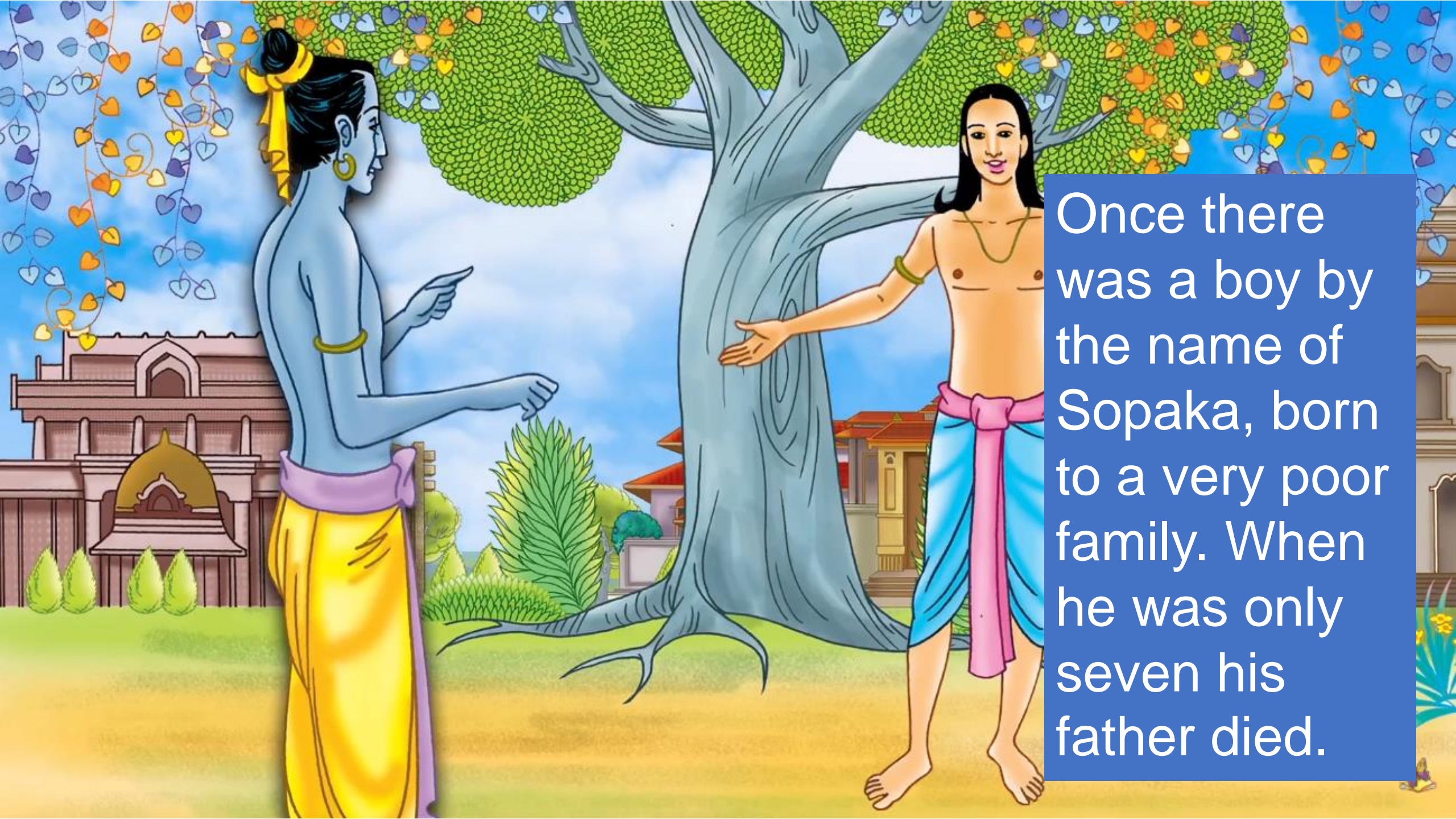




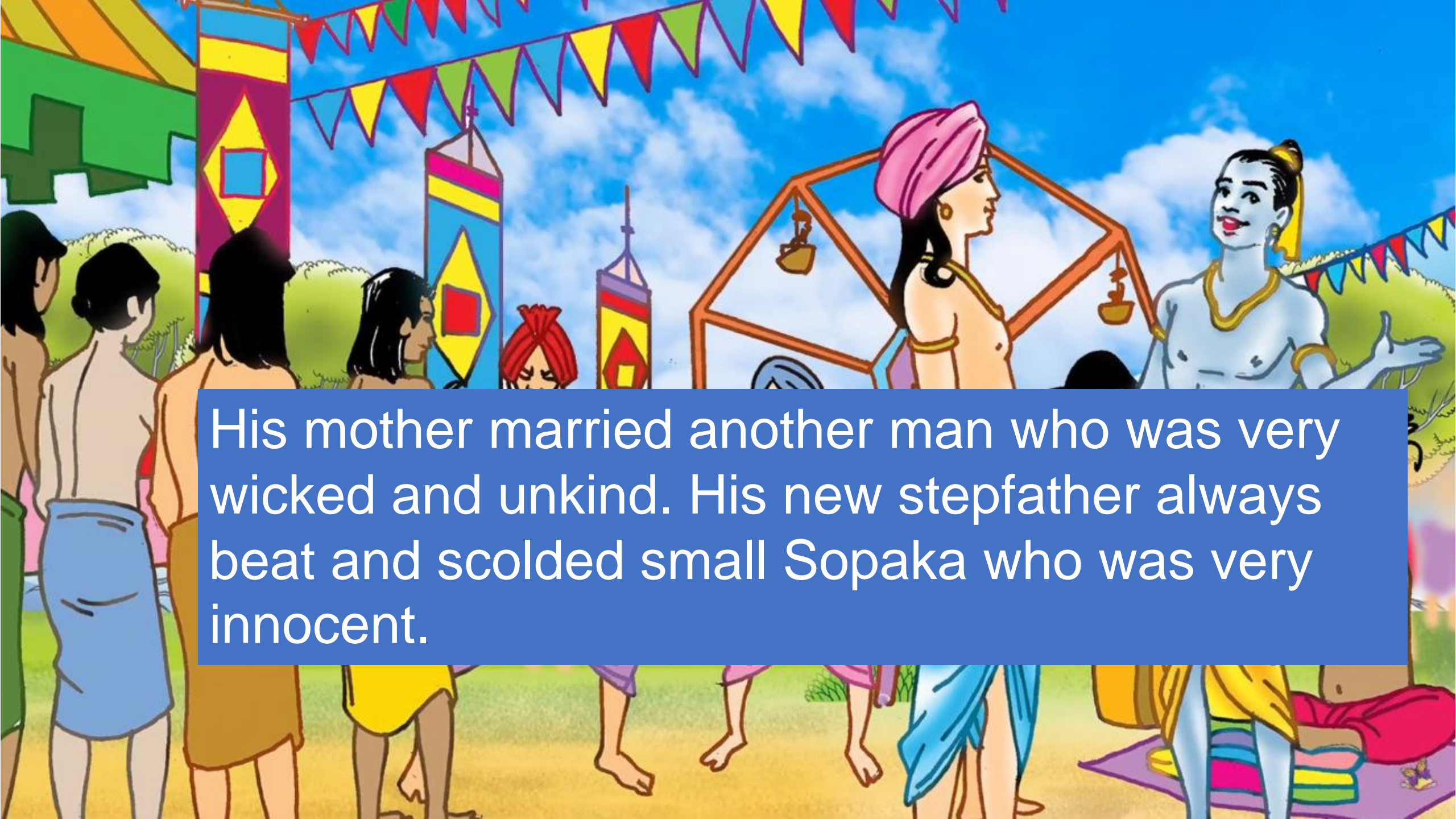
**Shanthi Vihara Dhamma School**

Dhamma School Lessons - KS1

# The Poor Sopaka



Once there was a boy by the name of Sopaka, born to a very poor family. When he was only seven his father died.

