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# Prince Siddhartha's Characteristics as the Future Buddha's Potential

*Huynh Thanh Liem*

*Research Scholar, Gautam Buddha University, Greater, Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India*

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## **Abstract:**

When the Buddha was Prince Siddhartha, Brahmanical traditions still profoundly affected Indian culture. He used transcendent intellect to learn four sets of the Vedas in the smallest amount of time. As a young prince, he also showed enormous sympathy for animals and the impoverished. Prince Siddhartha had a high IQ and a desire to acquire wisdom beyond the reach of normal humans. When he saw old age, illness, and death, he often thought about people's suffering. He subsequently left the palace in the middle of the night because of this anxiety. As a result, the Prince became an ascetic because he delivered a divine mission that rescues sentient beings from all pain and ends samsara.

When learning from a renowned Guru, the ascetic Gautama tirelessly studied and practised to acquire the great Guru's high levels of meditation. He was dissatisfied with what he had learned from his meditation masters and pursued the road to liberation via personal experiences. He sat down to meditate beneath a pipal tree, vowing not to rise until complete awakening (sammā-sambodhi) was attained. With the "three threefold wisdoms" (tevijja) to comprehend the functioning of all Kamma in human existence and the law of the cosmos, he obtained enlightenment and escaped from samsara, the eternal cycle of reincarnation. After his awakening, he attained the status of the Awakened One, also known as Buddha, and taught individuals how to alter themselves from common humans to holy sainthood.

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**Keyword:** Buddha, Knowledge, Wisdom, Suffering, Happiness, Brahmin.

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## **1. Introduction:**

Each of us is born into the world with a unique purpose. Some individuals play the roles of nice people, while others play the roles of evil people; some play the part of a noble, while others play the role of a vile person. Some individuals play a starring role, while others play a supporting one. Some individuals are intelligent, informed, open, and giving, whereas others are dumb, less knowing, damaging, and selfish. Even though there are two identical twins in the same fetus, with the same form, born at the same time, the same father, and the same mother, each individual has a unique function in life.

To explore the Buddha's views, we must thus do research on his life as Prince Siddhartha. Buddha was born with a divine purpose, and he was impacted by the period's political, social, and intellectual conditions. What kind of abilities and mindset did he possess? What did he think of the social climate of the time? Why did the Prince leave his family to become a monk? How Buddha communicated his liberated teachings to the Brahmins, the social classes of the time after he gained complete enlightenment.

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## **2. Ancient Indian Society's Perspective on the Context:**

In ancient India, four Vedas—the Rigveda, the Yajurveda, the Samaveda, and the Atharvaveda—were widely disseminated. Vedic thinking has had a significant impact on Indian cultural heritage since the Early Vedic era (around 1500 to 1200 BCE), when there were no Sanskrit letters for writing. Vedic thought organised the old Indian caste structure into four groups: Brahmins (scholars and yajna priests), Kshatriyas (rulers and warriors), Vaishyas (farmers, merchants, and craftsmen), and Shudras (workers and service providers). Brahmins have spiritually dominated Indian civilization since antiquity<sup>1</sup>.

When the letters of Vedic Sanskrit were formed by a large number of classical experts in India, the four sets of Vedas were inscribed on leaves, rocks, and the literature of the Vedas began to grow and spread across India. Vedic philosophy had a protracted effect on all ancient faiths. The Brahmins who knew the Vedas well always taught the nobles at the royal court, who were their followers, what the Vedas said about philosophy and other disciplines.

During the time of the Buddha in ancient India, there were six fundamental schools of orthodox (Astika) Indian philosophy, namely Nyaya, Vaisheshika, Samkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṃsā, and Vedānta<sup>2</sup>. Almost all Indian philosophical systems regard the Vedas as a trustworthy source of knowledge. This institution

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<sup>1</sup> Mark, 2020

<sup>2</sup> Mohanty, 2022

holds the Brahman and Atman tenets to be true, and another denomination believes in the afterlife and Devas. They also constantly disagreed on various topics, including Vedic philosophy, human life, and social, political, and cosmological issues.

