

Buddhist Legends and Stories

A. The Filial Piety of Sparrow Oanh-Vu

Once upon the time, there was a sparrow named Oanh-Vu who lived with its blind parents. Day by day, the sparrow flew to the forest to find food for its parents. At that time, there was a farmer with loving kindness. One morning, seeing the rice plants bearing seeds, he vowed: "Here is my rice field. I would like to offer all the rice to living beings". Oanh-Vu heard the farmer's charity vow. When the rice was ripe, the sparrow often came there to take food for its parents.

One day, the farmer visited the farm. He saw birds fighting one another to get food. They wasted a lot of rice in the field. The farmer got angry and put a net around the field. The sparrow was caught. He politely said to the farmer: "Sir, days ago, I heard your vow to give wholeheartedly your rice to all living beings. I therefore dare to take your rice, but now why do you catch me?" The farmer asked: "You are just a little sparrow. Why are you taking such a heavy rice branch?" Softly Oanh-Vu replied: "Sir, my parents are blind. These are for them." Touched deeply by the filial piety of the sparrow, the farmer said: "Good! You are a good child. From now on, you are welcome to take as much rice as needed. Do not worry!"

It was said that Oanh-Vu was a previous incarnation of the Sakyamuni Buddha, and the farmer was that of Venerable Sariputta, a senior disciple of the Buddha.