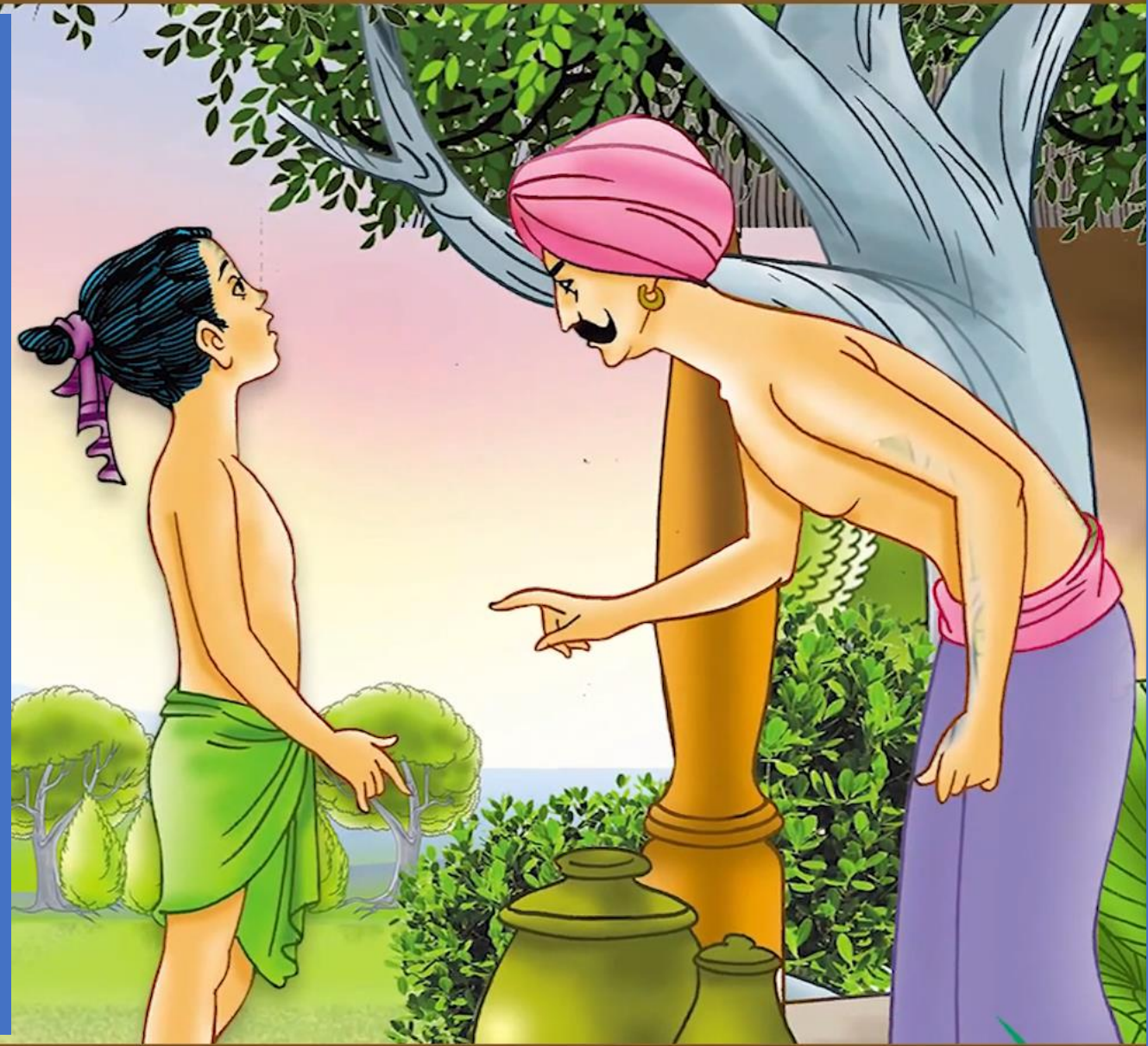


His mother married another man who was very wicked and unkind. His new stepfather always beat and scolded small Sopaka who was very innocent.

The stepfather thought, "This boy is a nuisance, a good-for-nothing, but I cannot do anything to him because his mother loves him so much. What shall I do about him?"



One evening he said, "Dear son, let us go for a walk." The boy was surprised and thought, "My stepfather has never talked to me so kindly. Perhaps my mother has asked him to be kind to me." So he happily went with his stepfather.