This institution has always believed that its teaching is correct and that all others are wrong. People were uncertain as to who was right and who was wrong on this topic. Many ideas, like dharma, karma, samsara, reincarnation, Dukkha, renunciation, and meditation, were always talked about by ancient Indian thinkers. Through a variety of spiritual practices, almost all of which were centred on the ultimate goal of achieving individual freedom (moksha or nirvana), they were able to reach a higher state of being. They diverged in their assumptions on the nature of life and the particulars of the road to ultimate freedom, resulting in the development of several schools with divergent beliefs. In ancient Indian societies, their ancient ideologies included a wide range of ideas.

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### 3. Comment on the historical figure Buddha as Prince Siddhartha:

Typically, whenever a great individual arrives in our world, his transcendently wise ideas profoundly impact the globe. Whenever he comes onto our planet and wherever he is born, favourable omens always occur before the day of conception, and auspicious omens often arise during birth. Later, as he matures, he progressively demonstrates his skill and makes an impact on others around him. Buddha obtained the ultimate delight of Nibbana in addition to his divine duty to save humans from pain and the end of samsara.<sup>3</sup>

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### 4. The summary commentary about the life of Prince Siddhartha:

The Buddha (also known as Siddhārtha Gautama) was a philosopher, mendicant, meditator, spiritual teacher, and religious leader who lived in Ancient India, (born c. 6th–4th century BCE, Lumbini, near Kapilavastu, Shakyas republic, Kosala kingdom [now in Nepal]—died, Kusinara, Malla republic, Magadha kingdom [now Kasia, India]). Buddhism, one of the main religions and philosophical systems of southern and eastern Asia and the globe, was founded by Buddha.<sup>4</sup>

As soon as Prince Siddhartha became pregnant, there were favourable omens associated with him. All events began when Queen Maya dreamed of a white elephant bearing a white lotus in its silvery-white trunk and descending from the sky into her womb<sup>5</sup>. The Queen is having a wonderful experience, incredible joy. She told her dream to King Suddhodana of the Kapilavastu kingdom. This event was foreseen by the erudite Brahmins, who were both intelligent and honourable. The Brahmins proclaimed, “O Great King, Your Queen Consort will give birth to a great prince. Your youngster will be a privileged individual. If he chooses to remain a homeowner, he will be a Universal Monarch; if he chooses to abandon the domestic life and embrace the ascetic life, he will be a Fully Enlightened One.”<sup>6</sup>

When the Prince was born, he had thirty-two wonderful indicators. The Gods also lauded him as:

“The noble and peerless diamond, the future Buddha, is born in Lumbini, a hamlet in the Sakyan kingdom, for the benefit and welfare of the world, in the world of human beings. As a result, we are overjoyed. He is the noblest of all creatures; the noblest of all men; the leader of mankind; and the most powerful personality. He will put the wheel of genuine instruction in the land of the sages in motion, like the roar of a strong lion, the king of creatures.”<sup>7</sup>

And the sage Devala Asita, a dark-skinned companion of King Suddhodana who lived in the Himalaya. He observed the gods revelling with joyful hearts, and he inquired of the gods; then he learned the surprising news of King Suddhodana’s son’s birth. He then flew through the skies to reach Kapilavastu. The sage Asita walked into the city to see King Suddhodana and his son. When the seer saw the prince, she burst into tears and said:

“I’m not worried about anything bad happening to the Prince. He will not be at risk. He is not your typical individual. Be unconcerned. This Prince will attain perfect awareness. With the purest purity, he will put in motion the wheel of genuine teaching out of concern for the wellbeing of the masses, and his holy life will be well-known. I, for one, am not going to live very long. Meanwhile, I shall perish. I will be unable to listen to this person’s distinctive instructions. As a result, I feel worried, tormented, and dissatisfied.”<sup>8</sup> And continuously, he said:

