The Great Chronicles of the Buddhas

by

Mingun Sayādaw

Edited by Ānanajoti Bhikkhu (2023)

The Great Chronicles of the Buddhas

Preface to the Revised Version

Between the years 1956-1969 Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṁsa, otherwise known as Mingun Sayādaw, who had been the Chief Respondent answering the questions on both discipline and doctrine at the 6th Buddhist Council held in Yangon, compiled his Great Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Mahā-buddha-vaṁsa*) in the Myanmar language.

The original translation was made by three different translators: T U Ko Lay, U Tin Lwin and U Tin Oo and is a big contribution which helped make this work available in English. However, their English was of variable standard, and their terminology sometimes differed from each other.

Changes made in this edition, mainly affect five areas: language, presentation, format, rearrangement and addition.

In this edition I have corrected the English and harmonized the terminology. Nearly every sentence has had to be corrected for spelling or grammar; the use of diacritics was fairly haphazard – sometimes using them, sometimes not, and sometimes wrongly – and most times the spelling of Pāḷi words has had to be corrected.

I have occasionally divided long chapters into two: a & b, or more, to better bring out the various contents of the chapters; headings have many times been changed, omitted or added for consistency; and presentation has been simplified and made more consistent.

I have also rearranged some material, this especially applies to the early and later chapters, so that Chapter VI, originally entiled Reflections on Perfections (*sic*), Chapter VII, On Miscellany and Chapter VIII Eighteen *Abhabbaṭṭhānas*, have all been moved to the Further Explanations, as has the Supplement that would have been Chapter X. This is so the story is more cohesive, and the treatises and supplements are treated separately. Also in the Dhamma Jewel section the three discourses: the Discourse setting the Dhamma Wheel Turning (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*, SN 56.11), the Discourse about the Characteristics of Non-Self (*Anatta-lakkhaṇa-sutta*, SN 22.59) and the Discourse

about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*, Khp 6, Sn 2:1) have been removed from that section and inserted in their proper place in the narrative.

I have also at times added in material, including adding in Jātaka stories where these were just mentioned in passing, sometimes new translations, such as that of the Discourse about Taking up Weapons (*Atta-daṇḍa-sutta*, Snp 4.15), and the Āṭānāṭiya Safeguard (*Āṭānāṭiya-paritta*). The biggest additions though, include adding in a chapter on Buddha Metteyya at the end of the Buddha Jewel.

References have been changed into the normal citation style in English works, and is usually done with a translation of the title; so that, for instance, the "Third Sutta, 4. Mahā-vagga, Navaka Nipāta of the Aṅguttara-nikāya," becomes "The Discourse on the Happiness of Nibbāna (*Nibbāna-sukha-sutta*, AN 9.34)." Also, in many cases, references that were omitted in the original have been added in, and I have given, where appropriate, the PTS page number. Unfortunately, however, the references in the original were sometimes too vague to be tracked down (i.e. simply given as: "*Visuddhi-magga-mahā-ṭīkā*," which is a huge work), and I have only updated the title to "sub-commentary to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*)." Dates and months which were given in an obscure Myanmar style of dating have been converted to CE/BCE, and month names have been given in English with Pāḷi equivalents.

Long notes that break up the story seem sometimes to have been written by the author, and sometimes by the translators (there is no guidance given on these matters). I have usually brought them into the body of the text, though they are then distinguished from other parts of the text by being indented and set in a smaller font size, so they can be skipped if the reader wishes to avoid what are often technical details, and can continue with the story; short notes, which were placed in brackets, perhaps again by the translators, have most times been included directly into the body of the text, without marker, as they are essential for a proper understanding of the text. They have also sometimes been changed to footnotes where appropriate. Notes in square brackets have been added in by the present editor.

The Anudīpanī, translated here to Further Explanations, which was a long appendix of 400+ pages, has now been re-edited to bring together material that was sometimes dispersed, and I have moved much more material from the main

text to this appendix, where it is better suited, so that it is now well over 500 pages long. All such changes have been noted in the text.

Many times the paragraphs were full of Pāḷi words, with no translation, so that the uninitiated would not know what is being said. Here I have prioritized the English translation, and mainly put the Pāḷi in brackets, and sometimes only at the first instance within the section. On the other hand, I have also added in the Pāḷi when it was felt it would help in clarifying the translation.

Ānandajoti Bhikkhu
November 2023

The Author

The author, Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṁsa, or Mingun Sayādaw, as he is popularly known, was born in the village of Thaibyuwa on November 11, 1911. At the age of eight he was sent to Sayādaw U Sobhita of Min-gyaung monastery, Myingyan, to start learning the rudiments of Buddhism. When he was ten he was ordained as a novice by the same Sayādaw. Ten years later he went to Dhammanāda monastery, a secluded monastery in Mingun, Sagaing Township, for further learning. In 1930, he received higher ordination. His sponsors were Daw Dhammacārī, a prominent and learned nun of Mingun, who was the author of the Truth-Speaker (*Sacca-vādī*) sub-commentary, and Sir U Thwin, a wealthy philanthropist of Yangon. Since then Daw Dhammacārī became his spiritual mother and Sir U Thwin the fatherly supporter for his religious life. In 1937, when the first Dhammanāda Sayādaw, who was the preceptor at his ordination, passed away, he had to take charge of the monastery.

Sayādaw had passed a series of religious examinations invariably with flying colours since the age of 13. To mention but a few, in his fourth year as a monastic, he passed the Dhammācariya Examination held by the Pariyatti Sāsanahita Association of Mandalay which was a formidable examination for which only a few candidates dare to sit. The Examination is on the three great commentaries which candidates normally try to finish one by one in three years. But the author passed all three commentaries in one year and acquired the rare and coveted title of Pariyatti Sāsanahita Dhammācariya Vaṭaṁsakā.

However, the first time he really made a name for himself as a man of vast learning was when he passed with distinctions the Tipiṭakadhara Examination,

which was held for the first time and was also reputed to be the longest and most difficult Examination. As the name suggests, the candidate has to recite all Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*) that he had learned by heart. In addition, he has to pass the written papers on all the canonical texts and commentaries. It took him four years to sit the whole Examination that earned him, in 1953, the unique title of Tipiṭakadhara Dhammabhaṇḍāgārika, which means "Bearer of the Three Baskets and Keeper of the Dhamma-Treasure." Sayādaw's ability to recite what amounts to 16,000 pages of the Buddhist Canonical Texts has been recorded in the Guinness Book of Records in 1985.

As regards his work for the Sāsana, suffice it to say that even before that great achievement of being Tipiṭakadhara Dhammabhaṇḍāgārika, when the Sixth Buddhist Council was well under way, Sayādaw was assigned the task of editing the Canonical texts to be approved by the Council as its sessions. Besides this, when the Council was convened, Sayādaw acted as the Respondent (*Vissajjaka*) answering questions on all three portions of the Canon. The Questioner (*Pucchaka*) was the late Mahāsi Sayādaw (1904-1982). In answering the questions, the author took the combined role of Vens. Upāli and Ānanda who answered the questions on the Vinaya and the Dhamma respectively at the First Council presided over by Ven. Mahā Kassapa.

After the Council, the author devoted himself to literary pursuits. At the request of U Nu, then Prime Minister of Myanmar, he assiduously compiled the Great Chronicles of the Buddha (*Mahā-buddha-vaṁsa*), being the Myanmar exposition on the lives of the Buddhas as related mainly in the Chronicles of the Buddha (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) of the Collection of the Supplementary Texts (*Khuddaka-nikāya*). This compilation, which resulted in six volumes in eight books, was commenced in 1956 and ended in 1969. The work, being the author's magnum opus and a colossal contribution to Myanmar Buddhist literature, has been received with enthusiastic acclaim by members of the Saṅgha and the laity alike.

In the year 1980, an historic event in the history of the Saṅgha in Myanmar took place, which was the emergence of the State Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka Committee comprising representatives of all sects of the Buddhist Saṅgha in Myanmar. The author was unanimously elected permanent General Secretary of the Committee, which, as the Supreme Authority on Buddhist religious affairs of the country, is responsible for the growth, development and prosperity of the Buddhasāsana.

In addition to his responsibilities as General Secretary of the State Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka Committee, the author was devoted to the service of the Sāsana in three main areas, namely, providing support and facilities for the emergence of more Bearers of the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka-dhara*) for the perpetuation of the Sāsana; providing support and facilities for the dissemination of the Buddha's teaching at home and abroad; and providing adequate medical facilities for members of the Saṅgha from all over Myanmar.

For the first task, the author founded the Tipiṭaka Nikāya Organization whose chief aim is to nurture young monastics so that they may one day become "Bearers of the Three Baskets and Keepers of the Dhamma-Treasure" like himself. There were a number of promising students under his care at Momeik Hill near Mingun.

> [Since the author's achievement there have been twelve other holders of the same title up and till March 2023]

Soon after the formation of the State Saṅgha Mahā Nāyaka Committee, it firmly resolved to establish two separate universities of the Learning Dispensation (*Pariyatti-sāsana*) in Yangon and Mandalay where the Good Dhamma of the Perfectly Awakened One would be taught in a new system of education to produce elders who will spread the teaching in Myanmar and elsewhere. In pursuance of the second objective, the author's untiring efforts have resulted in magnificent University buildings which have newly sprung up in both Yangon and Mandalay where courses leading to the Degrees of Dhammācariya and Mahā Dhammācariya have been operating since 1986.

As to the third important project undertaken by the author for the welfare of the Saṅgha, the Jīvitadāna Sāsana Specialist Hospital for monastics was founded in Mandalay. It is a 100-bed specialist hospital with all the facilities and equipment for a modern health centre and was formally opened under the auspices of the author himself on August 18, 1990.

In recognition of his great learning and of his invaluable services to the Sāsana, as mentioned above, the Government conferred upon him the title of *Agga-mahā-paṇḍita* (The Supremely Learned One) in 1979 and the title of *Abhidhaja Mahā-raṭṭha-guru* (The Noble Banner and Great Preceptor of the State) in 1984.

Hail and hearty at the age of 79, the indefatigable Sayādaw keeps on striving continuously, day in and day out, towards furtherance of his three main tasks,

thus setting an exemplary model for emulation to all who desire to promote the welfare of beings by means of the Buddha-Dhamma.

[The learned Sayādaw died on Feb 9th, 1993 at the age of 81. This was surely a great loss for the Sāsana, though his spirit lives on in his foundations and disciples.]

The Author's Introduction

Namo Buddhāya Siddhaṁ

Brief History

In 1954, [1] then Prime Minister of Myanmar, U Nu, requested the Late Bhaddanta Vicittasārābhivaṁsa, Ven. Mingun Sayādaw, to compile the Great Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Mahā-buddha-vaṁsa*), being the Myanmar exposition of the lives of the Buddhas as related mainly in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) in the Collection of the Supplementary Texts (*Khuddaka-nikāya*).

This compilation entitled "The Great Chronicles of the Buddhas," resulting in six volumes in eight books, was commenced in 1956 and ended in 1969. The work, being the author's *magnum opus* and a colossal contribution to Myanmar Buddhist literature, has been received with enthusiastic acclaim by members of the Saṅgha and the laity alike.

This Chronicle made its appearance after the convening of the Sixth Buddhist Council. It was subsequently translated into English by Myanmar scholars for the benefit of the English speaking readers, and has recenty been revised to bring it more in line with English usage and presentation.

The Chronicle vividly describes, for the benefit of those who are virtuous devotees of Buddhism, how the Buddha, the true friend of the three classes of beings, had performed unique, meritorious deeds beginning from his existence as the recluse Sumedha.

Sumedha met Buddha Dīpaṅkara and obtained assurance from the Buddha that he would, in time to come, gain Supreme Awakening as Buddha Gotama, which is during our present aeon. In his quest for Awakening in the cycle of births and deaths, the Bodhisatta met the past 24 Buddhas, which are described in detail.

This book retells the Buddha Gotama's story and also the lives of his prominent disciples. The book will appeal not only to the causal reader but also to the serious student of Buddhism.

> *Kīdiso te Mahā-vīra, abhinīhāro naruttama,*
> *kamhi kāle tayā dhīra, patthitā Bodhim-uttamā?*

> O Buddha, who is endowed with the four kinds of right exertion, who is the highest among men and higher than Devas and Brahmas, and who is thus chief of these three categories of beings! How should we comprehend your resolve to become a Buddha with great glory that pervades the whole universe extending from the bottom realm of intense suffering to the top realm of the Brahmas. Since when has your mind become inclined to achieve the highest laurel of Perfect Self-Awakening, which surpasses the Awakening of a Independent Buddha and the Awakening of a Disciple?
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> > The four such right exertions (*sammappadhāna*) are: 1) The endeavour to prevent the arising of evil which has not yet arisen; 2) the endeavour to put away evil that has arisen; 3) the endeavour to bring about the arising of good which has not yet arisen; and 4) the endeavour to further develop the good that has arisen.
> >
> > [This is the text and a translation of Bv 1.75. As can be seen this is a very long translation of what is just two lines in Pāḷi, an expansive form of translation the author uses throughout the text. Although not common in English, this form of translation is very common in Buddhist countries.]

This enquiring note of acclamation was sounded in the sky over the city of Kapilavatthu on the first waning moon of May (*Vesākha*), in the year 527 BCE.[1] The background story, in brief, of this question is narrated below.

The Buddha, the omniscient one and Lord of the Three Worlds, observed the first Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in the Deer Park of Isipatana, Bārāṇasī, in the year 528 BCE. During this retreat, he converted the Group-of-Five ascetics and the group of 54 friends headed by Yasa, the son of a wealthy man, leading them to Awakening. When the retreat was over, he asked them to disseminate the Dhamma, which is excellent in all three aspects – the beginning, the middle and the end – with no two of them going in the same direction. He himself went alone towards the forest of Uruvelā to convert the three ascetic Kassapa brothers and their followers, numbering 1,000.

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[1] [The text has Kason here, the Myanmar name for the month; and the date was given from the time of the Great Era. I have converted all such references to the Pāḷi and English names, with Common Era equivalents.]

On the way to Uruvelā, on reaching the Kappāsika cotton grove, the Buddha met with the group of 30 auspicious (*bhadda-vaggiya*) men who were searching for a woman who had run away from their party. He established them in the lower paths and fruitions and made them monastics by summoning them to come forth (*ehi-bhikkhu*). Then he proceeded alone to Uruvelā where he liberated the eldest brother, Uruvelā Kassapa and his 500 followers from heretical views. He did the same for Nadī Kassapa and his 300 followers and Gayā Kassapa and his 200 followers. Finally, he taught to all 1,000 ascetics, the Instruction about Burning (*Āditta-pariyāya-sutta*, SN 35.235)[2] on the stone slab at Gayāsīsa and thereby established them in the fruition of Arahantship. And, together with the 1,000 newly accomplished Arahats, the Buddha set out on a journey to the city of Rājagaha.

The day the Buddha arrived in Rājagaha, he helped King Bimbisāra and the Brahmin householders with his teaching to reach Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*), 110,000 in all, and another 10,000 Brahmin householders were established in the three refuges (*tisaraṇa*). The following day, the Buddha accepted the Veḷuvana monastery which was generously donated by King Bimbisāra in support of his ministry. It was the first monastery he had ever accepted, and the occasion of his acceptance of the monastery was marked by a great earthquake. From that time onwards, he taught all those worthy of [2] conversion, who came to him, including those who would eventually become chief disciples, great disciples and ordinary disciples. He did so as though he were dispensing amongst them the medicine of deathlessness.

While the Buddha was thus busily engaging himself, his father, King Suddhodana, sent nine ministers, one after another, each with 1,000 men, on a mission to invite him to return to Kapilavatthu. Instead, they became Arahats and neither conveyed the king's message to the Buddha, nor sent back any information to the king. So the Buddha's playmate, the minister Kāḷudāyī, was sent as the tenth envoy, also with 1,000 men. Kāḷudāyī and his men became Arahats also, and spent time enjoying the bliss of their spiritual attainment. When the cold season was over and spring arrived, Kāḷudāyī made a humble request to the Buddha, in 64 verses, persuading him to return to the home of his

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[2] [I have added in references.]

kinsmen. The Buddha then journeyed to the city of Kapilavatthu on the first day after the full moon of March (*Phagguṇa*) travelling slowly, covering only one league a day, and arrived at Kapilavatthu on the first day after the full moon of May (*Vesākha*) in the year 527 BCE.

On the same day the Sakyan princes welcomed the Buddha and his host of monastics in a great ceremony, they took them to Nigrodhārāma monastery as arranged beforehand. On arrival at the monastery, the Buddha sat in the seat specially prepared for him and remained quiet, surrounded by 20,000 Arahats. The Sakyans, who took too great a pride in their high birth, thought to themselves: "This Prince Siddhattha is younger than us. He is only a young brother, or a young nephew, or a young grandson of ours," and puffed up with conceit they urged their younger kinsmen: "You bow in homage to the Buddha; we shall, however, stand behind you."

The Buddha knew the inner minds of the Sakyan princes were full of pride at their birth and thought to himself: "These proud kinsfolk of mine do not realize that they have grown old without accomplishing anything beneficial for themselves. They know nothing about the nature of a Buddha. They know nothing about the power of a Buddha. Thinking: "What if I were to display a Buddha's might by performing the twin miracle of water and fire; I will make a jewelled walk in the sky, a platform as broad as the 10,000 world-element; and I will walk to and fro on it and pour forth a shower of teachings to suit the temperaments of all those who come to me." No sooner had he resolved on this, than the Brahmas and Devas shouted out their joyous approval.

Then the Buddha entered upon the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) taking the colour white as his object of concentration. On arising from that absorption, he made a firm resolve that light should spread all over the 10,000 world-element. Immediately after that resolution, all the universes were flooded with light to the great delight of humans, Devas and Brahmas. While they were rejoicing, the Buddha rose up into the sky by developing the supernormal power through exercise of the fourth absorption.

Then he proceeded to perform the twin miracle (*yamaka-pāṭihāriya*), which consisted of the appearance of flames of fire and streams of water emitted alternatively from: 1) The top and bottom of the body; 2) the front and the back; 3) the eyes; 4) the ears; 5) the nose; 6) the shoulders; 7) the hands; 8) the sides; 9)

the feet; 10) the fingers, toes and from between one finger and another, as well as from between one toe and another; 11) from each hair of the body; and 12) from every pore of the body.

The fire-sparks emitted and water-sprays fell amidst the crowds of human and celestial beings as though the Buddha was letting the dust fall from his feet onto their heads. This exhibition of the twin miracle with the emission of fire and water alternately from the body of the Buddha created a marvellous spectacle of great splendour which inspired all the Sakyan princes with awe and reverence, moving them to utter words of resounding praise.

After the performance of the twin miracle, the Buddha created a jewelled walk of great brilliance which extended from east to west reaching even beyond the 10,000 world-element. He then walked up and down the jewelled walk and delivered several discourses to Devas and humans according to their mental dispositions.

At that time, Venerable Sāriputta, who was residing at Gijjhakūṭa Hill in Rājagaha, through his supernormal power saw the whole event taking place at Kapilavatthu and [3] thought to himself: "I shall now go to the Buddha and make a request for a complete narration of the life stories of the Buddhas and the perfections they had fulfilled." Accordingly, he lost no time to gather the 500 Arahats, who were all his co-residents, and said to them: "Come, we will go and pay a visit to the master and ask him about the past stories of the Buddhas." Having urged them to accompany him, they travelled through space by means of supernormal power, at a speed which surpassed that of the wind and the storm; and in a moment, Ven. Sāriputta, with a company of monastics, arrived before the Buddha and paid homage to him. Then he uttered the verse (Bv 1.75):

Kīdiso te Mahā-vīra, abhinīhāro naruttama,
kamhi kāle tayā dhīra, patthitā Bodhim-uttamā?

which was mentioned above, thereby asking the Buddha to elaborate on how he had received the definite prophecy from the former Buddhas and how he had fulfilled the ten perfections, which extend to thirty in all, for the Bodhisattas. Then the Buddha, who was still on the walkway, responded with two verses (Bv 1.80-81):

Pīti-pāmojja-jananaṁ, soka-salla-vinodanaṁ,
sabba-sampatti-paṭilābhaṁ, cittī-katvā suṇātha me.

Mada-nimmadanaṁ sokanudaṁ, Saṁsāra-parimocanaṁ,
Sabba-dukkhakkhayaṁ maggaṁ, sakkaccaṁ paṭipajjatha.

Listen to the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) which will give you joy and happiness, remove the thorns of sorrow and bestow upon you the three kinds of bliss: human existence, divine existence and Nibbāna. Having thus listened, try to follow and practise the path, as will be explained in this discourse that will dispel conceit, eradicate sorrow, liberate you from Saṁsāra and put an end to all suffering.

Thus the Buddha, out of compassion, urged all humans, Devas and Brahmas reciting the verses numbering four recital sections (*bhāṇavāra*) or approximately 1080 verses.[3]

The Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) is included in the Collection of the Supplementary Texts (*Khuddaka-nikāya*) which was recited at the first, second and third councils by Arahats. The commentary on it, entitled the Clarifier of the Sweet Meaning (*Madhu-rattha-vilāsinī*), consisting of 26 *bhāṇavāra* (approx 200,000 syllables) was authored by Ven. Buddhadatta, a resident of the Port monastery of Kāvīrapaṭṭana of the Coḷa Country in South India.

The Great Chronicles of the Buddha's Story

During the reign of King Bagyidaw (A.D.1819-37), the fourth founder of the city of Ratanapūra, the first Ngakhon Sayādaw, recipient of the title of Ādiccavaṁsābhidhaja Mahādhammarājādhirājaguru, wrote the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) story in prose. He combined the text and its commentary, interspersed with certain Pāḷi verses and their word-for-word translations, for the benefits of joy, the end of sorrow, etc., by young men and women of good families, but he did not translate the whole text word for word, as there already existed well-known translations in that style called *nissaya*, or word-by-word translations.

That Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) in Myanmar prose was published in 1935 by Zambumeitswe Piṭaka Press, Yangon, in three volumes with the title: "The Great Chronicles of the Buddhas Story."

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[3] [One *bhāṇavāra* is equal to 250 Siloka verses, each of four lines, or 32 syllables.]

Sudhammavatī Buddha-vaṁsa

Not long after the Great Chronicles of the Buddhas Story was published, the Chronicles of the Buddhas endowed with the True Dhamma (*Sudhammavatī Buddha-vaṁsa*) appeared in one volume of poetical prose, written by editor U Htun Sein. [4]

The State Buddhasāsana Council's Version

After the founding of the newly independent country of the Union of Myanmar, the people, both the Saṅgha and the laity, were busy assiduously making preparations and arrangements, shouldering their respective responsibilities for holding the Sixth Buddhist Council. The Prime Minister U Nu, seeing their dedicated activities, was inspired by the profound thought of bringing out a new version of the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and its commentary, a version that should include everything that is connected with the Buddhas. Accordingly, he requested me, in his house, on the occasion of a "Countless births" (*Aneka-jāti*) ceremony[4] and inauguration of his shrine-room, to write such a story of the Buddhas in commemoration of the great event of the Buddhist Council.

I said to the Prime Minister then: "I have been assigned to participate as a Bearer of the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka-dhara*) in the Sixth Buddhist Council which is to be held soon, and I still have to work hard to become qualified for the title." With this excuse, I declined to comply with his request. Indeed, at that time, I had just passed the written examination in the Basket of Discipline (*Vinaya-piṭaka*) and was about to sit for another one on the Basket of the Abstract Teaching (*Abhidhamma-piṭaka*).

Succession of Compilers

Undaunted by my refusal of his request, the Prime Minister persisted in his earnest effort to produce the proposed book by approaching other scholars, and the compilation was started first under the supervision of Medhāvī Sayagyi U Saing. Some months later, when only a portion had been done, the work was interrupted until Mahāpaññābala Paṭhamagyaw Sayagyi U Kyee Pe took over as

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[4] [This is a ceremony performed for the deceased in Myanmar. One of the verses chanted during the ceremony is the *Aneka-jāti* verse, Dhp 153.]

supervisor. In the same way, the compilation again passed on to Aggamahāpaṇḍita Sayagyi U Lin, M.A. After one and a half years, he could finish compiling only the first volume of the series, from the story of Sumedha up to the end of the story of Buddha Kassapa. Then U Lin passed away to our great regret, leaving only the fame of his learning.

The Assignment

It was on the 11th day of the waxing moon on December 6, 1954, that Sayagyi U Lin passed away. Four days later, the sponsor of my ordination and spiritual father, the wealthy Sir U Thwin, Thadosirī Sudhamma, Chairman of the State Buddhasāsana Council and Patron of the Sixth Buddhist Council, came to see me at the request of the Prime Minister and asked me not to refuse should the Prime Minister make a request for writing a Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*). On the full moon day of January 8th 1955, the Prime Minister himself came to see me at my temporary residence at the Saṅgha Yeiktha Meditation Centre and made a formal request as follows:

1. Please supervise the compilation of a treatise on the lives of the Buddhas. In so doing, please include everything about the Buddhas, not leaving out even minor details. If one volume is not enough, make it two; if two is not enough make it four, eight and so on. It is important that the work should be exhaustive.

2. The writing should be intelligible and interesting to all, young and old, even to non-Buddhists, who wish to know about the lives of the Buddhas.

3. Should the Ven. Sayādaw undertake the task of writing the Great Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Mahā-buddha-vaṁsa*) in Myanmar, it will be welcomed by all, both the Saṅgha and the laity alike.

The request had been made repeatedly, the first time in 1951, the second time in 1953, and now in 1954, by my spiritual father, and finally by the Prime Minister himself. I therefore felt that I should no longer refuse to comply with their request. Accordingly I gave my consent firmly, saying: “Very well, Dāyakagyi, when the proceedings of the Council are over, I will take charge of the compilation, and supervise the work to the best of my ability without sparing my energy.”

After the Prime Minister left, I reminded myself of the following dictum (Thag 226):

> *Yañ-hi kayirā tañ-hi vade, yaṁ na kayirā na taṁ vade,* [5]
> *akarontaṁ bhāsamānaṁ, parijānanti paṇḍitā.*
>
> One should say what one would do, one should not say what one does not do. He who says, but does not do, is subject to blame by the wise.

Request by the State Buddhasāsana Council

Not long after I had promised the Prime Minister, the State Buddhasāsana Council also made its own request. In reply to it, I stipulated the following three terms for carrying out the work: 1) The work would be done voluntarily without acceptance of any honorarium; 2) I would have nothing to do with office administrative work; and 3) I would take charge of the literary matters only in which I feel competent. I added that if these three conditions were agreeable to the State Buddhasāsana Council, it would mean that I had accepted the assignment.

Some days later, three officials from the State Buddhasāsana Council, namely, Chief Editor U Ba Hmi and Editors Saya Htun and Saya U Ba Than, approached me with the favourable reply that the State Buddhasāsana Council had agreed to all the points raised by me.

Then, in accepting the compilation work, I said to Saya Htun and Saya U Ba Than: "Subject to failure is a work without a leader; so is a work with too many leaders. I accept the work as its supervisor so that the compilation of the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) may not fail. You carry on with the assignment as has been planned since the time of Sayagyi U Lin. I shall attend to the editing work when the proceedings of the Council come to an end."

The Prime Minister's Request

As though "to drive in a nail where it is already firm, or to strap on an iron belt where it is already tight," the Prime Minister's formal request in writing came. The letter was dated the December 28, 1955.[5]

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[5] The translation of the letter is omitted here [by the translators, that is].

Sayagyi U Lin's Great Learning

When the Sixth Buddhist Council and the ceremonies commemorating the 2500th year of Buddhism in 1956 came to an end, in compliance with the Prime Minister's request and in fulfilment of my promise, I started editing the manuscripts so far prepared on the Great Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Maha-buddha-vaṁsa*). I found them running to over 700 pages, they were full of noteworthy facts with profound meanings, covering a wide field but not easy to be grasped by ordinary people. In preparing these manuscripts it looked as if the Sayagyi was making a final display of his great genius of learning.

When Sayagyi U Lin first planned the compilation of the Great Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Maha-buddha-vaṁsa*), he had in mind to write it only briefly and did so accordingly. But the Prime Minister U Nu earnestly urged him saying: "Let it be as elaborate as possible, Sayagyi. Write all there is to know about the Buddhas; there cannot be anything that is too insignificant to be left out. Please write to the best of your ability for the benefit of the coming generations." Sayagyi then put aside all that had been written before briefly and worked afresh keeping his mind steadfastly on the subject of the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) all the time. When he began working, on arrival at his office, he would put both his arms on the desk and start dictating to his stenographer, giving him no rest, sometimes making a clicking sound with his tongue, at other times, clenching the fists, closing the eyes and gnashing the teeth to concentrate his energy. All this was known from the information given by Saya Htun.

A New Plan for the Work

Such a very ambitious literary work, which was full of noteworthy doctrinal points with their deep meanings, like a treasure house of knowledge presented by the Sayagyi as if "he [6] had hoisted the flag of learning" of his lifetime, could not be published as originally envisaged by him. I feared that readers would find it rather confusing and difficult to read and understand. Therefore the writing of the Great Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Mahā-buddha-vaṁsa*) had to be planned anew as follows:

1. The main subject of the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) should be treated separately.

2. Chapter II on "The Rare Appearance of a Buddha" should be re-written and confirmed by other learned Sayādaws.
3. A new chapter now chapters VII and VIII, on miscellaneous matters concerning duties which should be comprehended and performed by every aspirant of Buddhahood should be added. [This is now The First Treatise on the Perfections in the Further Explanations.]
4. Explanatory notes and interpretations should be given fully in a separate chapter entitled the Further Explanations, to serve as a supplement to the first part of the first volume.
5. Difficult usages should be made easy by replacing them with simple ones.

When the manuscripts of the Great Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Mahā-buddha-vaṁsa*) finally went to the press of the State Buddhasāsana Council, Sayagyi Saya Nyan, Mahāpaññābala, Professor of Pāḷi, acted as chief proof reader.

Exhortation to Readers

This version of the Great Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Mahā-buddha-vaṁsa*) contains the same material with the same meaning as that preserved in the original Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) text and its commentary, etc. The only difference between the original works and this lies in the medium employed, the former in Pāḷi and the latter in Myanman.

> Here, of course, translated into English. It should be said that the Great Chronicles of the Buddhas contains far more than the just the original Chronicles of the Buddhas, including much information about Buddha Gotama, which is greatly expanded on and now forms the bulk of the work, and his disciples, which is entirely absent from the original work.

Since a Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) can truly confer upon its worthy readers such benefits as: 1) Joy and happiness, 2) an end of sorrow, and 3) the three attainments of human existence, divine existence and Nibbāna, as has been pronounced by the Buddha, this Introduction is concluded with an exhortation in verse so that each reader might enjoy his or her share of welfare.

> *Pātubhūto Mahā-buddha-vaṁso Buddhattha-dīpako,*
> *Buddha-vādīnam-atthāya taṁ nisāmetha sādhavo.*

You worthy men of gentle mind, seeking your own interest and that of others! This book of the Great Chronicles of the Buddhas, a version commissioned by the State Buddhasāsana Council, which has made its appearance in commemoration of the convening of the Sixth Buddhist Council, resembles a plot of land on which virtuous Buddhists may sow the seeds of the Dhamma. It vividly describes, for the benefits of those who are virtuous devotees of Buddhism, how the Buddha, the friend of the three classes of beings, performed unique, meritorious deeds beginning from his existence as Sumedha. Therefore, you all who aspire after the fourfold knowledge of the path, the true Awakening, should study it carefully with an eye of wisdom, fully confident that you will gain the fruits of joy and happiness, an end of sorrow, and the three attainments of human existence, divine existence and Nibbāna.

U Vicittasārābhivaṁsa,
Tipiṭakadhara Dhammabhaṇḍāgārika,
The 7th waxing moon of July (*Āsāḷha*), 1969.

[The printed translation gave the date as 1399, Myanmar era, but there must be some mistake here, as 1399 corresponds to 2037 CE, which cannot be right. It says in the Introduction that the author started the work in 1956 and completed it in 1969. I have therefore dated it at the year of completion.]

The Bodhisatta[6]

I: Salutation and Intention[7]

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā-sambuddhassa!

> This Pāḷi sentence is a formula of great honour paid to the Buddha which may be translated: "Honour to him, the Fortunate One, the Worthy One, the Perfectly Self-Enlightened One." A Buddhist literary work usually begins with this to show the author's devotion and obeisance.

With [7] most respectful adoration, I pay obeisance to the Buddha who, like his predecessors, has made a very rare appearance; who, like them, has no peers among humans, Devas and Brahmas in the three worlds; who, like them, forms a refuge for all these beings who bow in homage; and who is like them in all aspects of glory, virtues and attributes.

> Malalasekera says there are eight differences (*aṭṭha-vemattāni*), in which "the eight particulars in which the Buddha differ from each other." His rendering of these eight are: "Length of life in the epoch in which each is born, the height of his body, his social rank, some are born as nobles (*khattiya*), others as Brahmins, the length of his austerities, the aura of his body,[8] the conveyance in which he makes his renunciation, the tree under which he attains Enlightenment, and the size of the seat (*pallaṅka*) under the Bodhi tree." See the Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names, under Buddha (DPPN II, p. 296). [Also see the discussion in the Supplement in the Further Explanations.]

With most respectful adoration, I pay obeisance to the Dhamma, which, through his omniscience and out of profound compassion for all beings, has been well taught[9] by the Buddha, and which has been held in high esteem.

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[6] [This title has been added in, as there was no overall descriptive title for this section.]

[7] The original word in Pāli is *Paṭiññā*, which literally means 'promise' or 'vow.'

[8] Thus in the case of Maṅgala, his aura spread throughout the ten thousand world-elements, while that of Gotama extended only one fathom.

[9] This is the first attribute of the Dhamma.

With most respectful adoration, I pay obeisance to the Saṅgha, the community of noble ones, who have become true sons of the master by their proper and upright practice[10] of the Dhamma.

Having paid respects to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, I shall now write in a language neither too brief nor too elaborate, neither too simple nor too difficult, and relying mainly on the canonical texts of the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*)[11] and its commentary, but also taking relevant materials from other texts and commentaries, the Great Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Mahā-buddha-vaṁsa*), a book on the lives of the 25 Awakened Ones from out of innumerable past Buddhas, whose number is far greater than that of the grains of sand of the Ganges,[12] beginning with the account of the exalted Dīpaṅkara, from whom the future Gotama, as the ascetic Sumedha, received the definite prophecy that he would [8] become a Perfectly Self-Awakened One.

> Receiving of the definite prophecy (*nīyata-vyākaraṇa*) is an important feature in the spiritual evolution of a Bodhisatta. We shall see more about it when we come to the story of Sumedha.

May those virtuous people, who are desirous of seeking merit and knowledge; who, with abiding faith, have established a firm foundation of refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, and who are properly and uprightly cultivating the threefold practice of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*), easily attain the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna. [9]

> After the word Buddha the author adds an adjectival clause reading: "Whose supremacy in the three worlds is like the ruby-studded pinnacle of a palace." The three worlds here are the three realms of sensuality (*kāma*), form (*rūpa*) and the formless (*arūpa*). The first corresponds to the realm of the five senses, comprising the four woeful states (*apāya*), the human world and the six celestial worlds. The form and formless worlds belong to the Brahmas.

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[10] These are the first and second of the attributes of the Sangha.

[11] The fourteenth book of the Collection of the Supplementary Texts (*Khuddaka-nikāya*).

[12] Cp. *Appakā vālukā Gaṅgā, anantā nibbutā jinā*, "few are the sands of the Ganges, innumerable are the conquerors, who have entered Nirvana …." This is from U Pe Maung Tin's translation of the popular Pāli verse beginning with the word *Sambuddhe*.

II: The Rare Appearance of a Buddha

Living when a Buddha Appears

The wealthy Anāthapiṇḍika,[13] who was to become the supporter of the Jetavana monastery, was on his visit to Rājagaha when he saw the Buddha for the first time, having heard the word Buddha from his wealthy brother-in-law[14] in Rājagaha. As soon as he heard the sound Buddha, he exclaimed: Friend, rare indeed it is in the world even to hear the utterance: Buddha, Buddha (*ghoso pi kho eso gahapati dullabho lokasmiṁ, yad-idaṁ, buddho buddho ti*).[15] Also while the Buddha was staying in the market town of Āpaṇa, in the country of Aṅguttarāpa, Sela, a leading Brahmin teacher, heard from Keṇiya the matted-hair ascetic, the word Buddha. As soon as he heard the sound Buddha, it occurred to him thus: Rare indeed it is in the world even to hear the utterance: Buddha, Buddha (*ghoso pi kho eso dullabho lokasmiṁ, yad-idaṁ, buddho buddho ti*).

He visited his friend Keṇiya who was then preparing to shower his lavish hospitality on the Buddha and his Saṅgha, an incident similar to that of Anāthapiṇḍika. Both were filled with joy on hearing such a great name as Buddha. See the Discourse concerning Sela (*Sela-sutta*, MN 92).

Not long after, together with 300 followers, he gained the "Come bhikkhu" (*ehi-bhikkhu*) ordination, and seven days thence he became an Arahat together with his followers.

> "Come bhikkhu," was the summons made by the Buddha in order to bring a deserving person into the Saṅgha. Accordingly, it formed the oldest formula of admission to the Saṅgha.

In the light of these canonical extracts it can be seen it is very rare and difficult in the world even to hear the word Buddha; inexpressibly and extremely more so indeed is the actual appearance of a Buddha.

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[13] [See chapter 45a.2 below for his life story].

[14] They were related as each had married the other's sister.

[15] [See the Vinaya Short Division (*Cūḷa-vagga*) 6, PTS 2.155].

In this respect, it may be noted that the utterance 'diamond' may refer to a genuine diamond or a fake. Likewise, because rumours of a coming Buddha had been widespread prior to the Buddha's appearance, both Anāthapiṇḍika and Sela must have heard before of the false claim of the six teachers to be Buddhas.

> They were Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambala, Pukudha Kaccāyana, Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta and Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta. *Cha-satthara* in Pāḷi simply means "six teachers." They were all ascetics (*samaṇa*) and non-brahmanical teachers and contemporaries of the Buddha but older in age.

But just as the sound of the word 'diamond', only when spoken of a genuine one, would please one who can differentiate between a genuine diamond and a fake; so also, to such men of highly developed intelligence as Anāthapiṇḍika and Sela, the utterance Buddha could have been delightful only when spoken of the true Buddha.

Just as taking a fake diamond to be genuine by unworthy persons of poor intelligence is a wrong notion, even so taking their masters, the six heretical teachers, to be genuine Buddhas by those who followed them was a wrong and harmful conclusion [10] (*micchādhimokkha).*

In order to appreciate more profoundly the rare phenomenon of a Buddha's appearance in the world, it is important to know briefly at the beginning the following matters concerning a Bodhisatta and a Buddha:

1. A being destined to attain Awakening (*Bodhisatta*).
2. The daily duties of a Bodhisatta (*Bodhisatta-kicca*).
3. A Supreme Being who has fulfilled the duties of a Bodhisatta and has consequently attained Awakening (*Buddha*).
4. The daily duties of a Buddha (*Buddha-kicca*).

1. Bodhisatta

The fourfold insight knowledge of the path (*magga-ñāṇa*) with or without accompaniment of omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) is called Awakening (*Bodhi*).

> The four noble truths are the truth of suffering (*dukkha*), the origin of suffering (*dukkha-samudaya*), the cessation of suffering (*dukkha-nirodha*),

and the path leading to the cessation of suffering (*dukkha-nirodha-gāminī paṭipadā*).

The path leading to the cessation of suffering, which forms the last of the four noble truths, is eightfold. The eightfold path consists of 1) Right understanding (*sammā-diṭṭhi*); 2) right thinking (*sammā-saṅkappa*); 3) right speech (*sammā-vācā*); 4) right bodily action (*sammā-kammanta*); 5) right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*); 6) right effort (*sammā-vāyāma*); 7) right mindfulness (*sammā-sati*); and 8) right concentration (*sammā-samādhi*). The first two form wisdom (*paññā*), the second three, morality (*sīla*) and the last three, concentration (*samādhi*), see the Dispeller of Delusion (*Sammoha-vinodanī*, PTS 90).

Knowledge of omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) is a compound of omniscience (*sabbaññutā*) and knowledge (*ñāṇa*). The word occurs in Netti 204; DA 1.44; VibhA PTS 144. One who is endowed with omniscience (*sabbaññutā*) or knowledge of omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) is an omniscient one (*sabbaññū*).

"The Buddha is omniscient, not in the sense that he knows everything, but that he could know anything should he so desires." DPPN under Buddha (DPPN II p. 302).