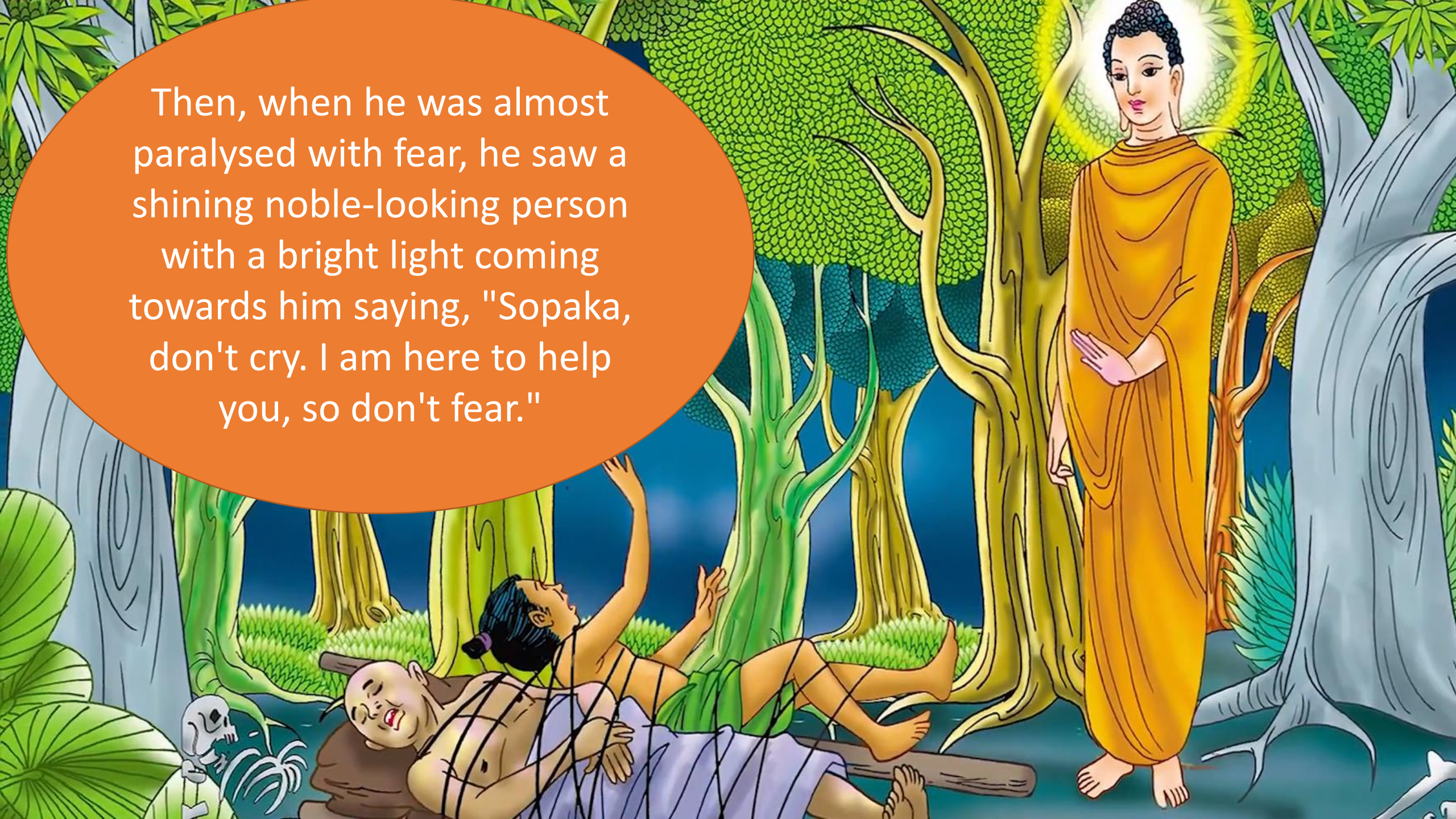


They walked to a cemetery where there were many rotting bodies and the stepfather tied Sopaka to one of them, leaving him alone and crying.

As the night became darker and darker Sopaka's fear increased. He was alone in the cemetery and so frightened that his hair stood on end and drops of sweat rolled down his body.

