

Prince Siddhartha's Childhood

Ploughing Ceremony

King Suddhodhana wished his son to become a great king. One day, he took Prince Siddhartha to see a ploughing ceremony. He asked the nurses to look after the prince. The nurses wanted to attend the festival and forgot about the prince. The prince went missing. The king found his son seated under a rose apple tree with his legs crossed and eyes closed, doing meditation. After this, the king gave the prince more and more comfort and luxuries in hopes to train him to be a great leader and a king.



Prince's Loving kindness

Wounded swan



Young prince Siddhartha was very kind, compassionate and thoughtful. He was sympathetic towards everyone, even the little animals. He knew all the living beings did not like suffering and pain.

One day when Prince Siddhartha and his cousin Devadatta were walking in the woods, they saw a swan. Quickly, Devadatta drew his bow and shot the swan down.

Siddhartha rushed to the wounded swan and pulled out the arrow.

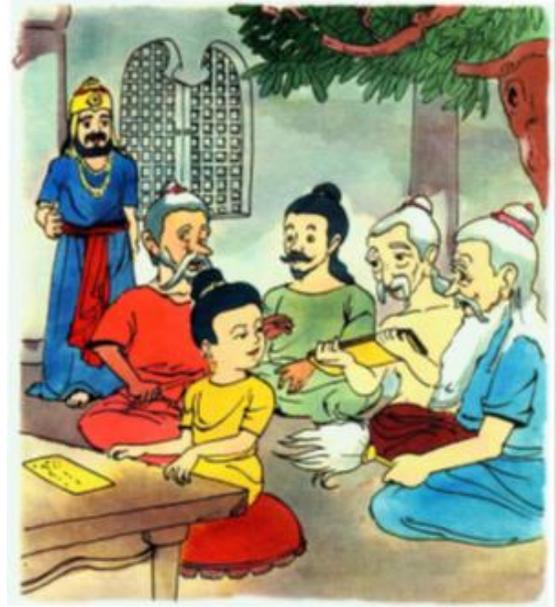


He held the bird in his arms and caressed it. Devadatta angrily shouted at Prince Siddhartha, “give me the swan, I shot it, it belongs to me!”. “I shall never give it to you, you will only kill it” said the prince Siddhartha firmly. “let’s ask the ministers of the court and let them decide” the two Princes agreed. The ministers each had a different view.

One wise minister stood up to say “A life belongs to the one who saves it, not to the one who destroys it. The swan goes to Prince Siddhartha”. Prince Siddhartha took care of the swan until it could fly again. Then he turned it loose so it could live freely among its own kind.

First Teacher

King appointed the best teachers in the kingdom to teach Prince Siddhartha. Prince Siddhartha's first teacher was Sarwa Mithra. The teacher realized that the prince was very intelligent. He learned all the arts and sciences with great ease. He was a really good student. King Suddhodhana was so happy and proud of his son. Prince Siddhartha was popular among his friends and was a very kind and peaceful boy.



Tournament of skills

Prince learned all the traditional arts and sciences and everything else a prince needs to learn. He excelled archery, fencing, martial arts and horse back riding. He was a very skilled, brave and intelligent prince. When he was done all his learnings, the king arranged for a tournament of skills and invited all he knows to the event. Prince Siddhartha performed really well in the tournament to demonstrate his learnings and made his father really happy.

A luxurious life

The prince was given all the luxuries of life by the king. He had three palaces named Ramya, Suramya and Subha for the three seasons and many servants to attend all his needs. However, the prince was never allowed out of the palace gates for the fear of him seeing the sad things in life.