Awakening is of three kinds:

1. Awakening consisting of the fourfold insight knowledge of the path with the accompaniment of omniscience (*Sammā-sambodhi*). The fourfold insight knowledge of the path is understanding of the four noble truths by oneself without a teacher's help, and it has distinctive power of removing mental defilements as well as the habitual tendencies (*vāsanā*) of past existences; omniscience (*sabbaññutā*) is understanding all principles worthy of understanding.
2. Independent Awakening consisting of the fourfold insight knowledge of the path, which is understanding of the four noble truths by oneself without a teacher's help (*pacceka-bodhi*).
3. Awakening consisting of the fourfold insight knowledge of the path, which is understanding of the four noble truths only with the help of a teacher (*sāvaka-bodhi*).

1. Noble persons who have a strong wholesome desire to realise Perfect Awakening (*Sammā-sambodhi*) are called Perfect Bodhisattas (*Sammā-sambodhisattas*).

2. Noble persons who have a strong wholesome desire to realise Independent Awakening (*Pacceka-bodhi*) are called Independent Bodhisattas (*Pacceka-bodhisatta*).

3. Noble persons who have a strong wholesome desire to realise the Awakening of a disciple (*sāvaka-bodhi*) are called future disciple Bodhisattas (*sāvaka-bodhisatta*).

Three Types of Bodhisattas

Of these three kinds of noble persons 1) Perfect Bodhisattas (*Sammā-Sambodhisatta*) are grouped into three types:

1. Bodhisattas with predominant wisdom (*paññādhika*).
2. Bodhisattas with predominant faith (*saddhādhika*).
3. Bodhisattas with predominant energy (*viriyādhika*). [11]

Becoming a Buddha is attainment of omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*). To attain this supreme wisdom, the seeker must have a mentality in which wisdom is predominant. The factor of predominant wisdom means careful consideration and forethought in doing everything: physically, verbally or mentally. By so doing, one's wisdom becomes strengthened and mature, existence after existence, so that in due course one painlessly attains omniscience which is far superior to all kinds of wisdom. Just as money is gained in the world by means of monetary investment, even so omniscience is gained by means of intellectual investment.

1. Bodhisattas with the factor of predominant wisdom (*paññādhika*) always become Buddhas after fulfilling their perfections (*pāramī*) for four immeasurable periods (*asaṅkhyeyyas*) and 100,000 aeons.

> Perfection: *pāramī*, also called *pāramitā*, "completeness" and "highest state," are also given as meanings of the Pāli word in PED. The perfections are ten in number which are "the perfect exercise of the ten principal virtues of a Bodhisatta."

Immeasurable (*asaṅkhyeyya*) literally means "immeasurable" or "uncountable." Some take it to be the figure one followed by 140 zeros, i.e. 10 to the power of 14, see Kacc. 395; Abhidh. 474-6.

Aeon (*kappa*) may also be translated as: "world cycle." An aeon has an age of enormous length. For details see the Further Explanations.

2. Other Bodhisattas also believe that they can become Buddhas by fulfilling the perfections, and in their mentality faith is predominant. With them, faith plays a greater role than wisdom. They are therefore called Bodhisattas with predominant faith (*saddhādhika*). Since they are not led by wisdom but by faith in their fulfilment of the perfections, they cannot become Buddhas after four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, but only after eight immeasurables and 100,000 aeons.

3. There are still other Bodhisattas who rely solely upon their energy. For them, wisdom is not a principal factor. Neither do they place emphasis on the faith that the perfections lead to Awakening. Holding that energy brings about Buddhahood, they give top priority to energy in their fulfilment of the perfections and become Buddhas only after sixteen immeasurables and 100,000 aeons. They are therefore called Bodhisattas with predominant energy (*viriyādhika*).

Thus it should be noted that the three designations viz., those with predominant wisdom (*paññādhika*), predominant faith (*saddhādhika*) and predominant energy (*viriyādhika*), are applied only to Bodhisattas. Otherwise, one would think that they belonged to Fully Awakened Buddhas. These distinctions exist only while they remain as Bodhisattas, but once they attain Buddhahood, they are all identical in respect of wisdom, faith and energy. One cannot say which Buddha is more accomplished than the other in each of these aspects.

Paññādhikānaṁ hi saddhā mandā hoti, paññā tikkhā;
saddhādhikānaṁ paññā majjhimā hoti, saddhā balavā;
viriyādhikānaṁ saddhā-paññā mandā, viriyaṁ balavam.[16]

In Bodhisattas with predominant wisdom, wisdom is strong but faith is weak; in Bodhisattas with predominant faith, wisdom is medial but faith is

[16] See the commentary on the first verse of the Discourse about the Rhinoceros (*Khagga-visāṇa-sutta*) of the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*, PTS 1.47).

strong; in Bodhisattas with predominant energy, faith and wisdom are weak, but energy is strong.

Differences between the Three Types of Bodhisattas

Bodhisattas are of three types with three respective periods of [12] fulfilment of the perfections, namely, four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, eight immeasurables and 100,000 aeons and sixteen immeasurables and 100,000 aeons. The reason for this difference is mentioned in the Poem on the Perfections (*Pāramidawgan Pyo*)[17] an epic composed by the celebrated poet of Old Burma, Ashin Sīlavaṁsa, who was a monastic poet and literary genius (1453-1520), born in a village near Taungdwingyi, who made his name in the city of Ava. According to that text, the difference lies in the path chosen by the individual Bodhisatta; a Bodhisatta with predominant wisdom chooses the wisdom path which takes four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons to reach the goal; a Bodhisatta with predominant faith chooses the faith path which takes eight immeasurables and 100,000 aeons to reach the goal; and a Bodhisatta with predominant energy chooses the energy path which takes sixteen immeasurables and 100,000 aeons to reach the goal.

> But what is mentioned in the Poem on the Perfections (*Pāramidawgan Pyo*) with regard to the three types of future Buddhas is apparently based on commentarial statements. It is interesting to note that, in the author's view, the words 'with predominant wisdom (*paññādhika*)', and so on, belong only to Bodhisattas, but not to Buddhas.

According to the view of other teachers, as mentioned in the Miscellany (*Pakiṇṇaka-kathā*) of the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*) commentary, the difference between the three durations lies in the three degrees of energy: strong, medial and weak.

> This view implies that it takes Bodhisattas with predominant wisdom only four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons for fulfilment of the perfections because of their predominant energy; the view is thus not free

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[17] Dated A.D. 1491, and composed when the poet was 38, according to the Introduction, the Poem on the Perfections (*Pāramidawgan Pyo*), Rangoon 1953. It is the best known work and masterpiece of the poet. See the Preface.

> from the fault of confusion (*saṅkara-dosa*) as it mixes up Bodhisattas with predominant wisdom with Bodhisattas with predominant energy.
>
> The word *saṁkara-dosa* is also found in Sanskrit which in rhetoric means the confusion or blending together or metaphors which ought to be kept distinct, see SED.

The view, which appeals to the commentator Ven. Dhammapāla and others, is that the difference in duration is due to the difference in the degrees: strong, medial and weak, of the maturity of the perfections leading to emancipation (*vimutti-paripācanīyā*). To elaborate: even at the time of receiving the prophecy, Bodhisattas are of three types:

1. Bodhisattas who quickly grasp the teaching (*ugghaṭitaññū-bodhisatta*) are those who have the capacity to become Arahats together with the six super knowledges (*abhiññā*) and four kinds of analytical knowledges (*paṭisambhidā*). They can attain that stage even before the end of the third line of a verse of four lines delivered by a Buddha, if they wish to achieve the Awakening of a disciple (*sāvaka-bodhi*) in that very existence. This is one of the eight factors for receiving the prophecy.

> The super knowledges (*abhiññā*) are: 1) Psychic powers (*iddhi-vidha*); 2) the divine ear (*dibba-sota*); 3) penetration of others' mind (*citta-pariyāya-ñāṇa* or *ceto-pariyāya*); 4) the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu*); 5) rememberance of former existences (*pubbe-nivāsānussati* or *pubbe-nivāsa*); and 6) extinction of the pollutants (*āsavakkhaya*). The first five, being mundane, can be attained through intense mental concentration (*samādhi*) whereas the last being supermundane can be attained only through penetrating insight (*vipassanā*).
>
> The analytical knowledges (*paṭisambhidā*) are: 1) Of meaning (*attha*); 2) of causal relations (*dhamma*); 3) of language (*nirutti*); and 4) and having a sharp intellect (*paṭibhāna*) which can define the above three analytical knowledges.

2. Bodhisattas who grasp the teaching after a detailed explanation (*vipañcitaññū-bodhisatta*) are those who have the capacity to become an Arahat together with the six super knowledges and four kinds of analytical knowledge. They can attain that stage before the end of the fourth line of a verse of four lines delivered by a Buddha, if they wish to achieve the Awakening of a disciple (*sāvaka-bodhi*) in that very existence. [13]

3. Bodhisattas who need to be led (*neyya-bodhisatta*) are those who have the capacity to become an Arahat together with the six super knowledges and four kinds of analytical knowledge. They can attain that stage at the end of the whole verse of four lines delivered by a Buddha, if they wish to achieve the Awakening of a disciple (*sāvaka-bodhi*) in that very existence.

With Bodhisattas who quickly grasp the teaching (*ugghaṭitaññū-bodhisatta*), the degree of maturity of the perfections leading to emancipation is so strong that they have to endeavour only for four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons after receiving the prophecy.

With Bodhisattas who grasp the teaching after a detailed explanation (*vipañcitaññū-bodhisatta*), the degree of maturity of the perfections leading to emancipation is medial and they have to endeavour for eight immeasurables and 100,000 aeons after receiving the prophecy.

With Bodhisattas who need to be led (*neyya-bodhisatta*), the degree of maturity of the perfections leading to emancipation is so weak that they have to endeavour for sixteen immeasurables and 100,000 aeons after receiving the prophecy.

Bodhisattas who quickly grasp the teaching are identical with Bodhisattas with predominant wisdom; so are Bodhisattas who grasp the teaching after a detailed explanation with Bodhisattas with predominant faith and Bodhisattas who need to be led with Bodhisattas with predominant energy.

The rice paddy species that ripens only when it is three, four or five months old by no means yields crops in fifteen days or a month although watering and weeding may have been done many times a day; its stems and leaves cannot grow as much as one would like and its ears cannot start bearing seeds, thrive and mature. In the same way, it should be noted that the three types of Bodhisattas by no means attain full Buddhahood with its perfectly ripe fruit of omniscience before they have completed the full course of the perfections that lasts 100,000 aeons in addition to four, eight or sixteen immeasurables even if, since receiving the prophecy, they have given daily alms like those of Prince Vessantara and have observed pertinent virtues such as morality, etc.

> Vessantara was famous for his most daring generosity. From the time he was made king at the age or sixteen by his father he gave alms each day costing 600,000 pieces of money. Besides, he gave his white elephant,

which had the power of causing rain, to the draught-stricken citizens of Jetuttara against the will of his own people. He was therefore banished to Vaṅkagiri, and while in exile he gave his son and daughter to Jūjaka, an old Brahmin who wanted to use them as slaves; he also gave his wife to Sakka, who came under the disguise of a Brahmin, to ask for her as a test of his generosity. His existence is said to be the last of the Bodhisatta before he was reborn in Tusitā, the third highest abode of celestial beings (see the Birth Story of Vessantara (*Vessantara-jātaka*, Ja 547) for more details).

2. The Duties of a Bodhisatta

Mere desire to possess wealth and not working for it leads nowhere. Only when one works hard enough can one hope to gain the desired object. In the same way, the three types of Bodhisattas, who wish to attain the above mentioned three respective types of Awakening, attain them only when they have fulfilled their perfections (*pāramī*), sacrificed their lives and limbs in charity (*cāga*) and developed their virtues through good conduct (*cariyā*) as a means of achieving the Awakening which they so desire.

In a business enterprise, the extent of profit gained is determined by the capital invested and the effort put in. When the capital is large and the effort great, the profit is considerable; when the capital and effort are fair, the accruing profit is just fair; when the capital and effort are little, the profit gained is little. In the same way, there exist distinctions between Awakening attained by those who make investment in the form of a fulfilment of the perfections, abandoning of life and limb in charity and development of virtues: [14] the practices which are conducive to the maturity of Awakening (*Bodhi-paripācaka*). The profits gained in the form of Awakening differ inasmuch as there are differences in their investment of the perfections, charity and virtues through practice. The differences may be explained as follows:

1. Perfect Bodhisattas (*Sammā-Sambodhisatta*) who even before the definite prophecy accumulate merits and make the mental resolution to become a Buddha. The definite prophecy is made by a Buddha saying: "This person will become a Buddha under a certain name in a certain world," like Buddha Dīpaṅkara who predicted Sumedha would become Gotama Buddha, as mentioned in the passage (Ap 1.4, PTS 1.1):

Aham-pi pubba-Buddhesu, Buddhattam-abhipatthayiṁ,
manasā yeva hutvāna Dhamma-rajā asaṅkhiyā.

I also amongst the previous Buddhas, aspired for becoming a Buddha, having made with my mind innumerable kings of the Dhamma.

In the Traditions about the Buddha (*Buddhāpadāna*), a Bodhisatta aspires mentally to Buddhahood in the presence of innumerable Buddhas throughout immeasurable aeons.

After thus making the mental resolution for becoming a Buddha and accumulating special merits for an inestimable period of time, when he becomes endowed with the eight factors, like the recluse Sumedha, a Bodhisatta receives the definite prophecy from a living Buddha.

Here it should be noted that the act of resolution by an aspirant to become a Buddha (*abhinīhāra*)[18] is made up of two phases; as aspiration to Awakening prior to his possession of the eight factors is mainly mental, his act of resolution made before Buddhas, one after another, is not complete, and he is not yet entitled to the designation of Bodhisatta. But when he becomes endowed with eight factors like Sumedha and, on that very account, he now makes the resolution saying (Bv 2.57):

Iminā me adhikārena katena purisuttame,
sabbaññutaṁ pāpuṇitvā, tāremi janataṁ bahuṁ.

As the fruit of this great meritorious deed done by me for the sake of this omniscient Buddha Dīpaṅkarā without regard even for my life, may I, having myself attained omniscient Buddhahood, be able to save multitudes of beings.

His act of resolution becomes complete then and there, and it enabled him to be worthy of receiving the definite prophecy, and being designated a Bodhisatta.

It should be noted that this complete act of resolution (*abhinīhāra*) is the great wholesome consciousness intention or volition (*mahā-kusala-cittuppāda*) that arises as a result of his reflection on the unimaginable attributes of a Buddha and his great compassion for the welfare of the entire world of beings. And this

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[18] The literal meaning of the word given by the author is directing one's mind towards his becoming a Buddha.

great wholesome consciousness has the unique power of motivating his fulfilment of the perfections, abandoning of life and limb in generosity and development of virtues through practice.

The moment that great wholesome consciousness arises in the Bodhisatta, he sets himself on the path leading to omniscience. Because he is definitely on his way to Buddhahood, he now wins the title, Bodhisatta. Owing to the complete resolution which, as has been explained above, is the great wholesome consciousness, there becomes [15] established in him the wholesome aspiration for full omniscience and the unrivalled ability to fulfil the perfections, to abandoning of life and limb in generosity and to develop virtues which form the requisites for the attainment of omniscience.

And also, because of the aforesaid great wholesome consciousness, he reflects on the perfections to be accomplished and determines the order for doing so. He does it by means of the knowledge of investigation of the perfections (*pāramī-pavicaya-ñāṇa*) which enables him to penetrate things without a teacher's help. This knowledge is a precursor to the attainment of omniscience; it is followed by the actual fulfilment of the perfections one after another.

As mentioned in the Introduction (*Nidāna-kathā*) of the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*) commentary (see PTS 18), after receiving the definite prophecy of Buddhahood, the Bodhisatta ceaselessly and uniquely strives to fulfil the perfections (*pāramī*), charity (*cāga*) and good conduct (*cariyā*) which are requisites for achieving the path-knowledge of Arahantship (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) and omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) by four means of development.

> Perfections, charity and good conduct (*pārami-cāga-cariyā)*: The perfections (*pāramī*) are ten in number. Charity (*cāga*) here refers to great offerings or charity of an extraordinary nature (*mahā-pariccāga*), which are five kinds of relinquishing of wealth, of children, of wife, of limbs and of life. For details of the perfections (*pāramī*) and charity (*cāga*), see the Further Explanations. *Cariyā* literally means "conduct, behaviour, or practice" cultivated for the welfare of both oneself and others. Good conduct is of three categories: 1) Practice for the benefit of all beings (*lokattha-cariyā*); 2) practice for the benefit of one's own kith and kin (*ñātattha-cariyā*); and (3) practice and efforts to achieve Awakening (*Buddhattha-cariyā*).

Of these four, these things are necessary:

1. The complete development of the entire range of the perfections (*sabba-sambhāra-bhāvanā*).
2. The development of the perfections throughout the minimum period of four immeasurable periods (*asaṅkhyeyyas*) and 100,000 aeons, or the medial period of eight immeasurables and 100,000 aeons, or the maximum period of sixteen immeasurables and 100,000 aeons, without a break of even a single existence (*nirantara-bhāvanā*).
3. The development of the perfections for a long duration which is not an aeon less than the minimum period of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons (*cira-kāla-bhāvanā*).
4. The development of the perfections with seriousness and thoroughness (*sakkacca-bhāvanā*).[19]

Moral Qualities of a Bodhisatta

The Bodhisatta, who has received the definite prophecy, is strongly moved by great compassion for beings when he sees these helpless ones who have no refuge in this difficult journey of life, who are beset with a variety of intolerably acute sufferings such as those springing from birth, old age, sickness and death; of killings, imprisonment, of being maimed and disabled; of hardships associated with earning a living and the sufferings of suffering states. Being so moved by this great compassion, he forbears his own suffering from such outrageous oppressive atrocities as cutting off of the hand, the leg, the ear, etc., perpetrated against him by those totally blind and ignorant people, and his compassion for them is long and enduring.

He suffuses them with compassion in this manner: "How shall I treat these people who have wronged me? I am, of truth, a person who is striving for the perfections with a view to liberating them from the woes of the cycle of births. Powerful indeed is delusion! Forceful indeed is craving! Sad it is that, being overwhelmed by craving and delusion, they have committed such great offences

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[19] *Sakkacca* is usually taken to be respect or reverence, but is rendered here as seriouness and thoroughness, see the Further Explanations for a full interpretation of *sakkacca* under *sakkacca-dāna* in types of giving (*dāna*) in group of twos.

even against me, who endeavours to liberate them thus. [16] Because they have perpetrated these outrages, serious troubles lie in wait for them."

Shedding his compassion on them, he tries to find suitable ways and means to save them and reflects: "Being overwhelmed by craving and delusion, they have wrongly taken what is impermanent to be permanent, suffering to be happiness, non-self to be self and unpleasantness to be pleasantness. In what way shall I go to their rescue and bring them out of suffering that arises owing to a cause?"

While contemplating thus, the Bodhisatta rightly discerns that forbearance (*khanti*) is the only means to set beings free from the bondage of existence. He does not show even the slightest anger to beings who have outraged him by cutting off his limbs, etc. He thinks to himself: "As the result of demeritorious deeds done in my past existences, I deserve this suffering now. Since I, myself, have done wrong previously, I deserve this suffering. I am the one who has started the wrongdoing." Thus, he takes the offence of others upon himself.

It further occurs to him thus: "Only with forbearance will I be able to save them. If I do wrong to the wrongdoer, I will become like him, I will not be different from him. How then can I liberate them from the woes of the cycle of births? I can never do so.

> The above exposition of the moral qualities of a Bodhisatta is drawn from the Explanation of the Requisites for Awakening (*Bodhi-sambhāra-vaṇṇanā*) of the sub-commentary on the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*).

Therefore, resting on the strength of forbearance, which is the basis of all strengths, and taking their misdeeds upon myself, I will forbear; and with loving-kindness and compassion as guides, I will fulfil the perfections. Only by so doing will I attain omniscient Buddhahood. Only by having attained omniscient Buddhahood will I be able to save all beings from suffering that arises owing to a cause." He thus sees the situation correctly, as it is.

Having observed in this way, the Bodhisatta fulfils his perfections in a unique manner: The perfections being ten ordinary ones, ten superior ones and ten most superior ones, 30 in all, are known as the requisites of Awakening (*Bodhi-sambhāra*). The fulfilment of the perfections takes place in the above-mentioned four ways of development.

Before he attains the complete fulfilment of the perfections, as in the existence of Vessantara (Ja 547), while still fulfilling the perfections, sacrificing life and limb in generosity and developing practices in a unique manner, a Bodhisatta may be reborn frequently as a divine being of long life in consequence of his great meritorious deeds. But he chooses to cut short his long life in that divine world by means of intentional death (*adhimutti-maraṇa*)[20] because it is difficult to fulfil the perfections in those celestial abodes. Accordingly, he is reborn in many a world of human beings where he can continue to fulfil the perfections.

However enormous an ocean may be, it is finite in its extent, being limited by its bed at the bottom, its surface at the top and encircled by the Cakkavāḷa mountains on all sides. On the other hand, the ocean of perfection in alms giving (*dāna-pāramī*), fulfilled and accumulated by the Bodhisatta, is infinite in its extent; its dimensions are limitless. With regard to this particular perfection of alms giving, one cannot define its limits by the extent of external properties given away, the amount of flesh or blood given away or by the number of eyes or heads sacrificed. Likewise, one cannot speak of the limits of the other perfections such as that of morality (*sīla-pāramī*). Thus, in this comparison of the ocean with the ocean of the perfections, it should be noted that the former is limited in capacity, however vast it may be, whereas, the latter is of infinite magnitude. [17]

At noon, during the hot season, a man may go into a deep lake and take a bath, submerging himself; and while he is doing so, he does not take note of the intense heat that descends from the sky. In the same way, the Bodhisatta who suffused himself with great compassion, while seeking the welfare of beings, goes down into the ocean of the perfections and submerges himself there. Since he is suffused with great compassion, he does not feel even intense pains which are inflicted by evil, cruel persons, and which are caused by the cutting off his limbs, etc., as suffering.

The Long Duration Needed

A Bodhisatta has to fulfil the perfections for at least four immeasurable periods (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and 100,000 aeons from the time of his receiving the prophecy to

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[20] See the Further Explanations.

the last existence when he achieves the completion of his fulfilment of the perfections, as in the existence of Vessantara.

According to the Thematic Discourses on the Inconceivable Beginning (*Anamatagga-saṁyutta*, SN 15), an aeon is a period of time during which, if the bones of beings were piled up, the size of that pile would become as high as a mountain. Therefore, the number of births taken by the Bodhisatta, during the long period of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, would be greater than the number of drops of water in a great ocean. Among these existences, there is none who has not witnessed the fulfilment of the perfections and none who has passed in vain.

The accounts of the fulfilment of the perfections by the Bodhisatta, as mentioned in the 547 Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) and in the 35 stories of the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*), are just a few examples out of the total experiences which he had during the long period of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons. It is like a bowl of sea-water taken out of a great ocean in order to sample its salty taste. The Buddha told these stories as illustrations, as occasions arose and under appropriate circumstances. The number of stories he told and the number of stories he did not tell, may be compared to the water in a bowl and the water in a great ocean respectively.

The perfection of alms giving fulfilled by the Buddha is sung in praise in the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) as follows (Jināl 31):

> *So sāgare jaladhikaṁ ruhiraṁ adāsi,*
> *bhūmāparājiya samaṁsam-adāsi dānaṁ,*
> *Meruppamāṇam-adhikañ-ca samoḷi-sīsaṁ,*
> *khe tārakādhika-taraṁ nayanaṁ adāsi.*
>
> Aiming at infinite wisdom, and full of faith and fervour, that Bodhisatta gave in generosity, his ruby-red blood in quantities much more than drops of water in the four oceans; aiming at infinite wisdom and full of faith and fervour, he gave in generosity, his naturally soft and tender flesh in quantities which would exceed the great earth that is 240,000 leagues in extent; aiming at infinite wisdom and full of faith and fervour, his heads, with glittering crowns studded with nine gems, he gave in generosity, would pile up higher than Mount Meru; aiming at infinite wisdom and full of faith and fervour, he gave in generosity, his wondrous smiling eyes,

dark as corundum or of a beetle's wing, more times than the stars and planets in the space of the universe.

This is a translation of the Burmese version of the Pāḷi verse. Moved by the awe-inspiring abandonments of the Bodhisatta, the illustrious author has rendered it in a most ornate language with appropriate elaborations.

2. Independent Bodhisattas (*Pacceka-bodhisatta*), have to fulfil their perfections for two immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons. They cannot become Independent Buddhas if their duration of fulfilment of the perfections is less than that number of aeons. Because, as has been said in the chapter dealing with previous Bodhisattas, the Awakening of an Independent [18] Buddha (*Pacceka-bodhi*) cannot become mature before they have completed the full course of the perfections.

3. There are three categories of disciple Bodhisattas (*sāvaka-bodhisatta*):

1. Future chief disciples (*agga-sāvaka*) are a pair of disciples like Vens. Sāriputta and Moggallāna.
2. Future great disciples (*mahā-sāvaka*) are like the 80 great disciples[21] in the lifetime of Buddha Gotama.
3. Future ordinary disciples[22] (*pakaṭi-sāvaka*) are all Arahats other than those mentioned above.

Of these three categories: 1) Future chief disciples have to fulfil their perfections for one immeasurable period and 100,000 aeons; 2) future great disciples for 100,000 aeons; and 3) future ordinary disciples, the duration of their fulfilment of the perfections is not directly stated in the texts. However, it is said in the commentary and sub-commentary on the Discussion of Previous Lives (*Pubbe-nivāsa-kathā*), on the Long Discourse on the Traditions (*Mahāpadāna-sutta*, DN 14)[23] that great disciples can remember their past lives

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[21] The enumeration of the 80 great disciples begins with Ven. Kondañña and ends with Ven. Piṅgiya.

[22] Disciples other than the chief disciples and great disciples of the master are ordinary disciples. See the sub-commentary to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*).

[23] The discourse deals elaborately with the life of Buddha Vipassī, the first of the seven Buddhas preceding Buddha Gotama. Because it contains the largest number of

of 100,000 aeons ago and ordinary disciples, of less than that figure. Since fulfilment of the perfections takes place in every existence of theirs, it may be inferred that future ordinary disciples have to fulfil the perfections not more than 100,000 aeons. The duration of their fulfilment of the perfections is thus indefinite: it may be 100 aeons or 1,000 aeons, etc. According to some, it may be just one or two existences as illustrated by the story of a frog.

> In the story of Maṇḍūka in the Stories about Heavenly Mansions (*Vimāna-vatthu*, Vv 51) a frog was reborn as a Deva after hearing the voice of the Buddha who was delivering a discourse. As a Deva, he visited the Buddha and became a Stream-enterer as a consequence of hearing the Dhamma from the Buddha.

3. Buddha

As has been said before, after fulfilling their perfections for their respective durations, the three types of Bodhisattas attain the fourfold path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*), which is understanding of the four noble truths by himself without a teacher's help, as well as omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*), which is understanding of all principles that are worthy of understanding.

They acquire, at the same time, the special attributes of a Buddha which are infinite (*ananta*) and an immeasurable period (*aparimeyya*). Such attributes are so immense that if a Buddha extols the attributes of another Buddha without touching on any other topic for an aeon, the aeon may come to an end, but the talk about the attributes will not. The noble person, who has thus attained Awakening with no equal in the three worlds, is called an omniscient Buddha or a Perfectly Self-Awakened One (*Sammā-sambuddha*).

After fulfilling the necessary perfections for two immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, an Independent Buddha attains Awakening consisting of the insight knowledge of the path which is the understanding of the four noble truths (*magga-ñāṇa*) by himself, without a teacher's help. But he does not achieve omniscience and the ten powers (*dasa-bala-ñāṇa*), [19] etc. The noble

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bhaṇavāras or sections, it came to be known as the king of discourses in the commentaries.

person who has thus attained Awakening is called an Independent Buddha (*Pacceka-buddha*).

> The commentary to the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*, PTS 5.12 *ff*) enumerates the ten powers (*dasa-bala-ñāṇa*) as follows: 1) Knowledge according to reality as to the possible as possible and the impossible as the impossible (*thānāṭṭhāna-ñāṇa*); 2) knowledge of the result of the past, present and future actions (*kamma-vipāka-ñāṇa*); 3) knowledge of the path leading to the welfare of all (*sabbattha-gāminī-paṭipadā-ñāṇa*); 4) knowledge of the world with its many different elements (*aneka-dhātu-nānā-dhātu-loka-ñāṇa*); 5) knowledge of the different inclinations of beings (*nānādhimuttikatā-nāṇa*); 6) knowledge of the lower and higher faculties of beings (*indriya-paro-pariyatta-ñāṇa*); 7) knowledge of the defilements, purity and rising with regard to the absorptions, concentration, attainments, etc. (*jhānādi-samkilesa-vodāna-vuṭṭhāna-ñāṇa*); 8) knowledge of remembering many former births (*pubbe-nivāsa-ñāṇa*); 9) knowledge of perceiving with the divine eye how beings vanish and reappear according to their deeds (*cutūpapāta-ñāṇa* or *dibba-cakkhu-ñāṇa*); and 10) knowledge of the extinction of all moral pollutants and impurities that befuddle the mind (*āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*), that is, becoming an Arahat.

After fulfilling the necessary perfections for one immeasurable period and 100,000 aeons, if he is a future chief disciple, or 100,000 aeons, if he is a future great disciple, or 100 aeons or 1,000 aeons or any smaller number of aeons, if he is a future ordinary disciple, a future disciple attains Awakening consisting of the insight-knowledge of the path, which is understanding of the four noble truths (*sāvaka-bodhi-ñāṇa*), with the help of a teacher who is a Buddha. The noble person who has thus attained the Awakening of a disciple (*sāvaka-bodhi-ñāṇa*) is called an Awakened disciple (*sāvaka-buddha*); he may have the status of a chief disciple, a great disciple or an ordinary disciple.

4. The Duties of a Buddha

There are three types of Awakened Ones:

1. Those who help others cross over (*tārayitu*).
2. Those who have crossed over (*tārita*).
3. Those who were helped across (*tarita*).

Among these great personages, namely, omniscient Buddhas, Independent Buddhas and Awakened disciples, omniscient Buddhas are called ones who makes other cross, and helps them through (*tārayitu*), the most supreme ones, who, having themselves crossed the ocean of Saṁsāra,[24] save others from their perils.

Independent Buddhas are called those who have crossed over (*tārita*), the noble ones who have crossed over the ocean of Saṁsāra on their own, but are unable to save others from its perils. Independent Buddhas do not appear in an age when an omniscient Buddha makes his appearance. They appear only in the intervening period between the lifetimes of two Buddhas. An omniscient Buddha realises for himself the four noble truths without guidance and has the ability to teach and make others understand them.

An Independent Buddha also realises the four noble truths on his own, but he is in no way able to teach and make others understand them. Having realised (*paṭivedha*)[25] the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna, he is unable to recount his personal experiences of these attainments because he lacks an appropriate terminology for these supermundane doctrines. Therefore, an Independent Buddha's knowledge of the four truths (*Dhammābhisamaya*)[26] is compared by the commentators to a dumb person's dream or an ignorant peasant's experience of a city life for which he has no words to describe it. Independent Buddhas (*tārita*) are thus those who have gone across Saṁsāra on their own, but who are in no position to help others cross.

Independent Buddhas may bestow monkhood on those who wish to become monks, and they may give them training in special practices of the holy life (*ābhisamācārika*)[27] thus: "In this calm manner, you should step forward, step backward, you should see, you should say," [20] and so on; but they are not able

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[24] *Saṁsāra*, literally, moving about continuously from one life to another, i.e. the cycle of births.

[25] *Paṭivedha*, literally, penetration. It is one of the three aspects of the Buddha's teaching, the first two being learning (*pariyatti*) and practice (*paṭipatti*).

[26] *Dhammābhisamaya*, literally, truth-realisation, which according to the commentaries means penetration of the four noble truths.

[27] *Ābhisamācārika*, "belonging to the practice of the lesser ethics," according to PED; "the minor precepts," according to CPD.

to teach them how to differentiate between mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*), and how to view them in terms of their characteristics, namely, impermanence, suffering and non-self, etc. so that they may reach the stage of realisation of the paths and fruitions.[28]

Noble disciples who have been helped across the ocean of Saṁsāra and have been saved by omniscient Buddhas are called those who were helped across (*tarita*). To illustrate, Upatissa, the wandering ascetic, who was to become Ven. Sāriputta, became established in the path and fruition of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*) on hearing from Ven. Assaji the following verse (*Mahā-khandhaka*, PTS 1.40):

> *Ye dhammā hetuppabhavā, tesaṁ hetuṁ Tathāgato āha,*
> *tesañ-ca yo nirodho: evaṁ-vādī Mahā-samaṇo.*
>
> Whatever things have a cause and source, their cause the Realised One has told, and also that which is their cessation: such is the Great Ascetic's doctrine.

From this account, one would think noble disciples could be both those who have been saved (*tarita*) by others and those who have saved others (*tārayitu*). But the teaching of a Buddha's disciple has its origin in the Buddha; it does not originate from the disciple himself. He does not preach a discourse of his own without taking help and guidance from the teaching of the Buddha. Therefore, such disciples are to called those who have crossed over (*tarita*) and not those who help others to cross over (*tārayitu*), as they can, by no means, realise the four noble truths without a master; and their realisation of the paths and fruitions can take place only with the master's help and guidance.

As has been said, Independent Buddhas are those who have crossed over (*tārita*) and noble disciples are those who were helped across (*tarita*) respectively. Hence, after their realisation of the path and fruition of an Arahat, they entered into the stage of attainment of fruition (*phala-samāpatti*) and attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*) for their own enjoyment of bliss of peace, and not working for the benefit of others.

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[28] The next paragraph in the original text deals with the Observance Day services observed by Paccekabuddhas. This account is too technical for lay readers, and we have thus omitted it from our translation.

On the other hand, an omniscient Buddha (*Sammā-sambuddha*) would not remain working for his own interest only. In fact, even at the time of fulfilling the perfections, he resolves: "Having understood the four noble truths, I will make others understand the same (*Buddho bodheyyaṁ*)," and so on. Accordingly, he performs the five duties of a Buddha continuously, day and night.[29]

Because he has to perform the five duties of a Buddha, the Buddha takes a short rest after his meal each day. At night, he rests only for one third of the last watch of the night. The remaining hours are spent attending to his five duties.

Only those Buddhas, who possess the energy in the form of unique and supreme diligence (*payatta*) which is one of the glories (*bhaga*) of a Buddha, are able to perform such duties. The performance of these duties is not the sphere of Independent Buddhas and disciples.

The Rare Appearance of a Buddha

A Buddha's coming into being is a very rare phenomenon. [21] Numerous were those who aspired after Buddhahood when they had themselves seen or heard the powers and glories of Buddha Gotama after his Awakening such as victory over the heretics bloated with conceit, performance of the twin miracle,[30] etc. Therefore, when the Buddha descended to the city of Saṅkassa from Tāvatiṁsa, where he had taught the Abhidhamma, humans, Devas and Brahmas became visible to one another owing to the Descent from the Devas (*Devorohaṇa*) miracle performed by the Buddha. The Descent from the Devas miracle created a great expanse of space from Bhavagga[31] above to Avīci below and throughout the eight directions of the unbounded universe.

> Descent from the Devas (*Devorohaṇa*) means a descent from the abode of the gods, i.e, the Buddha's descent therefrom. The miracle that took place on that occasion is here mentioned as the Descent from the Devas miracle, the most notable feature of which was seeing through all the universes from one end to another, from top to bottom and vice versa. There was

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[29] Here the author asks to see details of the five duties of a Buddha in the exposition on the attributes of *Bhagavā* in the Chronicle of Buddha Gotama in chapter 42a.

[30] It is a well known miracle displaying both fire and water issuing alternately from the Buddha's body.

[31] The highest abode of Brahmas.

> nothing to obstruct one's sight: Everybody, whether human or divine, was capable of seeing one another and capable of being seen by the others.

Beholding the Buddha's splendour that day, there was none among the people, who had gathered in a great mass, who did not aspire to become Buddhas. That all the people of this huge gathering wished to become Buddhas is mentioned in the story of the Descent from the Devas in the commentary to the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 181) and in the explanations of the three kinds of miracles in the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*).

Although the number of people aspiring after Buddhahood, on seeing and hearing the Buddha's splendour, was great, it is certain that those who were of little faith, wisdom, will and energy would have flinched if they had known the pertinent facts concerning the multiplicity of the perfections such as fulfilment of these perfections on a mighty scale, fulfilment of the perfections in every existence without interruption, fulfilment with seriousness and thoroughness, fulfilment for a long time and fulfilment without regard to one's life. Only undaunted fulfilment of these awesome perfections could lead to Awakening. Buddhahood is therefore said to be something hard to obtain (*dullabha*). The appearance of a Buddha is indeed a rare phenomenon.

> There are five rare phenomena hard to encounter: 1) The appearance of a Buddha (*Buddhuppāda*); 2) gaining rebirth as a human being (*manussatta-bhāva*); 3) being endowed with faith in the Three Treasures and the law of deeds and their results (*saddhā-sampatti-bhāva*); 4) becoming a member of the community of monastics (*pabbajita-bhāva*); and 5) getting the opportunity of hearing the teaching of a Buddha (*Saddhamma-savana*).

Thus, it is mentioned in the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*, AN 1.71):

> *Eka-puggalassa bhikkhave pātu-bhāvo dullabho lokasmiṁ: katamassa eka-pugglassa? Tathāgatassa Arahato Sammā-sambuddhassa imassa kho bhikkhave eka-puggalassa pātu-bhāvo dullabho lokasmiṁ.*
>
> Monks, in the world, emergence of one being is very rare. Whose emergence? The Realised One, the Worthy One, the Perfect Self-Awakened Buddha, who is worthy of the highest veneration and who knows the truth, his emergence is indeed very rare.

The commentary on that discourse, too, explains why the appearance of a Buddha is so rare. Of the ten perfections, with regard to alms giving alone, one cannot become a Buddha after fulfilling it just once; one cannot become a Buddha after fulfilling it twice, ten times, 20, 50, 100, 1,000, 100,000 times, or times numbering 10,000,000, 100 billion, 1,000 billion, or 100,000 billion.

Similarly, one cannot become a Buddha after fulfilling it for one day, two days, 10, 20, 50, 100, 1,000, 100,000 days or days numbering 100,000 billion; not after fulfilling it for one month, two months or months [22] numbering 100,000 billion; not after fulfilling it even for one year, two years, or years numbering 100,000 billion; not after fulfilling it even for a great aeon, two great aeons, or great aeons numbering 100,000 billion; fulfilling it even one great immeasurable period (*asaṅkhyeyya*) aeon, two great immeasurables or three great immeasurable aeons.

The same holds good in the case of the other perfections, such as morality, renunciation, wisdom, energy, forbearance, truth, resolution, loving-kindness and equanimity.

In fact, the shortest duration for fulfilment of the perfections is four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons. It is only after fulfilling all the perfections for such a long time without interruption, and with profound reverence, devotion, seriousness and thoroughness that one can become Awakened. This is the reason for the rare occurrence of an omniscient Buddha.

The sub-commentary on the discourse also emphasises that only when one has fulfilled the perfections for at least four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons can one become a Buddha. There is no other way. This is why the appearance of a Buddha is singularly rare.

No Similes to illustrate the Perfections

The Bodhisatta's existences during the period of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, between the life of the recluse Sumedha and that of Vessantara, were more than the drops of water in the great ocean. The number of the perfections that had been fulfilled without interruption of a single existence was so great that its sum total cannot be estimated. There is practically nothing to compare with these perfections. This is extolled in the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*, Jināl 28):

Mahā-samudde jala-binduto pi,
tad-antare jāti anappakā va,
nirantaraṁ purita-pāramīnaṁ,
kathaṁ pamāṇaṁ upamā kuhiṁ vā?

The births during the period between the life of Sumedha and that of Vessantara were more than the drops of water in the great ocean. Who can know the measure of the perfections fulfilled without interruption? Where is the simile to illustrate them with?

Besides, in the Discourse on the Provisions for a Journey (*Pātheyya-sutta*, SN 1.79) commentary and its sub-commentary and the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*), where virtues of 100 kinds of meritorious deeds (*sata-puñña-lakkhaṇa*) are dealt with, it states:

Having grouped on one side, all the meritorious deeds, such as giving (*dāna*), etc., done by an inestimable number of beings in the infinite universe, during the period between the moment Sumedha resolved to achieve the goal of Buddhahood at the feet of Buddha Dīpaṅkara and the moment Prince Vessantara gave away his wife, Queen Maddī; and having grouped, on the other side, all the meritorious deeds done by the Bodhisatta alone, during the same length of time, the meritorious deeds in the former group would not come to even 100th nor 1,000th of those in the latter.

Hard to become a Bodhisatta

Let alone becoming a Perfectly Self-Awakened One, the stage of development attained by the recluse Sumedha since he received the prediction of Buddhahood, can be reached only when one is endowed with eight factors. These are:

1. Being a human being.
2. Being a male person.
3. Having fulfilled all conditions such as the perfections, which are necessary for the realisation of Awakening in that very life. [23]
4. Meeting with a living Buddha.