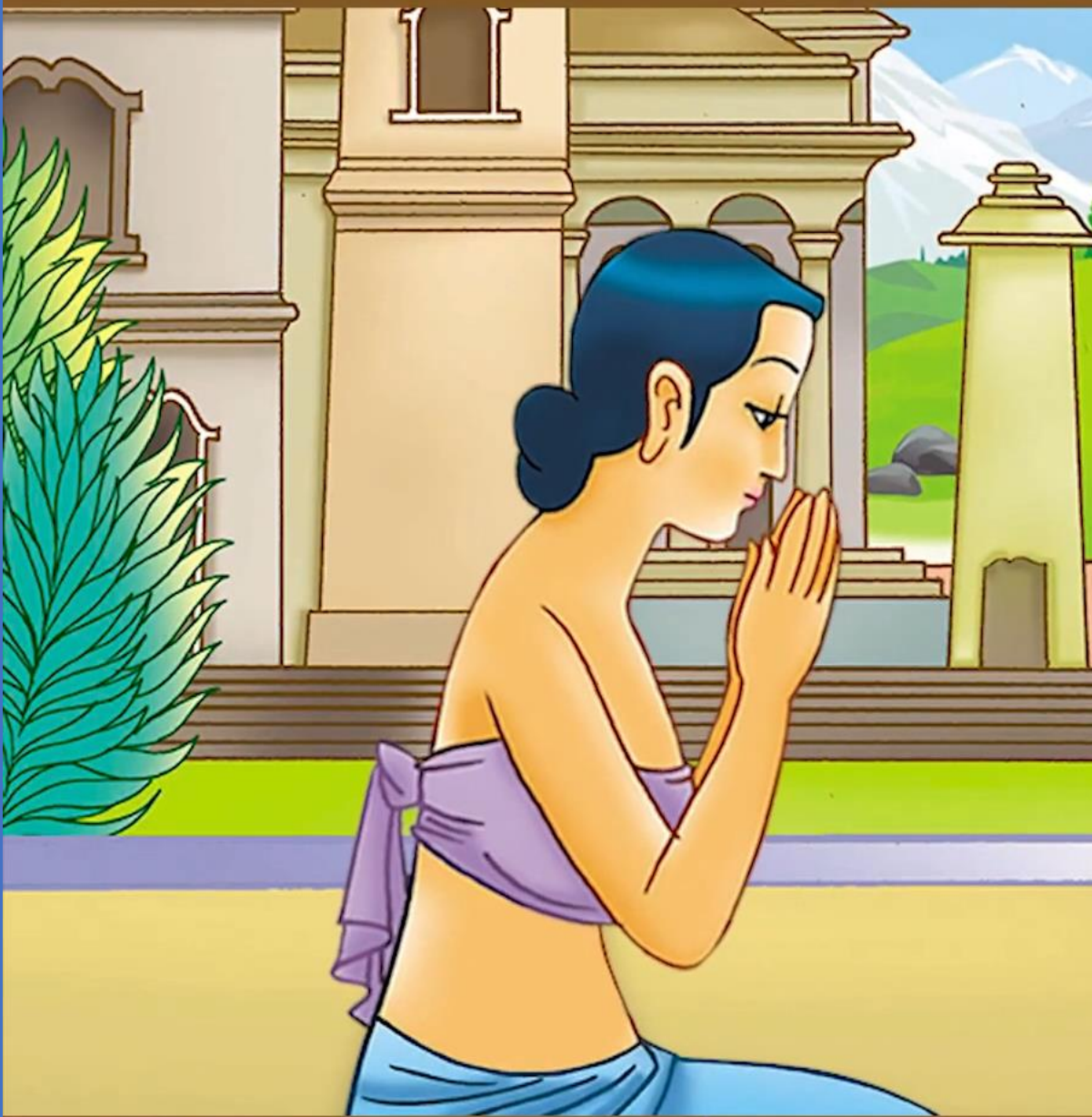


Then, when he was almost paralysed with fear, he saw a shining noble-looking person with a bright light coming towards him saying, "Sopaka, don't cry. I am here to help you, so don't fear."