“O King, if these eighty subsidiary indicators are present on the individual in addition to the thirty-two big signs, it is assured that the owner will become a perfect Buddha and teach the Dhamma.”<sup>9</sup> After hearing Asita’s comments, King Suddhodana and his ministers took every care to keep the Prince from leaving the palace. King Suddhodana also wanted Brahmins to observe the infant and predict his destiny based on the markings on his body at the rite of a prince’s given name on the fifth day of child bathing. A total of 188 Brahmins who had mastered the Vedas were welcomed to the palace and served with delicious milk rice. After they had been thoroughly amused, they were asked to make their predictions based on the Prince’s body markers. Rama, Dhaja, Lakkhana, Manti, Kondanna, Bhoja, Suyama, and Sudatta were among the Brahmins. The Brahmins also predicted the Prince’s future life, as the

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<sup>3</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p. 15

<sup>4</sup> Lopez, 2022

<sup>5</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p. 6

<sup>6</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p. 9

<sup>7</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p.15

<sup>8</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p.17

<sup>9</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p.17

sage Devala Asita had. But the youngest of these eight Brahmins, whose clan name was Kondanna, saw how beautiful the potential Buddha's face was and said: "There is no reason for this person to stay at home. He will become an Enlightened One, revealing the truth to the rest of the world".<sup>10</sup>

The Prince was then given the name Siddhārtha, which means "one who has fulfilled an excellent purpose" or "one whose objective is completed"<sup>11</sup>, since he was meant to provide happiness to the whole world. According to Mahāvastu, the Prince's name is Sarvārthsiddha, which means "he who has achieved all his goals."<sup>12</sup> This is exactly what the prophets, the philosopher Asita and the youngest Brahmin, predicted about Prince Siddhartha's destiny. Later, the Prince gave up his family, the palace, his wife, and children to become an ascetic and pursue the path of suffering release. Finally, the Prince reached complete enlightenment and became Buddha.

According to Buddha's history, when Buddha was a youngster, Prince Siddhartha had terrific powers, just like any other child. He loves animals and is always willing to help them in any way he can. The Prince's nature was always intensely reflective about life. One day at the ploughing festival, the Prince displayed deep compassion and the capacity to meditate, even though no one had taught him. One day, the King escorted the Prince to the farmer's ploughing ritual to mark the start of the rice season. Farmers ploughed the land, and insects and worms appeared on the earth, as seen by the Prince. The birds use them to manufacture food; the snake captures and consumes the frog; and eagles hunt snakes and small birds for food.

In the situation of animals murdering one another, some large creatures consume little animals. Larger animals eat stalkers, which devour smaller animals. This occurrence reawakened the Prince's heart to have pity on the animals. He reasoned that animals murder and consume one other for the purpose of survival<sup>13</sup>. For a while, the Prince sat cross-legged in intense meditation beneath the shade of a rose-apple tree on the events that had just occurred before his eyes.<sup>14,15</sup>

When the Prince was a few years old, he started to comprehend all that had occurred in his life, compassion developed, and he required a clever argument to defend the animal he wanted to save his life. Prince Siddhartha was successful in saving the life of a goose shot by an arrow by Devadatta, Gautama Siddhartha's cousin and brother-in-law, through accounts of discussion and litigation. This incident revealed Prince's ability to provide a persuasive thesis on animal protection.