5. Being an ascetic who believes in the law of deeds and reults (*kamma-vādī*) or being a member of the community of monastics during the Dispensation of a Buddha.
6. Being endowed with the absorptions (*jhāna*).
7. Intense efforts to develop one's perfections without regard to one's life.
8. A wholesome desire strong enough to aspire after Buddhahood.

Only those who are endowed with these eight factors are able to wear the crown of prophesy accordingly. Let alone becoming a Buddha, it is very difficult to reach the stage of development like the recluse Sumedha when he became eligible to receive the prediction of Buddhahood.

When, as a Bodhisatta, it is so difficult to receive the prophecy of Buddhahood, what can be said of Buddhahood which can be attained only by fulfilling the perfections by the fourfold mode of development for at least four immeasurable periods (*asaṅkhyeyyas*) and 100,000 aeons, after receiving the prophecy? Truly, it is hard to become a Buddha.

Since Buddhahood is so hard to attain, the moment of a Buddha's emergence is also very hard to encounter. In this connection, the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) gives an enumeration of eight moments or existences in Saṁsāra which are to be regarded as inopportune moments[32] or unfortunate existences. On the other hand, the moment of a Buddha's appearance is to be reckoned as an opportune moment of fortunate existence. The eight unfortunate existences are (*Akkhaṇa-sutta*, AN 8.29):

1. An existence in an abode of continuous intense suffering in Niraya. It is an unfortunate existence because a being in this abode cannot perform any acts of merit as he is all the time suffering from severe and painful tortures.
2. An existence in an animal abode. It is an unfortunate existence because a being of this abode, living in fear always, cannot perform any acts of merit and is in no position even to perceive what is good or bad.

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[32] Inopportune moment: *akkhaṇa*, literally, "a wrong moment."

3. An existence in a Peta[33] abode. It is an unfortunate existence because a being in this abode cannot perform any acts of merit as it always feels the sensation of hotness and dryness and suffers from severe thirst and hunger.

4. An existence in an abode of Brahmas who are devoid of consciousness (*asaññā-satta-bhūmi*). It is an unfortunate existence because a being in this abode cannot perform any acts of merit nor listen to the Dhamma as he is not equipped with the faculty of hearing.

   With regard to this fourth unfortunate existence, the author says that only the Brahmas who are devoid of consciousness (*asaññā-satta-bhūmi*) are mentioned in the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) commentary. In the the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*), however, the immaterial abodes (*arūpa-bhūmi*) are also included in this unfortunate existence. The reasons for its exclusion from the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) are given by the author in the next paragraph. But as they are too technical we have omitted the paragraph in our translation.

5. An existence in a remote area of the land. It is an unfortunate existence because such an area is not accessible to male and female monastics and other disciples and devotees of a Buddha. It is also a place where people are not well informed or up-to-date. A person living there cannot perform any acts of merit as he had no chance to listen to the Dhamma though he possesses the faculty of hearing.

6. An existence in which one holds a wrong view.[34] It is an unfortunate existence because a man holding a wrong view cannot hear and practise the Dhamma even though he may be living in the Middle Country when a Buddha appears and the continuous roar of [24] the Buddha's Dhamma reverberates throughout the land.

7. An existence in which one is born with deficient sense faculties. It is an unfortunate existence because, as a consequence of demeritorious deeds of past lives, his rebirth-consciousness is devoid of three wholesome

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[33] Usually translated "dead, departed" or "the departed spirit."

[34] Wrong view: *niyata-micchādiṭṭhi*, literally, a staunchly held wrong view.

root-conditions, viz., non-greed, non-hate and non-delusion (*ahetuka-paṭisandhika*) and, therefore, he is deficient in sense faculties such as sight, hearing, etc. As such, he is unable to see the noble ones, hear their teachings, or practise the Dhamma as taught by them, even if he may be living in the Middle Country[35] and have no staunchly held wrong view.

8. An existence at a time when a Buddha does not appear. It is an unfortunate existence because, at such a time, a man cannot cultivate and practise the threefold training of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*) though he may be living in the Middle Country, possessing unimpaired sense faculties and holding the right view, that is, belief in the law of deeds and their results (*kamma*).

Unlike these eight unfortunate existences (*akkhaṇa*), it may be noted that there is a ninth existence which is fortunate and that is the existence in which a Buddha appears (*Buddhuppāda-navama-khaṇa*). Rebirth at such a time with unimpaired sense faculties and holding right view enables one to cultivate and practise the Dhamma as taught by a Buddha. This ninth existence in which a Buddha appears covers the lifetime of a Buddha when he is teaching the Dhamma and the whole period throughout which his teaching flourishes.

Let the Appearance of a Buddha be Fruitful

Good Buddhists of today, who have gained existence as human beings with unimpaired sense faculties and right view, are living at a time when the Buddha's Dhamma is still flourishing, they have the rare opportunity of encountering a time when the Buddha's teaching flourishes (*Buddhuppāda-navama-khaṇa*). Despite such a happy encounter, if they should neglect the meritorious practices of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*), they will indeed miss a golden opportunity. Chances of rebirth in these eight unfortunate existences (*akkhaṇa*) are great and frequent, whereas chances of rebirth in the Dispensation of a Buddha are very remote. Only once in a long, long while of an unlimited number of aeons does a Buddha emerge, and the opportunity for a fortunate existence is indeed extremely difficult to obtain.

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[35] The area of central India and the birthplace of men of superior quality including Buddhas.

Good Buddhists of the present day possess two blessings. The first is the blessing of being born at a time when the Buddha's teaching, which is very difficult to come by, flourishes in this world; and the other is that of being born as a human being holding right view. At such an opportune moment they ought to ponder seriously and rightly thus: "How can we get to know the Buddha's teaching? We should not miss this golden opportunity of living while the Buddha's teaching flourishes. Should we miss it, we will suffer long and miserably in the four suffering states."

Bearing this in mind, as fortunate beings who encounter this rare opportunity of a time when the Buddha's teaching flourishes, may you be able to cultivate and develop the three noble practices of morality, concentration and wisdom, as taught by the Buddha, till the attainment of Awakening. [25]

III: Sumedha the Brahmin

The Origins of the Chronicle

This discourse on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) was delivered by the Buddha to his kinsmen, the Sakyas, on his first visit to the city of Kapilavatthu after his Awakening. The Sakyan elders and relatives, in their stubborn pride, did not pay obeisance to him when they gathered to meet him. In order to subdue their pride and make them show respect to him, the Buddha caused to appear in the sky a jewelled platform stretching from east to west throughout the 10,000 world-element and performed on it the twin miracle of water and fire.

> The Pāli word for twin miracle is *yamaka-pāṭihāriya*, which Malalasekera calls: "The miracle of the double appearances." He explains: "It consisted in the appearance of phenomena of opposite character in pairs e.g., producing flames from the upper part of the body and a stream of water from the lower, and then alternatively from the right side of his body and from the left. From every pore of his body a radiance of six colours darted forth, upwards to the realm of Brahma and downwards to the edge of the Cakkavāḷa." DPPN, s.v. *Yamaka pāṭihāriya*.

While he was doing so, he gave the discourse on the lives of the Buddhas, beginning with the story of the Brahmin Sumedha, as requested by Ven. Sāriputta, the chief disciple, who had the honour of occupying the seat on the immediate right of the Buddha.[36]

At the time of the First Council, the great elders, Ven. Mahā Kassapa, the Ven. Ānanda, etc., desiring to recite the full discourse of the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) together with the introductions,[37] prescribed a set way of recitation (*vācana-magga*) beginning with the verse (Bv 1.1) Brahma Sahampati, chief in the world (*Brahma ca Lokādhipati Sahampati*). Here,

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[36] The other chief disciple, Ven. Moggallāna, had the honour of occupying a similar seat on the immediate left of the Buddha.

[37] The author gives details of the introduction in the chapter on the Chronicle of Buddha Gotama.

however, the narration will begin with the story of the Brahmin Sumedha, as told by the Buddha, at the request of Ven. Sāriputta.

Four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons ago, there flourished the city of Amaravatī. A well-planned city in all respects, it was beautiful and pleasant. Surrounded by verdant and delightful open spaces, abounding in shades and springs, well-stocked with food and provisions and rich in assorted goods for people's enjoyment, this city warmed the hearts of the Devas and human beings.

This city was ever resounding with the ten kinds of sounds, such as the sounds of elephants, horses, chariots, long drums, short drums, harps, singing, conch shells, clappers and of invitations to feasts, whereas other cities were full of unpleasant noises and alarming cries.

> Here the author gives some examples of unpleasant noises and alarming cries to be heard in other cities. We have omitted them from our translation. In connection with the ten sounds refer to the Further Explanations.

This city was endowed with all characteristics of a metropolis. There was no scarcity of trades and crafts for earning a living. It was rich in the seven kinds of treasures, namely: diamonds, gold, silver, cat's-eyes, pearls, emeralds and coral. It was crowded with foreign visitors. Provided with everything as in a Deva realm, it was the abode of a powerful people enjoying the benefits of meritorious deeds.

Sumedha the Brahmin

There lived in the city of Amaravatī a Brahmin named Sumedha.[38] His parents were descendants from a long line of Brahmin families. He was, therefore, a pure Brahmin by [26] birth from both paternal and maternal sides. He was born of a virtuous and healthy mother. He could not be treated with contempt on account of his birth, by saying: "This man is of low birth that goes back to seven generations of his ancestors." He was not a man to be abused or despised. In fact, he was a man of true Brahmin blood with very good looks that charmed everyone.

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[38] The author says Sumedha was so called "because he was endowed with praiseworthy wisdom." [The name literally means "great intelligence."]

As regards his wealth, he had treasures in store worth many billions and abundant grain and other commodities for daily use. He had studied the three Vedas of *Iru*, *Yaju* and *Sāma*, and, being expert in these texts, could recite them flawlessly. Effortlessly, he became well versed in 1) The glossaries that explains various terms (*nighaṇḍu*); 2) rhetoric (*keṭubha*), which is concerned with literary works and which explains various literary ornamentations of learned authors; 3) grammar (*vyākaraṇa* or *akkhara-pabheda*), that deals with the analysis of words and explains various grammatical rules and such things as the alphabet, consonants, vowels, etc.; and 4) Ancient Histories (*Itihāsa*), also called tales of old (*purāṇa*), which constitutes the fifth Veda and which tells of legends and ancient tales.

> The author says: "Ancient Histories as the fifth Veda," means it is the fifth in the enumeration of sciences, which according to the canon, should run: 1) Three Vedas, 2) glossaries (*nighaṇḍu*), 3) rhetoric (*keṭubha*) 4) grammar (*vyākaraṇa*) and 5) Ancient Histories (*Itihāsa*).
>
> According to the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*) commentary, by adding the fourth, Atharvaveda (*Athabbaṇa*), the Vedas become four in number and hence Ancient Histories (*Itihāsa*), which comes after them, is the fifth.

He was equally well-versed in Lokāyata, or natural philosophy, which discourages deeds of merit and favours actions which prolong Saṁsāra and in works dealing with various characteristics of great men, such as Perfect Bodhisattas, Independent Bodhisattas, etc. He was also an accomplished teacher in Brahmanical lore that had been taught by generation after generation of teachers.

The parents of the wise Sumedha passed away while he was still young. Then the family treasurer, bringing the list of riches, opened the treasure-house which was full of gold, silver, rubies, pearls, etc., said: "Young master, this much is the wealth that has come down from your mother's side and this much from your father's, and this much from your ancestors." He informed him of his wealth which had belonged to seven generations of his ancestors, and saying: "Do as you wish with these riches," handed them over to him.

IV: The Renunciaton of Sumedha

Sumedha's Reflection

One day [27] he went up to the upper terrace of his mansion and sitting cross-legged in solitude, he thought (Bv 2.7-27):

> "Miserable, is birth in a new existence; so is destruction of the body; miserable, also it is to die in delusion, oppressed and overpowered by old age. Being subject to birth, old age and sickness, I will seek Nibbāna where old age, death and fear are extinct.
>
> Wonderful it would be, if I could abandon this body of mine without any regard for it, as it is full of putrid things, such as urine, excreta, pus, blood, bile, phlegm, saliva, mucus, etc.
>
> Surely there must be a path leading to the peaceful Nibbāna. It cannot be otherwise. I will seek that good path to Nibbāna so that I shall be liberated from the bondage of life.
>
> For example, just as when there is suffering (*dukkha*), there is also in this world, happiness (*sukha*); even so, when there is the round of existences which is the arising of suffering, there should also be Nibbāna, which is the cessation of suffering.
>
> Just as when there is heat, there is cold also; even so, when there are the three fires of passion, hate and delusion, there should also be Nibbāna, which is the extinction of these three fires.
>
> Again, just as when there is demeritoriousness, there is also meritoriousness; even so when there is rebirth, there should also be Nibbāna where potential for rebirth is exhausted."

After these thoughts had occurred to him, he went on thinking profoundly:

> "For example, a man, who has fallen into a pit of excreta or who is besmeared with filth, sees from a distance a clear pond adorned with the five kinds of lotus. If, in spite of seeing it, he does not find out the right way to reach the pond, it is not the fault of the pond, but of the man himself.

In the same way, there exists a big pond of the deathless Nibbāna where one could wash off one's mental defilements, and if one does not search for that big pond of Nibbāna, it is not the fault of Nibbāna.

Again, if a man is surrounded by enemies and he does not try to flee although there is an escape route for him, it is not the fault of the route. In the same way, if a man, who is besieged by enemies in the form of mental defilements, does not wish to run away although there exists so clearly the big road to the golden city of Nibbāna where one is safe from enemies in the form of mental defilements, it is not the fault of that big road.

Again, if a man is inflicted with a disease and he does not get it cured although there is an efficient doctor, the doctor is not to blame. In the same way, if one is suffering painfully from diseases of mental defilements and he does not look for a master for their cure though there exists one who is skilled in removing these mental defilements, the master is not to blame."

After thinking thus, he contemplated further to be rid of his body:

"Just as a man, who is burdened with the dead body of an animal which is hung round his neck, would get rid of the loathsome carcass and freely and happily go about wherever he likes, even so, I too will go to the city of Nibbāna, abandoning this putrid body of mine which is but a collection of various worms and foul things.

Again, just as people, who have voided their excreta in a lavatory, leave it without looking behind; even so, I will go to the city of Nibbāna, after leaving behind this body full of various worms and foul things. [28]

Again, just as the owners of an old, ruined, decaying and leaking boat, abandon it in disgust; even so, I too will go to the city of Nibbāna, after abandoning this body, from the nine orifices of which, filthy things ooze out incessantly.

Again, just as a man, carrying treasures, who happens to be travelling in the company of robbers, would leave them and flee to safety when he sees the danger of being robbed of his treasures; even so, since the thought of being robbed of my treasures of meritorious deeds, always makes me afraid, I will abandon this body of mine that is like a chief robber and will

go seeking the road to Nibbāna, which can undoubtedly give me security and happiness."

When one thinks unwisely and is instigated by greed and hate, this body turns into a robber who takes life, a robber who takes things not given, etc., and plunders all the treasures of one's meritorious deeds, this body is therefore likened to a chief robber.

The Great Alms Giving

After contemplating thus on renunciation in the light of these similes, once again it occurred to the wise Sumedha (BvA): "Having amassed this much of wealth, my father, grandfather and other kinsmen of mine of seven generations were unable to take even a single coin with them when they passed away. But I should find some means of taking this wealth with me up to Nibbāna."

He could not, of course, carry his wealth bodily with him to Nibbāna. But Sumedha is referring here to the beneficial results that would accrue from his meritorious deeds of giving away his wealth in generosity.

Then he went to the king and said: "Your majesty, since my mind is obsessed with a great dread of the dangers and sufferings springing from such things as birth, old age, etc., I am going to leave the household life and become a recluse. I have wealth worth many millions. Please take possession of it."

"I do not desire your wealth. You may dispose of it in any way you wish," replied the king. "Very well, your majesty," said the wise Sumedha and, with the beating of the mighty drum, he had it proclaimed all over the city of Amaravatī: "Let those who want my riches come and take them." And he gave away his wealth, in a great alms giving, to all without distinction of status and whether they be destitutes or otherwise.

The Renunciation

After thus performing a great act of generosity, the wise Sumedha renounced the world and left for the Himālayas with an intention of reaching Mount Dhammika on that very day. Sakka,[39] seeing him approach the Himālayas after

[39] Sakka, known as the Lord of the Devas. He is known by many other names including Vasavā and Sujampati. He rules over the Devas in Tāvatiṁsa which is the second

renunciation, summoned Vissakamma and said: "Go, Vissakamma,[40] there is the wise Sumedha, who has renounced the world, intending to become a recluse. Have a residence made ready for him."

"Very well, Lord," said Vissakamma, in answer to Sakka's command. He then marked out a delightful enclosure as a hermitage, created in it a well-protected hut with a roof of leaves and a pleasant, faultless walkway.

> Sakka is the name of the Lord of the Devas. He is known by many other names including Vasavā and Sujampati. He rules over Devas in Tāvatiṁsa which is the second lowest of the six celestial abodes. There are many stories which tell of his help rendered to Bodhisattas and other noble persons. Vissakamma is Sakka's chief architect and builder who built, under Sakka's orders, the hermitages for the Bodhisatta in other existences as well.
>
> The author explains here that the walkway is faultless because it was free from five defects: 1) Having uneven, rugged ground; 2) having trees on the walkway; 3) being covered with shrubs and bushes; 4) being too narrow; and 5) being too wide. [29]
>
> The author then describes the walkway and gives its measurement: 60 cubits long, it consisted of three lanes, the main one with two narrower ones on both sides. The main walkway was one a half cubits wide, and each of the two flanking, one cubit wide. The whole walkway was on even ground strewn with white sand. For details of the five defects read the Further Explanations.
>
> The author further enumerates the eight sources of comfort which a good hermitage such as the one created by Vissakamma would bring to a recluse. For the eight sources of comfort (*samaṇa-sukha*), read the Further Explanations and compare with the eight blessings of a recluse (*samaṇa-bhadra*).

These eight sources of comfort (*samaṇa-sukha*) are:

1. The non-hoarding of wealth and grains.

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lowest of the six celestial abodes. There are many stories which tell of his help rendered to Bodhisattas and other noble persons.

[40] He is Sakka's chief architect and builder who built, under Sakka's orders, the hermitages for the Bodhisatta in other existences as well.

2. Searching for blameless food.
3. Enjoying peaceful food only.
4. Being free from worries and distress which are due to the heavy burden of taxation and confiscation of one's property.
5. Being not attached to articles, wares or ornaments, etc.
6. Feeling secure against robbers.
7. Not being associated with kings and ministers.
8. Being free to move to all four quarters.

In addition to these eight, the author says that the hermitage created by Vissakamma was of the kind that facilitated ascetic practices for its residents and helped them gain insight (*vipassanā*) into the true nature of things, their impermanence, suffering and non-self, without much difficulty. It had chambers, caves, tunnels, trees bearing flowers and fruits, and a pond of sweet and clear water. It was a secluded place free from the disturbances of wild beasts and the raucous noises of birds.

The leaf hut contained various requisites of an ascetic such as a headdress, robes, a tripod, a water jug and so on. Vissakamma then wrote on the wall, inside the hut, an inscription, reading: "Whoever wishes to become an ascetic, may make use of these requisites," and he went back to his divine abode.

The Beginning of his Ascetic Life

Reaching the foothills of the Himālayas, the wise Sumedha walked along the hills and ravines to look for a suitable place where he could live comfortably. There, at a river bend, in the region of Mount Dhammika, he saw the delightful hermitage which was created by Vissakamma at the instance of Sakka. He then went slowly to the edge of the walkway, but on seeing no footprints, he thought: "Surely, the residents of this hermitage must be taking a rest in the leaf-hut after their tiring alms round in the neighbouring villages." Thinking like this he waited for a while.

Seeing no signs of habitation after waiting for a fairly long time, it occurred to him: "I have waited long enough. I should now investigate to see whether there are any occupants or not." He opened the door and entered the leaf-hut. Looking

here and there he saw the inscription on the wall and thought: "These requisites are befitting requisites for me. I will use them and become an ascetic." Having made up his mind, and after reflecting on the nine disadvantages of a layman's clothing and the twelve advantages of a fibre-robe, he discarded the clothing he was wearing and donned the robe.

> For the nine disadvantages of a lay man's dress and the twelve significant advantages of a fibre-robe, read the Further Explanations.
>
> At verse 28 of the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) it says: "In that region of Mount Dhammika, I made a pleasant enclosure and created a fine hut of leaves." But in this connection, as has been said before, the hermitage, the hut of leaves, the walkway, etc. were all created by Vissakamma under Sakka's orders. Nevertheless, the Buddha, referring to the powers accrued from his own meritorious deeds while as Sumedha, said: "I made a pleasant enclosure in the forest and created a fine hut," etc. as though he himself had done them all. In reality, it should be noted without doubt that they were not constructed by the recluse Sumedha, but by Vissakamma at the command of Sakka.

Approaching the Foot of Trees

When he had taken off his fine clothing, the wise Sumedha took the fibre-robe, which was red like a cluster of Anojā flowers. He found the robe, which was folded and placed [30] for ready use on a bamboo peg. He wore it round his waist. On top of it, he put on another fibre-robe, which had the colour of gold. He also placed on his left shoulder a hide, which was complete with hoofs, and was like a bed of laurel (*punnāga*) flowers. He put the headdress on his top knot and fastened it with an ivory hairpin. Taking a curved carrying yoke, he hung a string net at one end of it whose knots were like pearls and into which he placed the water jug, which was of the colour of coral; at the other end of the yoke, he hung a long hook used for gathering fruits from trees, a basket, a wooden tripod, etc. He then shouldered the yoke which now carried the full equipment of an ascetic. Taking hold of a walking stick with his right hand, he went out of the hut. While walking back and forth along the walkway, 60 cubits long, he surveyed himself in his new garb and felt exultant with the thought (Ja-Nid PTS 9):

> "My heart's desire has been completely fulfilled. Splendid indeed is my ascetic life. The ascetic life has been praised by all wise men such as Buddhas and Independent Buddhas. The bondage of the household life has been abandoned. I have come safely out of the realm of worldly pleasures. I have entered upon the noble life of an ascetic. I will cultivate and practise the holy life. I will endeavour to attain the benefits of the holy practices."

He then put down the yoke and, sitting gracefully like a golden image on the bean-coloured stone slab in the middle of the walkway, he passed the daytime there.

In the evening, he entered the hut, and lying on the wooden plank by the side of a cane couch, he used the robes as blankets and went to sleep. When he woke up early in the morning, he reflected on the reasons and circumstances of his being there (Ja-Nid PTS 9):

> "Having seen the demerits of the household life, and having given up incomparable wealth and unlimited resources and retinue, I have entered the forest and become an ascetic, desiring to seek meritoriousness that will liberate me from the snares of sensuality. From today onwards, I should not be negligent.
>
> There are these three categories of wrong thoughts, namely, thought based on desire (*kāma-vitakka*), which is directed to sense-pleasures; thought based on ill-will (*vyāpāda-vitakka*), which is directed to killing, destroying, harming; thought based on cruelty (*vihiṁsā-vitakka*), which is directed to causing harm and injury to others. These thoughts may be likened to wild flies which feed on those who are negligent and who abandon the practice of mental detachment from defilements and physical detachment from sense-pleasures. Now is the time for me to devote myself totally to the practice of detachment (*paviveka*).
>
> True, seeing the defects of the household life, which obstruct, hinder and harm meritorious practices, I have renounced the world. This hut of leaves is indeed delightful. This fine levelled ground is bright yellow like a ripe bael fruit. The walls are silvery white. The leaves of the roof are beautifully red like the colour of a pigeon's foot. The couch is made of cane, bears the patterns of a variegated bedspread. The dwelling place is

> very comfortable to live in. I do not think that the luxuries of my former residence can excel the comfort provided by this hut."

Reflecting thus, he discerned the eight disadvantages of a leaf-hut and the ten advantages of the foot of trees.[41] Consequently, on that very day he abandoned the hut and approached the foot of trees which are endowed with ten virtues. [31]

The following morning, he entered the nearby village for alms food. The villagers made a great effort to offer him choice food. After finishing his meal, he went back to the enclosure in the forest and sat down thinking:

> "I became an ascetic not because I lack food and nourishment. Delicacies tend to boost one's pride and arrogance in being a man. There is no end to the trouble that arises from the necessity of sustaining one's life with food. It would be good if I should abstain from food made from cultivated grains and live only on the fruits that fall from trees."

From that moment onwards he lived only on fruits that fell from trees. Without lying down at all, he made strenuous efforts to meditate incessantly only in the three postures of sitting, standing and walking, and at the end of seven days, he achieved the eight attainments (*samāpatti*) and the five super knowledges (*abhiññā*). [33]

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[41] On these see the Further Explanations.

V: The Prophecy

By the time the recluse Sumedha had become accomplished in the practices of asceticism by following the teachings of noble ascetics and had gained the absorptions (*jhāna*) and super knowledges (*abhiññā*), there appeared in the world Buddha Dīpaṅkara,[42] Lord of the Three Worlds. Thirty-two wondrous events such as a quake of the 10,000 world-element, occurred on four occasions concerning the appearance of Buddha Dīpaṅkara, at his conception, birth, becoming a Buddha and the teaching of the first discourse.[43] But Sumedha was not aware of these wondrous events as he was then totally taken with the bliss of the absorptions (*jhāna*).

After his Awakening, Buddha Dīpaṅkara taught the first discourse[44] to 100,000 billion Devas and human beings at Sunandārāma. After that, he set out on a journey with an intention of removing the mental defilements of beings by pouring on them the purifying water of Dhamma, like the heavy rain that falls on all four continents.

Then with 400,000 Arahats, he went to the city of Rammavatī and stayed at Sudassana monastery. Meanwhile Sumedha was enjoying the bliss of the absorptions (*jhāna*) in the forest, completely unaware of the appearance of Buddha Dīpaṅkara in the world.

On hearing of the Buddha's arrival at Sudassana monastery, the citizens of Rammavatī, after their morning meal, carried excellent gifts for medicinal use such as butter, ghee, etc., as well as flowers and scents and went into the presence of the Buddha. Having paid their respects to the Buddha and honoured him with flowers, scents, etc., they sat down at suitable places and listened to his exalted discourse. By the end of the discourse, they invited him, together with his disciples, the Saṅgha, to the next day's meal, and having circumambulated the Buddha in salutation, they left the monastery.

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[42] An account of the life of Buddha Dīpaṅkarā will be given in chapter IX.

[43] These wondrous events will be mentioned in the Chronicle of Buddha Gotama.

[44] A Buddha's discourse is usually figuratively referred to as medicine that cures the ills of the world. The author therefore beautifully describes Buddha Dīpaṅkarā's teaching of the first sermon as a medicinal prescription to cure the suffering of beings.

Preparations to receive Buddha Dīpaṅkara

The next day, the citizens of Rammavatī were preparing elaborately for the incomparably great alms giving (*asadisa-mahā-dāna*). A pavilion was set up, and pure, tender, blue lotuses were strewn in it. The air was refreshed with four kinds of perfume; sweet smelling flowers made from rice-flakes were scattered; pots of cool sweet water were covered with emerald-green banana leaves and placed at the four corners of the pavilion; a canopy, decorated with stars of gold, silver and ruby, was fixed to the ceiling of the pavilion; scented flowers and jewels, like blooms formed into garlands and festoons, were hung here and there. When the decorations of the pavilion were complete, the citizens started to make the city clean and tidy. On both sides of the main road were placed water-pots, flowers, banana plants complete with bunches of fruit. Flags, banners and streamers were hung up and decorative screens were put up at suitable places.

When the necessary preparations had thus been made in the city, the citizens attended to mending the road which the Buddha would take in entering the city. They filled holes and cracks caused by floods with earth, and they levelled the uneven muddy ground. They also covered the road with pearl-white sand and strewed it with flowers of rice-flakes. Thus, they made all the arrangements and preparations for the ceremonial alms giving.

At that time, the recluse Sumedha levitated from his hermitage and, while travelling through the air, saw the citizens of Rammavatī engaging cheerfully in road-mending and [34] decorating. Wondering what was going on below, he alighted and stood at an appropriate place while the people were watching him. Then he asked (Bv 2.40):

> "You are mending the road so happily and enthusiastically. For whose benefit are you mending the road?"

The people then answered (Bv 2.41):

> "Venerable Sumedha, there has appeared in this world the incomparable Buddha Dīpaṅkara, who has conquered the five kinds of death (*māra*). He is the supreme lord of the whole world. We are mending the road for his visit."

From this conversation, it may be noted that Buddha Dīpaṅkara appeared long after Sumedha had attained the absorptions and super knowleges.

Sumedha did not happen to be aware of Dīpaṅkara's conception, birth, becoming a Buddha, and teaching of the first discourse because he had wandered about only in the forests and in the sky, totally absorbed in the bliss of the absorptions and in the exercise of the super knowleges, taking no interest in any event of the human world. It was only while he was travelling through the air and saw the people of Rammavatī were attending to road-mending and cleaning, that he descended to earth to ask what was going on. This suggests that Sumedha was some few thousand years old at that time, as the duration of life, when Buddha Dīpaṅkara appeared, was 100,000 years.

Sumedha Helps with Road-Mending

Sumedha was filled with joy on hearing the word "Buddha," uttered by the people of Rammavatī. He experienced great mental happiness and repeated the word Buddha, Buddha, as he could not contain the intense joy that had arisen in him.

Standing on the spot where he had descended, Sumedha was filled with happiness and also stirred by spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*). He thought thus: "I will sow excellent seeds of merit in the fertile ground of this Buddha Dīpaṅkara, for the cultivation of good deeds. Rare and difficult, indeed, it is to witness the happy moment of a Buddha's appearance. That happy moment has now come to me. Let me not let it pass by unheeded."

Having thought thus, he asked the people: "Men, if you are preparing the road for the Buddha's visit, allot me a stretch of the road. I, too, would like to participate in your road-mending work." – "Very well," said the people, and because they were confident that he was a person of great supernormal powers, they allotted him a big, boggy and very uneven portion of ground which would be difficult to mend. As they assigned him his share of work, they said: "You may improve and make it delightful with decorations."

Then Sumedha, with his heart gladdened by thinking of the attributes of the Buddha, decided: "I can mend the road with my supernormal powers so that it will look pleasant. But if I do so, the people around me may not think highly of it, because it will be done easily, in an instant. Today, I should do my duties with my own physical labour." Having decided thus, he filled the bog with earth which he carried from a distance.

The Arrival of Buddha Dīpaṅkara

Before Sumedha could finish his assigned work, Buddha Dīpaṅkara came along the road with 400,000 Arahats, who were all endowed with the six super [35] kowledges, who could not be shaken by the eight vicissitudes of the world and who were purified of mental defilements.

> The 400,000 Arahats always followed and accompanied Buddha Dīpaṅkara. The virtues of these Arahats are given just for ready reference in the Pāḷi text which says that they were endowed with the six super knowledges (*abhiññā*), that they could not be shaken by the eight vicissitudes of the world and that they were purified of mental defilements.
>
> But the commentary states that their virtues were in addition to those already mentioned: they had little desire; they were easily contented; they could give others words of advice; in turn they listened to words of advice respectfully; they were devoid of attachment to the five sense objects; they did not mix with lay people unnecessarily; and they observed the five kinds of discipline, etc., says the author, who also makes a quotation from the Poem about Aspiration (*Hsutauṅggan Pyo*) a well-known epic of Shin Sīlavaṁsa.

When Buddha Dīpaṅkara came along the road with 400,000 Arahats, both Devas and humans welcomed them with the beating of drums. They also expressed their joy by singing songs of welcome in honour of him.

At that time, human beings were visible to Devas and Devas were visible to human beings. All these beings, divine and human, followed the Buddha, some raising their hands in adoration and others playing their respective musical instruments.

Devas, coming along through the air, tossed and scattered celestial flowers, such as Mandārava, Lotus (*Paduma*) and Koviḷāra, all over the place – up and down, front and behind, left and right – in honour of the Buddha. Humans also did similar honour to the Buddha with such flowers as Campak (*Campaka*), Sarala,

Indian putat (*Mucalinda*), Ironwood (*Nāga*), Indian Laurel (*Punnāga*), and Ketakī.[45]

Sumedha gazed, unblinking, at the Buddha's person, which was endowed with the 32 marks of a Great Man and further adorned with the 80 minor marks. He witnessed the Buddha's resplendent person, looking as if of solid gold, at the height of glory, with the bright aura always around him and the six radiances emanating from his body flashing like lightning against a sapphire-blue sky.

Then he decided thus: "Today, I ought to abandon my life in the presence of the Buddha. Let him not tread in the mud and suffer discomfort. Let the Buddha and all his 400,000 Arahats tread on my back and walk just as they would do on ruby-coloured planks of a bridge. Using my body as a footpath by the Buddha and his Arahats will definitely bring me long-lasting welfare and happiness."

Having made up his mind thus, he loosened his hair-knot, spread a mat of hide, and fibre-robe on the murky swamp and then prostrated himself on them, like a bridge constructed of ruby-coloured wooden planks.

Sumedha's Aspiration towards Buddhahood

So to Sumedha, who had prostrated himself, the aspiration to become a Buddha arose (Bv 2.54-58):

> "If I so desire, this very day I can become an Arahat in whom the pollutants (*āsava*) are exhausted and mental defilements removed. But what does it profit me to realise the Arahat fruition and Nibbāna as an obscure disciple in the Dispensation of Buddha Dīpaṅkara? I will exert my utmost for the attainment of omniscient Buddhahood.
>
> What is the use of selfishly escaping the cycle of births alone, in spite of the fact that I am a superior person, fully aware of my prowess in wisdom, faith and energy. I will strive to become an omniscient Buddha and liberate all beings, including Devas, from the cycle of births which is a sea of suffering.

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[45] [Both *Sarala* and *Ketakī* are identified as pine trees in the dictionaries, but pine trees don't have flowers, so it is not clear what they refer to here.]

> After becoming an omniscient Buddha myself, which is the result of my matchless deed of lying prostrate in the mud and making myself a kind of bridge for the Supreme Buddha Dīpaṅkara, I will rescue beings out of the cycle of births, which is a sea of suffering. [36]
>
> After crossing over the stream of Saṁsāra and leaving behind the three realms of existences,[46] I will, by myself, first embark on the Dhamma-raft of the noble path of eight constituents and go to the rescue of all beings including Devas."

Thus, his mind was bent upon being a Buddha.

Sumittā, the Future Yasodharā

While Sumedha was making his resolution to attain Buddhahood, a young Brahmin maiden, named Sumittā, went to join the people who were gathering in the presence of the Buddha. She brought eight lotus blooms to honour the Buddha. When she was in the middle of the crowd, and as soon as her eyes fell on Sumedha, she was seized with a sudden great love for him. Though she wanted to offer him some gifts, she had nothing but the eight lotus blooms. Then she said to him: "Venerable recluse, I give you five lotus blooms so that you may offer them to the Buddha yourself. The remaining three blooms are for my own offering to the Buddha." She then handed the five lotus blooms to Sumedha and expressed her wish saying: "Venerable recluse, throughout the period you are fulfilling the perfections to become a Buddha, may I be the partner who shares your life."

Sumedha accepted the lotus blooms from the young lady Sumittā and, in the midst of the crowd, offered them to Buddha Dīpaṅkara, who had come towards him, and he prayed for the attainment of Perfect Self-Awakening.

Observing the scene that had taken place between Sumedha and Sumittā, the Buddha made the prediction in the midst of the multitude thus (*Yasodharā-therī-apadāna*, Thi-ap 50):

> "Sumedha, this girl Sumittā, will be your partner who will share her life with you, assisting you with equal fervour and deed for your becoming a

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[46] Further details in this connection are given by the author in the Further Explanations.

Buddha. She will be pleasing to you with her every thought, word and deed. She will be lovely in appearance, pleasing, of sweet speech and a delight to the heart. In your Dispensation as a Buddha, in your final existence, she will become a female disciple who will receive your spiritual inheritance of Awakening complete with supernormal psychic powers."

The Utterance of the Prophecy

As mentioned under chapter II, The Rare Appearance of a Buddha, there was none among the people who did not aspire to Buddhahood on beholding a Buddha's splendour. Although they aspired to Buddhahood, not one of them was qualified to become a Buddha. But, unlike this multitude of people, Sumedha was fully endowed with all requisites for his becoming a Buddha. In fact, he was inclined to become a Buddha as he was endowed with the eight factors required for receiving the prophecy. These eight factors are:

1. Being a human being.
2. Being a male person.
3. Having fulfilled all conditions necessary for the realization of Awakening.
4. Meeting with a living Buddha.
5. Being an ascetic who believes in the law of deeds and their results (*kamma*).
6. Having acquired the absorptions (*jhāna*) and super knowledges (*abhiññā*).
7. Being prepared to lay down his life for the well-being of a Buddha.

   If Buddha Dīpaṅkara and his 400,000 Arahats had walked on the back of the prostrate Sumedha, as though they were crossing a bridge, he would not have survived. Knowing this full well, Sumedha unhesitatingly and courageously prepared himself to render service to the Buddha. Such a performance is called a principal act of merit (*adhikāra-kusala*).

8. Intense wholesome aspiration to become a Buddha.

> Even if the whole universe were filled with glowing red hot coal and sharp pointed spears, he would not hesitate to tread through them in order to become a Buddha.

Knowing that Sumedha was endowed with these requisite qualifications, Buddha Dīpaṅkara went to Sumedha and, standing at the head of his prostrate body, exercised his supernormal psychic power of seeing into the future, to find out whether Sumedha's aspiration to become a Buddha would be fulfilled, and said: "Sumedha will become a [37] Buddha, Gotama by name, after four immeasurable periods (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and 100,000 aeons have passed from the present one." While still standing at his head, the Buddha uttered the prophecy in nine verses beginning with these words: *Passatha imaṁ tāpasaṁ jaṭilaṁ uggatāpanaṁ* (Bv 2.61-69):

> "Monks, behold this matted-haired ascetic of rigorous austere practices! The recluse Sumedha will become an Awakened One among Brahmas, Devas and human beings after innumerable aeons, to be exact, after four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons from now.
>
> On the threshold of his becoming a Buddha, this Sumedha will renounce the world, leaving behind the marvellously delightful city of Kapilavatthu; he will then devote himself to meditation and perform strenuous austere practices (*dukkara-cariyā*).
>
> While staying under the banyan tree called Ajapāla, he will accept the offering of milk rice and go to the river Nerañjarā.
>
> > Nerañjarā is the name of the river on the banks of which was Uruvelā, the scene of the Bodhisatta's sojourn after his realization at the futility of his severe austerities. He bathed in the river before he ate the meal of milk-rice given by Sujātā. After eating the meal, the Bodhisatta launched the bowl in the river. Having reached the Nāga's riverine abode, it sank down and came into contact with the bowls similarly launched by the three previous Buddhas of this aeon. Read the Further Explanations for the derivation of the river's name.
>
> When his becoming a Buddha is drawing near, he will partake of the milk rice on the river bank and approach the Bodhi tree by the path well prepared by Devas.
>
> As he reaches the Bodhi tree, which will be the site of attaining Awakening, he will go round it clockwise; he will turn from south to west,

> from west to north and then from north to east, and will sit down with the intentions of becoming a Supremely Awakened One with none to excel him. Then, having seated himself at the foot of the Bodhi tree, he will gain insight knowledge of the four noble truths.
>
> The mother of this Buddha will bear the name Māyā Devī; the father will be named Suddhodana. The Buddha will have the name Gotama.
>
> The pair of his chief disciples will be Kolita and Upatissa, who will be free of mental intoxicants (*āsava*) and lust (*rāga*), and who are calm of heart and have profound mental concentration. The monk, Ānanda by name, will wait upon this Buddha as an attendant.
>
> Vens. Khemā and Uppalavaṇṇā, who are free of the mental pollutants and attachments, who have calm hearts and profound mental concentration, will become the two female chief disciples. The fig tree (*assattha*) will be the Buddha's Bodhi tree under which he will attain Awakening.
>
> Citta and Hatthālavaka will be the foremost laymen serving the Buddha. Similarly, Uttarā and Nandamātā will be the foremost laywomen."

Acclamation by Devas and Humans

On hearing the prophecy of Buddha Dīpaṅkara, who had no equal in the three worlds and who was always in pursuit of meritorious deeds, Devas and humans acclaimed with joy: "It is said that this the recluse Sumedha is truly the seed of a Bodhisatta." They slapped themselves on their upper arms[47] with joy. Devas and Brahmas, who had come from the 10,000 world-element together with humans raised their hands in adoration. They also expressed their wishes (Bv 2.73-75):

> "Even though we should now fail to put into practice the teaching of Buddha Dīpaṅkara, lord of the entire world, we have encountered this noble recluse who will become a Buddha. We will then strive to attain the higher knowledge of the Dhamma. [38]
>
> For example, there are those who try to cross a river, but cannot reach the destined landing place on the other side as they are carried away by the current of the river. They manage, however, to cling to a landing place

[47] Slapping oneself on the left upper arm with the right palm is a physical expression of one's joy.

somewhere further down the river and thence cross over to their destinations.