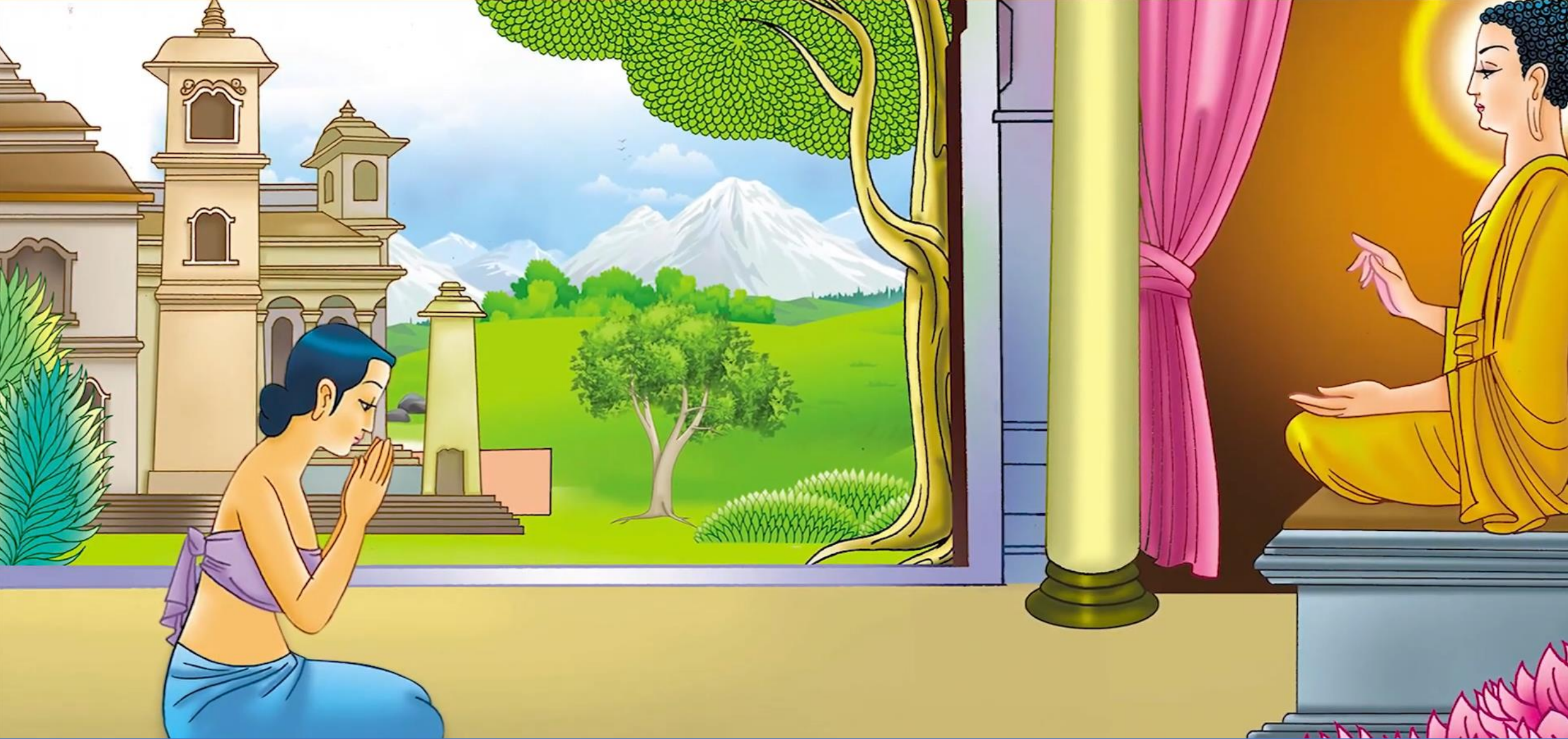




At that moment Sopaka broke his bonds and stood before the Buddha in the Jetavana monastery. The Buddha bathed him, gave him food to eat, cloths to wear and consoled and comforted him.



Meanwhile, on returning home, the wicked stepfather was questioned by Sopaka's mother. "Where is my son?" she asked. "I don't know," he replied, "he came home before me." But the mother could not sleep the whole night for worrying about her son.



Early next day she went to see the Buddha for help. "Why are you crying, sister?" asked the Buddha. "O Lord," replied the lady, "I have only one son and since last night he has been missing. My husband took Sopaka for a walk and the little boy never returned home."



"Don't worry, sister. Your son is safe. Here he is." And so saying the Buddha showed her Sopaka, who had become a monk. The mother was overjoyed to see her son again, and after listening to the Buddha's teachings she too became a follower.



**“Just like a mother would be very good  
Towards her only child,  
So you too should be very good  
Towards all creatures everywhere and everyone”**

# Quiz

- Who was Sopaka?
- Why did his stepfather want to kill him?
- How did he try to kill the boy?
- What did the Buddha do to save the boy?