Also, since the Prince's essence is highly intelligent, he learned very quickly. When Prince Siddhartha was eight years old, the King sent him, along with five hundred other Sakya youth and countless others, to study the sixty-four types of texts and the Vedas, Vedangas from the finest instructor, Visvamitra.<sup>16</sup> Prince Siddhartha mastered the three Vedas in a short period of time using transcending wisdom and was adept at studying the three Vedas in their entirety. With intrinsic knowledge and a desire to learn, the Prince asked numerous questions concerning Vedic philosophy, which startled the professors and left them unable to answer the Prince's queries fully.<sup>17</sup>

The King then called Ksantadeva, Suppabuddha's son, to train the Prince and other Sakya youngsters in military techniques and war science.<sup>18</sup> The tutors admire the Prince's intellect and rational, analytical abilities, yet the Prince consistently exhibits humility and civility to everyone. Furthermore, the Prince had remarkable power; during talent competitions, the Prince demonstrated his skill and strength. He was unbeatable in swordplay, archery, horse riding, and other sports; no one could stand in his way.

Several instances are given that demonstrate the Prince's physical power. As in the account of the elephant who was slaughtered by Devadatta's fist. The Licchavis of Vaisali gave the Prince an elephant. When the Prince noticed an elephant corpse lying on one side of the road, he grabbed it by the tail and tossed it across seven fences and ditches, and it excavated a large trench in the process, which became known as "the elephant ditch or Hastigarta."<sup>19</sup> And in the narrative of archery, the youthful Sakyas tried his hand at it. After piercing all the targets, Prince Siddhartha's arrow traveled so deep into the earth that it caused a spring to burst forth, and there the believing Brahmins and householders constructed a stupa.<sup>20</sup>

Despite his exceptional courage, the Prince was always thoughtful and compassionate, calm and modest, and not eager to win. Because of these attributes, the Prince was well-known for his gentleness and compassion. King Suddhodana, Queen Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, the Buddha's stepmother and maternal aunt (mother's sister), courtiers and citizens in Kapilavatthu, and everyone else adored him when they heard the news.

During his five years of pursuing enlightenment and six years of austerities, he demonstrated his great practise ability, steady position, and exceptional endurance to endure excruciating rigours to reach the road of liberation and obtain enlightenment and full release from suffering. When the disciples practise attaining the same degree of concentrated cultivation as the holy teacher, it is as normal as learning from any religious master. To educate these

<sup>10</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p. 19

<sup>11</sup> Thomas, 1949, p. 44

<sup>12</sup> Thomas, 1949, p. 44

<sup>13</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p. 23.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas, 1949, p. 45.

<sup>15</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p. 21.

<sup>16</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p.24

<sup>17</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, pp. 24-25

<sup>18</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p. 25

<sup>19</sup> Rockhill, W. W. (trans.), 1884, p. 19

<sup>20</sup> Rockhill, W. W. (trans.), 1884, p. 19

other students, the disciples must collaborate with his spiritual masters or form a new denomination. He demonstrates his abilities and inherits the career of his religious master to pass on to the next generation to keep the teachings of this sect alive for a long time.

Because of these attributes, the Prince was well-known for his gentleness and compassion. King Suddhodana, Queen Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, the Buddha's stepmother and maternal aunt (mother's sister), courtiers and citizens in Kapilavatthu, and everyone else adored him when they heard the news. During his five years of pursuing enlightenment and six years of austerities, he demonstrated his great practice ability, steady position, and exceptional endurance to endure excruciating rigors to reach the road of liberation and obtain enlightenment and total release from suffering.

Any disciple who went to study with any religious master had generally practised and attained the same level of meditation cultivation as the holy master. This disciple will work with his spiritual masters to educate these other pupils, or he will form new denominations to teach them. He demonstrates his abilities and inherits the career of his religious master to pass on to the next generation to preserve the teachings of this long-existing sect. After shaving his hair and donning an austere garb, he travelled to the Vultures Peak (Gijha Kuta), near Rajagaha, and lived among the ascetics there. He outdid them in his mortification and was dubbed the Maha Sramana. But when he realised their objective was to become Sakka, Brahma, or even Mara, he understood they were on the wrong road and left them to travel to Alara Kalama.<sup>21</sup>