In the same way, although we cannot yet avail ourselves of the teaching of Buddha Dīpaṅkara, we have encountered this noble recluse who is destined to become a Buddha in future, when we will attain the paths and fruitions."

Buddha Dīpaṅkara proceeded to Rammavatī

After Buddha Dīpaṅkara, who had insight into the three worlds, who was the possessor of the attribute knower of the world (*loka-vidū*), who was worthy of accepting the gift brought from a distance,[48] had thus made the prediction and been honoured with eight handfuls of flowers, he departed, stepping out with his right foot placed by the side of Sumedha.

From the place where the Buddha had uttered the prophecy, the 400,000 Arahats also departed, keeping Sumedha on their right, after honouring him with flowers and scents. So also humans, Nāgas and Gandhabbas departed from there after paying obeisance to Sumedha and honouring him with flowers and scents.

Amidst the honours showered on him in reverence by the Devas and citizens of Rammavatī, Buddha Dīpaṅkara, followed by the 400,000 Arahats, proceeded along the well-decorated road into the city where he took the seat especially prepared for him. Sitting down, he appeared like the morning sun rising on the top of Mount Yugandhara. Just as the early radiance of the sun brings the lotus flowers into full bloom, so the Buddha would shed the radiance of Awakening to enable those who were on the verge of liberation to penetrate stage by stage into the depths of the four noble truths. The 400,000 Arahats were also seated in an orderly manner at the places they had reached. The citizens of Rammavatī then performed the ceremony of the great incomparable alms giving (*asadisa-dāna*) to the Buddha and his monastics.

When Buddha Dīpaṅkara, the leader of the three worlds, and the 400,000 Arahats, went out of his sight, Sumedha got up joyfully from his prostrate position. With his mind suffused with joy and happiness, exultation and

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[48] *Āhuneyya*, worthy of accepting the gift brought from a distance, the fifth of the nine attributes of the Saṅgha. [See chapter 42a.]

delightful satisfaction, he sat cross-legged on the huge pile of flowers that were strewn in his honour by Devas and humans, and contemplated thus (Bv 2.80-81):

> "I am fully accomplished in the absorptions (*jhāna*) and have attained the height of the five super knowledges (*abhiññā*). Throughout the 10,000 world-element, there is no ascetic who is my peer. I see none who is equal to me in the exercise of supernormal powers."

Thus contemplating, he experienced intense joy and satisfaction.

The Thirty-two Prophetic Phenomena

When Sumedha was seated cross-legged, happy with the recollection of Buddha Dīpaṅkara's prophecy and feeling as though he already had the precious gem of omniscient Buddhahood in his very hand, Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element arrived and proclaimed with a mighty sound (Bv 83-108):

> "Noble Sumedha, 32 prophetic phenomena have now taken place; these phenomena occurred also to all previous Bodhisattas who had received the prediction and were sitting down cross-legged as you are doing now, so you will certainly become a Buddha.
>
> Noble Sumedha, when previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, there was [39] an absence of extreme cold and heat or hotness of the weather. These two phenomena have been clearly discerned today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.
>
> Noble Sumedha, when previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, there was utter silence and a complete absence of disturbances over the whole 10,000 world-element. These two phenomena have been clearly discerned today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.
>
> Noble Sumedha, when previous Bodhisattas had received the prediction, there were no violent winds blowing, there were no rivers flowing. These two phenomena have been clearly discerned today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.
>
> Noble Sumedha, when previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, all the terrestrial flowers and aquatic flowers bloomed simultaneously. The same phenomenon has happened today. So you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, when previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, all the creepers and trees bore fruit simultaneously. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, when previous Bodhisattas had received the prediction, all the precious jewels that lie in the sky and on earth shone bright. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, when previous Bodhisattas had received the prediction, great sounds of celestial as well as earthly music were heard, without either Devas or human beings playing on the musical instruments. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, when previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, strange and exquisite flowers fell from heaven like rain. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, when previous Bodhisattas had received the prediction, there occurred a whirling of the great ocean and a trembling of the 10,000 world-element. There have been great roars today because of these two phenomena, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, on the day that previous Bodhisattas had received the prediction, there occurred an extinction of hell-fires throughout the 10,000 world-element. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, on the day that previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, the sun became clear of blemishes, all the stars and planets were discernable during the day. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, on the day that previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, water gushed from the earth without there being any rain. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, on the day that previous Bodhisattas had received the prediction, the stars and planets shone with splendour. The constellation

Visākhā appeared in conjunction with the full moon. The same phenomena have happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, on the day that previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, snakes, mongooses and other animals which live in pits, and foxes and other animals which live in ravines, came out of their holes. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, on the day that previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, there was no sign of dissatisfaction in the hearts of sentient beings and they were [40] content with what they had. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

> People are inflicted with discontent in their everyday life, never satisfied with whatever they possess; it is only on the day of a Buddha's prophecy that they are temporarily relieved of their perennial discontent.

Noble Sumedha, on the day that previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, sentient beings were cured of diseases and relieved of hunger. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, on the day that previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, there ocurred an alleviation of attachment to sense objects in the minds of sentient beings which are also rid of ill-will and delusion. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, on the day that previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, the minds of sentient beings were rid of fear. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, on the day that previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, the atmosphere was clear, free from dust, dirt and mist. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Noble Sumedha, on the day that previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, the atmosphere was free of undesirable odours and filled with celestial fragrance. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

> Noble Sumedha, on the day that previous Bodhisattas received the prediction Devas and Brahmas – except for the formless Brahmas – became visible. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.
>
> Noble Sumedha, on the day that previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, all abodes of incessant suffering became visible. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.
>
> Noble Sumedha, on the day that previous Bodhisattas received the prediction, walls, doors and even mountains always opened wide and formed no obstructions or barriers. Today also, these walls, doors and mountains became like the empty space and the open sky, in every way. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.
>
> Noble Sumedha, at the moment that Bodhisattas received the prediction there ocurred no deaths or conceptions of beings. The same phenomenon has happened today, so you will certainly become a Buddha.

Devas and Brahmas, who had arrived from the 10,000 world-element, spoke words of praise and encouragement to Sumedha thus: “Noble Sumedha, strive on earnestly with constant diligence! There should be no retreat. Proceed with your endeavour! We know without any doubt that you will certainly become a Buddha.” [41]

VI: Sumedha's Reflection on the Perfections

The Bodhisatta, Sumedha, was delighted with both the prophetic words of the Buddha Dīpaṅkara and the encouraging words of Devas and Brahmas, and he reflected thus, when Devas and Brahmas had departed (Bv 2.109-115):

> "Buddhas are not speakers of ambiguous words, nor are they given to speaking of futile things. Never have their words proved wrong, surely I will become a Buddha.
>
> As a stone thrown upwards will certainly fall back to the ground, so the words of Buddhas always prove unerring and never failing, surely I will become a Buddha.
>
> Again, as death certainly comes to living beings, so the words of Buddhas always prove unerring and never failing, surely, I will become a Buddha.
>
> Again, as the sun certainly rises at the end of night, so the words of Buddhas always prove unerring and never failing, surely I will become a Buddha.
>
> Again, as a lion certainly roars on coming out of his den, so the words of Buddhas always prove unerring and never failing, surely I will become a Buddha.
>
> Again, as birth certainly follows conception in a woman, the words of Buddhas always prove unerring and never failing, surely I will become a Buddha."

Reflecting on these similes, Sumedha was certain that he would definitely attain Buddhahood in accordance with Buddha Dīpaṅkara's prophetic words. And he thought to himself thus (Bv 2.116):

> "Well, I will make a thorough search in the basic principle concerning the three worlds[49] in all the ten directions for the conditions of my becoming a Buddha."

Thus he thought about and investigated those factors which conditioned his becoming a Buddha (*Buddha-kāraka-dhamma*). [42]

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[49] These are the realms of sensuality (*kāmāvacara*), materiality (*rūpāvacara*) and immateriality (*arūpāvacara*).

The wisdom involved in such mental investigation is called the perfection investigating wisdom (*pāramī-pavicaya-ñāṇa*). The wisdom that arose in Sumedha's mental process was of great potency. It helped him see clearly the perfections, the great charity and good conduct, all of which are essential in gaining omniscience and are called the constituent elements of Awakening (*Bodhi-sambhāra*). This wisdom was achieved by himself, without the help of a teacher.

According to the sub-commentary on the Enumeration of Phenonema (*Dhamma-saṅgaṇī*), it was the forerunner of the arising of omniscience in him. Buddha Dīpaṅkara had merely predicted Sumedha's becoming a Buddha. He did not expound on what and how to practice for becoming one. Sumedha had to think about and find out those practices with his own perfection investigating wisdom, and when he did so, he came to see very clearly what to practise and how to proceed.

Then the author reproduces a long verse that depicts Sumedha's investigation of the ten perfections from the Poem on the Perfections (*Pāramidawgan Pyo*) of Shin Sīlavaṁsa.

The phrase "basic principle" in the aforesaid paragraph is the translation of the Pāḷi *dhamma-dhātu*, in which *dhātu* literally means "a phenomenon that carries its own nature." That is to say, it is a phenomenon that is not created by anyone, but which arises on its own as conditioned by a cause. If a phenomenon is created by someone, it cannot be said to be a natural phenomenon. Therefore "basic principle" means "a phenomenon that arises, not through a person's effort, but as a result of natural conditions and circumstances," which in Pāḷi is *dhamma-dhātu*.

If one wants to look for Buddha-making factors, one should do so in the basic principle (*dhamma-dhātu*), hence, "I will make a thorough search in the basic principle" (*vicināmi dhamma-dhātuyā*). In contrast, when an individual is meant and not a principle, one may say in Pāḷi, *loka-dhātuya*, "in the world."

What this means is that a principle is concerned with the basic principle (*dhamma-dhātu*) whereas an individual is concerned with world (*loka-dhātu*). For instance, there is such a saying as "there cannot be two contemporary Buddhas in the world (*loka-dhātu*)." Here as the saying concerns an individual the "world" (*loka-dhātu*) is used instead of the basic principle (*dhamma-dhātu*).

1. The Perfection of Generosity

While Sumedha was engaged in the investigation of the Buddha-making factors, he discovered first the perfection of generosity which former Bodhisattas had always followed and practised, and which was like a highway to the state of Buddhahood. Then he admonished himself thus (Bv 118):

> "Sumedha, if you are desirous of attaining the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience,[50] you should constantly establish first, the perfection of generosity and make efforts to become accomplished in fulfilling this perfection."

He continued to admonish himself thus (Bv 119-120):

> "When a jar, full with liquid, is overturned, it pours out all its contents. Likewise, Sumedha, you should give alms to all, whether low, middling or high, leaving nothing with you."[51]

2. The Perfection of Morality

After discovering and reflecting on the perfection of generosity, he went on to contemplate thus (Bv 121):

> "The perfection of generosity alone cannot constitute all the Buddha-making factors. There must be other factors that also contribute to the maturity of the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience. I shall investigate them."

When he investigated thus, he discovered morality as the second perfection which former Bodhisattas had always cultivated and fulfilled. He admonished himself thus (Bv 122):

> "Sumedha, if you are desirous of attaining the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience, you should constantly establish the perfection of morality and make efforts to become accomplished in fulfilling this perfection."

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[50] That is, becoming a Buddha, says the author.

[51] Details of the perfection are given in the Further Explanations. So are details of each and every item of the remaining perfections.

He continued to admonish himself (Bv 124-125):

> "The yak (*camara*) protects its tail even at the risk of its life; if the tail should happen to be caught in something, it would rather die than damage its tail by making an effort to release it. Likewise, Sumedha, you should observe morality in the four purifying fields, namely: 1) Restraint according to the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara*); 2) restraint of the sense faculties (*indriya-saṁvara*); 3) purity of livelihood (*ājīva-parisuddhi*); and 4) proper use of the requisites (*paccaya-sannissita*) which form the basis of meritorious deeds. As the yak gives up its life in protecting its tail, so also you should safeguard your morality constantly."

3. The Perfection of Renunciation

After discovering and reflecting on the perfection of morality, he discovered renunciation as the third perfection which former Bodhisattas had always cultivated and fulfilled. [43] Then he admonished himself thus (Bv 127-128):

> "Sumedha, if you are desirous of attaining the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience, you should constantly establish the perfection of renunciation and make efforts to become accomplished in fulfilling this perfection."

He continued to admonish himself (Bv 129-130):

> "A man, imprisoned for a long time and suffering from torture all the time, looks only for an opportunity to escape. Likewise, Sumedha, you should regard all the existences in the realms of sensuality, materiality and immateriality as prisons and look towards renunciation to escape from all these existences."

4. The Perfection of Wisdom

After discovering and reflecting on the perfection of renunciation, he discovered wisdom as the fourth perfection which former Bodhisattas had always cultivated and fulfilled. Then he admonished himself thus (Bv 132-133):

> "Sumedha, if you are desirous of attaining the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience, you should constantly establish the perfection of wisdom and make efforts to become accomplished in fulfilling this perfection."

He continued to admonish himself (Bv 134-135):

> "A monastic on his alms round receives sufficient food by going from one household to another, be they low, middling or high. Likewise, Sumedha, you should always approach all learned persons, irrespective of their depth of learning and ask them the facts and the meaning of all that should be known by raising questions, such as: "Sir, what is merit? What is demerit? What is faulty? What is faultless?" and so on. You should thus make an effort to become accomplished in the perfection of wisdom. When you are thus accomplished, you will attain the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience."

5. The Perfection of Energy

After discovering and reflecting on the perfection of wisdom, he discovered energy as the fifth perfection which former Bodhisattas cultivated and fulfilled. Then he admonished himself thus (Bv 137-138):

> "Sumedha, if you are desirous of attaining the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience, you should constantly establish the perfection of energy and make efforts to become accomplished in fulfilling this perfection."

He continued to admonish himself (Bv 139-140):

> "Crouching, standing and walking, the lion, the king of beasts, is possessed of undiminished energy in these postures, and is always alert. Likewise, Sumedha, you should constantly arouse your energy in all your existences. When you are accomplished in fulfilling the perfection of energy, you will attain the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience."

6. The Perfection of Forbearance

After discovering and reflecting on the perfection of energy, he discovered forbearance as the sixth perfection which former Bodhisattas had always cultivated and fulfilled. [44] Then he admonished himself thus (Bv 142-143):

> "Sumedha, if you are desirous of attaining the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience, you should constantly establish the perfection of forbearance without being inconsistent, such as being tolerant sometimes and not at other times, being patient with some people and not

with others; if you can practise thus, you will attain the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience."

He continued to admonish himself (Bv 144-145):

"This great earth shows no signs of love or hate towards all of the things that are dumped upon it but forbears them whether they are clean and good or unclean and foul. Likewise, Sumedha, you should put up with all that is done to you, be it in honour or in contempt. When you are accomplished in fulfilling the perfection of forbearance, you will attain the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience."

7. The Perfection of Truthfulness

After discovering and reflecting on the perfection of forbearance, he discovered truthfulness as the seventh perfection which former Bodhisattas had always followed and practised. Then he admonished himself thus (Bv 147-148):

"Sumedha, if you are desirous of attaining the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience, you should constantly establish the perfection of truthfulness, which is speaking only the truth and not being duplicitous, such as being truthful sometimes and not at other times; speaking truthfully to some people and not to others. If you fulfil the perfection of truthfulness by speaking only the truth, you will attain the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience."

He continued to admonish himself (Bv 149-150):

"The morning star, which serves as a guiding light, keeps steady on its course, never deviating from it, irrespective of the season, whether it is rainy, cold or hot. Likewise, Sumedha, you should not deviate from the path of truth, the path that consists of eight sectors: what you see, what you hear, what you feel, what you know; what you do not see, what you do not hear, what you do not feel and what you do not know. When you are accomplished in fulfilling the perfection of truthfulness, you will attain the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience."

You stand on the path of truth only when you say that you see what you do see with your eyes in the case of seeing. Only when you say you hear what you hear with your ears in the case of hearing. Only when you say you feel with your nose, tongue or body in the case of feeling. Only when you say

you know what you know with your mind in the case of knowing. The same holds good in the case of not seeing, not hearing, not feeling and not knowing. Such a speech established on the path of truth is said to be the speech of the noble ones (*ariya-vohāra*), said the Buddha.

8. The Perfection of Resolution

After discovering and reflecting on the perfection of truthfulness, he discovered resolution as the eighth perfection which former Bodhisattas had always cultivated and fulfilled. Then he admonished himself (Bv 152-153):

"Sumedha, if you are desirous of attaining the paths, fruitions and omniscience, you should constantly establish the perfection of resolution. When you fulfil it steadfastly without wavering, you will attain the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience."

He continued to admonish himself (Bv 154-155):

"A big rocky mountain that stands in a solid mass is [45] not shaken by strong winds, but remains rooted in its place. Likewise, Sumedha, you should perform without fail and at all times meritorious deeds which you have resolved to do. When you are accomplished in fulfilling the perfection of resolution, you will attain the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience."

Here the author explains that resolution means determination to see things happen the way you like, once you have resolved: "I will do this or that, and I will make it happen in this manner," and so on. For instance, Prince Temiya made up his mind to assume the guise of a deaf and dumb person though he was not deaf or dumb, until he was permitted to renounce the world. Such a determination is called resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*).

Temiya's story is contained in the Birth Story about the Wise Mūgapakkha (*Mūga-pakkha-jātaka*, Ja 538). He was the Bodhisatta born as the son of the King of Kāsi. Even in his infancy, he recollected his past lives, one of which was being in the state of severe suffering in the Auxillary Hells (*Ussada-niraya*), owing to his giving orders of punishment to convicted criminals. His recollection made him hate kingship bitterly, and on the advice of the goddess of his parasol, who had been his mother in a former existence, he resolved to pretend to be an invalid who could neither hear nor speak.

For sixteen years the royal parents tried in vain to break his determination. As the last attempt, they appointed him king for one week, but he was not happy to rule the country and remained firm in his determination. He was then ordered to be clubbed to death and buried in the charnel ground. Sunanda the charioteer took him there in a chariot, and while he was digging the grave, Temiya spoke to him and expressed his wish to lead an ascetic life. The matter was reported to the palace, and the king and queen rushed to the scene. But after listening to a discourse delivered by Temiya, who was now an ascetic, they all joined him by becoming ascetics themselves.

9. The Perfection of Loving-Kindness

After discovering and reflecting on the perfection of resolution, he discovered loving-kindness as the ninth perfection which former Bodhisattas had always cultivated and fulfilled. Then he admonished himself (Bv 157-158):

> "Sumedha, if you are desirous of attaining the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience, you should constantly establish the perfection of loving-kindness and make efforts to cultivate and practise the meditation of loving-kindness (*mettā-bhāvanā*) in a peerless manner."

He continued to admonish himself (Bv 159-160):

> "Water suffuses with coolness all who bathe, the virtuous and the wicked alike, and cleanses them of dust and dirt. Likewise, Sumedha, you should develop goodwill equally towards those who wish for your welfare and those who do not. When you are accomplished in fulfilling the perfection of loving-kindness, you will attain knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience."

10. The Perfection of Equanimity

After discovering and reflecting on the perfection of loving-kindness, he went on to contemplate thus (Bv 161):

> "These nine alone cannot constitute the Buddha-making factors. There must be other perfections that also contribute to the maturity of the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience. I shall investigate them."

When he investigated thus, he discovered equanimity as the tenth perfection which former Bodhisattas had always cultivated and fulfilled. Then he admonished himself (Bv 162-163):

> "Sumedha, a pair of scales remains steady without tipping to one side or the other when poised by equal weights; likewise, if you remain evenly balanced in mind when faced with happiness or suffering, you will attain the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience."

He continued to admonish himself (Bv 164-165):

> "Sumedha, this great earth shows no sign of love or [46] hate towards all the things that are dumped upon it, whether they are clean or foul. Likewise, Sumedha, you should always remain composed, equable in heart, not being affected either by love or hate. When you are accomplished in fulfilling the perfection of equanimity, you will attain the path and fruition, and omniscience."

When Sumedha had reflected on the perfection of equanimity, it occurred to him thus (BvA, PTS 113):

> "The perfections which contribute to the maturity of the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience and make a Buddha, and which a Bodhisatta has to fulfil, are exactly these ten. There are no other perfections besides these. And these ten perfections, which are essential to become a Buddha, do not exist outside myself; neither in the sky above nor on the earth below; nor do they lie in the east or in any other direction. In fact, they are in my heart."

When he had thought thus, he urged himself (BvA, PTS 113):

> "Sumedha, fulfil these ten perfections, which are the excellent factors conditioning Buddhahood, without swerving in any way."

Then he considered going over the perfections in forward order: generosity, morality, renunciation, wisdom, energy, forbearance, truthfulness, resolution, loving-kindness and equanimity. Then he considered them in reverse order: equanimity, loving-kindness, resolution, truthfulness, forbearance, energy, wisdom, renunciation, morality, and generosity.

Then he considered going over them in groups of two beginning with the middle two: energy and forbearance; wisdom and truthfulness; renunciation and resolution; morality and loving-kindness; generosity and equanimity. Then he considered going over them again, beginning from the two ends: generosity and equanimity; morality and loving-kindness; renunciation and resolution; wisdom and truthfulness; energy and forbearance. Thus he contemplated on the ten perfections as thoroughly as an oil-press grinds oil-seeds to produce oil.

He also considered all the matters connected with the perfections that are essential for his becoming a Buddha: giving up external things is an exercise of an ordinary perfection (*pāramī*); giving up one's limb is an exercise of higher perfection (*upapāramī*); giving up one's life is an exercise of the highest perfection (*paramattha-pāramī*).

A Great Earthquake

Because of the power generated by the investigation of the ten perfections complete with their basic principles of functions and characteristics, this great earth leaned left and right, forward and backward, downward and upward, in these ways it shook violently. It also made loud rumbling and echoing sounds. Like a sugarcane press operated by its workers, or like the turning wheel of an oil-mill, the 10,000 world-element swirled and quaked.

After declaring the prophecy to Sumedha, Buddha Dīpaṅkara entered the city of Rammavatī and went to the citizens who had invited him to a meal. It was while he was partaking of the meal that Sumedha reflected on the ten perfections, one after another. And it was at the end of his reflection that the earthquake took place. Because of this violent earthquake, all the people, who were hosts to the Buddha, could not stand firm; like the big Sāla trees lashed by the strong winds descending from Mount Yugandhara they fell to the ground in bewilderment and in a faint.

At the place of the alms offering, thousands of pots containing food and hundreds of water-pots knocked against one another and were shattered into pieces. Being greatly shaken, frightened and troubled in mind, they unanimously approached Buddha Dīpaṅkara and said: "Possessor of the five eyes, does this incident foretell our fortune or misfortune? A fearful danger has befallen us. May it please the Fortunate One to dispel our fears!"

Then the Fortunate One replied: "Be free from the fear caused by this earthquake; be relieved of your worries. There is nothing to be afraid of. I have today made the prophecy to Sumedha, declaring that he will in the future become an omniscient Buddha in the world. He has reflected on the ten perfections that were fulfilled by former Buddhas. Because of [47] Sumedha's reflections on the ten perfections, which are essential for his becoming a Buddha, without leaving out any one of them, the 10,000 world-element shook violently." Thus, Buddha Dīpaṅkara explained to the citizens of Rammavatī the cause of the great earthquake and assured them of the absence of any danger.

Homage to Sumedha

The citizens at once became calm and free from worry on hearing the words of Buddha Dīpaṅkara. In fact, they were filled with great joy, and taking flowers, scents and other offerings, they marched out of the city and approached Sumedha, honoured him with their offerings and paid respects to him.

Then Sumedha, following the usual practice of Bodhisattas, contemplated on the attributes of an Awakened One; and with steadfast mind directed towards Buddha Dīpaṅkara, he paid homage to him. Then he stood up from his seat where he had been sitting cross-legged.

When Sumedha thus stood up from his seat, both Devas and humans did honour to him by showering on him celestial and terrestrial flowers that they had brought with them. And they spoke auspicious words of praise and encouragement (Bv 179-187):

> "You, noble recluse, have aspired for the noble prize of Buddhahood. May your wish be fulfilled!
>
> May all dangers and obstacles, which lie in store for you, remove themselves and never come to pass. May all worries and ailments vanish and may you never encounter them. May no harm befall you. May you speedily attain the knowledge of the paths, fruitions and omniscience!
>
> Great Hero, as trees bloom in their right season in the world, so may you bring forth the fourfold valorous wisdom (*catu-vesārajja-ñāṇa*), the sixfold unique wisdom (*cha-asādhāraṇa-ñāṇa*) and the ten powers (*dasa-bala-ñāṇa*), etc., which are the fruitful possessions of all Buddhas!

The fourfold valorous wisdom (*catū-vesārajja-ñāṇa*): 1) Knowledge of factors forming an impediment to the attainment of Nibbāna (*antarāyika-dhamme vā jānatā*); 2) knowledge of factors leading to escape from the round of rebirths (*niyyānika-dhamme passatā*); 3) knowledge of the destruction of the enemy-like defilements (*kilesārīnaṁ hata arahatta*); and 4) Perfect Self-Enlightenment, or knowledge of all aspects and characteristics of all factors (*sammā samañ-ca sabba-dhammānaṁ buddhattā Sammā-sambuddhena*).

The sixfold unique wisdom (*cha-asādhārana-ñāṇa*): 1) Knowledge of the different stages of development in the faculties of beings (*indriya-paro-pariyatte-ñāṇa*); 2) knowledge of covert and latent inclinations of beings (*āsayānusaya-ñāṇa*); 3) knowledge of the performance of the twin miracle (*yamaka-pāṭihāriya-ñāṇa*); 4) knowledge concerning great compassion for beings (*mahā-karuṇā-ñāṇa*); 5) knowledge of all aspects and characteristics of all factors, i.e. omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*); and 6) unobstructed knowledge of what all Buddhas should know (*anāvaraṇa-ñāṇa*).

O Great Hero, do fulfil the ten perfections as all Buddhas have done. May you be able to do so!

O Great Hero, as all Buddhas have penetrated the four noble truths at the foot of the Bodhi tree, so may you become a Buddha after penetrating the four noble truths at the foot of the Bodhi tree, the site of victory!

O Great Hero, as all Buddhas have turned the Dhamma Wheel by delivering the first discourse, so may you be able to turn the Dhamma Wheel by delivering the first discourse! [48]

Its full name is the Discourse on the Turning of the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*, SN 56.11). It was delivered to the Group-of-Five ascetics led by Koṇḍañña at the Deer Park in Isipatana, now known as Sarnath, near modern Varanasi, on the full moon day of July (*Āsāḷha*). It speaks about the two extreme practices which a recluse should avoid, and such fundamental teachings of the Buddha as the four noble truths and the eightfold noble path.

As the moon shines free from the five blemishes of mist, fog, cloud, Asurinda and smoke on a full moon day, so may you appear resplendent in the 10,000 world-element with your heart's desire fulfilled!

As the sun, liberated from the mouth of Asurinda, shines radiant with its own light, so may you shine bright with the glory of a Buddha after your liberation from all the existences!

As all rivers flow and are gathered into the great ocean, so may all Devas and humans congregate in your presence!"

Asurinda, literally, chief of Asuras, form a class of inferior deities. In fact, Asuras are inhabitants of one of the four woeful states. There are more than one Asurinda, but here the word refers to Rāhu, who captures the moon or the sun by means of his mouth. Such a seizure is believed to be the cause of the eclipse of the moon or the sun.

In this manner, Devas and humans proclaimed his glory and offered auspicious words of prayer. Then Sumedha, who had thus been offered resounding words of encouragement, complete with good wishes and admiration, entered a great forest in the Himālayas, being determined to practise and fulfil the ten perfections. [49]

[This section in the Great Chronicles was followed by chapter VII called "On Miscellany" in the original. That has now been moved to the Further Explanations, and is now entitled The First Treatise on the Perfections.

There is also a Second Treatise on the Perfections, which has been extracted from the original Further Explanations, but is now set off as a standalone piece.

Chapter VIII, entitled "Eighteen *Abhabbaṭṭhānas*" is also now included in the Further Explanations, under the heading Eighteen Impossible Rebirths.

We therefore move now to chapter IX: The Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Buddhas, which continues the story.]

IX: The Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Buddhas

The definition of the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) in the commentary is this (BvA, PTS 2):

> *Ito heṭṭhā kappa-sata-sahassādhikesu catūsu asaṅkheyyesu uppannānaṁ pañca-vīsatiyā Buddhānaṁ uppanna-kappādi-pariccheda-vasena paveṇi-vitthāra-kathā Buddhavaṁso nāma.*

From this definition the meaning of the Chronicles of the Buddhas should be understood as:

> A description and exposition of the chronicles of the 25 Buddhas, who came into being over the past four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, with their 32 particulars, such as the aeons concerned, their names, clans, families, etc., which is known as the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*).

Though the chronicle of all these Buddhas with their particulars, such as the aeons, etc., is called the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), when each of them is spoken of, the same term (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) is applicable to the life-story of each Buddha. For a parallel, though the word Saṅgha is a term for the whole Saṅgha of noble ones, each and every one of them can also be called Saṅgha.

1. The Chronicle of Buddha Dīpaṅkara

In this section on the Chronicle of the Buddha Dīpaṅkara, his life story with the aeon to which he belonged, etc. will be dealt with.

In the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), the account of Buddha Dīpaṅkara does not contain in detail the events that took place at the time of his conception and birth. Only this much is mentioned about him in the Story of Sumedha (*Sumedha-kathā*, Bv, 2.34-35):

> *Evaṁ me siddhippattassa, vasī-bhūtassa sāsane,*
> *Dīpaṅkaro nāma Jino, uppajji Loka-nāyako.*
> *Uppajjante ca jāyante, bujjhante Dhamma-desane,*
> *caturo nimitte nāddasaṁ, jhāna-rati-samappito.*

> The Bodhisatta, the recluse Sumedha, says: When I have thus become accomplished in the absorptions (*jhāna*) and super knowledges (*abhiññā*), there appeared Buddha Dīpaṅkara, lord of the whole world.
>
> Being totally absorbed in the bliss of the absorptions, I had not seen the wondrous phenomena that took place on the four occasions of his conception, birth, Awakening and the delivery of the first discourse.

Thus the Chronicles of the Buddhas text refers only briefly to the appearance of Buddha Dīpaṅkara in the story of Sumedha.

It is only in the commentary that we find the full story of Buddha Dīpaṅkara, with details of the events in chronological order, starting from the episode of his rebirth in the abode of Tusita Gods.

Early Life

Four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons before the present Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*), there appeared in one aeon four Buddhas (*sāra-maṇḍa-kappa*); the first three were Taṇhaṅkara, Medhaṅkara and Saraṇaṅkara, one after another; and after that came an inclusive period (*antara-kappa*).

> [As explained in the Further Explanations there are 256 inclusive periods in one aeon.]

Then King Sudeva reigned in the city of Rammavatī. During his reign, Bodhisatta Dīpaṅkara was enjoying life in the [116] celestial abode of Tusita after his fulfilment of the perfections. Deities from the 10,000 world-element approached him with a request. In compliance with which, the Bodhisatta took conception in the womb of Sumedhā, Queen of Sudeva, on the full moon day of July (*Āsāḷha*) when the moon was in conjunction with the constellation of *Uttarāsāḷha*. Having been attended to by a great retinue and after ten full months, the Bodhisatta was born.

At the moment of his conception and birth, there appeared 32 portentous phenomena such as the trembling of the thousand world-elements, etc.

> These 32 phenomena usually take place on the four occasions of every Bodhisatta's conception, birth, Awakening and teaching of the first discourse. These phenomena, common to all Bodhisattas, will be described when we come to the Chronicle of Buddha Gotama. In the commentary on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), however, these 32

phenomena and their subsequent happenings were elaborately told in the chapter on Bodhisatta Dīpaṅkara's conception.

Thereafter, Prince Dīpaṅkara was brought up in luxury, and when he came of age, he ascended the throne. As a king, he lived in three golden palaces by rotation for 10,000 years, namely, Haṁsa, Koñca and Mayūra. There were about 300,000 well-ornamented female attendants. His chief consort was Padumā and his son, Prince Usabhakkhandha.

Enjoying a divine-like kingly life in the three palaces, Prince Dīpaṅkara went out to the royal garden to enjoy himself. On the way, he saw an old man, a sick man and a dead man who were Deva messengers. Overcome by spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*), he returned from the garden and entered the city. When he wanted to go out again to the garden for the fourth time, he summoned his elephant-keeper and said: "Today, I will visit the royal garden for sightseeing. Get the elephants ready." – "Very well, your majesty," said the royal elephant-keeper and he had 84,000 elephants prepared. Dressed in a costume offered by Deva Vissakamma and accompanied by 84,000 elephants and a large army of troops, he entered the garden riding the state elephant. Having descended from the elephant's back, he roamed about, sightseeing all over the garden, sat on a cool and pleasant stone slab and aspired to go forth from the world.

Then Mahā Brahma, an Arahat living in the Suddhāvāsa abode, brought the eight requisites and appeared at a place where he could be seen. Seeing the eight requisites, the Bodhisatta asked what they were and when told that they were the requisites for a monk, he took off his royal attire and handed it over to the royal treasurer. Then he cut off his hair with his sword and threw his hair up into the sky.

Then, Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, took the hair knot in a golden receptacle and placed it in a shrine (*cetiya*) called Makuṭa, which is on Mount Meru and is three leagues in size and built of emerald stones.

The Bodhisatta then put on the robes offered by the Brahma and threw up into the sky his old raiment which was received and enshrined by Brahma in the cloth shrine (*dussa-cetiya*), which is twelve leagues in size, in the Suddhāvāsa Brahma abode.

A crore of people, who had heard of the prince's donning of the robe, followed his example and became monks themselves. Together with these monks, who

had thus followed in his footsteps, Bodhisatta Dīpaṅkara practised the austerities (*dukkara-cariyā*). On the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), on which he was to become a Buddha, he entered a town for alms food. It was the day that townsfolk happened to be making pure milk rice for propitiating gods. Nevertheless, the food was offered to the Bodhisatta and his 10 million of followers.

Having taken the milk rice, the Bodhisatta spent the daytime in the Sāla grove of the neighbourhood, and in the evening, leaving behind all of his followers, he headed alone to the Mahā Bodhi tree. [117]

Awakening

On the way, the Bodhisatta accepted eight handfuls of grass from a naked ascetic (*ājīvaka*), Sunanda by name, and no sooner had he spread out the grass at the foot of the Bodhi tree, the unconquered seat (*aparājita-pallaṅka*), which was 53 cubits in size, appeared.

> With regard to the size of the seat which was 53 cubits, some say the size means the height and others say it means the breath as found in the sub-commentaries of the Inwa Period. These commentarial statements in detail will be dealt with when we come to the story of Buddha Gotama.

Sitting cross-legged on the unconquered seat, under the Pepper (*Pipphalī*) Bodhi tree, the Bodhisatta put forth energy at four levels, where one would be reduced to skin, sinews, bones and where his flesh and blood would dry up, and he overcame Māra and his army.

He gained knowledge of previous existences (*pubbe-nivāsa-ñāṇa*) in the first watch of the night; knowledge of the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu-ñāṇa*) in the middle watch; and contemplated, in the last watch, the doctrine of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), the revolving of the wheel of Saṁsāra, in forward order, and in the backward order, the stopping of it. Thereafter, he entered upon the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) through breathing meditation (*ānāpānassati*); emerging from it and reflecting on the five aggregates, he discerned the 50 characteristics concerning rise and fall of these aggregates and developed insight (*vipassanā*), up to the stage of the knowledge of a change of

lineage (*gotrabhū-ñāṇa*).[52] As soon as the sun rose, this insight development led to the penetration of the path and fruition of an Arahat, of all the attributes of a Buddha, and to the incomparable Buddhahood which is supreme in the three worlds.

After attaining Buddhahood, the Buddha spent seven days at each of the seven sites around the Bodhi tree, enjoying the bliss of fruition (*phala-samāpatti*). Having granted Brahma's request to him to teach, the Buddha delivered the first discourse, the Discourse on the Turning of the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*) at Sunandārāma and 10 billion humans, Devas and Brahmas realized the four truths.

At the time of his Awakening and that of his teaching the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, 32 portentous phenomena occurred. These phenomena on the four occasions, when Bodhisatta Dīpaṅkara was conceived, born, become a Buddha and taught the first discourse, occurred unknown or unseen by the recluse Sumedha as he was absorbed in the bliss of the absorptions (*jhāna*).

After teaching the first discourse, Buddha Dīpaṅkara set out on a journey for the benefit of humans, Devas and Brahmas. While staying at Sudassana monastery in Rammavatī, at the invitation of the citizens, the Buddha went out to accept the alms food offered by them.

While he was partaking of the food, there took place a violent earthquake as a result of Sumedha's contemplation of the perfections. The people, present on that occasion, were frightened and asked the Buddha about the cause of the earthquake. On hearing from the Buddha that there was nothing to fear as the cause was Sumedha's contemplation of the perfections, they visited and acclaimed him, who thereafter entered the forest, as has been told in the story of Sumedha.

What remains to be told is the following: When the citizens of Rammavatī had finished their offering of alms food to Buddha Dīpaṅkara and his 400,000 monastics, they paid respects to the Buddha with flowers, scents, etc., and

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[52] The wisdom that helps one cut off the heritage of sensual-consciousness and evolve the lineage of the *rūpa*-class of exalted consciousness.

assembled to listen to his discourse. Buddha Dīpaṅkara then addressed the assembly (BvA, PTS 119): [118]

> *Dānaṁ nāma sukhādīnaṁ, nidānaṁ paramaṁ mataṁ*
> *Nibbānaṁ pana sogānaṁ patiṭṭhāti pavuccati.*
>
> Giving should be understood as the noble cause of human and divine happiness and the happiness of Nibbāna; it is said to be the basis of divine bliss.

Beginning with these words the pleasant talk on the practice of giving (*dāna-kathā*) was given.

Next, the talk on morality (*sīla-kathā*) was given in detail (BvA, PTS 120):

> *Sīlaṁ nāmetaṁ idha-loka-para-loka-sampattīnaṁ mūlaṁ.*
>
> Morality means the root of various forms of prosperity in this life and the next.

Next, Buddha Dīpaṅkara gave a talk on the divine abodes (*sagga-kathā*) to explain as to which morality leads to which divine happiness. "This divine abode is desirable, pleasant and delightful, and indeed happy. This abode provides constant merriment and gaiety. The Four Great Kings enjoy celestial happiness for 9,000,000 years in terms of human reckoning." In this way, the benefit of heavenly attainment was taught.

After persuading, convincing and inspiring the people with this teaching so that they might be inclined to perform giving and morality, the Buddha proceeded to teach that even such heavenly bliss was not permanent and that one should not crave for it. In this way, the Buddha pointed out the disadvantages, unworthiness and foulness of sensual pleasures and also the advantages of emancipation from them. He ended his discourse with a talk on the deathless Nibbāna.

With this discourse given to the people, the Buddha established some of them in the three refuges, some in the five precepts, some in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*), Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmi-phala*), Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-phala*) and some in the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*). Some in the threefold

knowledges, the sixfold super knowledges, or the eight attainments.[53] The Buddha then left the city of Rammavatī and entered Sudassana monastery.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. Having spent 49 days in the neighbourhood of the Bodhi tree after his Awakening, Buddha Dīpaṅkara delivered the first discourse at Sunandārāma at the request of Mahā Brahma and administered the Dhamma, the elixir of immortality to one billion Devas and humans. This was the first occasion (*Dhammābhisamaya*) of the Buddha's teaching.

2. Next, knowing that his son, Prince Usabhakkhandha, had become intellectually mature, Buddha Dīpaṅkara gave a discourse and administered the Dhamma, the elixir of immortality, to 900 million Devas and humans headed by the prince.

3. Finally, after defeating the heretics near the acacia tree at the city-gate of Rammavatī and displaying the twin miracle of water and fire, the Buddha taught the Abhidhamma, sitting on the stone slab of Paṇḍukambala at the foot of a Pāricchattaka tree in Tāvatiṁsa heaven, and administered the Dhamma, the elixir of immortality, to 900 million Devas and Brahmas headed by a Deva who, in his previous existence, had been the Buddha's mother, Sumedhā Devī. [119]

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were three occasions of a meeting (*sannipāta*) of Buddha Dīpaṅkara's disciples, one of them being at Sunandārama, where Arahats, numbering about 1,000 billion from all regions, specially met for the first time.

