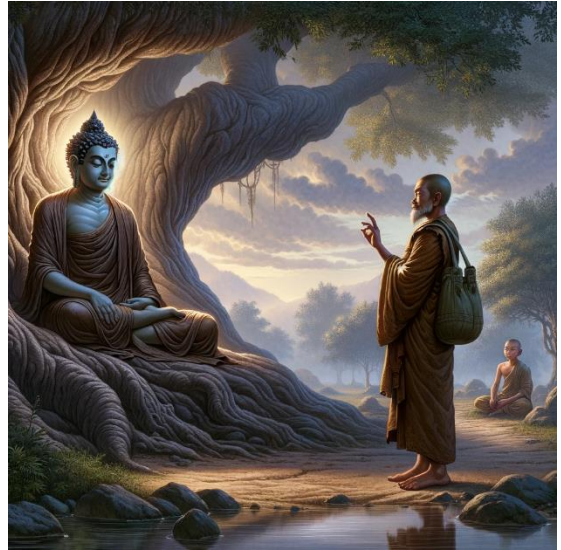


Lesson -1

I'd like to begin our group by sharing three compelling stories, each from a different time period: ancient, medieval, and contemporary.

In the time of Buddha, there was a wise and well-versed monk who visited him. When he bowed before Buddha, the Buddha affectionately referred to him as the "Empty" monk. This unexpected name left the monk feeling disheartened, prompting him to seek a new teacher. He eventually found a young monk by a pond who asked him to fulfill a request before accepting him as a student: jump into the muddy pond and run across.



The second story involves a professor who approached a Zen master, expressing his desire to become the master's student. The Zen master responded with silence and invited the professor for tea. Sitting face to face on the floor, the master began pouring tea into the professor's cup. As the cup filled to the brim, the master continued to pour, causing it to overflow.

Lastly, there's the story of an Iranian student who frequents our temple for meditation. While seeking a teacher in Iran, she encountered a renowned meditation instructor. When she approached him and asked to be taught meditation, he gave her a unique condition: she must beg in the streets for a couple of days if she wanted him to accept her as his student.

These stories carry profound lessons and insights, and I look forward to discussing them further during our session.