After studying hard and meditating under the guidance of the great sage Alara Kalama and then the great Master Uddaka Rmaputta, he tried to practise in a strict way. He obtained the same condition of greatest happiness as the great religious master. Despite the utmost bliss of the concentrated state of meditation, which was on the same level as the level states of legendary spiritual teachers like the sage Alara Kalama<sup>22</sup> and the great Master Uddaka, he was dissatisfied. He determined the greatest realms in these two systems of practises to be those of two masters who did not use his cognitive knowledge to take sentient beings out of samsara or enable them to escape all suffering.<sup>23</sup>

During Alara Kalama's studies, Venerable Gautama said, "I recognised that like Alara Kalama, I, too, possessed faith, persistence, mindfulness, concentration, and knowledge." So, like him, I learned that method and started to practise it. And "one day, I went to Alara Kalama and informed him that I had mastered his teaching technique and was putting it into practise."<sup>24</sup>

Then Alara Kalama approved:

"It is a big help to us that you are a fellow ascetic who has grasped our method. I'm sure you're aware of that as well. Everything you know is also something I know. You are similar to me, and I am similar to you. Let the two of us now head this congregation of disciples."<sup>25</sup>

Ascetic Gautama considered "as a result, Alara Kalama appointed me his student and equal, and he immensely respected me." But I started to suspect that this technique did not lead to detachment, listlessness, tranquility, focus, awareness, complete enlightenment, and liberation (Nibbana). It just leads to non-existence. I left in unhappiness because I was so disillusioned with the system."<sup>26</sup>

As a result of these factors, he decided to withdraw from the guidance of well-known spiritual gurus. Instead, he continued his search for the way to enlightenment by conducting experiments on himself. During his six years of asceticism, he was surrounded by five other practitioners who were always there for him. He journeyed to many different locations to practice the many forms of asceticism that all hermit ascetics were doing at that time using the most stringent ascetic practices. He was there for all of them.

Finally, after a long period of ascetic effort practice, he discovered that, contrary to ascetic propaganda, the practised approach of forced asceticism did not result in the relief of suffering. After researching the traditional practise techniques, he concluded that "a clear mind is not in a weak body." Therefore, he abandoned asceticism and chose the middle path<sup>27</sup>. He agreed and got a milk rice dish from a Sujata woman in Uruvela's neighbouring hamlet, Senani. He vowed to achieve enlightenment with a strong determination and his health restored. "If he does not acquire complete enlightenment, he will not leave this location," he promises. Then he chose the Pippala tree to sit cross-legged in order to examine the inner soul. He discovered a new meditation route, taking the middle road that led to a serene place. He conquered all of Mara's internal and external trials and hurdles with fierce tenacity.<sup>28</sup>

He meditated to entry the state of the first Jhāna, the second Jhāna, the third Jhāna, the fourth Jhāna and then the cessation of all evil, defilement. In the end, he acquired complete enlightenment and freedom from samsara, the ceaseless cycle of reincarnation, with "The threefold wisdom" (tevijja)<sup>29</sup> culminating in waking to understand the road free of all miseries, as well as the functioning of all Kamma in human existence and the rule of the cosmos. Thus, his mind was cleansed of the contamination of desire, existence, and ignorance. He understood that birth has been eradicated, a higher life has been

<sup>21</sup> Rockhill, W. W. (trans.), 1884, p. 27

<sup>22</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, pp. 53-56

<sup>23</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p.56

<sup>24</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p.55

<sup>25</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p.55

<sup>26</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p.55

<sup>27</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, pp. 61-70

<sup>28</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, pp. 71-73

<sup>29</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, pp. 74-75

lived, and all necessary tasks have been accomplished. He became Buddha at dawn on the day of the full moon in the month of Vaisakha, much to the delight of the human and divine worlds.<sup>30</sup>