2. Next, the disciples' meeting took place on Mount Nārada. Once, while wandering from place to place with 400,000 monastics, Buddha Dīpaṅkara arrived at the delightful Mount Nārada which was full of marvellous features. The mountain was occupied by a Yakkha named Naradeva. People brought human beings as sacrificial offering in his honour annually.

3. Seeing that the people were endowed with the merits of their past deeds to rely upon, the Buddha ascended the mountain alone, leaving behind his

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[53] The eight attainments (*samapatti*) are the four form absorptions (*rūpa-jhāna*) and the four formless absorptions (*arūpa-jhāna*).

monastics. Thereupon, the Yakkha became furious and caused a trembling of the mountain to scare the Buddha away. On seeing the Buddha serene and undisturbed although he had used all his might to frighten him, it occurred to him thus: "This great monk is indeed wonderful! Powerful indeed is he! The evil consequences of what I have done will come back to me. There is no refuge for me other than this great monk. Like a man, who slips and falls onto the ground, has to rely on the same ground to get up, I will now take refuge in this very monk."

With this thought, he bowed before the Buddha, touching his head on the Buddha's feet, the soles of which were adorned with 108 signs. He also begged the Buddha's pardon and took refuge in him. Then the Buddha gave him talks on generosity, morality, etc., in serial order. By the end of which, Naradeva and his retinue of 10,000 Yakkhas were established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

On the day Naradeva thus became a Stream-enterer, people from all over Jambudīpa brought a man from each village to make sacrificial offerings to the Yakkha. They also brought with them large quantities of sesame, rice, beans of various kinds, butter, ghee, honey, molasses, etc. Naradeva handed back all these food-stuffs to the people and entrusted the men, originally meant for the sacrifice, to the Buddha.

Then the Buddha ordained these men as summoned monastics (*ehi-bhikkhu*) and helped them achieved Awakening within seven days. On the full moon day of February (*Magha*), staying in the middle of one billion Arahats, the Buddha gave instructions in the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) at the disciples' meeting having four features.

> A summoned monastic does not need to seek the bowl, robes, etc., to become a recluse. On being summoned by the Buddha, saying: "Come, O monk," his appearance as a layman vanishes, and he assumes the appearance of a monk of 60 years' standing in the Saṅgha.

The four features of a Disciples' meeting are:

1. All participants are summoned monastics (*ehi-bhikkhu*).
2. All participants have attained the sixfold super knowledges (*chaḷ-abhiññā*).
3. All participants come together without being called by the Buddha.

4. The congregation takes place on the full moon day of the month, on the Observance Day (*Uposatha*) of the fifteenth.

The story above of the divine Yakkha, Naradeva, comes from the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary.[54]

In the Chronicles of the Buddhas, however, just this simple narration is given (Bv 3.11):

> Again, when Buddha Dīpaṅkara had gone into solitude on the top of Mount Nārada, there gathered one billion Arahats who were free from the defilements.

Once, Buddha Dīpaṅkara observed the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) on Mount Sudassana. When the Rains Retreat was over, the people of Jambudīpa went to the mountain to celebrate their annual mountain-top festival. They then happened to encounter the Buddha. They listened to his [120] discourse and were so delighted with it that they became monks. When the Buddha taught them again on the Great Invitation (*Mahā-pavāraṇā*) day, at the full moon of October (*Assayuja*), the newcomers became Arahats through the stages of insight (*vipassanā*) and of the path (*magga*) as a result of their contemplation of conditioned things in the three planes of existence. The Buddha held the Invitation ceremony with 900 billion Arahats.

> The Invitation is a formal ceremony concluding the Rains Retreat in which each monastic invites criticism from his fellow monastics in respect of what has been seen, heard or suspected about his conduct.

The ordinary sermons, given by Buddha Dīpaṅkara, led to the realization of the four truths, and the attainment of liberation by thousands of beings, by countless individuals.

At that time, the thoroughly purified teaching of the Buddha spread far and wide; it was understood by innumerable beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas; it was full and complete with exhortations on morality and such virtues.

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[54] [See PTS 254 ff, but it is included in the story of Buddha Kakusandha, not Buddha Dīpaṅkara].

Buddha Dīpaṅkara, the knower of the three realms, was always attended upon by 400,000 Arahat disciples who were immensely powerful with the sixfold super knowledges (*abhiññā*).

During the Dispensation of Buddha Dīpaṅkara, those who died as learners (*sekkha*) while trying for Awakening in vain, become the scorn of all.

The teaching of Buddha Dīpaṅkara spread throughout the whole world and remained glorious forever with Arahats who had extirpated their foe, namely the defilements, and who were not disturbed by various sense objects and thus free of impurities and the pollutants (*āsava*).

Particulars of Buddha Dīpaṅkara

Buddha Dīpaṅkara's birth place was the city of Rammavatī.

His father was King Sudeva and his mother was Queen Sumedhā.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Sumaṅgala and Ven. Tissa.

His attendant was Ven. Sāgata.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Nandā and Ven. Sunandā.

His Bodhi tree was a Pepper (*Pipphalī*) tree.

His male supporters were Tapussa and Bhallika.

His female supporters were Sirimā and Koṇā.

His height was 80 cubits. He was splendid like a pillar of blazing light and a great Sāla tree in full bloom.

> The advantage of giving these particulars is this: Had they not been given, he might have been mistaken for a Yakkha, a Deva, a Māra, or a Brahma. One could think it is not strange at all that the wonderful events should occur to such a divine being. This would have led to the wrong notion that it was not worthwhile to listen to his teaching. Then there would have been no possibility of realization of the attainment of liberation. On the other hand, the particulars would give rise to the right belief that: "Powerful indeed is this human being." With this belief, beings would listen to his teaching and could understand the truth or could attain liberation. Hence such details were given.

Buddha Dīpaṅkara's radiance spread by itself, i.e. without his exercising any power, to all the directions reaching twelve leagues.

His lifespan was 100,000 years.[55]

There are also some more particulars in the commentaries which are not contained in the text but which, the commentaries state, must be told.

While leading a layman's life, Buddha Dīpaṅkara had three palaces: Haṁsa, [121] Koñca, and Mayūra.

His chief consort was Padumā Devī, who had 300,000 female attendants.

His son was Usabhakkhandha.

The duration of his reign was 10,000 years.

When he renounced the world, he went forth on an elephant.

When he became a Buddha, he lived at Nandārāma.

Living throughout such a long period, Buddha Dīpaṅkara saved a large number of beings from suffering.

Having made the three divisions of the true Dhamma, learning (*pariyatti*), practice (*paṭipatti*) and penetration (*paṭivedha*), shine forth throughout the world, and having liberated beings, Buddha Dīpaṅkara and his disciples realized final peace, the way a mass of fire goes out after blazing with bright flames.

The glory of that Buddha Dīpaṅkara, his assemblage of 400,000 Arahats, etc., who were all his disciples, and the signs on both his feet, have all ceased to exist. Impermanent are all conditioned things! They are indeed unsubstantial!

In this way, Buddha Dīpaṅkara, who had penetrated all four noble truths without exception, attained Parinibbāna at Nandārāma. In the same park was erected a shrine (*cetiya*), 30 leagues in height and dedicated to him. It was made of powdered red orpiment mixed with oil and butter, and in it were enshrined his relics which were in an indestructible and undispersed mass, a natural phenomenon common to all long-lived Buddhas. The people of Jambudīpa came together and completed the shrine with decorations of the seven kinds of gems.

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[55] This much is given in the Pāḷi text.

2. The Chronicle of Buddha Koṇḍañña

Early Life

The aeon in which Buddha Dīpaṅkara appeared came eventually to an end. When one immeasurable (*asaṅkhyeyya*) number of aeons had passed after that, there appeared Buddha Koṇḍañña in a certain aeon.

> *Asaṅkhyeyya* is a number which is immeasurable, and the period between the previous Buddha Dīpaṅkara and the following Buddha Koṇḍañña is called a *Buddhantara-asaṅkhyeyya* as it is to be understood as an immeasurable interval between two Buddhas.

This is how Buddha Koṇḍañña appeared: At the end of his fulfilment of the perfections for 16 immeasurables[56] and 100,000 aeons, while enjoying his life in the divine abode of Tusita which is a tradition followed by all Bodhisattas, and having complied with the request made by other Devas for becoming a Buddha, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of Queen Sujātā at King Sunanda's palace in the city of Rammavatī. At the moment of his conception there occurred the usual 32 portent phenomena.

The Bodhisatta was born after ten months had passed. At the moment of his birth also, the portents became manifest and other miraculous events that were associated with every Bodhisatta took place.[57] [122]

Since the Bodhisatta belonged to the clan of Koṇḍañña, he was named Prince Koṇḍañña. When he came of age, he enjoyed a kingly life for 10,000 years, living in the three most delightful golden palaces: Suci, Suruci and Subha, with his chief consort Rucī Devī, and being waited upon and entertained by 300,000 female dancers and attendants.

While Koṇḍañña was living thus, Queen Rucī Devī gave birth to a son, named Vijitasena. On seeing the four omens of the aged, the sick, the dead, and the recluse, the Bodhisatta renounced the world, riding a chariot drawn by four

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[56] [The original translation said "60 immeasurables," but no Bodhisatta has to fill the perfections for that long, the quickest is 4 immeasurables and 100,000 aeons, and the slowest is 16 immeasurables and 100,000 aeons, see the Further Explanations. This figure of 16 is confirmed in BvA.]

[57] All this will be mentioned in detail when we come to the Chronicle of Buddha Gotama.

thoroughbred horses. Prince Koṇḍañña's renunciation was admired by 100 million people, who became recluses too.

Bodhisatta Koṇḍañña, with these 100 million recluses, practised austerities (*dukkara-cariyā*). On the day he was to attain Awakening, the Bodhisatta partook of the milk rice offered by Yasodharā, daughter of a wealthy man of the village of Sunanda. He passed the daytime in the local grove of Sāla trees and in the evening, he went alone to the Bodhi tree, leaving behind all his followers. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass offered by a naked ascetic named Sunandaka and as soon as he spread the grass at the foot of a beautiful Sāla tree, the unconquered seat (*aparājita-pallaṅka*), which was 57 cubits in height, appeared.

Awakening

Sitting cross-legged on the seat, the Bodhisatta put forth energy at four levels and overcame Māra and his army; then he gained knowledge of previous lives (*pubbe-nivāsa-ñāṇa*) in the first watch; and the knowledge of the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu-ñāṇa*) in the middle watch; and in the last watch he contemplated the doctrine of consditional origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) in forward order and backward order. Thereafter, he entered upon the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) through breathing meditation, emerged from it and, while reflecting on the five aggregates, he discerned 50 characteristics concerning the rise and fall of the aggregates and developed insight up to the change of lineage (*gotrabhū-ñāṇa*). Gaining the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) and penetrating all the attributes of a Buddha, he become a Buddha at sunrise.

After becoming a Buddha, the Buddha Koṇḍaññā spent seven days at each of the seven places in the neighbourhood of the Bodhi tree. In the eighth week, he accepted the request made by a Brahma for his teaching and he considered who he should teach first, ahead of all others. Remembering the 800 million recluses who had followed his example of renunciation, he thought of their whereabouts and came to know that they were staying at Devavana, the Divine Grove of Arundhavatī town, eighteen leagues from the Bodhi tree. Taking his bowl and robe, he arrived at their place at once by means of his miraculous power.

Seeing Buddha Koṇḍaññā approaching them from a distance and being moved by their devotional faith in him, the 100 million recluses extended him a warm welcome, took his bowl and robe, prepared the seat and paid respects to him.

After which, they sat down at suitable places, surrounding the Buddha. Then the Buddha taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse which was also delivered by all previous Buddhas.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

Buddha Koṇḍañña, who was endowed with unlimited glory, incomparable retinue and fame, countless attributes, formidable appearance to those who are impudent, forbearance like the mass of earth, morality which is extensive like the mass of water in the ocean, concentration, steadfast like Mount Meru, wisdom infinite like the open space, always engaged himself in teaching the faculties (*indriya*), powers (*bala*), constituents of Awakening (*bojjhaṅga*), factors of the path (*maggaṅga*), truths (*sacca*) as revealed in the 37 things on the side of the Awakening (*Bodhi-pakkhiya-dhamma*) for the benefit of large numbers of beings. [123]

1. At this teaching of the first discourse, 1,000 billion Devas and humans headed by 100 million monastics realized the four truths.

2. This was followed, at one time, by the delivery of the Discourse on the Blessings (*Maṅgala-sutta*, Snp 2.4) to a great gathering of Devas and Brahmas, who arrived from the 10,000 world-element, assuming minute and subtle bodies so that there could be enough room for them all in the universe. At this gathering, an unknown Deva raised the question of blessings (*maṅgala*), asking as to what helped to bring about a perfect life with prosperity. Addressing that Deva, the Buddha taught the Discourse on the Blessings. At this teaching of the Discourse on the Blessings, 900 billion Devas and humans became Arahats. Those who became Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*), etc., were innumerable.

3. When Buddha Koṇḍañña taught the Dhamma, staying in the sky after defeating the heretics by a display of the twin miracle of water and fire, 880 billion humans, Devas and Brahmas attained the Arahat fuition (*Arahatta-phala*). Those who were established in the three lower fruition stages, were innumerable.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

There were also three occasions of Buddha Koṇḍañña's disciples' meetings (*sannipāta*):

1. The first occasion took place in Canda Park, with Candavatī being his supporting city, when he observed the first Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), after he had become a Buddha penetrating the four truths. In that city, two young men, Bhadda, son of Sucindhara, and Subhadda, son of Yasodharā, whose fathers belonged to the lineage of immensely rich Brahmin families, listened to Buddha Koṇḍañña's discourse. As a result, they developed devotional faith, donned the robes together with 10,000 youths in the presence of the Buddha and became Arahats. There, the Buddha, being surrounded by 1,000 billion Arahats led by Ven. Subhadda, recited the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) on the full moon day of June (*Jeṭṭha*).

2. Some time later, Buddha Koṇḍañña's son, Prince Vijitasena, after becoming a monastic, became an Arahat. The Buddha then recited the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) in the midst of 10 billion Arahats with Ven. Vijitasena at their head.

3. Finally, at one time, while visiting the countryside, Buddha Koṇḍañña ordained King Udena and his host of followers. When they all became Arahats, the Buddha, being surrounded by 900 million Arahats, headed by Ven. Udena, recited the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*).

Bodhisatta Vijitāvī

At that time our Bodhisatta was a Universal Monarch, Vijitāvī by name, ruling in the city of Candavatī, and he received the prediction from Buddha Koṇḍañña. Having numerous distinguished hosts of attendants, he held under his sway the whole stretch of land in the universe up to the end of the four oceans, by righteousness, not by force, nor by arms.

Then Buddha Koṇḍañña, setting out on a journey followed by 1,000 billion Arahats, arrived at Candavatī. Hearing of the Buddha's visit, the Bodhisatta King [124] Vijitāvī extended a warm welcome to the Buddha, made arrangements for his lodging and invited him and his disciples for the next day's meal. The following day, he prepared the meals properly and performed a ceremony of alms food offering on an elaborate scale.

Having thus performed, the king listened to the Buddha's discourse, which was given in appreciation of the offering. At the end of the discourse, he made a request: "May the venerable ones spend the three months of the Rains Retreat

(*Vassa*) in the city of Candavatī, to bring blessings to the citizens." And he performed matchless deeds of generosity to the congregation of monks led by the Buddha during the whole period of the Rains Retreat.

Then Buddha Koṇḍañña declared a prophecy: "Innumerable aeons from the present one, in the aeon that appears after three immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, you will definitely become a Buddha."

> The prophecy, like the one made by Buddha Dīpaṅkara, is given in full detail in the Pāḷi, mentioning the practice of austerity and other events, but they are not repeated here as they have already been given in the story of Sumedha.[58]

Having declared the prophecy, Buddha Koṇḍañña carried on teaching. After listening to the Buddha's discourse, the king's faith in the Buddha grew to a great extent and being desirous of achieving Buddhahood, he made an offering of his vast kingdom to the Buddha, in whose presence he became a monk. After learning the Three Baskets, he acquired the eightfold attainment and the fivefold super knowledges (*abhiññā*). Reaching the apex of the super knowledges, he was reborn in the Brahma abode on his death.

Particulars of Buddha Koṇḍañña

Buddha Koṇḍañña's place of birth was the city of Rammavatī.

His father was King Sunanda, and his mother was Sujātā Devī.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Bhadda and Ven. Subhadda.

His attendant was Ven. Anuruddha.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Tissā and Ven. Upatissā.

His Bodhi tree was a Beautiful Sāla (*Sāla-kalyaṇī*).

His male lay attendants were Soṇa and Upasoṇa.

His female lay attendants were Nandā and Sirimā.

His height was 88 cubits, and he shone like the moon or the sun at noon.

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[58] This statement is made after the declaration of prophecy made by each Buddha. We will leave out similar statements from the accounts of later Buddhas.

The lifespan then was 100,000 years and throughout that long period he saved beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, taking them out of the flood-waters of Saṁsāra and placing them on the shore of Nibbāna.

While a lay-prince, Buddha Koṇḍañña had three palaces: Suci, Suruci and Subha.

His female attendants were 300,000.

His chief consort was Rucī Devī, and his son Vijitasena.

He reigned for 10,000 years.

He used for his renunciation the chariot drawn by thoroughbred horses.

When he became Buddha, he stayed at Candārāma.

In Buddha Koṇḍañña's Dispensation, the earth with Arahats, whose pollutants (*āsavas*) were destroyed and who were purified of impurities, was in splendour like the open sky with stars and planets. That is to say, the colour of the Arahats' robes covered the surface of the whole earth.

The Arahats were of incomparable nobility. They were not at all disturbed by the eight vicissitudes of life; it was hard for the fiery tempered unruly people to approach them. When these Arahats, who were endowed with great fame, were desirous of passing into Nibbāna, they rose into the sky, about seven toddy palm trees high, like the lightning rushes into the murky clouds. They entered upon absorption attained with the fire-element as a meditation device (*tejo-kasiṇa-jhāna*) and [125] flashing a great light completely burned themselves in the sky and attained Parinibbāna.

The peerless glory of Buddha Koṇḍañña and his concentrated mind that was permeated with omniscience have all vanished. Unsubstantial and futile indeed are all conditioned things!

Buddha Koṇḍañña, who had fully realized the four noble truths, attained Parinibbāna at Candārāma. In the same park, a shrine, seven leagues high, was built. It was made of powdered red orpiment mixed with oil and butter and was dedicated to him.

The unbreakable relics of the Buddha, true to the nature of long-lived Awakened Ones, remained solid like golden images without falling into pieces. These relics were laid in the shrine and people from all over Jambudīpa

completed the construction by decorating it with the seven kinds of precious stones.

3. The Chronicle of Buddha Maṅgala

When one immeasurable period had elapsed after the aeon of Buddha Koṇḍañña, in one aeon there appeared four Buddhas: 1) Maṅgala, 2) Sumana, 3) Revata and 4) Sobhita in that order. The first of the four Buddhas therefore was Maṅgala.

Early Life

Having fulfilled the perfections for sixteen immeasurables and 100,000 aeons and on completion of his fulfilment of the perfections, Bodhisatta Maṅgala was reborn in Tusita which is a common abode of all Bodhisattas. While enjoying a divine life, he accepted the request made by the Devas and descended to the world of human beings to take conception in the womb of Uttarā, Queen of King Uttara, in the city of Uttara which excelled all other cities.

From the moment the Bodhisatta took conception, the light from the queen's body spread eight cubits all around and could not be overpowered even by sunlight and moonlight. Not requiring other lights, the queen moved about by means of her own luminescence with her maids of honour at her service.

The conception was guarded by celestial beings, and when ten months had elapsed the Bodhisatta was born in the excellent and delightful Uttaramadhura Park.

When Bodhisatta Maṅgala came of age, he ascended the throne. He lived in three golden palaces, namely, the most famous Yasavanta palace, the most delightful Rucimanta palace and the most splendid Sirimanta palace, together with his chief consort Yasavatī, and surrounded by 30,000 dancers who were exquisitely adorned. Thus he enjoyed kingly luxuries that were likened to divine comforts for 9,000 years. Queen Yasavatī gave birth to a son, named Sīvala.

The Bodhisatta saw the four omens of the aged, the sick, the dead and the recluse, and he renounced the world by going forth riding on the well decorated thoroughbred horse named Paṇḍara and became a monk. His renunciation example was followed by 30 million people who also donned the [126] robe.

With the 30 million monks, Buddha Maṅgala engaged in austerities (*dukkara-cariyā*) for eight months. On the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*) when he was

about to attain Buddhahood, he partook of the milk rice offered by Uttarā, the daughter of a wealthy man and a resident of the village of Uttara. After spending the daytime in the local Sāla grove, he left behind his host of monastics and went alone to the Mahā Bodhi tree in the evening. On the way, he accepted the eight handfuls of grass from a naked ascetic, Uttara by name. As soon as he spread the grass under the Ironwood (*Nāga*) Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat, which was 58 cubits high.

Awakening

Sitting cross-legged on that seat and putting forth energy at four levels, the Bodhisatta defeated Māra and his army. He acquired the knowledge of previous lives (*pubbe-nivāsa-ñāṇa*) in the first watch; and knowledge of the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu-ñāṇa*) in the middle watch of the night. In the last watch, however, he reflected on the doctrine of conditional origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) in forward and backward order, after which he entered upon the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) through breathing meditation (*ānāpānassati*). Having emerged from that absorption, he reflected on the five aggregates, discerned the 50 characteristics of their rise and fall and developed insight (*vipassanā*) up to the change of lineage (*gotrabhū-ñāṇa*). Gaining the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) and penetrating all attributes of a Buddha, he attained the incomparable state of a Buddha at sunrise.

Buddha Maṅgala's radiance shone forth more intensely than those of other Buddhas. The radiance from other Buddhas produced automatically without supernormal power, reached the distance of either 80 cubits or just an arms length. But Buddha Maṅgala's radiance shone day and night all over the 10,000 world-element. Because of such brilliance, not only all the surrounding objects, such as trees, the ground, forests, hills, oceans, etc., were illuminated, but, to say the least, pots and pans that were usually dirty and black with soot were lit up as if they were covered with gold.

The lifespan of people belonging to the period in which Buddha Maṅgala appeared was 90,000 years, and during that whole period everything was gold in colour. During his Dispensation, the sun, the moon, stars and planets had no light. Since there was no sunlight, the demarcation between day and night was not distinct.

Though there was absence of sunlight, people moved about attending to their business by means of the Buddha's radiance. Days and nights are recognized with the help of the chirps of birds that were normally heard in the morning and the blooms of flowers that are normally seen in the evening.

The question may be asked whether other Buddhas were lacking such glorious powers. The answer is: they were not, indeed, they also had such powers. They could make the radiance permeate the 10,000 world-element if they so desired. But while others had their natural luminescence of their bodies just within an arm's length, the radiance of Buddha Maṅgala's body always spread throughout the 10,000 world-element without having to be produced purposely because of the power of his wish made in a previous existence.

When Buddha Maṅgala was a Bodhisatta in one existence that was similar to that of Vessantara, he lived with his wife and children at a place that resembled Mount Vaṅka. Hearing that the Bodhisatta was very generous, a Yakkha named Kharadāṭhika, in the guise of a Brahmin, approached him to ask for his son and daughter.

The Bodhisatta handed his son and daughter over to the Brahmin most delightedly and thus caused the trembling of the great earth, 240,000 leagues in size, the bottom of which is touching the waters below.

Leaning against the wooden plank of the railing of the walkway, the Yakkha devoured up both children as though he chewed and ate a bundle of lotus stems while the Bodhisatta was looking on. [127]

While looking, he saw bright blood like flames of fire pouring out from the Yakkha's mouth as he opened it, but there arose not one iota of distress in him. Instead, he was greatly delighted and happy, thinking: "This is an excellent act of generosity."

He then expressed his wish: "As a result of this generous act of mine, may my body emanate radiance in future, bright like the blood in the Yakkha's mouth." Hence, in fulfilment of that wish, on becoming a Buddha, the brilliant natural radiance emanated and spread from Buddha Maṅgala's body all over the 10,000 world-element.

Besides, there was another wish made previously by Buddha Maṅgala. As a Bodhisatta, he once got an opportunity to pay homage to a shrine (*cetiya*)

dedicated to a Buddha. Thinking: "I should sacrifice my life to this Awakened One," he had his whole body wrapped up in cloth soaked with oil. He then filled a golden bowl, which was worth 100,000 pieces of money, with butter up to the brim which was about a cubit in diameter. In that golden bowl, he lighted 1,000 wicks and carried the bowl on his head. He also set his body ablaze and spent the whole night circumambulating the sacred shrine.

Though the Bodhisatta was paying homage thus till dawn, the heat could not touch even the pores of his body, as if he were living amidst lotus blooms. Indeed the nature of the Dhamma is such that it gives reciprocal protection from danger to one who protects it. Therefore the Buddha says (Ja 447.11):

> *Dhammo have rakkhati Dhamma-cāriṁ,*
> *Dhammo suciṇṇo sukham-āvahati,*
> *esānisaṁso Dhamme suciṇṇe:*
> *na duggatiṁ gacchati Dhamma-cārī.*
>
> The Dhamma surely protects one who lives by Dhamma, the Dhamma well-practiced brings happiness, this is the advantage of the Dhamma well-practiced: one who lives by Dhamma does not go to a bad destiny.

Also as a result of this act of merit, Buddha Maṅgala's natural body radiance spread throughout the 10,000 world-element.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After his Awakening, Buddha Maṅgala stayed for seven days at each of the seven sites near the Bodhi tree. He then accepted a Brahma's request for his teaching, and when he contemplated to whom he should teach, he saw the 30 million monastics who had donned the robe to follow his example and who were endowed with sufficing conditions (*upanissaya*) for the paths and fruitions.

Thinking that he would teach them first, the Buddha contemplated also their whereabouts and came to know that they were staying in the forest called Sirivana of the city of Sirivaḍḍhana, eighteen leagues away from the Mahā Bodhi tree. Taking with him his bowl and robe, the Buddha immediately appeared at the forest of Sirivana, using his psychic power.

On seeing the Buddha approaching them, the 30 million monastics, with faithful minds, welcomed the Buddha by taking his bowl and robe, prepared the seat for

him, and paid their respects to him. When all this had been done, surrounding the Buddha they took their appropriate seats.

Then the Buddha delivered the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse as all previous Buddhas had done. By the end of which, the 30 million monastics attained the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*). Devas and humans, numbering 100,000, realized the four truths.

2. Immediately before Buddha Maṅgala taught the Abhidhamma, he was staying near the city of Citta, his resort for food. Like our Buddha Gotama who performed the twin miracle of water and fire near the mango tree of the gardener, Kaṇḍa, near the city-gate of Sāvatthī, and defeated the heretics, so did Buddha Maṅgala display the twin miracle and defeat the heretics at the city-gate of Citta. He then went up to Tāvatiṁsa where he sat on the emerald stone slab called Paṇḍukambala at the foot of Pāricchattaka tree and taught [128] the Abhidhamma discourses to Devas and Brahmas. Then 1,000 billion Devas and Brahmas realized the four truths.

3. Before Buddha Maṅgala appeared, there was King Sunanda, in the city of Surabhi, who performed the duties necessary for acquisition of the wheel which is one of the seven treasures of a Universal Monarch. After fulfilment of the duties, the wheel treasure came into his possession.

When Buddha Maṅgala appeared, the wheel slipped from its place. Seeing this, King Sunanda became very unhappy and asked his Brahmin advisors: “Why has the wheel treasure that appeared by the power of my meritorious deeds slipped from its place?”

Then the Brahmins replied: “King, the wheel slips because the life of a Universal Monarch is nearing its end; or when the monarch becomes a monk; or because a Buddha appears. There is absolutely no danger of your life ending. You will live a very long life. Indeed, Buddha Maṅgala has now appeared in the world. That is the reason for the slipping of your wheel treasure.”

Having heard the reply given by the Brahmins, the Universal Monarch Sunanda with his retinue paid his respects to the wheel treasure and made a request thus: “I will do obeisance to Buddha Maṅgala by means of your glory, O wheel. Please do not disappear yet in the meantime.” Then the wheel returned to its original place.

Immensely delighted, the Universal Monarch Sunanda with his multitude of people, 30 leagues in size, approached Buddha Maṅgala who was indeed auspicious (*maṅgala*) for the whole world. The king gave alms on a grand scale to the Buddha and his Saṅgha. He offered the 100,000 Arahats pieces of cloth from Kāsi, to be made into robes, and all kinds of requisites to the Buddha. After the alms giving, he sat down at a suitable distance to listen to the Buddha's discourse. Likewise, Prince Anurāja, son of the Universal Monarch, took his seat.

Then Buddha Maṅgala gave the audience, headed by King Sunanda, the usual series of sermons beginning with generosity (*dāna-kathā*) and so on. This led to the attainment of Awakening with the fourfold analytical knowledge by the Universal Monarch Sunanda and his followers, numbering 900 million.

Contemplating on the deeds of merit done by them in the previous existence, the Buddha saw their past wholesome deeds that would bring them bowls and robes miraculously without looking for them. So he stretched out his right arm and uttered: "Come, O monks! (*Etha bhikkhavo!*)" Instantly all of them became monks with their hair being less than two fingers in length, carrying their respective bowls and putting on their respective robes and assuming the respectable appearance of great elders of 100 years' standing in the Saṅgha, and they surrounded the Buddha.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. While Buddha Maṅgala was sojourning in the city of Mekhala, his future chief disciples, the young men Sudeva and Dhammasena, who had 1,000[59] youthful companions each, became summoned monastics (*ehi-bhikkhu*) in the Buddha's presence, and when they became Arahats on the full moon of February (*Magha*), the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*) in the midst of 1,000 billion monks.

2. Again, the Buddha recited the same advice at the meeting of 10 billion monks, who had been ordained at the assembly of the Buddha's kinsmen that took place in Uttara Park. [129]

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[59] Or, according to the Sinhalese commentary, 10,000.

3. In the midst of 900 million monks, who took part in the Saṅgha meeting headed by the monastic who formerly was Sunanda the Universal Monarch, the Buddha repeated his recitation of the advice.

Bodhisatta Suruci

At the time of Buddha Maṅgala, our Bodhisatta was a Brahmin, Suruci by name, living at the village of Suruci. He was accomplished in the Vedic texts, glossaries (*nighaṇḍu*), rhetoric (*keṭubha*), grammar (*akkhara-pabheda*) and the Ancient Histories (*Itihāsa*) as the fifth treatise. He was clever in writing and reading poetry (*padaka*) as well as prose (*veyyākaraṇa*).

He was well-versed in materialist (*lokāyata*) philosophy, which was concerned not with spiritual matters but only with mundane affairs, and also in the art of reading bodily signs of a Great Man (*Mahā-purisa-lakkhaṇa*).

Having listened to the Buddha's talks on the Dhamma, Brahmin Suruci cultivated faith in him and took refuge in the Three Treasures. He then invited the Buddha and his disciples: "Please accept my offering of food for tomorrow."

"Brahmin, how many monks do you like to have?" asked the Buddha. "How many monks are there, venerable sir?" – "There are all together 1,000 billion," replied the Buddha, as it was the occasion when his disciples assembled for the first time. "Then venerable sir, together with all these monks, please accept my offering of the meals." The Buddha kept silent, showing his consent.

Having invited the Buddha, Bodhisatta Suruci went home and thought thus: "I can afford to give such a great number of monks rice gruel and pieces of cloth meant to be robes. But how can the seating for them be arranged?"

The Bodhisatta's thought caused warming of the stone slab, which was the seat of Sakka on Mount Meru, 84,000 leagues high.

Then Sakka contemplated thus: "Who is interested in removing me from this place?" When he looked for the cause of the warming of his seat, he saw Brahmin Suruci; it then occurred to him thus: "This Bodhisatta has invited the Saṅgha, led by the Buddha, for meals and is worrying about their accommodation. I should go there and take my share of merits." Assuming the appearance of a carpenter and carrying an axe in hand, he appeared before the Bodhisatta.

Sakka, as the carpenter, enquired: “Is there any job for a worker?” Seeing the carpenter, the Bodhisatta asked: “What can you do?” – “There is no craft that I do not know. If anybody wants to build a pavilion, a palace, a house, or any other building, that is my job.” – “Then I have something for you to do.” – “What is it?” – “I have invited 1,000 billion monks to tomorrow’s meal. Can you build a pavilion to accommodate them.” – “Yes, I can, provided you pay me.” – “Friend, I will.” – “Very well, I will construct it as you will make payment.” So saying, Sakka looked round for a certain plot of land.

The plot of land, twelve leagues in size, which was viewed by Sakka, became an evenly level ground like a meditation device (*kasiṇa*). Sakka looked around and made the wish: “Let a great pavilion made of the seven kinds of jewels, pleasing to the eye and richly adorned, appear from the earth.” And while he was watching, there rose up a great pavilion of jewels, splitting the earth’s surface. Its pillars of gold had lotus-vases of silver; its pillars of silver had lotus vases of gold; its pillars of rubies had lotus-vases of coral; its pillars of coral had lotus-vases of rubies, and its pillars of the seven kinds of jewels had lotus-vases of the seven kinds of jewels. [130]

Thereupon he looked at the pavilion and made the wish: “Let there be chains of tinkling golden bells hanging between the pillars in the pavilion.” As he was thus looking, the chains of tinkling golden bells appeared, hanging between one pillar and another. Fanned by a gentle breeze, the tinkling bells made a very sweet sound like the sound of music produced by the five kinds of musical instruments. It was like the time when celestial beings in heaven performed a concert.

Again, he made the wish: “Let there be festoons of heavenly perfumes, flowers and leaves hanging down.” At that moment, festoons of heavenly perfumes, flowers and leaves appeared hanging down.

Again, he made the wish: “Let seats for the 1,000 billion monks, costly spreads and bowl stands allowable to monks appear, breaking through the earth.” Instantly, these things appeared. Still again Sakka made the wish: “Let there be huge water pots in every corner.” Instantly, huge water pots appeared.

When all these had been created, Sakka went to the Bodhisatta Suruci and said: “Come, Brahmin, please have a look at your pavilion and make payment due to

me." The Bodhisatta went to the pavilion and while he was examining it, the whole frame of his body was suffused with the five kinds of joy.

While the Bodhisatta was looking at the pavilion, it occurred to him thus: "This pavilion could not have been made by a human being. On account of my wholesome desire to perform a great act of generosity and also of my virtues, surely Sakka's seat must have become warm. The warmth must have led the Lord of the Devas to construct this pavilion. With such a pavilion, it does not befit me to make offerings just for one day. For seven days I will perform a great act of generosity." He then accommodated the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha in the pavilion for seven days and offered them specially prepared milk rice.

When the milk rice was offered, it was not possible for the people alone to wait upon the monks, Devas too, one beside each man, participated in waiting upon them. The site which was twelve or thirteen leagues was not large enough for all the monastics. Therefore those monastics, who could not get seats, had to make their own accommodation there by exercising their respective powers.

The day the alms giving was over, all the monks' bowls were washed well, filled with clarified butter, ghee, honey and molasses for medicinal purposes, and were offered together with sets of three robes. The set of robes that was received by the most junior member of the Saṅgha was worth 100,000 pieces of money.

When Buddha Maṅgala was giving his discourse in appreciation of the alms given to him, he contemplated through his foreseeing wisdom: "This man has performed such an act of great alms giving. What will he become in the future?" Then he foresaw that Bodhisatta Suruci would definitely become a Buddha, Gotama by name, in one Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*) after two immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons had elapsed. He then called out to him and made a prophetic declaration: "When two immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons have elapsed, you will definitely become a Buddha, Gotama by name."

Hearing Buddha Maṅgala's prophecy, the Bodhisatta became elated and rejoiced, and it occurred to him thus: "The Buddha has predicted that I would certainly become a Buddha. What is the use of living a household life? I shall go forth immediately." Having abandoned the wealth of a rich Brahmin's household as though it were spittle, he became a monk in the presence of Buddha Maṅgala,

learned the Three Baskets, and attained the five super knowledges (*abhiññā*) and eight absorptions (*jhāna*), and without slackening from his absorptions, he was reborn in the Brahma world on his death. [131]

Particulars of Buddha Maṅgala

Buddha Maṅgala's birthplace was the city of Uttara.

His father was King Uttara and his mother was Queen Uttarā.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Sudeva and Ven. Dhammasena.

His attendant was Ven. Pāḷita.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Sīvalā and Ven. Asokā.

His Bodhi tree was an Ironwood (*Nāga*) tree.

His male supporters were the wealthy men Nanda and Visākha.

His female supporters were Anulā and Sutanā.

Buddha Maṅgala's height was 88 cubits.

His physical radiance always appeared in splendour throughout the 10,000 world-element. Sometimes they spread beyond the 10,000 world-element, reaching hundreds of thousands of world-elements.

The lifespan of people during his time was 90,000 years, and the Buddha lived throughout that period, rescuing such beings as humans, Devas and Brahmas out of the flood-waters of Saṁsāra and placing them on the shore of Nibbāna.

While a prince, the golden palaces he lived in were three viz., Yasavanta, Rucimanta, and Sirimanta.

His chief consort was Yasavatī, who had 30,000 female attendants.

His son was Sīvala.

He reigned for 9,000 years.

He went forth riding the horse named Paṇḍara.

After his Awakening he stayed in Uttara Park.

Just as counting the waves in the great ocean is impossible, so was the number of the Arahat disciples of Buddha Maṅgala.

Throughout the lifetime and Dispensation of Buddha Maṅgala who conveyed all the three kinds of beings to Nibbāna, there never was a single recluse who died with defilements. They all became Arahats and were pure when they passed away into Nibbāna.

Buddha Maṅgala, who had large numbers of followers and great fame, lighted the lamp of Dhamma and carried a great multitude of people from the currents of Saṁsāric to the shores of Nibbāna.

Like a mass of fire that had shone forth became extinct and like the sun that has set, the Buddha attained Parinibbāna, revealing thereby the nature of impermanence, suffering and the uncontrollability of conditioned things to humans together with Devas and Brahmas.

As soon as Buddha Maṅgala had thus passed away, his physical radiance disappeared, and the entire 10,000 world-element were left in total darkness. Then there occurred a great lamentation of people throughout the world-elements.

The peerless glory of Buddha Maṅgala and his concentrated mind that was permeated with omniscience have all vanished. Unsubstantial and futile indeed are all conditioned things!

Buddha Maṅgala, who had fully realized the four noble truths, thus attained Parinibbāna at Uttara Park.[60] In the same park, a shrine, 30 leagues high, was built with the soft plaster made of powdered red orpiment mixed with oil and butter; and it was dedicated to Buddha Maṅgala.

The unbreakable relics of the Buddha, true to the nature of long-lived Awakened Ones, remained solid like a golden image without falling into pieces. These relics were placed [132] in the shrine and people from all over Jambudīpa completed the construction by decorating it with the seven kinds of precious stones.

In this way, Buddha Maṅgala, by means of his physical radiance, outshone the various radiances of the sun, moon, stars and planets, Devas and Brahmas throughout the 10,000 world-element of the fields of birth (*jāti-khetta*), making

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[60] So called because its fruit trees bore more fruits and its flower trees had more flowers than those of other gardens.

no difference between day and night, and then passed away into Nibbāna as though he had simultaneously created massive darkness.

> There are three regions associated with the Buddha: 1) The fields of birth (*jāti-khetta*), the 10,000 world-element that quaked at the time of his conception, birth, Awakening, giving up of the life-sustaining mental process and attaining Nibbāna; 2) the 100,000 world-elements throughout which his teaching spread (*āṇā-khetta*); and 3) the infinite world-elements which form the field of investigation of his omniscience (*visaya-khetta*).

4. The Chronicle of Buddha Sumana

The lifespan, which was 90,000 years in Buddha Maṅgala's time, gradually decreased to ten years; and again the lifespan increased therefrom, it again increased to immeasurables, and when it reached 90,000 years on its decline, Bodhisatta Sumana, having fulfilled the perfections, was reborn in Tusita, a practice common to all Bodhisattas. Consenting to the request made by Devas and Brahmas, he descended to the human abode and took conception in the womb of Sirimā, Queen of Sudatta, in the city of Mekhala.

Early Life

At the time of his conception, 32 prophetic phenomena became manifest. At his birth, which took place after ten months, similar phenomena also took place, and all miracles, associated with all Bodhisattas, occurred.

When he came of age, Prince Sumana occupied three golden palaces, namely, Canda, Sucanda and Vataṁsa, which he enjoyed for 90,000 years, a blissful life resembling that of Devas, with his chief consort Vataṁsikā[61] who was waited upon by beautifully adorned maids of honour, 83,000 of them.

> With regard to the number of these maids, it should not be taken that they all waited upon the princess at the same time; it was the total number of all those ladies who served her in turn. [The author stated there were 6,300,000 maids, but the number given in BvA is as above.]

