

16.3 The Prince's Royal Life

Prince Siddhartha's father wanted his son to be a great and powerful ruler. The king was worried about the **predictions** made by the Brahmins. If the prince saw the world's suffering, he might give up his royal duties to seek a spiritual path.

The king decided to protect his son from all of the horrors of the world. He raised the prince in a world of perfect wealth and beauty. He provided Siddhartha with only the finest gardens, houses, education, and food. Servants took care of the prince's every need, from washing his clothes to playing music for his amusement.

The prince enjoyed his life filled with lavish pleasures, yet he always felt curious about the world outside the palace walls. Some days, he would sit under a rose apple tree and think and wonder about the world beyond his reach.

At the age of 16, Prince Siddhartha married a beautiful young noblewoman. The wedding feast lasted seven days and seven nights. For 12 years, the couple lived together in perfect peace, enjoying the prince's many palaces. When Siddhartha turned 29, they had a son.

Prince Siddhartha enjoyed a life of luxury in his father's palaces. This painting shows his wedding ceremony, at left, and his skill at archery, at right.