#### ***Commenting on Prince Siddhartha's Personality and Talent:***

We have come to realise that the Prince has always demonstrated his extraordinary strength, strong will, fullness of virtue, calm demeanor, humble moral conduct, and great compassion for all beings. This has been the case from childhood all the way through the renunciation of the Royal Family in search of a more liberal path away from suffering. Everyone who heard of the prince's wonderful reputation for his virtues and good knowledge appreciated him from the depths of their hearts. The Prince's reputation continued to grow in a positive direction. He had both strength and virtue, as well as talent and intellect above those of a normal person. Even though the Gautama hermit was far younger than the other legendary ancient ascetics, they still admired him. This occurrence demonstrates that even while he was still young, he had not yet reached the level of enlightenment known as Buddhahood; nonetheless, he still had the ability to have significant influence over other individuals. Everyone is aware of their own personal ideals, which include knowledge and morality. These are also pieces of evidence that show us the extraordinary capabilities of the Prince, and they are similar to what the prophets had predicted of Prince Siddhartha's future as soon as he was about to be born and as soon as he was born with the thirty-two characteristics of a great man. These pieces of evidence show us that Prince Siddhartha was born with these characteristics.

#### **Conclusion:**

When, Buddha was a young Prince Siddhartha, he had a superhuman mind, a strong will, and incredible strength, and he mastered all aspects of literature and martial arts, as well as having encyclopaedic knowledge and expertise in war themes. And he was always humble, with all the qualities of a good Prince. He is popular among the general populace. Everyone liked and loved the Prince, including the royal family, courtiers, generals and army, and the general public. The Prince has the potential to become a great ruler, conquering nations through both military force and morality.

As a consequence, Prince Siddhartha's future is very bright, full of glory, wealth, happiness, complete power, and a world-famous reputation. Everyone praised him. The Prince didn't pay heed to the fact that he had an extremely promising future that was packed with power, glory, and wealth. The Prince merely chose the path of renunciation in order to find a way to alleviate suffering for sentient beings, a path loaded with challenges and profound anguish, unfit for a prince who has never suffered. This demonstrated that neither celebrity nor personal gain prompted Prince Siddhartha's ordination. The Prince will not become a renunciant if it is for the sake of his reputation, his personal sake, or his kingdom. And he will stay in the palace to become a glorious King with total power, glory, and money, indulging in sexual pleasures throughout his life with a plethora of servants who will also serve day and night.

As a moment, the Prince became an ascetic after delivering a heavenly mission that frees sentient creatures from all agony and ends samsara. Because this feature has strengthened the prince's willpower and given him the energy to overcome any hardships and difficulties through an austere lifestyle, The Prince's amazing endurance as a consequence of his practise of the most extreme austerities was then feared and appreciated by other Brahmanical ascetics. All of the evidence presented above shows that Prince Siddhartha's abilities and cognitive wisdom aided him in the process of realising the right path to help him escape the cycle of birth and death in samsara and later attain Buddhahood and expand enlightened wisdom to bring practical benefits to human life, assisting people in better understanding the true nature of the principles that govern the operation of all things, phenomena in the universe, and what is happening in the universe.

After attaining full enlightenment and Buddhahood, the wisdom of Buddha Gautama showed the right path to freedom, leading to the cessation of all sources of suffering, the cessation of all causes of evil, the attainment of Arahantship, the cessation of rebirth in samsara, and the greatest accomplishment, the pleasures of Nirvana. It is owing to the sacred obligation for the Buddha Gautama's entrance in this world to bring ultimate happiness for gods and humans, to end all suffering, and to achieve Arahantship and Nirvana. Later, the notion of the Buddha's liberating thinking had a very apparent influence on people, and it has a plethora of practical and persuasive benefits in terms of life values. As a result, the Buddha's teachings of liberation are spreading and are gradually being recognised and embraced as a benefit by the people of India and across the world.

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<sup>30</sup> Wickremesinghe, 1972, p.75