When Princess Vataṁsikā gave birth to a son, Anupama, the Bodhisatta saw the four omens of the aged, the sick, the dead and the recluse, and he renounced the

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[61] So named because she was comparable to a flower that is worn on the crown of each and every person.

world, following the tradition of all Bodhisattas, in the clothings offered by Devas and, riding an elephant. His example of renunciation was followed by 300 million people who became recluses like him.

Awakening

Bodhisatta Sumana with the 300 million recluses engaged in the practice of the austerities (*dukkara-cariyā*). On the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), having partaken of the milk rice offered by Anupamā, the daughter of a wealthy man of the village of Anoma, he spent the daytime in the local Sāla grove. In the evening, he left all his followers and went alone to the Bodhi tree. On the way, he accepted the eight handfuls of grass offered by Anupama, a naked ascetic, and spread it under the Ironwood Bodhi tree; suddenly there appeared the unconquered seat of 30 cubits in height.

Sitting cross-legged on that seat as has been described previously in the Chronicle of Buddha Maṅgala, he dispelled Māra and his hordes, attained Perfect Self-Awakening, the crowning glory of the three worlds, and uttered the verse of elation, beginning with *Aneka-jāti saṁsaraṁ*, "through the round of countless births and deaths" (Dhp 153), which was also uttered by each and every Buddha.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After becoming a Buddha and spending 49 days in the neighbourhood of the Bodhi tree, the Buddha accepted a Brahma's request and contemplated who [133] he should teach first. Then he discerned the 300 million recluses who, with him, had renounced the world, his half-brother, Prince Saraṇa and his Brahmin chaplain's son, the youthful Bhāvitatta, who were endowed with the merits of their past deeds that would lead them to the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna. Thinking: "I shall teach them first," he contemplated as to their whereabouts and saw that they were living in Mekhala Park of the city of Mekhala which was eighteen leagues away from the Mahā Bodhi tree. Accordingly, taking his bowl and robe, the Buddha, by his psychic power, immediately appeared in Mekhala Park, the residence of those monastics.

On seeing Buddha Sumana approaching them, the 300 million monastics, with faithful hearts, welcomed the Buddha, took his bowl and robe, prepared the seat

and did obeisance respectfully. When all these were done, they took appropriate seats surrounding him.

Then Buddha Sumana sent the gardener to fetch Prince Saraṇa and the youth, Bhāvitatta, son of the Brahmin chaplain. To the prince and the youth with their 370 million followers, to the 300 million monastics who were his companions on his renunciation and as well as to many millions Devas and humans, the Buddha taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, which was taught by previous Buddhas too, and hence beat the drum of his Dispensation of nine constituents, accompanied by the conch of the four noble truths.

> The nine constituents of the Buddha's Dispensation (*navaṅga-satthu-sāsana*) are: 1) Discourses (*Sutta*) such as the Discourse on the Supreme Net (*Brahma-jāla-sutta*, DN 1), the Discourse on the Fruits of the Ascetic Life (*Sāmañña-phala-sutta*, DN 2) etc. in plain prose; 2) Mixed Poems and Prose (*Geyya*) such as these in the Thematic Discourses about Devas (*Devatā-saṁyutta*, SN 1); 3) teaching without any verses (*veyyākaraṇa*) such as the Basket of the Abstract Teaching (*Abhidhamma-piṭaka*); 4) teaching with verses only (*gāthā*) such as the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*), the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*), the Verses of the Elder Nuns (*Therī-gāthā*); 5) Exalted Utterances (*Udāna*) in 80[62] discourses; 6) 112[63] discourses beginning with the expression: "Thus said (*Iti-vuttaka*) the Fortunate One"; 7) 550 Birth Stories (*Jātaka*);[64] 8) discourses describing the marvellous attributes (*abbhūta-dhamma*) of persons such as Ānanda, etc.; 9) discourses with questions and answers (*vedalla*) such as the Long Discourse giving an Elaboration (*Mahā-vedalla-sutta*, MN 43), the Small Discourse giving an Elaboration (*Cūḷa-vedalla-sutta*, MN 44), the Discourse of Right View (*Sammā-diṭṭhi-sutta*, MN 9).

What should be particularly mentioned is this: Having attained omniscience, Buddha Sumana was desirous of fulfilling Brahma's request. In order to liberate beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, from the bondage of existences and to protect those who were robbed of their treasures of meritorious deeds by the defilements, he built the deathless city of Nibbāna with the walls of morality

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[62] [Text reads 28, but this is a mistake].

[63] [Text reads 12, but this is again a mistake].

[64] [There are listed 547, but some are repetitions so the actual number is smaller].

(*sīla*), the moats of concentration (*samādhi*) that encircled the city and adorned it with the gate of insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*), the doors of mindfulness (*sati*), the grand pavilions and mansions, etc., of absorption attainments (*samāpatti*) and it was inhabited by the noble citizens of a group of things on the side of Awakening (*Bodhi-pakkhiya-dhamma*).

Having thus built the city of Nibbāna, Buddha Sumana created the unbroken, straight, tidy, beautiful, broad, and long boulevard of the four methods of steadfast mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*). On either side of the boulevard, he laid out peaceful and pleasant rows of shops of Dhamma where those who wanted the precious fourfold fruitions (*phala*), fourfold analytical knowledges (*patisambhidā-ñāṇa*), sixfold super powers (*abhiññā*) and eight absorption attainments (*samāpatti*), could buy them to their hearts content with mindfulness (*sati*), energy (*viriya*), conscience (*hirī*), and concern (*ottappa*).

Having thus built the great city of Dhamma and laid out the market of Dhamma, Buddha Sumana beat the drum of Dhamma by delivering the first discourse, the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, and provided the means of liberation to one billion humans, Devas and Brahmas.

2. In order to subjugate the wrongful conceit of the intoxicated and arrogant heretics in Sunandavati, Buddha Sumana once performed the marvellous twin miracle of water and fire near a mango tree and administered the Dhamma, the elixir of immortality, to humans, Devas [134] and Brahmas. Then one billion beings realized the four noble truths.

3. On another occasion, Devas and Brahmas of the 10,000 world-element came and met humans, Devas and Brahmas of this universe and discussed the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*). “How can one enter upon the attainment of cessation? How can one attain it? How can one rise from it?” Since they could not solve such problems, all of them, up to the nine abodes of Brahmas, had doubts as to the right answers and they divided themselves into two groups. Along with King Arindama, the lord of people, they approached Buddha Sumana, Lord of the Three Worlds, and put forward the aforesaid questions. The Buddha solved them by giving appropriate Dhamma discourses, and 900 million humans, Devas and Brahmas penetrated the four noble truths.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were three occasions of meetings of Buddha Sumana's disciples. Of these three, the first took place when, having observed the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) with Mekhala city as the resort for food, together with 100,000 Arahats who were all summoned monastics (*ehi-bhikkhu*), Buddha Sumana held the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*) ceremony on the full moon day of October (*Assayuja*), at the end of the Rains Retreat.

2. At one time when Buddha Sumana was sojourning on the mountain of pure gold, one league in size, which appeared, as the result of King Arindama's act of merit, he admonished, by means of his excellent discourses, 900 billion royal servants who accompanied the king on his visit. The Buddha made them all summoned monastics and being surrounded by all these monastics, who became Arahats on the same day, he recited the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) at the meeting complete with four features.

> The four features are not given in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary. However, as mentioned in the exposition of the Discourse concerning Dīghanakha (*Dīghanakha-sutta*, MN 74) commentary, these should be understood as follows: 1) The meeting is held on the full moon day of February (*Magha*); 2) the meeting is held by Arahats on their own accord without being called together by anyone; 3) the monastics at the meeting are all Arahats, who are endowed with six super knowledges (*abhiññā*); and 4) they are all summoned monastics (*ehi-bhikkhu*).

3. At another time, Sakka went to pay homage to Buddha Sumana. Being surrounded by 800 billion Arahats, the Buddha recited the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*).

Bodhisatta Atula

In the lifetime of Buddha Sumana, Bodhisatta Gotama was reborn as Atula, a powerful Nāga King. Learning that a Buddha had appeared in the three worlds and accompanied by all his kith and kin, he came out of his residence and performed deeds of merit towards the Buddha and his 1,000 billion monastics by making celestial music in their honour, and by performing a great act of alms giving in the form of food and drinks. He also offered a set of robes to each monastic and was established in the refuges.

Then Buddha Sumana predicted: "This Nāga King will become Buddha Gotama in future." Hearing Buddha Sumana's prophecy, Atula the Nāga King became all the more heartened and resolved firmly to increase his effort in fulfilling of the ten perfections.

Particulars of Buddha Sumana

Buddha Sumana's birth place was Mekhala city. [135]

His father was King Sudatta and his mother was Queen Sirimā.

He reigned for 9,000 years.

His three palaces were named Canda, Sucanda and Vataṁsa.

His chief consort was Vataṁsikā, and she had 83,000 maids of honour.

His son was Prince Anupama.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Saraṇa and Ven. Bhāvitatta.

His attendant was Ven. Udena.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Soṇā and Ven. Upasoṇā.

His Bodhi tree was an Ironwood (*Nāga*) tree.

His distinguished male supporters were the wealthy men Varuṇa and Saraṇa.

His distinguished female supporters were Cālā and Upacālā.

Buddha Sumana's height was 90 cubits.

Resembling a golden pillar created as an object of worship, the Buddha was of great splendour with his physical radiance shining forth throughout all the universe.

The lifespan during his time was 90,000 years and throughout these years, he saved large numbers of humans, Devas and Brahmas from the flood-waters of Saṁsāra and placed them on the shore of Nibbāna.

Having liberated those who deserved liberation out of the great ocean of Saṁsāra and taught those who deserved to be taught the four noble truths, Buddha Sumana attained Parinibbāna like the setting moon.

Those noble ones, who had become Arahats after eradicating their pollutants (*āsava*), and that Buddha Sumana, who was unmatched in the three worlds,

brightened the peerless light of Dhamma. Having done so, the most glorious, famous Buddha and his Arahat disciples attained Parinibbāna.

Buddha Sumana's unrivalled omniscience, his matchless Dhamma treasures, such as the four fruitions, the fourfold analytical knowledge, etc., have all disappeared. Unsubstantial and futile indeed are all conditioned things!

In this manner, the attainment of Parinibbāna by Buddha Sumana, who had realized the four noble truths without any exception and who had achieved great fame, took place in the park called Aṅga. In that very park was constructed a shrine, four leagues high. It was made of powdered red orpiment mixed with oil and butter and dedicated to Buddha Sumana.

As it was customary with long-lived Buddhas, the relics that were unbreakable remained like golden statues. These relics were placed in that shrine which was decorated with the seven kinds of jewels and completed by the people of Jambudīpa.

5. The Chronicle of Buddha Revata

After Buddha Sumana had attained Parinibbāna, the lifespan of human beings decreased gradually from 90,000 years down to ten years; and from ten years, it again increased to immeasurables. When the lifespan became 60,000 years on its decline, Bodhisatta Revata, on complete fulfilment of the perfections, was reborn in Tusita, as is the common practice of all Bodhisattas.

While enjoying the celestial life there, he agreed to comply with the request made by Devas and Brahmas, and descended to the human abode and took conception in the womb of Queen Vipulā, wife of King Vipula, in the city of Sudhaññavatī. When ten months had elapsed, he emerged from his mother's womb like the golden goose king that appears from Mount Citta. [136]

Early Life

When the Bodhisatta, Prince Revata, came of age, he resided in three uniquely beautiful palaces, namely, Sudassana, Ratanagghi, and Āveḷa, which appeared as a result of his perfections and glorious deeds of the past. He enjoyed a royal household life that was comparable with a divine life for 6,000 years together with his consort Sudassanā and was entertained and waited upon by 33,000 attendants.

While he was thus enjoying his life, his wife, Princess Sudassanā, gave birth to a son named Varuṇa. After seeing the four omens presented by Devas, which was something common to all Bodhisattas, he mounted the chariot drawn by thoroughbred horses and went forth, renouncing the world, in a procession composed of his fourfold army of elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers, like the moon surrounded by the stars and planets, like Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, followed by his fellow-beings or like Hārita, King of Brahmas, followed by divine beings of his abode. On reaching a grove, he handed his garments to the keeper of his treasures, cut off his hair with his ever-present sword and flung his hair into the sky.

His hair was received in a golden receptacle by Sakka, who built a shrine of the seven kinds of jewels over it in Tāvatiṁsa on Mount Meru. Having put on the lotus-robe offered by the Brahma he thus became a recluse. 10 million men followed his example and became recluses themselves. Bodhisatta Revata then put efforts to undergo the practice of the austerities (*dukkara-cariyā*) with his 10 million followers for seven months.

Awakening

Having completed the practice of the austerities, on the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*) the day he was to become a Buddha, he partook of the milk rice offered by Sādhu Devī, daughter of a wealthy man, and spent the daytime in the local Sāla grove. In the evening, he left behind his followers and went alone to the region of the Mahā Bodhi tree. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass from a naked ascetic, Varunindhara by name, and spread it under the Ironwood (*Nāga*) Bodhi tree. Suddenly, there appeared the unconquered seat (*aparājita-pallaṅka*) of 53 cubits in size, on which he sat cross-legged, mobilized his resources of fourfold energy, dispelled Māra and his forces, and attained the omniscient state of a Perfectly Self-Awakened One, Lord of the Three Worlds.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After becoming a Buddha and staying near the Bodhi tree for 49 days, Buddha Revata accepted a Brahma's request for his teaching. When he considered who he should teach first, he discerned the 10 million of monastics, who joined him in his renunciation, and also Devas and humans, who were endowed with meritorious deeds from the past, leading them to the paths, fruitions and

Nibbāna. When he contemplated their whereabouts, he came to know that they were staying in Varuṇa Park, eighteen leagues from the Mahā Bodhi tree.

Taking his bowl and robe and using his psychic power he immediately appeared at the monastics' residence in Varuṇa Park. On his arrival there, Buddha Revata was very warmly received by the monastics. To these monastics the Buddha taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse and 10 million monastics realized Awakening. Those who were established in the lower paths and fruitions were countless.

2. At another time, Buddha Revata paid a visit to the city of Uttara, so named because it excelled all other cities, during the reign of King Arindama, who had conquered all of his enemies. Learning of the Buddha's arrival, the king, with his 30 million followers, extended a warm welcome and invitation to the Buddha for the next day's meal. For seven days he gave a great alms gift (*dāna*) and held a festival of lights extending three miles in honour of [137] the Buddha and stayed near him. Then the Buddha gave various sermons that suited the king's disposition. On that occasion of the teaching of Dhamma, 10 billion Devas and humans attained liberation as they realized the truths.

3. Still at another time, while sojourning at a place near the market-town of Uttara, a resort for his alms food, Buddha Revata engaged himself in the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*) for seven days. Then townsfolk brought rice-gruel and other kinds of food and drink and offered them to the members of the Saṅgha. "Venerable Sirs, where is the Buddha staying?" asked the people. "Dear supporters," replied the monks, "the Buddha is absorbed in the attainment of cessation." When seven days had lapsed, they had an opportunity of seeing the Buddha and asked him about the advantages of that very attainment. Accordingly, the Buddha explained to them the advantages of the attainment of cessation. As a result, one billion Devas and humans were established in the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*).

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were three meetings of the Buddha's disciples, the first of which took place in the city of Sudhaññavatī where Buddha Revata recited the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) for the first time to the Arahats, who had become summoned monastics and who were too innumerable to count.

2. Later, at the meeting held in Mekhala city, the Buddha recited the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) to 1,000 billion summoned monastic Arahats.

3. At the third meeting, Buddha Revata explained the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering and unsubstantiality to the people who went to enquire after the ailing Ven. Varuṇa, who was the Buddha's chief disciple and right-hand man and was foremost among knowers of Dhamma as he was able to keep the Dhamma Wheel in constant motion. His health condition then was so serious that it gave rise to anxiety and the question: "Will he survive?" At that meeting, the Buddha also made 100,000 men summoned monastics and established them in the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*). Finally he recited the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) in that very meeting which was composed of four features.

Bodhisatta Atideva

At that time, our Bodhisatta was a Brahmin named Atideva, fully accomplished in Brahminic lore, which was handed down by generation after generation of teachers. On encountering Buddha Revata, and after listening to the Buddha's discourse, he took refuge in the Three Treasures. He also sang 1,000 verses in praise of the Buddha's attributes of morality, concentration and wisdom, and offered his upper garment which was worth 1,000 pieces of money.

Thereupon Buddha Revata made a prophecy: "Two immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons[65] after the present one, you will become a Buddha by the name of Gotama." On receiving Buddha Revata's prophecy, the Bodhisatta's mind became all the more serene and he courageously resolved to make more effort in fulfilling of the perfections: "I will contemplate and develop the perfections and try to attain the state of a Buddha that I long for."

Particulars of Buddha Revata

Buddha Revata's birthplace was Sudhaññavatī city.

His father was King Vipula and [138] his mother was Queen Vipulā.

He reigned for 6,000 years.

His three palaces were Sudassana, Ratanagghi and Āveḷa.

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[65] [Mistakenly written as two immeasurables and 100 aeons in the original.]

His chief consort was Sudassanā, who had 33,000 maids of honour.

His son was Varuṇa.

Having seen the four omens, he renounced the world in a chariot drawn by thoroughbred horses.

He practised the austerities for seven months.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Varuṇa and Ven. Brahmadeva.

His attendant was Ven. Sambhava.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Bhaddā and Ven. Subhaddā.

His Bodhi tree was an Ironwood (*Nāga*) tree.

His male noble supporters were the wealthy men Paduma and Kuñjara.

His female noble supporters were Sirimā and Yasavatī.

Buddha Revata's height was 80 cubits. He illumined all the directions like the hoisted banner of Sakka. His physical radiance spread all round, up to one league, day and night.

The lifespan during his time was 60,000 years. He lived throughout the period equal to four-fifths of this lifespan, rescuing numerous humans, Devas and Brahmas from the flood-waters of Saṁsāra and placing them on the shore of Nibbāna.

Having taught the doctrine of deathlessness to the world by showing the powers of the tenfold wisdom of the Awakened Ones, Buddha Revata attained Parinibbāna, like great flames of fire that become extinct as the fuel runs out.

When his Parinibbāna was drawing near, Buddha Revata resolved: "May my relics remain not in a mass but split into pieces and reach various places so that, when I am gone, all beings may attain celestial abodes and Nibbāna as a result of them." Then he attained Parinibbāna in the Ironwood (*Nāga*) grove, neither too near nor too far from the city. His relics did not form into one mass, a deviation from the usual mode of relics of long-lived Buddhas, but dispersed and spread to every nook and corner of Jambudīpa, in accordance with his resolve and were held in honour by humans, Devas and Brahmas.

That Buddha Revata's frame, which was like a solid gem stone, and his incomparable tenfold Dhamma have all vanished. Unsubstantial and futile indeed are all conditioned things!

6. The Chronicle of Buddha Sobhita

After Buddha Revata's Parinibbāna, the lifespan of human beings decreased gradually from 60,000 years to ten years and then from ten years it increased to immeasurables. When the lifespan became 90,000 years on its second decline, Bodhisatta Sobhita, after complete fulfilment of the perfections for four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, was reborn in Tusita, a practice common to all Bodhisattas. While living there, he accepted the request made by Devas, and then descended from his celestial abode to the human world and took conception in the womb of Sudhammā, Chief Queen of King Sudhamma, in the city of the same name. Ten months thereafter, the Bodhisatta left his mother's womb in Sudhamma Park, similarly to how the big full moon comes out from behind the clouds.

Early Life

When the Bodhisatta Prince Sobhita came of age, he lived in three golden palaces: Kumuda, Nāḷina and Paduma, and enjoyed a heavenly-like royal household life with his chief consort Manilā, and being entertained and waited upon by 70,000[66] [139] female attendants.

While he was enjoying thus, a son, named Sīha, was born by the Princess. Seeing the four omens, Bodhisatta Sobhita was stirred by a strong spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*). Even while in the palace, he lived the life of a recluse and practised breathing meditation (*ānāpāna-bhāvanā*) till he attained the fourth absorption. Still again in the very palace, he practised the austerities (*dukkara-cariyā*) for seven days.

Then on the full moon of May (*Vesākha*), the day he would attain Awakening, he took the milk rice offered by the chief consort Manilā herself. Determined on renunciation, he resolved: "Let this very palace of mine, with its usual decorations, go through the air while the populace is watching and descend onto

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[66] [Corrected according to BvA.]

the earth, making the Mahā Bodhi tree stand in the centre. When I take residence near the Bodhi tree, may all female courtiers here leave the palace on their own accord without my asking."

As soon as he had thus resolved, the Bodhisatta's palace rose from the courtyard of his father, King Sudhamma, into the sky of the dark blue-green colour of collyrium. The palace adorned with scented festoons shone very brightly as though it beautified the whole sky like the sun with its splendid colour of liquid gold showers, and also like the bright moon of the month of November (*Kattikā*) in autumn. The flying palace travelled all over the vault of heaven and attracted the people's eyes, as would the brilliant colour of tree branches and various gems.

It had a net of various exquisite little bells hanging downwards. Touched by the breeze, the net made a sweet tinkling sound that was like the sound of five musical instruments played by highly skilled musicians. The sweet tinkling sound, from a distance, attracted the people as if enticing them from its aerial travel, neither too low nor too high, whether they were staying in the houses or standing on cross-roads, they praised and marvelled at the sound. The sound seems to be proclaiming the qualities of the deeds of merit done by the Bodhisatta.

The female dancers, who were in the flying palace, sang with delightful voices resembling the sound of five musical instruments. They also spoke sweetly in praise of the Bodhisatta among themselves. The Bodhisatta's fourfold army surrounded the palace in the sky, just as it did on the ground. They were like Devas, brilliant with their shining equipment and physical radiance and in their raiment of fragrant blossoms.

Having taken its flight, the palace descended onto the earth making the Ironwood (*Nāga*) Bodhi tree lie in the centre. This tree was 88 cubits tall, its trunk straight, broad, round, and beautiful with flowers, leaves, sprouts and buds. Then the female dancers went out of the palace and departed of their own accord.

Awakening

Glorious with numerous qualities and surrounded by hosts of people, Buddha Sobhita acquired the threefold knowledge during the three watches of the night. Māra's forces were defeated. The palace, however, remained where it was.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After his attainment of Awakening, Buddha Sobhita spent 49 days near the Bodhi tree. Having agreed to a Brahma's entreaty, he thought as to whom he should teach first and he saw, with his mind's eye, his younger half brothers, princes Asama and Sunetta. Knowing that they were endowed with the supporting merits (*upanissaya*) and were able to grasp the profound and subtle Dhamma, he decided to teach them. Accordingly, by his psychic power, he immediately appeared at Sudhamma Park. Through the gardener, the Buddha summoned the princes. Being surrounded by the princes and their retinues, in the midst of the audience of countless humans, Devas and Brahmas from all over the regions, ranging from the highest Bhavagga abode down to the lowest Avīci hell, the [140] Buddha taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse. As a result of which, a large multitude of humans, Devas and Brahmas realized the four truths.

2. On another occasion, having displayed the twin miracle of water and fire near an exquisite Cittapāṭalī tree, in the neighbourhood of the city-gate of Sudassana, sitting on the emerald stone slab of Paṇḍukambala under the coral tree, the Buddha taught Abhidhamma. At the conclusion, 900 billion Devas and Brahmas realized the truths and were liberated.

3. Still on another occasion, Prince Jayasena had a monastery built in the compound of a garden in Sudassana where he had such excellent trees as Asoka, Assakaṇṇa, etc., planted, one close to another. He dedicated the monastery, together with the garden, to the Saṅgha with the Buddha at its head. At the great ceremony of dedication, the Buddha Sobhita gave a discourse in appreciation of the dedication, lauding the prince's great generosity (*mahā-dāna*). At the conclusion of the discourse, 1,000 billion beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, attained realization of the truths and liberation.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. Another offering of a monastery, Sunandārāma, at the city of Sunanda, was given by King Uggata to the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha. On this occasion, one billion summoned monastic Arahats assembled. To them, the Buddha recited the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*).

2. Again, a group of virtuous people built a monastery named Gaṇārāma in the city of Mekhala and offered it to the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha. They also performed alms givings (*dāna*) of various requisites. On this occasion, 900 million summoned monastics Arahats assembled. At this meeting, the Buddha uttered the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*).

3. After teaching Abhidhamma in Tāvatiṁsa and staying there for the whole period of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), being accompanied by Devas and Brahmas, Buddha Sobhita returned to the human world to perform the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*) ceremony and did so at the meeting of four features attended by 800 million Arahats.

Bodhisatta Sujāta

At that time, our Bodhisatta was born a Brahmin, Sujāta by name, whose parents were of Brahmin caste, in Rammavatī city. Having listened to the Dhamma, he was established in the three refuges. He gave alms on a grand scale to the Buddha and his Saṅgha for the three months of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*). Then the Buddha made a prophetic declaration concerning Sujātā the Brahmin: “This man will become a Buddha, Gotama by name, in the future.”

Particulars of Buddha Sobhita

Buddha Sobhita’s birthplace was Sudhamma city.

His father was King Sudhamma and his mother was Sudhammā.

He reigned for 9,000 years.

His three palaces were Kamuda, Nāḷina and Paduma.

His chief consort was Manilā, and she had 70,000 maids of honour.

His son was Sīha.

His conveyance on his renunciation, after seeing the four omens, was a palace.

He [141] observed the austerities for just seven days even in this palace.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Asama and Ven. Sunetta.

His attendant was Ven. Anoma.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Nakulā and Ven. Sujātā.

His Bodhi tree was an Ironwood (*Nāga*) tree.

His noble male lay supporters were the wealthy Ramma and Sudatta.

His noble female supporters were Nakulā and Mittā.

Buddha Sobhita's height was 58 cubits.

Like the rising sun, he possessed body lustre which could shine and spread all over the directions as much as he wished.

Like a great grove full of trees in full bloom and fragrant with various scents, the Buddha Sobhita's grove of instructive words was fragrant with the scents of morality. Another simile: As one is not satiated looking at the moving and rising waves of the ocean, so beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, were not satiated listening to the words of Buddha Sobhita.

The lifespan during Buddha Sobhita's time was 90,000 years and living four-fifths of this lifespan, he saved humans, Devas and Brahmas from the flood-waters of Saṁsāra and placed them on the shore of Nibbāna.

After bequeathing his diverse teaching, long and short, to future beings who had not attained liberation in his presence, Buddha Sobhita, together with his Arahat disciples, came to the cessation of his existence and attained Parinibbāna just as a great flame becomes extinguished.

That Buddha Sobhita, equal only to the peerless Buddhas, and his Arahat disciples who had acquired the super knowledges and other powers, have all vanished. Unsubstantial and futile indeed are all conditioned things!

Before his Parinibbāna, Buddha Sobhita resolved: "When I am gone, let the relics of my body not remain in a mass but split into pieces and reach various places," and his Parinibbāna took place in Sīha Park. Accordingly his relics did not remain in a mass but dispersed all over Jambudīpa and were worshipped by beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas.

7. The Chronicle of Buddha Anomadassī

After the lapse of the aeon in which Buddha Sobhita lived, came one immeasurable period devoid of Buddhas (*suñña-kappa*). Again, after these had passed, there appeared in a certain aeon three Buddhas, namely, Anomadassī, Paduma and Nārada. The first of these was the Buddha Anomadassī.

Having fulfilled the perfections for sixteen immeasurables and 100,000 aeons, like other Bodhisattas, he was reborn in Tusita heaven. At the request of Devas and Brahmas, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of Princess Yasodharā of King Yasavā, in the city of Candavatī. A strange event happened then. As soon as Prince Anomadassī was conceived, because of his meritorious deeds, light spread out from the princess to the extent of 80 cubits and was unsurpassed by the light of the sun and the moon.

When ten months had elapsed, Princess Yasodharā gave birth to Prince Anomadassī in Sudassana Park. On his naming day, he was given the name of Anomadassī by wise men because, while [142] he was in the womb, there was incessant falling from the sky of the jewels called Anoma.

Early Life

When the Bodhisatta, Prince Anomadassī, came of age, he lived a divine-like household in three palaces: Sirī, Upasirī and Sirivaḍḍha, with his consort Sirimā, and being entertained and waited upon by 23,000 female attendants for 10,000 years.

While he was thus living, Princess Sirimā gave birth to a son, named Upavāṇa. Seeing the four omens, the Bodhisatta Prince Anomadassī went forth from household life on a palanquin and became a recluse. 30 million men, who were inspired by his act of renunciation, also became recluses like him. Surrounded by these recluses, the Bodhisatta practised the austerities (*dukkara-cariyā*) for ten months.

Awakening

Having practised thus, he went on alms round on the day of his Awakening on the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*) to the Brahmin village of Anupama. He partook of the milk rice offered by Anupamā, daughter of a wealthy man, then he passed the day in the local Sāla grove and proceeded alone to the Mahā Bodhi tree in the evening. On the way, he was given eight handfuls of grass by Anoma, the heretic. As soon as he spread the grass at the foot of Arjuna tree, there appeared, under the tree, the unconquered seat (*aparājita-pallaṅka*), which was 38 cubits in size. Sitting on it cross-legged, he mobilized his resources of the fourfold energy and dispelled Māra's forces and, above all, he became a Buddha, the state of a Perfectly Self-Awakened One, Lord of the Three Worlds.

Having cut off the strings of attachment to Saṁsāra and having overcome with his path-wisdom the destruction of productive deeds (*kammakkhaya*), which are the deeds leading to the three kinds of existence, Buddha Anomadassī was able to expound the doctrine, from the eightfold noble path to Nibbāna.

The Buddha was like an ocean, being endowed with virtues that could not be disturbed. With attributes that made it difficult for insincere persons to approach him, he was also like Mount Meru. He was also like the vault of heaven because his qualities were boundless. Magnificent with his characteristic marks, large and small, he was like a great Sāla tree in full bloom.

People were delighted with Buddha Anomadassī. Hearing the Buddha's teaching they attained Nibbāna, which is deathless.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. Having become a Buddha, Buddha Anomadassī stayed around the Bodhi tree for 49 days; then he accepted a Brahma's entreaty for his teaching and he surveyed the world of beings with his Buddha's Eye, which includes the knowledge of the inclination and latent tendencies of beings (*āsayānusaya-ñāṇa*), and knowledge of mature or immature controlling faculties of beings (*indriya-paro-pariyatti-ñāṇa*). He saw the 30 million followers who had become recluses together with him and who were endowed with the merits of their past deeds, which were conducive to attainment of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna. Reflecting on their present whereabouts, he saw them in Sudassana Park near the city of Subhavatī. He immediately appeared in the Park by his psychic power. Being surrounded by the 30 million recluses, he taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse amidst the audience of Devas and humans. On that occasion, thousands of millions of beings realized the four truths and attained liberation.

2. At another time, when he had performed the twin miracles near an Indian Laurel (*Asana*) tree, close to Osadhi city, sitting on the emerald stone slab under it, he caused the rain of Abhidhamma to fall for the three months of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*). Then 800 million beings penetrated the four truths and attained liberation. [143]

3. Still at a later time, when the Buddha gave an analytical discourse with regard to the blessings (*Maṅgala-sutta*), 780 million beings attained liberation through gaining knowledge of the four noble truths.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were also meetings of Buddha Anomadassī's disciples. In the first meeting, Buddha Anomadassī recited the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) in the midst of 800,000 Arahats, who had already become summoned monastics out of great faith, at the time when he taught the Dhamma to King Isidatta in the city of Soreyya.

2. Again, when the Buddha was teaching King Sundarindhara[67] in the city of Rādhavatī, he recited the Rules in the midst of 700,000 Arahats who had already become summoned monastics out of faith.

3. Still again, the Buddha uttered the Monastic Rules in the midst of 600,000 Arahats, who had already become summoned monastics, together with King Soreyya in the city of the same name.

The Bodhisatta as a Yakkha General

During the Dispensation of the Buddha Anomadassī, our Bodhisatta was a Yakkha general commanding many billions of powerful Yakkhas. Hearing that a Buddha has appeared in the world, he visited the Buddha and created a magnificent pavilion decorated with very beautiful gems, in which he performed a great alms giving of food, drink, etc., to the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha, for seven days.

While the Yakkha general was listening to the discourse given by the Buddha, in appreciation of the meal, the Buddha made a prophetic declaration, saying: "One immeasurable period and 100,000 aeons from the present aeon, this Yakkha general will definitely become a Buddha by the name of Gotama."

Particulars of Buddha Anomadassī

Buddha Anomadassī's birthplace was Candavatī city.

His father was King Yasavā and his mother was Princess Yasodharā.

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[67] Alternatively: Madhurindhara.

He reigned for 10,000 years.

His three palaces were Sirī, Upasirī and Sirivaḍḍha.

His chief consort was Sirimā Devī, who had 23,000 maids of honours.

His son was Prince Upavāṇa.

When he renounced the world after seeing the four omens he used a golden palanquin as the vehicle.

He practised the austerities for ten months.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Nisabba and Ven. Anoma.

His attendant was Ven. Varuṇa.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Sundarī and Ven. Sumanā.

His Bodhi tree was an Arjuna (*Ajjuna*) tree.

His lay male supporters were Nandivaḍḍha and Sirivaḍḍha.

His female supporters were Uppalā and Padumā.

Buddha Anomadassī's height was 58 cubits.

Like the newly rising sun, the radiance from his body shone as far as twelve leagues. [144]

The lifespan during the time of Buddha Anomadassī was 100,000 years. He lived throughout the period equal to four-fifths of this lifespan, rescuing beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, from the flood-waters of Saṁsāra and placed them on the shore of Nibbāna.

Buddha Anomadassī's Dispensation, consisting of his noble teaching, was resplendent with noble ones who were Arahats, undisturbed by pleasant and unpleasant conditions of the world and free of passions and other defilements.

Buddha Anomadassī, who possessed boundless retinue and fame, and his two chief disciples and others, who were possessors of peerless qualities, have all vanished. Unsubstantial and futile indeed are all conditioned things!

Buddha Anomadassī, conqueror of the five kinds of death (*māra*), attained Parinibbāna in Dhammārāma Park. The shrine built and dedicated to him, in that very Park, was 25 leagues high.

Two persons, who would become the Vens. Sāriputta and Moggallāna, wished in the presence of Buddha Anomadassī for the state of chief disciples. This will be narrated later in the section on the Saṅgha Jewel.

8. The Chronicle of Buddha Paduma

After the Parinibbāna of Buddha Anomadassī, the human lifespan decreased from 100,000 years to ten years and then it increased again to an immeasurable and decreased again. When the lifespan was 100,000 years, Bodhisatta Paduma, on complete fulfilment of the perfections, was reborn in the celestial abode of Tusita which was a practice common to all Bodhisattas. Having agreed to the entreaty of other Devas and Brahmas, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of Asamā, Chief Queen of King Asama. When ten months had elapsed, the Bodhisatta was born in the grove of Campak trees.

At the Bodhisatta's birth, a rain of Paduma lotuses fell from the sky over the whole of Jambudīpa, reaching the surrounding seas. On his naming day, therefore, learned omen-readers and relatives named him Mahā Paduma.

Early Life

When the Bodhisatta Mahā Paduma came of age, living in three palaces, namely, Nanduttara, Vasuttara and Yasuttara, and being entertained and waited upon by 33,000 female attendants under his chief consort Uttarā Devī, he lived a divine-like royal household life for 10,000 years.

While he was thus living, Princess Uttarā gave birth to a son, named Ramma. After seeing the four omens, he went forth in celestial raiment, riding a chariot drawn by thoroughbred horses and became a recluse. 10 million men joined him and became recluses too. With these recluses, the Bodhisatta practised the austerities for eight months.

Awakening

After striving thus for eight months, on the day he was to become a Buddha, the Bodhisatta ate the milk rice offered by Dhañña vatī, daughter of a wealthy man, named Sudhañña, of the city of Dhañña vatī. Having spent his time at midday in the local Sāla grove, he went alone, in the evening, to the place where the Mahā Bodhi tree stood. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass given by Titthaka, a naked ascetic. The moment he spread the grass under the great Soṇa

Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat of [145] 33 cubits in size. Sitting cross-legged and mobilizing his resources of the fourfold energy, the Bodhisatta dispelled Māra's forces and attained the state of a Buddha, the omniscient and Perfectly Self-Awakened One, Lord of the Three Worlds.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After becoming a Buddha, the Awakened One, Paduma, spent 49 days in the neighbourhood of the Mahā Bodhi tree. Having accepted a Brahma's request for his teaching, he contemplated who he should teach first and he saw his fellow recluses, numbering 10 million. Using his psychic vision, he found that they were staying in Dhanañjaya garden, near Dhaññavatī city, and taking his bowl and robe, he appeared immediately in the garden.

On seeing the Buddha coming from a distance, the recluses, with faithful hearts, welcomed him. Taking his bowl and robe, preparing his seat, after paying respects, they took their seats around him. Being thus surrounded, Buddha Paduma, like the past Buddhas, taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse amidst the audience of humans, Devas and Brahmas. In that occasion, one billion humans, Devas and Brahmas attained the unique Dhamma of the paths and fruitions.

2. At another time, Buddha Paduma, in an assembly of his relatives, helped his younger brothers, princes Sāla and Upasāla, his future chief disciples, and their retinues, became monks and gave a discourse to 900 million Devas and humans who attained the paths and fruitions.

3. Still at another time, Buddha Paduma instructed his son Ven. Ramma in Dhamma. On this occasion 800 million beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, attained realization of the four noble truths and were liberated.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were three occasions of the meetings of Buddha Paduma's disciples. In the first occasion, a king by the name of Subhāvitatta became a summoned monastic together with his retinue of one billion. In that meeting, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*).

2. At a later time, Buddha Paduma observed the Rains Retreat, relying upon Usabhavatī as his resort for food. Then the Buddha taught the citizens who visited him. Many of them developed their faith in him and became monks. On

the full moon day of October (*Assayuja*), Buddha Paduma performed the Invitation of the Pure (*Visuddhi-pavāraṇā*) with the monks of Usabhavatī and others, numbering 300,000 Arahats in all. The Invitation of the Pure means the Invitation was attended by Arahats only.

3. When the laymen in the city, who remained as householders, heard about the benefits of the Cloth (*Kaṭhina*) offering, they offered a piece of Cloth (*Kaṭhina*) to the Saṅgha. Then members of the Saṅgha formally dedicated it, by reciting the formal procedure (*kamma-vācā*) to Ven. Sāla who was privileged to stay on the Buddha's right hand side as the general of the Dhamma (*Dhamma-senāpati*). Monks then prepared to sew the robe collectively, so that the sewing might be finished in the same day. As it was an act of the Saṅgha, the Buddha himself helped them by putting the thread through the eye of a needle. When the sewing [146] was done, the Buddha and his 300,000 monks set out on a journey. After that, the Buddha observed the Rains Retreat in a forest that was like the Gosiṅga grove of Sāla trees. While the Buddha was sojourning with his retinue, people visited him. Having listened to his discourse, their faith in him increased and on being called by him they became summoned monastics then and there. Then, surrounded by 200,000 monks, the Buddha performed the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*) ceremony.

> The second and third meeting (*sannipāta*) have been narrated as mentioned in the commentary. According to the Pāḷi text, however, the meeting of the 300,000, where the sewing of Cloth (*Kaṭhina*) for the chief disciple Sāla took place, it seems, should be taken as the second meeting. Although the commentator knew this, he described the event somewhat differently from the text. Since such a deviation was done in line with older commentators, who are believed to have grasped what was meant by the Buddha, and since the meetings where the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*) was performed or the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*) was given, are shown as the meetings of disciples in the previous and later Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), the commentary's order is followed in this work.

The Bodhisatta as King of the Lions

While Buddha Paduma was staying in that forest grove, our Bodhisatta was a king of lions. Seeing the Buddha in the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*), the lion-king developed faith in him, and did obeisance by

circumambulating him. Exalted with joy, he roared three times and remained there for seven days without losing his ecstasy which was derived from the sight of the Buddha. Without going in search of food, he stayed near the Buddha respectfully, at the risk of starvation.

When seven days had elapsed, on emerging from the attainment of cessation, Buddha Paduma saw the lion and made a wish: "May this lion have faith in the Saṅgha of monks also." At the same time, he resolved to have the Saṅgha near him: "May the monks come here!" Immediately many millions of monks arrived on the spot. The Bodhisatta developed faith in the Saṅgha also. After surveying and knowing the Bodhisatta's mind, Buddha Paduma made a prophetic declaration: "In the future, this lion-king will become a Buddha, Gotama by name."

Having heard the Buddha's prophecy, the Bodhisatta became even more devotionally inclined and resolutely determined to fulfil the ten perfections even more energetically.

Particulars of Buddha Paduma

Buddha Paduma's birthplace was a Campak grove.[68]

His father was King Asama and his mother was Queen Asamā.

He reigned for 10,000 years.

His three palaces were Nanduttara, Vasuttara and Yasuttara.

His chief consort was Uttarā, who had 33,000 maids of honour.

His son was Prince Ramma.

His vehicle used for renunciation, after seeing the four omens, was a chariot drawn by thoroughbred horses.

He practised the austerities for eight months.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Sāla and Ven. Upasāla.

His attendant was Ven. Varuṇa.

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[68] [Here Sayādaw had mentioned a Campaka city, but earlier spoke of a Campak grove. According to BvA it was a grove.]

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Rādhā and Ven. Surādhā.

His Bodhi tree was a Great Soṇa tree (*Mahā-soṇa*).

His noble male lay attendants were the wealthy Bhiyya and Asama.

His noble lay female attendants were Rucī and Nandarāmā.

Buddha Paduma's height was 58 cubits.

The radiance that emitted from his body diffused as far as he wished. The light of the moon, the sun, jewels, fire and rubies disappeared on encountering the body light of the Buddha. [147]

The lifespan during the lifetime of Buddha Paduma was 100,000 years and living for four-fifths of this lifespan, he conveyed beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, from the flood-waters of Saṁsāra and placed them on the shore of Nibbāna.

Having caused the beings of mature faculties to realize the four noble truths, even in his lifetime, leaving out none, and having taught other beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, so that they might realise the four noble truths, together with his Arahat disciples, Buddha Paduma attained Parinibbāna.

Just as a snake sheds its old skin, as a tree discards its old leaves, as a bright fire becomes extinct after consuming up all its fuel, so the Buddha attained Parinibbāna, giving up all conditioned things, internal and external.

In this way, Buddha Paduma, conqueror of the five kinds of death (*māras*) attained Parinibbāna in the Park known as Dhammārāma. In accordance with his resolve, his relics dispersed in the way mentioned before all over Jambudīpa and were honoured by humans, Devas and Brahmas.

9. The Chronicle of Buddha Nārada

After Buddha Paduma had attained Parinibbāna, the lifespan of 100 years decreased gradually to ten years and from ten years it again increased to immeasurables. When it was 90,000 years on its next decline, Bodhisatta Nārada was reborn in Tusita which was a practice common to all Bodhisattas on complete fulfilment of the perfections.

Having accepted the request by Devas and Brahmas to become a Buddha, he descended to the abode of human beings to be conceived in the womb of Anomā,

Chief Queen of the Universal Monarch Sudeva, in the city of Dhaññavatī. After ten months in the womb, the Bodhisatta was born in Dhanañjaya garden.

On his naming day, just when he was about to be named, falling from the sky, various kinds of clothing and ornaments, like a heavy rainfall, were seen falling from wish-fulfilling trees, etc. On account of this, he was named Nārada by the wise men who gave his name. *Nāra* means "ornaments befitting people" and *da*, "one who gives."

Early Life

When Prince Nārada came of age, he lived in three palaces, namely, Jita, Vijita and Abhirāma. Being entertained and waited upon by 2 billion female attendants headed by his chief consort Vijitasenā, he thus enjoyed a divine-like royal household life for 9,000 years.

While he was thus enjoying life, Princess Vijitasenā gave birth to a son, Nanduttara by name. Having seen the four omens, he put on various garments, perfume, flowers, etc., and being surrounded by his fourfold army, he went to the garden on foot. Having taken off his ornaments and handed them over to his treasurer, he cut off his hair with his own sword and threw it into the sky.

Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, received it in a golden casket and built a shrine of seven kinds of jewels over it, three leagues in height, in Tāvatiṁsa on Mount Meru. Donning the robes offered by the Brahma, the Bodhisatta became a recluse in that very garden. Joining him in renunciation were 100,000 men who also became recluses.

> A noteworthy point here is: Other Bodhisattas saw the omens while they were taking a trip to the royal garden to amuse themselves. On seeing the omens, they were stirred by spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) and went forth, not to the usual resort of the royal garden but to a remote region of forests and hills, to renounce the world.
>
> The sight of seeing the omens and the locality of their renunciation were two different places. Because of a considerable distance between the two they had to take some forms of conveyance, a vehicle such as an elephant, a horse, a chariot, etc. [148] But, in the case of Buddha Nārada, it is to be noted that it was in the royal garden where he came across the omens and it was also in this very garden where he stayed after renunciation. The commentary says that Dhanañjaya garden was just outside the city.

Awakening

Buddha Nārada practised the austerities in the garden for seven days. On the full moon of May (*Vesākha*), the day he was going to attain Awakening, he partook of the milk rice offered by Princess Vijitasenā and spent the daytime in the same garden. In the evening, he left all his followers and went alone to the Bodhi tree. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass from Sudassana the gardener. As soon as he spread the grass at the foot of a great Soṇa tree, there appeared the unconquered seat of 57 cubits in extent. Sitting cross-legged on the seat, the Bodhisatta put forth energy at four levels, dispelled Māra's forces and attained omniscience, and became a Perfectly Self-Awakened One, and Lord of the Three Worlds.

> The Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary has this to say with regard to Buddha Nārada's Bodhi tree, a great Soṇa tree: "The great Soṇa tree was 90 cubits high. It has a round smooth trunk. It possessed many forks and branches, dense and abundant foliage in dark green and closely knitted shade. As it was guarded by a spirit, no birds could make it their resort. It was honoured as though it were a monarch among trees on the surface of the earth. It was full of branches adorned with red flowers, very delightful and pleasing to the eye. It thus served as an elixir to those Devas and humans who saw it."

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After he had become a Buddha, Buddha Nārada spent 49 days in the neighbourhood of the Bodhi tree. Having accepted a Brahma's request for his teaching, he contemplated who he should teach first. Then he saw his companions in renunciation being endowed with meritorious qualities, which were conducive to the attainment of the paths and fruitions. After reflecting on their whereabouts, he came to know that they were staying in Dhanañjaya Park. Accordingly, he took his bowl and robe and, by his psychic power, he immediately appeared in the Park.

At that time, the 100,000 monks saw the Buddha coming from a distance. With faithful hearts, they welcomed him; taking his bowl and robe, preparing a seat for him, paying their respects to him and taking their appropriate seats around him. Being surrounded thus, Buddha Nārada taught these 100,000 monks the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse amidst the audience of humans,

Devas and Brahmas, as was done by former Buddhas. In that occasion, 1,000 billion humans, Devas and Brahmas realized the supreme Dhamma of the paths and fruitions.

2. Once, a Nāga King, called Doṇa, was ruling on the banks of the Ganges, near the city of Mahā Doṇa. He was powerful and was held in esteem and honour. If the local inhabitants did not appease him with an offering, he would destroy the locality either by total drought or by extremely heavy rainfall or by a rain of pebbles.

Buddha Nārada, who had realized the other shore of Nibbāna, foresaw a large number of people who would definitely attain the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna if he would go and tame the Nāga King, as they were endowed with the merits of their past deeds, which qualified them for such attainments. Accordingly, accompanied by monks, he travelled to the residence of the Nāga King.

When the people saw the Buddha, they requested him, saying: "Exalted Buddha, here lives a Nāga King, who is terribly venomous and mighty, reigning terror in this region. Please do not come here lest you should get hurt." The Buddha went, nevertheless, as though he did not hear their entreaties and sat on the flowers which were spread in honour of the Nāga King. [149]

The people then assembled, thinking: "We shall now see a battle between the Buddha, the lord of sages, and Doṇa, the Nāga King." On seeing the Buddha sitting on the seat of flowers which was prepared for him, the Nāga King could not control his anger and made himself visible with an emission of smoke. Using his psychic power, the Buddha also emitted forth smoke in return. Again, when the Nāga King sent forth blazing flames, the Buddha sent back blazing flames by his power. The Nāga King was so severely affected by the flames from the Buddha that he was not able to stand the suffering. Thinking: "I will kill this great monk by means of venom," the Nāga King discharged venom.

Although the Nāga King's poisonous discharge was so virulent that it could destroy the whole of Jambudīpa it was powerless to disturb a single hair on the Buddha's body. "What is the condition of the great monk?" wondered the Nāga King? When he surveyed the scene, he saw the Buddha with a face so serene and bright with the six radiances, like the sun and the full round moon in the month of November (*Kattikā*) in the autumnal season. Then he thought to himself: "This great monk is indeed powerful. Knowing not my own ability, I have

wronged him," and so he took refuge in the Buddha. After taming the Nāga King, the Buddha displayed the twin miracle of water and fire in order to arouse pious faith in the multitude gathered there. At that time, 900 billion Devas and humans were established in Awakening.

3. At another time, Buddha Nārada instructed his son, Prince Nanduttara. As a result, 80,000 Devas and humans attained the supreme Dhamma of the path and fruition.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were three occasions of the meetings (*sannipāta*) of Buddha Nārada's disciples. The first occasion took place in the city of Thullakoṭṭhita, where the two Brahmin youths, who were to be his future chief disciples, Bhaddasāla and Vijitamitta, encountered Buddha Nārada who was seated boldly in the middle of a gathering. They were looking for the "great pool of the deathless Dhamma." When the two youths saw the 32 marks of a Great Man on the body of the Buddha, they concluded: "This man indeed is a Buddha who has removed the veil of ignorance in the world." Developing faith in the Buddha, they became monks together with their followers. After their establishment in Awakening, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*) in the midst of 1,000 billion monks.

2. At another time, at an assembly of his relatives, Buddha Nārada related his life story with an introduction, beginning from the episode of his aspiration to become a Buddha. 900 billion Arahats then met.

3. At another time, a Nāga King, Verocana by name, who had developed great faith in the Buddha on the occasion of his taming of the Nāga King, Mahā Doṇa, created a huge pavilion of jewels, three miles in size and let the Buddha and his retinue of monks stay inside the pavilion. He also invited his courtiers together with the people of the district to visit his pavilion. Presenting a concert of Nāga dancers in various costumes and ornaments, he held a resounding ceremony of reverence, and performed a great alms giving to the Buddha and his company of monastics.

After finishing the meal, the Buddha gave a discourse in appreciation of the alms food. Listening to the discourse, the people developed faith in him and asked to become monks. The Buddha then uttered: "Come, monks," and they all

became summoned monastics. In the midst of eight million summoned monastics, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*). [150]

The Bodhisatta as a Recluse

At that time our Bodhisatta was a recluse, who found a hermitage in the Himālayas and lived there, and who had mastered the five super knowledges (*abhiññā*) and the eight attainments (*samāpatti*). Out of compassion for the Bodhisatta recluse, Buddha Nārada visited the hermitage in the company of 800 million lay disciples who were all Non-returners (*Anāgāmi*).

The noble recluse was glad to see the Buddha. He then created a residence for the Buddha and his monastics. During the whole night, the recluse extolled the Buddha, relating all his attributes and listened to his discourses. The next morning, he went to the northern continent by his psychic power and brought back cooked rice and other kinds of food which he offered to the Buddha and his monastics and lay disciples.

In this way, the Bodhisatta offered food for seven days, after which he paid homage to the Buddha and offered priceless red sandalwood from the Himālayas. Then Buddha Nārada, after delivering a discourse, predicted: "You will certainly become a Buddha in the future." Hearing the Buddha's prophecy, the Bodhisatta became very happy and resolved to fulfil the perfections even more energetically.

Particulars of Nārada Buddha

Buddha Nārada's birthplace was Dhaññavatī city.

His father was the Universal Monarch Sudeva and his mother was Queen Anomā.

He reigned for 9,000 years.

His three palaces were Jita, Vijita and Abhirāma.

His chief consort was Vijitasenā, who had 43,000 maids of honour.

> The number of the maids is given as 2 billion in the section on "royal household life" but here it is mentioned as 43,000. The two numbers therefore seems inconsistent. It should be noted, however, that the former was the total number of maids serving the princess and the latter was the

number of maids in each batch that waited upon the princess at any given time.

His son was Nanduttara.

Seeing the four omens, he went forth on foot without taking a vehicle.

He practised the austerities for seven days.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Bhaddasāla and Ven. Vijitamitta.

His attendant was Ven. Vāseṭṭha.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Uttarā and Ven. Phaggunī.

His Bodhi tree was a Great Soṇa tree (*Mahā-soṇa*).

His noble male lay attendants were the wealthy Uggarinda and Vāsabha.

His noble female attendants were Indāvarī and Vaṇḍī.[69]

Buddha Nārada's height was 88 cubits. He was dignified in the 10,000 world-element of births, like a column of gold erected as an object of honour.

The radiance emitted from his body extended for a league, during day and night without interruption. While Buddha Nārada was alive, because of the dazzling brilliance of his radiance, people living within a league did not have to light torches.

The lifespan during Buddha Nārada's time was 90,000 years. He lived throughout the period equal to four-fifths of this lifespan, rescuing beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, from the flood-waters of Saṁsāra and placed them on the shore of Nibbāna.

As the sky is exquisitely beautiful with stars and planets, so was Buddha Nārada's Dispensation with noble Arahats. For those other than Arahats who remained worldlings and trainees (*sekkhas*), the Buddha constructed the huge strong bridge of the path for them to easily cross over Saṁsāra. Having done all his tasks as a Buddha, he attained Parinibbāna with his Arahat disciples.

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[69] Or Gaṇḍī.

Buddha Nārada, who was equal only to peerless Buddhas, and his Arahats, who were endowed with matchless glory, have all vanished. Unsubstantial and futile indeed are all [151] conditioned things!

Thus Buddha Nārada, conqueror of the five kinds of death (*marā*), attained Parinibbāna in the city of Sudassana. In that very city was erected a shrine of four leagues in height, and dedicated to him.

> An aeon in which only one Buddha appears is called an essential aeon (*sāra-kappa*); two Buddhas is a fine aeon (*maṇḍa-kappa*); three Buddhas is called a noble aeon (*vara-kappa*); four Buddhas is called an essential and noble aeon (*sāra-maṇḍa-kappa*); five Buddhas is called an Auspicious aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*). The aeon in which no Buddha appears at all is called an empty aeon (*suñña-kappa*). The aeon in which three Buddhas, such as Buddha Anomadassī, Buddha Paduma and Buddha Nārada, appeared is therefore a noble aeon (*vara-kappa*).

10. The Chronicle of Buddha Padumuttara

> [The most momentous of the events in Buddha Padumuttara's life story has somehow been left out of this account. For, as we will see later, in chapters 43-45, it was during his Dispensation that nearly all of the 80 Buddha Gotama's foremost disciples, both male and female, monastic and lay, were inspired, and made their aspirations for their respective positions later on. The only exceptions to this are Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, who made their aspiration earlier under Ven. Anomadassī owing to a greater time amassing the perfections needed for these positions. This is very much worth noting.]

After the aeon with three Buddhas (*vara-kappa*), in which appeared the Buddhas Anomadassī, Paduma and Nārada had come to an end, one immeasurable period passed. Then in one aeon, 100,000 aeons before the present one, there appeared Buddha Padumuttara.

> This particular aeon was an essential aeon (*sāra-kappa*) as Buddha Padumutta alone appeared then, yet it resembled a fine aeon (*maṇḍa-kappa*) of two Buddhas because of its delightful features. In the aeon to which Buddha Padumuttara belonged, there lived only people who abounded in meritoriousness.

In the Chronicle of the Buddhas, Padumuttara's appearance was like this: Having completed his fulfilment of the perfections, Bodhisatta Padumuttara was

reborn in Tusita which was a practice common to all Bodhisattas. Having agreed to the entreaties of Devas and Brahmas, he descended to the human abode to be conceived in the womb of Sujātā, Queen of King Ānanda, in the city of Haṁsavatī. When ten months had elapsed, the Bodhisatta was born in the royal garden of Haṁsavatī. When Prince Padumuttara was born, a rain of Paduma lotuses fell and his relatives gave him the name of Padumuttara.

Early Life

When he came of age, he enjoyed the divine-like royal household life living for 10,000 years in three palaces: Naravāhana, Yasavāhana and Vasavatti, and being entertained and served by 120,000 female attendants headed by his chief consort Vasudattā.

While he was thus living the royal household life, Princess Vasudattā gave birth to a son, named Uttara. Having seen the four omens, he resolved to undertake the noble task of renunciation. No sooner had he thus resolved, the Vasavatti palace rotated thoroughly like a potter's wheel and rose up to the sky. Then it moved on its course, like the moon and other heavenly bodies, and descended onto the ground with the Bodhi tree at its centre.

The Bodhisatta came down from the palace and putting on the lotus robes offered by the Brahma, he became a recluse at that very spot. The palace then returned to the city and stood at its original site. Except womenfolk, all those who accompanied the Bodhisatta also became recluses themselves. [152]

Awakening

Buddha Padumuttara practised the austerities with his companions for seven days. On the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), the day of his Awakening, he ate the milk rice offered by Rucanandā, daughter of the local wealthy man of Ujjenī. Having passed the daytime in a Sāla grove, he went alone, in the evening, to the Bodhi tree. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass offered by a heretic named Sumitta. As soon as he spread the grass at the foot of the Salala Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat, which was 38 cubits.

Sitting cross-legged on the seat, he mustered his energy at four levels and dispelled Māra's forces. He acquired the knowledge of previous lives in the first watch of the night; the knowledge of the divine eye in the middle watch; and contemplated conditional origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) in the third watch.

After contemplating it, the Bodhisatta emerged from the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) through breathing meditation, and viewed the five aggregates with their characteristics.

By means of the knowledge of rise and fall (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*) of all conditioned things, he contemplated the impermanence in 50 modes, and developed insight (*vipassanā*) up to the change of lineage (*gotrabhū-ñāṇa*). Through the noble path (*ariya-magga*), he realized all the attributes of the Buddhas, and became a Buddha, and uttered the verse of elation: *Aneka-jāti saṁsaraṁ*, "through the round of countless births and deaths" (Dhp 153). This utterance was customarily made by all Buddhas.

> There are ten modes for each of the five aggregates (*khandha*), which makes 50 altogether. The ten modes are enumerated in the Path of the Analytic Knowledges (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*) commentary as follows: impermanent (*anicca*), crumbling (*paloka*), unstable (*cāla*), disintegrating (*pabhaṅgu*), uncertain (*addhuva*), mutable (*vipariṇāma-dhamma*), essenceless (*asāra*), unprosperous (*vibhava*) and liable to death (*maraṇa-dhamma*).

No sooner had the Bodhisatta become a Buddha then a rain of lotuses fell as though to adorn everything in the 10,000 world-element.

What is particularly noteworthy is this: After becoming an Awakened One, Buddha Padumuttara stayed absorbed in the fruition attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) for seven days under the Bodhi tree in the first week. On the eighth day, he thought he would set his foot on the ground, and as he was trying to put down his right foot on the ground, Paduma lotuses, which normally flower in water, miraculously pushed through the earth and appeared under his feet. Each lotus leaf measured nine cubits, each stamen filament, holding pollen, 30 cubits; each pollen, twelve cubits and each bloom had pollen that would fill nine water-jars.

Buddha Padumuttara was 58 cubits tall; the measurement between his two arms was eighteen cubits; that of his forehead five cubits; and that of each arm and leg eleven cubits. As his leg of eleven cubits trod on another pollen of twelve cubits, about nine jars-full of pollen rose up and spread all over his body of 58 cubits in height as though the powder of red orpiment and sulphuret of arsenic

was sprinkled on it. On account of this particular happening, the Buddha was renowned as Buddha Padumuttara.[70]

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. Having become a Buddha, Buddha Padumuttara stayed near the Salala Mahā Bodhi tree for seven weeks. Having accepted a Brahma's request, he thought as to whom he should teach first and saw Prince Devala and Prince Sujāta his future chief disciples who were endowed with the merits of their past deeds leading to the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna. Then he thought of their whereabouts and came to know that they were staying in Mithilā. Accordingly, taking his bowl and robe, and by his psychic power, the Buddha immediately appeared in the garden of Mithilā city.

Buddha Padumuttara then sent the gardener for the two princes, who discussed thus among themselves: "Our uncle's son, Prince Padumuttara, after becoming a Buddha, has come to Mithilā city. We shall now visit him." Then they approached the Buddha with their retinues and sat in suitable places. [153]

Buddha Padumuttara appeared resplendent with the princes waiting upon him, like the full moon attended upon by stars, he taught the audience of Devas and humans led by the princes, the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse which was also taught by all past Buddhas. At that time 1,000 billion Devas and humans attained the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna.

2. At another time, Sārada the recluse was teaching his followers some evil doctrine that would lead them to rebirth in the suffering states. The Buddha went to Sārada's assembly and taught the Dhamma, giving the congregation illustrations of the dangers of rebirth in the Niraya hell, an abode of intense suffering. At that time 3,700,000 Devas and humans, including the disciples of Sārada, attained the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna.

3. Still at another time, the Buddha's father, King Ānanda, sent 20 ministers with 20,000 men to bring back Buddha Padumuttara, who was staying at Mithilā, to his home city of Haṁsavatī, in the same way King Suddhodana did for his son Buddha Gotama. On arriving in the presence of the Buddha in Mithilā, the 20

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[70] This is based on the reciters of the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*). [It is an alternative account to that given above for his name.]

ministers and their 20,000 men, after giving them a discourse, were called upon: "Come, O monks," by the Buddha and they became summoned monastics. Accompanied by them, he travelled to Haṁsavati and stayed in the city to uplift the royal father's spiritually.

Like our Buddha Gotama who visited Kapilavatthu and narrated the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) in the assembly of his relatives, Buddha Padumuttara also taught the Chronicles of the Buddhas in the midst of his relatives while walking on the jewel-walk in the sky. At that time, five million Devas and humans attained the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. The meetings (*sannipāta*) of Padumuttara's disciples took place three times. In the first meeting of 1,000 billion monastics on the full moon day of the month of February (*Māgha*), the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*) in the garden nearby, also named Mithilā.

2. At another time, after observing the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at Mount Vebhāra, the Buddha taught numerous people who had come to see him; on being called upon by the Buddha: "Come, O monks," 900 million became summoned monastics. At the meeting of these monastics, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*).

3. Still at another time, Buddha Padumuttara, Lord of the Three Worlds, while travelling, in order to help multitudes of people free from the bonds of defilements, recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*) at the meeting of 80,000 monks, who as laymen had gone forth in renunciation from various villages, market-towns, districts and countries.

The Bodhisatta as a Governor

At that time, our Bodhisatta was Jaṭila, governor of a province, and he was very wealthy. He performed a great alms giving of food and clothing-material to the Saṅgha, with the Buddha at its head. At the end of the discourse, which was delivered in appreciation of the alms giving, the Buddha predicted of the governor: "A 100,000 aeons from now this man will certainly become a Buddha, named Gotama." On hearing the Buddha's prophecy, the Bodhisatta was extremely happy and determined to fulfil the ten perfections more energetically. [154]

Unusual Features of Buddha Padumuttara's Dispensation

When Buddha Padumuttara appeared, the opposing heretics who were holding wrong views were unhappy, distressed, powerless and started fading away. They received no respect, no generosity and the like, even from a few people. In fact, they were driven out of the country. Then the heretics met together and approached the Buddha with these words: "Most energetic, heroic, venerable sir, may you be our refuge."

The compassionate Buddha Padumuttara established the heretics, who had come to him, in the three refuges together with the observance of the five precepts. In this way the Dispensation of Buddha Padumuttara was free of heretics who were holding wrong views. It was indeed marvellous, with Arahats who were accomplished in the five kinds of mastery, who were not affected by the vicissitudes of the world, and who had the virtues of morality, concentration, wisdom, and forbearance.

Particulars of Buddha Padumuttara

Buddha Padumuttara's birthplace was Haṁsavatī city.

His father was King Ānanda and his mother was Queen Sujātā.

He reigned for 10,000 years.

His three palaces were Naravāhana, Yasavāhana and Vasavatti.

His chief consort was Vasudattā, who was attended by 43,000 maids of honour.

> The number of the maids is given as 120,000 in the section on "royal household life" but here it is mentioned as 43,000. The two numbers therefore seems inconsistent. It should be noted, however, that the former was the total number of maids serving the princess and the latter was the number of maids in each batch that waited upon the princess at any given time.

His son was Prince Uttara.

The vehicle during his renunciation, after seeing the four omens, was a palace.

He practised the austerities for seven days.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Devala and Ven. Sujāta.

His attendant was Ven. Sumana.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Amitā and Ven. Asamā.

His Bodhi tree was a Salala tree.

His noble male lay attendants were the wealthy men, Vitiṇṇa and Tissa.

His noble female attendants were Hatthā and Vicittā.

Buddha Padumuttara's height was 58 cubits.

Endowed with 32 marks of a Great Man, he was like a column of gold erected as an object of worship.

The radiance emitting from the Buddha's body cannot be hindered by gates, doors, walls, trees, high and huge earthen hills, rocky mountains and the like. In fact, the radiance shone forth within the surrounding area of twelve leagues.

The lifespan during Buddha Padumuttara's time was 100,000 years. He lived for 80,000 years, four-fifths of the lifespan and rescued many beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, from the currents of Saṁsāra and placed them on the shores of Nibbāna.

Having eradicated all kinds of doubt in beings whom he conveyed to Nibbāna, Buddha Padumuttara with his monastic disciples, attained the end of his existence just as a great mass of fire became extinct after burning brightly!

In this way, Buddha Padumuttara, conqueror of the five kinds of death (*māra*), attained Parinibbāna in [155] Nanda Park. In the Park, the shrine dedicated to him was twelve leagues in height.

11. The Chronicle of Buddha Sumedha

After the lapse of the aeon in which Buddha Padumuttara appeared, there passed 70,000 empty aeons (*suñña-kappas*), which were devoid of Buddhas. In one aeon, 30,000 aeons before the present one, there appeared two Buddhas (*maṇḍa-kappa*), namely Sumedha and Sujāta.

Of these two Buddhas, Buddha Sumedha, as a Bodhisatta, on complete fulfilment of the perfections was reborn in Tusita which was a common practice of all the Bodhisattas. Having accepted the request made by Devas and Brahmas to become a Buddha, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of Sudattā, Queen of King Sudatta. When ten months had passed, the Bodhisatta was born in Sudassana royal gardens.

Early Life

When he came of age, Prince Sumedha lived in three palaces, namely, Sucanda, Kañcana and Sirivaḍḍhana. Entertained and served by his chief consort Sumanā and her 48,000 maids of honour, he thus enjoyed a divine-like royal household life for 9,000 years.

While he was thus living a royal household life, Princess Sumanā gave birth to a son, named Punabbasu. Having seen the four omens, he renounced the world riding an elephant and became a recluse. Joining him in renunciation were one billion men who also became recluses.

Awakening

Bodhisatta Sumedha observed the austerities with the one billion recluses for fifteen days, or for eight months according to the Sinhalese version. On the day of his Awakening, the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), he ate the milk rice offered by Nakulā, daughter of a wealthy man of Nakula village, and spent the daytime in the local Sāla grove. In the evening, leaving his companions, he went alone to the Bodhi tree. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass from a naked ascetic named Sirivaḍḍha. As soon as he spread the grass under the Asoka Mahā Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat of 57 cubits. Sitting cross-legged on the seat, the Bodhisatta mustered his energy at four levels, dispelled Māra's forces and attained the state of a Buddha, omniscient, and Perfectly Self-Awakened One, Lord of the Three Worlds.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. Having become a Buddha, Buddha Sumedha stayed near the Mahā Bodhi for seven weeks. Agreeing to the entreaty made by a Brahma, he saw his younger half-brothers, princes Saraṇa and Sabbakāma, his future chief disciples, and also the one billion recluses who were his companions in renunciation. He then, by his psychic power, immediately appeared at Sudassana royal gardens near the city of Sudassana.

On seeing the Buddha from a distance, the one billion recluses, with faithful heart, welcomed him: taking his bowl and robe, preparing his seat, paying respects and taking their seats around him. Then the Buddha sent the gardener for his brothers, princes Saraṇa and Sabbakāma. He then taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse to all, including Devas and humans, who had

gone to listen to him. At that time, 1,000 billion Devas and humans attained the paths and fruitions.

2. At another time, having engaged in the attainment of great [156] compassion (*mahā-karuṇā-samāpatti*) in the morning and surveyed the beings who were ripe for liberation, Buddha Sumedha saw a Yakkha, named Kumbhakaṇṇa, a man-eating demon who revealed his terrible appearance at an entrance of a thick forest, thus making the forest tracks deserted. Buddha Sumedha went alone to the Yakkha's dwelling and, after entering it, sat on his prepared seat.

Then Kumbhakaṇṇa became furious, like an extremely poisonous snake struck with a stick. In order to threaten the Buddha, he assumed a horrible shape with his head like a mountain, his eyes opened wide and bright like sunrays; his long and broad fangs like ploughshares; his dark blue belly skin, flabby and pendulous; his nose concave in the middle, convex at its base and tip and terrifyingly ugly; his mouth wide and reddened like a mountain cavity; his hair thick, tawny and rough. With this most terrible appearance, he stood before the Buddha, breathing forth smoke and flames towards him and showered on him rains of rocks, mountains, fire, hot water, hot mud, hot ashes, weapons, burning coal, and hot sand. Despite this rain of the ninefold weapons, the Yakkha was unable to ruffle even a single hair on the Buddha's body. Thinking to himself: "I will kill him by asking a question," he put forward a question, like the Yakkha Āḷavaka, to the Buddha. By successfully answering the Yakkha's question, Buddha Sumedha tamed him.

> Yakkha Āḷavaka, was the best known Yakkha of Buddha Gotama's lifetime, and was King of Āḷavi. Once while he was away, the Buddha went to his palace and taught to his women-folk. Hearing of the Buddha's intrusion, the furious Āḷavaka hurried home and tried to drive the Buddha out of his residence, but in vain. On the contrary, it was the Buddha who succeeded in softening the Yakkha's anger. Yet the Yakkha asked some questions just to fatigue the Buddha, who answered them to Āḷavaka's satisfaction and thereby making him a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*).

On the second day, which happened to be the day the ruler of a nearby country was supposed to sacrifice his son to the Yakkha, the countrymen brought cart-loads of food and offered it, together with the prince, to the Yakkha. Instead, the Yakkha offered the prince, whom he was to devour, to the Buddha. Having heard the good news, the people, who were waiting at the entrance of the forest,

approached the Buddha. In that assembly, Buddha Sumedha taught to the Yakkha a suitable discourse and helped 900 billion beings attain the knowledge of the path.

3. Still on another occasion, Buddha Sumedha taught the four noble truths to Devas and humans in the garden of Sirinanda, near the city of Upakāri. At that time, 800 billion of them attained the path and fruition.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were three meetings (*sannipāta*) of Buddha Sumedha's disciples. In the first meeting, the Buddha was in the city of Sudassana. Then one billion Arahats happened to have congregated.

2. At another time, the Buddha kept the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at Mount Deva. When the Cloth (*Kaṭhina*) ceremony was held after the Rains Retreat, 900 million monks assembled.

3. Still at another time, the Buddha set out on a journey. Then the 800 million monks, who followed the Buddha on his journey, met.

Bodhisatta Uttara

At that time, our Bodhisatta was a young man named Uttara, whose name means one who excels all others in virtues. He gave the Saṅgha, headed by the Buddha, his wealth of 800 [157] million, which was accumulated in his residence. After hearing the Buddha's discourse, he was established in the three refuges and became a monk in the Dispensation of the Buddha. When the discourse given in appreciation of the offering was over, the Buddha uttered the prophecy: "This young man, Uttara, will indeed become a Buddha, named Gotama, in the future." Hearing the Buddha's prophecy, the Bodhisatta was overjoyed and resolved to fulfil the perfections even more.

Uttara became a monk and shouldered his religious responsibilities and became accomplished in studying the Buddha's ninefold teaching of discourses and discipline (*sutta-vinaya*), thus promoting the splendour of his Dispensation.

Mindfully cultivating and developing his virtues as a monk in the three postures of sitting, standing and walking but entirely without lying down, he reached not only the eight attainments (*samāpatti*) but the apex of the super knowledges (*abhiññā*) and on his passing, he was reborn in the Brahma abode.

Particulars of Buddha Sumedha

Buddha Sumedha's birthplace was Sudassana.

His father was King Sudatta and his mother was Queen Sudattā.

He reigned for 9,000 years.

His three palaces were Sucanda, Kañcana and Sirivaḍḍhana.

His chief consort was Sumanā, who had 48,000 maids of honour.[71]

His son was Prince Punabbasu.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Saraṇa and Ven. Sabbakāma.

His attendant was Ven. Sāgara.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Rāmā and Ven. Surāmā.

His Bodhi tree was an Asoka tree (*Mahā-nīpa*).

His noble male lay supporters were the wealthy persons, Uruvela and Yasava.

His noble female supporters were Yasodharā and Sirimā.

His height was 88 cubits.

The radiance emanating from his body spread over all directions, like the moon lighting up the sky and its stars. Or, the Buddha's body radiance spread everywhere in the area of one league, like the Universal Monarch's ruby shining all around to the extent of a league.

The lifespan during Buddha Sumedha's time was 90,000 years. He lived throughout, for four-fifths of this lifespan, and rescued beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, from the flood-waters of Saṁsāra and placed them on the shore of Nibbāna.

Buddha Sumedha's Dispensation witnessed numerous noble Arahats everywhere in his Dispensation, who were endowed with the threefold knowledge and the sixfold super knowledges, who were possessed of energy, who were undisturbed

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[71] [Text: 84,000, but again this didn't agree with BvA, or what was stated earlier, so I have changed it.]

by the vicissitudes of the world, who had the ability to view things, pleasant or unpleasant, in one and the same manner.

These noble Arahats of incomparable fame were all liberated from defilements and free of the four bases of existence (*upadhi*). The Arahats, who were the Buddha's disciples, having large retinues, shed the light of their wisdom and attained the peaceful Nibbāna.

In this way Buddha Sumedha, conqueror of the five kinds of death (*māra*), attained Parinibbāna in the gardens of Medha. His relics dispersed in accordance with his resolve and existed all over Jambudīpa, being honoured by beings such as humans, Devas and Brahmas. [158]

12. The Chronicle of Buddha Sujāta

After Buddha Sumedha had attained Parinibbāna, the lifespan of human beings gradually decreased from 90,000 years to ten and then it again increased to immeasurables. When the lifespan reached 90,000 years on its next decrease, Bodhisatta Sujātā was reborn in Tusita on complete fulfilment of the perfections which was a practice common to all Bodhisattas. Having agreed to the entreaties of Devas and Brahmas to become a Buddha, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of Queen Pabhavatī of King Uggata, in the city of Sumaṅgala. Ten months thereafter the Bodhisatta was born.

On his naming day, wise men who were to give him a name, named him Sujāta, on account of the fact that, at the time of his birth, all the people in Jambudīpa experienced both physical and mental happiness.

Early Life

When he came of age, he lived in three palaces: Sirī, Upasirī and Nanda, and entertained and was served by Princess Sirinandā and her 23,000 maids of honour for 9,000 years.

When the Bodhisatta had seen the four omens and when Princess Sirinandā had given birth to a son, named Upasena, he went forth in renunciation riding the state steed, named Haṁsavaha and became a recluse. 10 million men were inspired and became recluses themselves.

Awakening

Bodhisatta Sujātā practised the austerities with that 10 million of recluses for nine months. On the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), the day of his Awakening, he ate the milk rice offered by the daughter of the wealthy man Sirinandana of the city of Sirinandana and spent the daytime in the local Sāla grove. In the evening, he proceeded alone to the Mahā Bodhi tree. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass offered by the naked ascetic Sunanda. As soon as he spread the grass at the foot of the Great Bamboo Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat, which measured 33 cubits, on which he sat cross-legged and mustered his energy at four levels and dispelled Māra and his army and attained omniscience, Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddhahood and the state of Lord of the Three Worlds.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. Having become a Buddha and stayed in the neighbourhood of the Mahā Bodhi tree for 49 days, the Buddha accepted a Brahma's request for his teaching and he contemplated who he should teach first. He saw his younger half-brother, Prince Sudassana, and his Brahmin chaplain's son, Sudeva the youth, who were endowed with the merits of their past deeds, which would lead to the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna. Resolving to teach them first, by his psychic power, he immediately appeared in Sumaṅgala Park, near Sumaṅgala city and then he sent the gardener for Prince Sudassana and Sudeva the youth. To the audience of Devas and humans, the Buddha taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, which was also taught by previous Buddhas. At that time, 800 million Devas and humans attained the paths and fruitions.

2. At another time, Buddha Sujāta defeated the heretics by displaying the twin miracle of water and fire, near the Sāla tree close to the gate of the Sudassana Royal Park. And while observing the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) sitting on the emerald stone slab, which was placed at the foot of the Pāricchattaka tree in Sakka's abode of Tāvatiṁsa, the Buddha taught the Abhidhamma. On that occasion of the Abhidhamma teaching, 3,700,000 Devas [159] and Brahmas attained the paths and fruitions.

3. Still at another time, Buddha Sujāta paid a visit to his father in the city of Sumaṅgala and taught him the Dhamma. By the end of his teaching, six million Devas and humans attained the paths and fruitions.

Three Occasions of The Disciple's Meeting

1. There were three meetings of Buddha Sujāta's disciples; the first was at Sudhamma, near Sudhammavatī city, where the Buddha taught people who visited him and admitted six million men into the Saṅgha by calling upon them: "Come, monastics," and recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*) to them.

2. At another time, when Buddha Sujāta descended from Tāvatiṁsa, a meeting of five million monks took place.

3. Still at another time, when the chief disciple, Ven. Sudassana, who sat on the right side of the Buddha, took 400,000 men to the Buddha. These men had decided among themselves to go forth on hearing that the Buddha's younger brother, Prince Sudassana had become a monk in the presence of the Buddha and had become an Arahat, as they were inspired. The Buddha gave them instructions, made them summoned monastics and recited the Advisory Rules at the meeting with four features.

The Bodhisatta as a Universal Monarch

At that time our Bodhisatta was a Universal Monarch. Hearing that there had appeared a Buddha in the world, he approached the Buddha, listened to the Dhamma discourses, offered his kingship with his seven treasures to the Saṅgha with the Buddha as its head and then he became a monk. The inhabitants of Jambudīpa made themselves monastery attendants, collected taxes from his domain and constantly supplied the Buddha and his Saṅgha with the four requisites of robes, food, shelter and medicines. Then Buddha Sujāta made a prophecy: "He will indeed become a Buddha in future." Having received the Buddha's prophecy, the Bodhisatta rejoiced and was determined to fulfil the ten perfections even more energetically.

He joined the Saṅgha of Buddha Sujāta and became accomplished in the studies of the Buddha's teachings which are of nine divisions together with the discourses and discipline (*sutta-vinaya*). Thus he contributed to the beauty of the Buddha's Dispensation.

Having cultivated the practice of meditation on the divine abodes (*Brahma-vihāra-bhāvanā*), leading to rebirth in the Brahma abode, without absent-mindedness in the three postures of sitting, standing and walking, but not in the

posture of lying down, he reached the apex, not only of the eight attainments but also of the five super knowledges. On his death, he was reborn in the world of the Brahmas.

Particulars of Buddha Sujāta

Buddha Sujāta's birthplace was Sumaṅgala city.

His father was King Uggata and his mother was Queen Pabhāvatī.

He reigned for 9,000 years.

His three palaces were Sirī, Upasirī and Nanda.

His chief consort was Sirinandā, who had 23,000 maids of honour.

His son was Prince Upasena. [160]

He renounced the world riding a horse, after seeing the four omens.

He practised the austerities for nine months.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Sudassana and Ven. Sudeva.

His attendant was Ven. Nārada.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Nāgā and Ven. Nāgasamālā.

His Bodhi tree was the Great Bamboo (*Mahā-veḷu*).

> The bamboo plant had a massive trunk, its leaves were so luxuriant that there was no space to let the sunlight through. It was pleasant to look at, straight and big and thus attractive. It grew from one stem and from that one stem came out branches, which were very beautiful, like the feathers of a peacock's tail being well tied together. The bamboo plant had absolutely no thorns. Its branches spread out in the four directions and were not so sparse, thus providing a delightful, cool and dense shade.

His noble male lay-attendants were the wealthy men, Sudatta and Citta.

His noble female lay attendants were Subhaddā and Padumā.

Buddha Sujāta's height was 50 cubits. He was endowed with all the good physical qualities.

Buddha Sujāta's physical radiance, resembling those of past incomparable Buddhas, emanated from various parts of his body towards all directions as

much as he desired. They could not be likened to anything as they were beyond all comparisons.

The lifespan, during the time of Buddha Sujāta, was 90,000 years, and living for four-fifths of this lifespan, he saved beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, from the currents of Saṁsāra and placed them on the shores of Nibbāna.

Just as the rising waves look wonderful in the ocean, like the stars and planets twinkling and shining look marvellous in the sky, even so Buddha Sujāta's Dispensation shone forth with Arahats.

Buddha Sujāta, who was to be likened to the past peerless Buddhas, and his attributes, which were equal to those of the peerless Buddhas, have all vanished. Unsubstantial and futile indeed are all conditioned things!

In this way, Buddha Sujāta, conqueror of the five kinds of death (*māra*), attained Parinibbāna in Sīlārāma Park. In that very Park the shrine dedicated to him was three miles high.

13. The Chronicle of Buddha Piyadassī

When the aeon in which Buddha Sujāta appeared had come to an end and 1,800 aeons had elapsed, in a certain noble (*vara*) aeon there appeared three Buddhas: Piyadassī, Atthadassī and Dhammadassī.

The story of Piyadassī, the first of these three, is as follows: On completion of his fulfilment of the perfections, Bodhisatta Piyadassī was reborn in Tusita which was a practice common to all Bodhisattas. Having agreed to the entreaties of Devas and Brahmas to become a Buddha, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of Queen Candā, Queen of King Sudatta, in the city of Sudhaññavatī. When ten months had elapsed, the Bodhisatta was born in the garden, named Varuṇa. The Bodhisatta was given the name of Piyadassī as delightful miracles were manifest to multitudes of people on his naming day. [161]

Early Life

When the Bodhisatta came of age, he lived in three palaces: Sunimmala, Vimala and Giriguhā. Being entertained and served by Princess Vimalā and her 33,000 maids of honour for 9,000 years, he enjoyed a divine-like royal household life.

After seeing the four omens, and after Princess Vimalā had given birth to a son, named Kañcanaveḷa, he went forth in a chariot drawn by thoroughbred steeds. 10 million men were inspired and became recluses themselves.

Awakening

With that 10 million of recluses, Bodhisatta Piyadassī practised the austerities for six months. On the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), the day of his Awakening, he partook of the milk rice offered by the daughter of Brahmin Vasabha, a resident of the Brahmin village of Varuṇa and spent the daytime in the local Sāla grove. He went alone to the Mahā Bodhi tree in the evening. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass offered by Sujāta the Ājīvaka. As soon as he spread the grass under the Kakudha Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat, which was 53 cubits. Sitting cross-legged on it, and mustering his energy at four levels, he drove away Māra's forces and attained omniscience, Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddhahood and the state of the Lord of the Three Worlds.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After his Awakening, Buddha Piyadassī stayed in the neighbourhood of the Mahā Bodhi tree for 49 days, just as previous Buddhas did. He discerned that the 10 million recluses, who had renounced the world with him, were endowed with the merits of their past deeds which lead to the attainment of the paths and fruitions. He then, by psychic power, immediately appeared in the royal garden, which was named after the nearby city of Usabhavatī. Being surrounded by the 10 million of recluses, he taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, which was also taught by previous Buddhas, to Devas and Brahmas who had gathered there to listen to him.

2. The Buddha's second teaching took place on the mountain of Sudassana, near Usabhavatī city. Sudassana, the Yakkha King of the mountain, was then holding to a wrong view. People living in Jambudīpa annually brought food costing 100,000 pieces of money to offer to him, who, sitting side by side with the human king of Usabhavatī, was honoured by the whole continent as a god.

> Things offered to gods or kings are called *bali* in Pāḷi; offering *bali* to gods is said to be "feeding *bali* to gods"; giving it to kings is known as "paying taxes."

At that time, thinking that he would remove Sudassana's wrong view, Buddha Piyadassī went to his mansion, while he was away at a meeting of Yakkhas. He sat on Sudassana's splendid couch and stayed there emitting his radiance of six colours, like the sun appearing at the top of Mount Yugandhara in the month of November (*Kattikā*), in autumn. Sudassana's retinue of Yakkhas, surrounding him, honoured the Buddha with flowers, scents, unguents, etc.

On his return from the Yakkhas' meeting, Sudassana saw the radiance of six colours coming out from his mansion, and thought to himself: "Never have I seen before such splendour of diverse brilliant colours. Who could be the person occupying my place? Is it a human being? Or, is it a divine being?" On surveying, he saw the Buddha with a network of radiance of six colours like the autumnal sun rising from Mount Yugandhara. "This shaven-headed monk is sitting on my luxurious bed and is surrounded by members of my retinue," said Sudassana to himself, with his heart tormented by anger. "Well, I shall display my physical [162] might to this monk." So thinking, he turned the whole mountain into a mass of blazing flames.

Having done so, he inspected it, wondering "whether the shaven-headed monk has become ashes in the flames," but he saw the Buddha with a serene face and a glorious body emitting brilliant lights because of the network of diverse radiance. "This monk can withstand even the burning fire," he thought. "Well, I will drown him in a huge flood of water." He then caused an immense mass of water to rush into the mansion at high speed. Though the Buddha remained in the mansion flooded with water, not even a single thread of his robe nor a single hair of his body got wet.

After that the Yakkha King Sudassana contemplated another method by which he hoped the Buddha would be suffocated and killed. He brought the mass of water close to the Buddha, who appeared glorious in the greenish blue waters with the network of radiance like the bright moon on the full moon night of November (*Kattikā*) and sitting surrounded by Sudassana's courtiers. Unable to control his anger and thinking: "I shall put the great monk to death by all means," he caused a rain of nine kinds of weapons to fall on the Buddha. Because of the Buddha's great physic power, all these weapons turned into various beautiful and fragrant clusters and garlands of flowers and fell at his feet.

Seeing that miraculous phenomenon, Sudassana became much more resentful and violent instead of getting awed with faith. He caught hold of the Buddha by the legs with his two hands and lifted him up. Then passing over the great ocean, he rushed to the mountain ranges that mark the end of the Cakkavāḷa, for he wanted to rid his abode of the Buddha.

"How is he? Is he dead or alive?" Thinking thus, he looked at the Buddha and, as though in a dream, saw that he remained seated in the mansion. It then occurred to him thus: "Ah, this great monk is so powerful, I was not able to drag him out of my place. If somebody comes to know of what I am doing now, it will be a disgrace to me. Therefore, before anyone sees, I shall go away, abandoning both the monk and the mansion."

At that moment, the Buddha, knowing Sudassana's thoughts, resolved so that Devas and humans could see him holding his legs. In accordance with this resolve, Sudassana was unable to leave his abode as he had planned but remained there holding the Buddha's legs with both of his hands.

That was the day when 101 kings of the whole of Jambudīpa gathered together to honour the Yakkha King with offerings (*bali*). The 101 kings saw Sudassana holding the Buddha's legs and marvelled at what they saw, exclaiming: "Our King of Yakkhas is massaging the legs of the king of recluses! Oh, Buddhas should be indeed marvelled at with a snapping of the fingers.[72] Oh, their attributes are indeed wonderful!" With their hearts inclined towards the Buddha they paid homage to the Buddha with their clasped hands placed on their heads.

At that gathering, Buddha Piyadassī gave Dhamma instructions to the audience with Sudassana at its head. Then 900 billion Devas and humans became Arahats.

3. At another time, in the city of Kumuda, which was nine leagues in extent, its area being nine leagues, the wicked monk Soṇa, opponent of Buddha Piyadassī and the counterpart of Devadatta in the lifetime of our Buddha Gotama, after consulting with the king's son, Prince Mahā Paduma, incited him to kill his father. After various attempts to have Buddha Piyadassī killed proved futile, he enticed the driver of the royal elephant, Doṇamukha by name, to whom he gave

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[72] With the snapping of the fingers: equivalent to an expression of praise or approval with clapping of the hands.

instructions, saying: "When Buddha Piyadassī enters the city on alms round, kill him by driving Doṇamukha towards him."

Since the elephant-driver was not so intelligent to judge what was beneficial and what was not, he thought thus: "This monk Soṇa is an intimate friend of the king. If he does not [163] like me, I could be dismissed from service." So he agreed to do so. On the next day, he managed to know the time when the Buddha would enter the city for alms food. Then he went to Doṇamukha, who was in a state of frenzy and made him more intoxicated and then sent him to kill the Buddha.

As soon as he was let out, Doṇamukha crushed elephants, horses, buffaloes, bulls, men and women whom he encountered on the way, destroyed all buildings that were in his way, and like a cannibal-demon, he devoured all the flesh of its prey in the noisy company of eagles, kites, crows and vultures. And finally, as soon as he saw the Buddha from a distance, he rushed towards him at high speed.

The hearts of the citizens, almost burst open with fear and anxiety, took to house-tops, walls, stone parapets, brick parapets, trees, etc., and on seeing the elephant, who was rushing towards the Buddha, they called out, and some of them even tried to stop the elephant in various ways. Seeing Doṇamukha, the king of elephants rushing towards him, the "Elephant of a Buddha," with his tranquil heart, diffusing intense compassion, permeated it with sublime loving-kindness.

> Noble ones such as Buddhas and Arahats are sometimes figuratively likened to such noble animals as elephants, lions, bulls, etc. in Buddhist literature. For instance in the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*), there is a chapter named the Chapter about the Elephant (*Nāga-vagga*), the verses of which described the qualities of an elephant (*nāga*). That may be compared to those of a sage in the Questions of King Milinda (*Milinda-pañha*), where the epithet Buddha-nāga is conspicuously mentioned.

Then Doṇamukha, his heart made tender with the permeation of the Buddha's loving-kindness, realized his wrong-doing and became so ashamed that he could not stand in a natural manner before the Buddha but lay down with his head at the Buddha's feet as though he was about to sink into the earth.

Watching the event, the citizens were filled with joy and shouted in acclaim, like the roar of a lion. They also honoured the elephant in various ways, with

highly fragrant flowers, sandalwood powder, ornaments and so on. They even threw up their turbans and garments, and celestial drums were beaten in the sky.

> Nāḷāgiri, the elephant during the time of our Buddha Gotama, was similarly tamed, and when it was respectfully lying before the Buddha, people threw on it various ornaments, which covered the whole of its body. From that moment onwards, Nāḷāgiri had been called Dhanapāla, Keeper of Wealth. Thereupon, it walked backwards with respect and when it had entered its shed, it is said in the Short Birth Story about the Golden Goose (*Cūḷa-haṁsa-jātaka*, Ja 502) commentary, the adornments went back to their respective original owners owing to the Buddha's resolve. In the same way, when the people threw theirs on Doṇamukha, it should be taken that they were given as a reward to the elephant.

Then the Buddha stroked the head of the elephant who was lying prostrate at his feet and exhorted it with the words that suited his mentally. The elephant that has thus been exhorted regained his conscience and became so tame that he looked like a monk-disciple of the Buddha, disciplined in Vinaya. Having exhorted Doṇamukha the way Buddha Gotama exhorted Dhanapāla, Buddha Piyadassī give a discourse in the midst of the people who had gathered there. At that time, 800 billion people attained the paths and fruitions.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were three meetings (*sannipāta*) of the disciples of the Buddha. On the first occasion, when Buddha Piyadassī paid a visit to the city of Sumaṅgala, the two friends, Prince Pālita and the youth, Sabbadassī, son of the king's Brahmin chaplain, who were his future chief disciples, hearing of the Buddha's visit to their city, welcomed him together with their 1,000 billion retinue. They listened to his discourse and gave alms for seven days. On the seventh day, at the end of the Buddha's discourse which was given in appreciation of the meal, both of them, together with their 1,000 billion [164] followers, became monks and became Arahats. In the midst of these monks, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*).

2. At another time, at the gathering where the Yakkha Sudassana was tamed, 900 million men put on the robe and became Arahats. Being surrounded by these 900 million monks, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules.

3. Still at another time, on the occasion of the taming of the elephant Doṇamukha, 800 million men renounced the world and became Arahats. In the midst of these 800 million Arahats, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules.

The Bodhisatta as Brahmin Kassapa

At that time, our Bodhisatta was a Brahmin youth, Kassapa by name, who was accomplished in the three Vedas. Having listened to the Buddha's teaching, he cultivated great faith and had a huge monastery built at the cost of 1,000 billion. He then offered it to the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha. Rejoicing in his act of merit, he took refuge in the Three Treasures and kept the five precepts steadfastly, lest he should become heedless.

Remaining in the midst of the Saṅgha, Buddha Piyadassī made the prophecy concerning the youth, Kassapa: "1,800 aeons from the present one, this youth, Kassapa, will become a Buddha indeed."

Having heard Buddha Piyadassī's prophecy, the Bodhisatta was extremely happy and determined to fulfil the perfections even more energetically.

Particulars of Buddha Piyadassī

Buddha Piyadassī's birthplace was Sudhañña̱vatī city.

His father was King Sudatta and his mother was Queen Candā.

He reigned for 9,000 years.

His three palaces were Sunimmala, Vimala and Giriguhā.

His chief consort was Vimalā, who had 33,000 maids of honour.

His son was Prince Kañcanaveḷa.

The vehicle he used for his going forth, after seeing the four omens, was a chariot drawn by thoroughbred horses.

He practised the austerities for six months.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Pālita and Ven. Sabbadassī.

His attendant was Ven. Sobhita.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Sujātā and Ven. Dhammadinnā.

His Bodhi tree was a Kakudha.

His noble male lay-supporters were the wealthy men, Sandhaka and Dhammaka.

His noble female lay-disciples were Visākhā and Dhammadinnā.

Buddha Piyadassī had innumerable followers and good reputation. He was also endowed with the 32 marks of a Great Man. His height was 80 cubits, like a great Sāla tree in full bloom.

There was no torchlight, moonlight or sunlight that could vie with the physical light of the peerless Buddha Piyadassī which surpassed them all.

The lifespan during the time of Buddha Piyadassī was 90,000 years. Living for four-fifths of this lifespan, he rescued many beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, from the currents of Saṁsāra and put them on the shores of Nibbāna. [165]

Buddha Piyadassī, who was to be likened with past peerless Buddhas, and the pair of his peerless chief disciples, etc., have all vanished. Unsubstantial and futile indeed are all conditioned things!

In this way, the noble monk, Buddha Piyadassī attained Parinibbāna in the park of fig trees. In that park, the shrine erected and dedicated to Buddha Piyadassī, as has been stated before for other Buddhas, was three leagues high.

14. The Chronicle of Buddha Atthadassī

After Buddha Piyadassī had attained Parinibbāna, in that aeon[73] the lifespan of human beings decreased gradually from 90,000 years to ten years, and then it again increased to immeasurables. When the lifespan reached 100,000 years on its next decrease, Bodhisatta Atthadassī was reborn in Tusita on complete fulfilment of the perfections which was a practice common to all Bodhisattas. Having agreed to the entreaties of Devas and Brahmas to become a Buddha, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of Queen Sudassanā, consort of King Sāgara, in the city of Sobhana. Ten months thereafter the Bodhisatta was born in Sucindhana Park. On his naming day, he was named Atthadassī because owners of treasures, which were hidden underground,

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[73] Which should be called *Maṇḍa-kappa* because it was full of pleasing, spotless, special attributes though it was actually a *Vara-kappa* as three Buddhas appeared during that period.

recovered them, after having discovered the forgotten sites where their treasures had long been kept, one generation after another.

Early Life

When Bodhisatta Atthadassī came of age, he lived in three palaces: Amaragiri, Sugiri and Girivāhana. Being entertained and served by 33,000 female attendants, headed by Princess Visākhā, he thus enjoyed a divine-like royal household life for 10,000 years.

When the Bodhisatta had seen the four omens and when Queen Visākhā had given birth to a son, named Sela, he went forth riding a horse, named Sudassana. 90 million men joined him and became recluses themselves.

Awakening

With these 90 million recluses, Bodhisatta Atthadassī practised the austerities for eight months. On the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), the day of his Awakening, people brought delicious milk rice to offer it to the female Nāga, Sucindharā by name. But she did not eat it. Having revealed herself to the people, she instead offered it in a golden bowl to the Bodhisatta. The Bodhisatta partook of it, and spent the daytime in the local grove of Sāla trees. In the evening, he proceeded alone to the Mahā Bodhi tree. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass offered by the Nāga King, Mahā Ruci. As soon as he spread the grass at the foot of the Campak Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat, measuring 53 cubits. Sitting cross-legged on this seat, he mustered his energy at four levels, dispelled Māra's forces and attained omniscience, Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddhahood and the state of Lord of the Three Worlds.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After becoming a Buddha, the Buddha stayed in the neighbourhood of the Mahā Bodhi tree for 49 days. Accepting a Brahma's request for his teaching, he contemplated who he should teach first. Then he saw the 90 million monks who had followed him in renunciation and who were endowed with past meritorious [166] deeds, which could lead to the paths and fruitions. And surveying their whereabouts, he saw them staying in Anoma Park, near the city of Anoma. He then, by his psychic power, immediately appeared in Anoma Park.

At that time, the 90 million monks saw, from a distance, Buddha Atthadassī approaching them. With faithful heart, they all performed their duties, as has been described in the previous chapters. They took their seats around the Buddha, who then taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, which was also taught by other Buddhas. By the end of the discourse, 1,000 billion beings attained the paths and fruitions.

2. At another time, Buddha Atthadassī travelled up to Tāvatiṁsa and taught the Abhidhamma to Devas and Brahmas. 100,000 Devas and Brahmas attained the paths and fruitions.

3. Still at another time, like our Buddha Gotama, who visited his father in the city of Kapilavatthu and narrated the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), so did Buddha Atthadassī visit the city of Sobhana and taught the Dhamma to his relatives, headed by his father. At the time, 1,000 billion people attained the paths and fruitions.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were three meetings of the Buddha's disciples. The first one took place at Sucandaka, where Prince Santa and the Brahmin chaplain's son, Upasanta who were his future chief disciples, seeing no essence in the three Vedas as well as in various creeds, assigned four intelligent men and some brave watchmen at the four gates of the four sides of the city with an instruction: "Come and inform us if you see or hear of any Awakened person, be he a recluse or a Brahmin."

When Buddha Atthadassī, lord of the three kinds of men, with his disciples, arrived at Sucandaka city, those on assignment went to the prince and the Brahmin chaplain's son and informed them of the Buddha's arrival. Being thus informed, with joyous hearts, they both hurriedly went outside the city with a retinue of 1,000 members and greeted, honoured and invited him into the city. Having done so, they performed a great incomparable alms giving (*asadisa-mahā-dāna*) for seven days to the Saṅgha with the Buddha at its head. On the seventh day, with all the citizens, they both listened to the Buddha's teaching. On that day, 98,000 people, on it being pronounced: "Come, O monks," became summoned monastics and became Arahats. In the midst of that assembly of monks, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*).

2. At another time, when Buddha Atthadassī gave instructions to his own son, Ven. Sela, 88,000 people developed faith and asked the Buddha to become monks. The Buddha then pronounced: "Come, O monks," and they all became summoned monastics and Arahats. In the midst of that assembly of monks, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules.

3. Still at another time, on the full moon day of February (*Māgha*), when beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, assembled to listen to the Great Discourse on the Blessings (*Mahā-maṅgala*), taught by the Buddha, 78,000 humans became Arahats. In that assembly of monks, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules. [167]

The Bodhisatta as Recluse Susīma

At that time our Bodhisatta was reborn as Susīma, in the city of Campaka. He was a wealthy Brahmin, considered and recognized by the whole world as a virtuous person. Having given away all his wealth to the poor, the helpless, the destitute, travellers and others, he went to the Himālayas and lived the life of an ascetic. After achieving the eight attainments and the five super knowledges, he became a noble ascetic with supernormal power. Teaching people the merit of wholesome deeds and the demerit of unwholesome deeds, he waited for the time when a Buddha would appear.

Later on, when Buddha Atthadassī appeared in the world and "showered the rain of discourses of immortality" in the midst of an audience, which was composed of the eight assemblies of people, Susīma the ascetic listened to the Buddha's Dhamma. And he went up to the celestial abode, brought back such celestial flowers as the Mandārava, Paduma, Pāricchattaka, etc., from Tāvatiṁsa. Wishing to display his miraculous power, he made himself visible and caused a rain of flowers to fall in the four quarters, like a great rain that fell all over the four continents. He also created a pavilion of flowers decorated on all sides with flowers, had a pinnacled arch over the entrance with decorated columns and nets, etc., and adorned with flowers. He then honoured the Buddha with a huge umbrella of celestial Mandārava flowers. Buddha Atthadassī then made a prophecy concerning Susīma the ascetic: "This ascetic Susīma will definitely become a Buddha, Gotama by name, in the future when 1,800 aeons have elapsed."

On hearing Buddha Atthadassī's prophecy, the Bodhisatta was extremely happy and firmly resolved to fulfil the ten perfections even more energetically, fearing that he would become heedless.

Particulars of Buddha Atthadassī

Buddha Atthadassī's birthplace was Sobhana city.

His father was King Sāgara and his mother was Queen Sudassanā.

He reigned for 10,000 years.

His three palaces were Amaragiri, Sugiri and Girivāhana.

His chief consort was Visākhā, who had 33,000 maids of honour.

His son was Prince Sela.

The vehicle he used in renunciation was a steed, Sudassana by name.

He practised the austerities for eight months.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Santa and Ven. Upasanta.

His attendant was Ven. Abhaya.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Dhammā and Ven. Sudhammā.

His Bodhi tree was a Campak.

His male noble supporters were the wealthy persons, Nakula and Nisabha.

His female supporters were Makilā and Sunandā.

The height of Buddha Atthadassī, who had as his equals only peerless Buddhas, was 80 cubits tall and he was majestic like a Sāla tree in full bloom or like the full moon, king of all the stars and planets.

Buddha Atthadassī's radiance of intense power emitting from his body, constantly radiated, glowing above and below in the ten quarters for a league.[74]

Excelling all beings, Buddha Atthadassī was endowed with five eyes and existed in the world for 80,000 years.

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[74] Should the Buddha have wished and resolved the radiance could diffuse all over several tens of millions of world-elements.

After shedding the peerless light of Dhamma in the world of Devas and humans, Buddha [168] Atthadassī attained Parinibbāna just like a fire becomes extinct on exhaustion of fuel.

In this way, Buddha Atthadassī, conqueror of the five kinds of death (*māra*), attained Parinibbāna in Anoma Park. His relics were dispersed according to his resolve and reached all over Jambudīpa and received veneration from beings such as humans, Devas and Brahmas.

15. The Chronicle of Buddha Dhammadassī

After Buddha Atthadassī had attained Parinibbāna in that aeon[75] the lifespan of human beings decreased gradually from 100,000 years to ten years and then it again increased to immeasurables. When the lifespan reached 100,000 years on its next decrease, Bodhisatta Dhammadassī was reborn in Tusita on complete fulfilment of the perfections which was a practice common to all Bodhisattas. Having accepted the requests made by Devas and Brahmas to become a Buddha, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of Queen Sunandā, consort of King Saraṇa, in the city of Saraṇa. Ten months thereafter the Bodhisatta was born in Saraṇa Royal Park.

Since his birth, unrighteous rules and codes applied in lawsuits had all automatically disappeared from the law books, while righteous ones had remained. Therefore, when the prince was to be named, he was given the name of Dhammadassī by learned omen-reading men, and his relatives.

Early Life

When Bodhisatta Dhammadassī came of age, he lived in three palaces: Araja, Viraja and Sudassana. Being entertained and served by 43,000 female attendants headed by Princess Vicikoḷī, he thus enjoyed a divine-like royal household life for 8,000 years.

After he had seen the four omens and after his Princess Vicikoḷī had given birth to a son, named Puññavaḍḍhana, Bodhisatta Dhammadassī, gentle like a celestial

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[75] Which was a *Vara-kappa* as it was a period in which three Buddhas appeared but which should be called *Maṇḍa-kappa* because it was full of pleasing, spotless, special attributes.

being and experiencing a divine life, woke up at midnight. Sitting on his bed, he saw the various loathsome conditions of the female attendants who were asleep. With his mind greatly disturbed, he decided to renounce the world. No sooner had he decided than Sudassana Palace, which was occupied by him and his fourfold army, rose to the sky and travelled like a second sun, as if a flying celestial mansion, and descended near the Bimbijāla Mahā Bodhi tree.

The Bodhisatta then put on the lotus-robes offered by a Brahma and getting off the palace, he stood not far from it. The palace then travelled through the sky again and landed on the ground encompassing the Bodhi tree. Female courtiers and their followers got down from the palace and stayed at a distance of half a mile. From among these people the male folk donned the yellow robes joining the Bodhisatta in renunciation. Those who did so numbered about 1,000 billion.

Awakening

After practising the austerities for seven days, Bodhisatta Dhammadassī ate the milk rice offered by Princess Vicikoḷī on the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), the day of his Awakening, and spent the daytime in the local plum grove. In the evening, he went alone to the Mahā Bodhi tree. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass from Sirivaḍḍha, the watchman of the barley-field. As soon as he spread the grass at the foot of the Bimbijāla Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat, measuring 53 cubits. Sitting cross-legged on that seat, he become a Buddha, in the same manner as previous Buddhas. [169]

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After becoming a Buddha, the Buddha stayed in the neighbourhood of the Mahā Bodhi tree for 49 days. Having accepted a Brahma's request for his teaching, he contemplated who he should teach first. He saw the 1,000 billion monks, who had renounced the world along with him, who had done meritorious deeds in the past that would lead to the paths and fruitions. By his psychic power, he immediately appeared at the Deer Park called Isipatana, which was a place where flying ascetics, masters of mundane absorptions, normally alighted, and which was eighteen leagues from the Mahā Bodhi tree.

On seeing the Buddha from a distance, the 1,000 billion recluses welcomed him by performing various duties faithfully and finally taking their seats around him. Then the Buddha taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, which

was also taught by previous Buddhas, to these recluses and all the Devas and humans who had come to listen to him. By the end of the discourse, 1,000 billion beings attained the paths and fruitions.

2. Once, thereafter, in the town of Tagara, King Sañjaya, having seen the disadvantages of sensual pleasures and the advantages of renunciation, became an ascetic. Following his example, 900 million men also became ascetics. All of them achieved the five super knowledges and the eight attainments. Seeing them endowed with meritorious deeds leading to the paths and fruitions, the Buddha appeared at Anaya's hermitage. He stood in the sky and taught a discourse that suited their inclinations and dispositions. Thus, the Buddha helped them attain the knowledge of the path known as the vision of the Dhamma (*Dhamma-cakkhu*).

3. At still another time, the Lord of the Devas, wishing to listen to a discourse, approached the Buddha with his retinue. When the Buddha taught them a discourse, 800 million them attained the paths and fruitions.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There are three meetings (*sannipāta*) of Buddha Dhammadassī's disciples. The first meeting took place at Saraṇa city, where Buddha Dhammadassī caused his half-brothers, Prince Paduma and Prince Phussa, and their retinues to become monks and observe the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in that city. During the Rains Retreat and in the midst of one billion monks who had become Arahats, the Buddha performed the Invitation of the Pure (*Visuddhi-pavāraṇā*).

2. At another time, Buddha Dhammadassī taught Abhidhamma in Tāvatiṁsa and descended back to the human world. Then one billion monks assembled.

3. Still at another time, Buddha Dhammadassī explained the advantages of the thirteen ascetic practices (*dhutaṅgas*) and proclaimed Hārita, a great disciple and Arahat, to be the foremost among those who engaged in the ascetic practices. Then, at the meeting of 800 million monks, he recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*).

The Bodhisatta as Sakka

At that time, our Bodhisatta was Sakka, the Lord of the Devas. Being accompanied by Devas of two divine abodes, the Cātumahārājika and the Tāvatiṁsa, he visited the Buddha and honoured [170] him with celestial flowers,

etc., and various sounds of celestial music. Then the Buddha made a prophetic declaration: "This Sakka will indeed become a Buddha, Gotama by name, in the future."

Having heard Buddha Dhammadassī's prophecy, Sakka the Bodhisatta, became extremely pleased and resolved to fulfil the perfections even more energetically.

Particulars of Buddha Dhammadassī

Buddha Dhammadassī's birthplace was Saraṇa city.

His father was King Saraṇa and his mother was Queen Sunandā.

He reigned for 8,000 years.

His three palaces were Araja, Viraja and Sudassana.

His chief consort was Vicikoḷī, who had 43,000 maids of honour.

His son was Puññavaḍḍhana.

The vehicle he used in renunciation, after seeing the four omens, was a palace.

He practised the austerities for seven days.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Paduma and Ven. Phussa.

His attendant was Ven. Sunetta.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Khemā and Ven. Sabbanāmā.

His Bodhi tree was a Bimbijāla.

His noble male lay supporters were the wealthy persons Subhadda and Kaṭissaha.

His noble female lay supporters were Sāḷiyā and Kāḷiyā.

Buddha Dhammadassī, who had as his equals only peerless Buddhas, was 80 cubits tall.

He was glorious with power in the 10,000 world-element. Buddha Dhammadassī was majestic like the Sāla tree in full bloom or like the lightning or the sun at midday that brightens the sky.

Buddha Dhammadassī, who was endowed with unparallel might and the five eyes, lived the whole lifespan of his time which was 100,000 years.

Having displayed his power and knowledge and purified his teaching so that it had no stain, the Buddha attained Parinibbāna with his Arahat disciples and disappeared like the moon that vanishes after shining in the sky.

In this way, the greatly energetic Buddha Dhammadassī attained Parinibbāna in the Sāla Park, in the city of Sālavatī. A three-leagues high shrine was erected in the Park and dedicated to him.

16. The Chronicle of Buddha Siddhattha

After the aeon in which Buddha Dhammadassī appeared had come to an end, there elapsed, one after another, 1,706 aeons.[76] Then 94 aeons ago from now, there appeared the one and only Buddha of that aeon, Siddhattha by name.

At that time, 94 aeons ago, the lifespan of human beings decreased from immeasurables to 100,000 years. Bodhisatta Siddhattha, on complete fulfilment of the perfections, was reborn in Tusita, a practice common to all Bodhisattas. Having accepted the request made by Devas and Brahmas, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of Queen Suphassā, chief consort of King Udena, in the city of Vebhāra. When ten months had elapsed, the Bodhisatta was born in Viriya Park.

On his naming day, learned readers of omens, and his relatives, named him Siddhattha [171] because, at the time of his birth, everybody's endeavours, big or small, were accomplished and desirable results achieved.

Early Life

When Bodhisatta Siddhattha came of age, he lived in three palaces: Kokā, Suppala and Kokanada. Being served and entertained by 48,000 female attendants headed by Princess Somanassā, he thus enjoyed a divine-like royal household life for 10,000 years.

When Bodhisatta Siddhattha had seen the four omens and when Princess Somanassā had given birth to a son, named Anupama, he went forth riding a

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[76] [There is something awry with the calculations here. It appears that this number should be 27,106 aeons, which would indeed add up. BvA though agrees with the translation in stating 1,706.]

golden palanquin on the full moon day of July (*Āsāḷha*) and became a recluse in Viriya Park. 1,000 billion men joined him and also became recluses.

Awakening

With the 1,000 billion recluses, Bodhisatta Siddhattha practised the austerities for ten months. On the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), the day of his Awakening, he partook of milk rice offered by a Brahmin girl, named Sunettā, of Asādisa village and spent the daytime in the local Jujube grove. In the evening, he went alone to the Kaṇikāra Mahā Bodhi tree and accepted, on the way, eight handfuls of grass from Varuṇa, a watchman of the barley fields. As soon as he spread the grass under the Bodhi tree there appeared the unconquered seat, measuring 40 cubits. Sitting cross-legged on the seat, he became a Buddha, in the same manner as previous Buddhas.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teachings

1. After becoming a Buddha, Buddha Siddhattha stayed in the neighbourhood of the Mahā Bodhi tree for 49 days. Agreeing to the entreaties made by a Brahma, he contemplated who he should teach first. Then he discerned the 1,000 billion recluses who, with him, had renounced the world and who were endowed with the merits of their past deeds, which would lead them to the paths and fruitions. Thinking: "I shall teach them first," he contemplated as to their whereabouts and saw that they were still living in the Deer Park, which was eighteen leagues from the Mahā Bodhi tree. By his psychic power, he immediately appeared at the Deer Park.

The 1,000 billion recluses, seeing the Buddha approaching them, welcomed him with faithful heart, attending upon him in the way as described in the previous Buddhas, and finally, took their appropriate seats, surrounding the Buddha. Then the Buddha taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse which was also taught by all the previous Buddhas to Devas and humans who had come to listen to him. At that time, 1,000 billion beings attained the paths and fruitions.

2. At another time, at the invitation of King Bhīmaratha of Bhīmaratha city, Buddha Siddhattha visited that city and, staying at the royal pavilion, which was erected on a grand scale in the city-centre, he spoke in a voice that was like that of the king of the Indian Cuckoo birds, or like that of the king of the Brahmas,

as it was sweet, pleasing to the ear and appealing to the hearts of the wise. Thus, letting the Dhamma reach the ten quarters, he beat the drum of deathlessness. At that time, 900 million beings attained the paths and fruitions.

3. Still at another time, Buddha Siddhattha visited his home-town of Vebhāra, where, in the assembly of his relatives headed by his father King Udena, he narrated to them the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*). At that time, 900 million beings attained the paths and fruitions. [172]

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were three meetings of Buddha Siddhattha's Arahat disciples. The first meeting took place at the city of Amara, which was beautiful and pleasing to the eye, like the divine city of Tāvatiṁsa. There, in the city, two brothers, who were also his two future chief disciples, Prince Sambala and Prince Sumitta, reigned together like Licchavī princes during the lifetime of our Buddha. Seeing that the two princes were endowed with the merits of their past deeds, which would lead to the paths and fruitions, Buddha Siddhattha instantly appeared in the centre of Amara city. There, he descended to the surface of the earth, impressing it with the soles of his feet which were even and adorned with 108 marks. He thus showed his footprints (*pada-cetiya*), which were worthy of respect, and then he went to Amara Park where he stayed in glory, like a golden statue on a stone slab.

The two royal brothers, seeing the footprints, together with their retinues traced them till they came to the Buddha. They paid respects to him and sat down near him. When the Buddha taught a discourse to them that suited their inclinations and dispositions they developed faith in him and after becoming monks, they became Arahats. In the midst of these 100 billion monks, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*).

2. At another time, in the midst of 900 million monks, who had become monastics at the assembly of his relatives in Vebhāra, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules.

3. Still at another time, in the midst of 800 million monks who had assembled at Sudassana monastery, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules.

The Bodhisatta as Recluse Maṅgala

Meanwhile, our Bodhisatta was reborn in the city of Surasena as a Brahmin, named Maṅgala who was accomplished in the Vedas in their original texts as well as in their branches of literature. He gave away all his possessions worth many millions to the poor and the destitute and since he took delight in seclusion, he became an ascetic. Developing the attainments (*samāpatti*) and super knowledges (*abhiññā*), he achieved effective powers by virtue of which nobody could torture him.

While he was thus abiding, he heard the news: "Buddha Siddhattha had appeared in the world." He therefore approached the Buddha and adoringly paid respects to him. Hearing the Buddha's teaching, the ascetic became so pleased that he brought fruits from the rose-apple tree of Jambudīpa with his psychic power, and at Surasena monastery, where he accommodated the Buddha, he offered the fruits as food to the Buddha who was accompanied by 900 million disciples. Having partaken of the fruits, Buddha Siddhattha declared prophetically: "This Maṅgala, the ascetic, will indeed become a Buddha, Gotama by name, in the 94th aeon from now."

Having heard the Buddha's prophecy, the Bodhisatta, Maṅgala the ascetic, was overjoyed and firmly resolved to fulfil the ten perfections even more energetically.

Particulars of Buddha Siddhattha

The birthplace of Buddha Siddhattha was Vebhāra city.

His father was King Udena and his mother was Queen Suphassā.

He reigned for 10,000 years.

His three palaces were Kokā, Suppala and Kokanada.

His chief consort was Somanassā, who had 48,000 maids of honour.

His son was Prince Anupama.

The vehicle he used in renouncing the world was a palanquin.

He practised the austerities for ten months.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Sambala and Ven. Sumitta.

His [173] attendant was Ven. Revata.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Sīvalā and Ven. Surāmā.

His Bodhi tree was a Kaṇikāra.

His noble male lay supporters were the wealthy persons Suppiya and Samudda.

His noble female supporters were Rammā and Surammā.

Buddha Siddhattha's height was 60 cubits.

He shone forth in the 10,000 world-element like a column of jewels erected for worship.

Resembling the unequalled former Buddhas, peerless and unrivalled and endowed with the five eyes, Buddha Siddhattha lived for 100,000 years.

Having displayed extensively his physical radiance as well as his intellectual brilliance, having caused the flowering of the paths and fruitions in his disciples, and having glorified them with attainments, both mundane and supermundane, Buddha Siddhattha attained Parinibbāna with all of them, and came to the end of his final existence.

In this way, Buddha Siddhattha, noble monarch of all monks, attained Parinibbāna in Anoma Park, near Kañcanaveḷu city. In that very park, a four leagues high shrine of jewels was erected, in the way mentioned for previous Buddhas, and was dedicated to him.

17. The Chronicle of Buddha Tissa

When the aeon in which Buddha Siddhattha appeared had come to an end, there immediately followed a void or empty aeon (*suñña-kappa*), in which no Buddha appeared. When that aeon was over, and in the 92nd aeon previous to the present, two Buddhas, namely, Tissa and Phussa, appeared, in a two-Buddha aeon (*maṇḍa-kappa*).

The chronicle of Buddha Tissa was as follows: In that aeon, human lifespan declined from immeasurables to 100,000 years. The Bodhisatta Tissa was then reborn in Tusita, on complete fulfilment of the perfections. Having complied with the request made by Devas and Brahmas to become a Buddha, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of Queen Padumā, chief consort of King Janasandha, in the city of Khemaka. When ten months had

elapsed, the Bodhisatta was born in Anoma Park. On his naming day, learned readers of omens and his relatives named the Bodhisatta, Prince Tissa.

> There are two kinds of name: according to the sense, or meaning (*anvattha*) and according to custom, or tradition (*rūḷhi*). The name given after a particular event or in a particular meaning is according to the sense (*anvattha*). The name given not after a particular event or in a particular meaning but given for convenience sake is according to custom (*rūḷhi*). Here the name Tissa given to the Bodhisatta is of the convenience (*rūḷhi*) kind.

Early Life

When the Bodhisatta, Prince Tissa, came of age, he lived in three palaces: Gūhasela, Nārisaya and Nisabha. Being entertained and served by 30,000 female attendants headed by Princess Subhaddā, he thus lived a divine-like royal household life for 7,000 years.

When the Bodhisatta had seen the four omens and when Princess Subhaddā had given birth to a son, named Ānanda, he went forth riding a thoroughbred horse, named Soṇuttara, and became a recluse. 10 million men were inspired by his renunciation and joined him, to become recluses themselves too. [174]

Awakening

With this 10 million of recluses, Bodhisatta Tissa practised the austerities for eight months. On the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), the day of his Awakening, he partook of the milk rice offered by Vīrā, the daughter of a wealthy person of Vīra market-town, and spent the daytime in the local Salala grove. In the evening, he went alone to the Mahā Bodhi tree. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass offered by Vijitasaṅgāmaka, a watchman of the barley fields. As soon as he spread the grass at the foot of the Indian Laurel (*Asana*) Mahā Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat, which measured 40 cubits. Sitting cross-legged on the seat, he became a Buddha in the same manner as previous Buddhas.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After becoming a Buddha, Buddha Tissa stayed in the neighbourhood of the Mahā Bodhi tree for 49 days. Having complied with a Brahma's request for his teaching, he contemplated to whom he should teach first and he saw his future

chief disciples, princes Brahmadeva and Udaya, who were residents of Yasavatī, and who, together with their retinues, were endowed with previous meritorious deeds, which led to the paths and fruitions. By his psychic power he immediately appeared in the Deer Park near Yasavatī. He then sent the gardener for the two princes. On arrival with their retinues, Buddha Tissa then taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse to Devas and humans, who had followed the two princes and their men to listen to the teaching. The Buddha did so, proclaiming all over the 10,000 world-element in a voice similar to that of the King of Brahmas which was distinct, far-reaching and sweet. Then 100,000 beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, attained the paths and fruitions.

2. At another time, when 10 million recluses, who had been his companions in renunciation, and who had parted with him as he was moving to the Mahā Bodhi tree, on hearing that he had taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, travelled to the Deer Park near Yasavatī. On arriving there, they paid homage to the Buddha and took their seats around him. When the Buddha taught the Dhamma to these monks and all others who had come to listen to him, 900 million beings headed by 10 million monks attained the paths and fruitions.

3. Still at another time, when Devas and humans discussed what constituted the blessings (*maṅgala*) leading to prosperity in the world, but could not get an answer acceptable to all, and when they put forward the same question to the Buddha, he taught them the Discourse on the Blessings. By the end of this discourse, 600 million Brahmas and humans attained the paths and fruitions.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were three meetings of Buddha Tissa's disciples. The first took place at Yasavatī, where the Buddha, being accompanied by 100,000 Arahats who were monastics at the beginning of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) and became Arahats during the same Rains Retreat. He then performed the Invitation of the Pure (*Visuddhi-pavāraṇā*) on the full moon day of October (*Assayuja*).

2. At another time, when the Buddha was going on a journey and arrived at the city of Nārivāhana, Prince Nārivāhana, son of King Sujāta of that city, with his hosts of followers, welcomed the Buddha and invited him and his Saṅgha to the ceremony of an unparalleled alms giving which was held for seven days. Having relinquished his princely right over the kingdom to his son, he sought monkhood together with his followers in the presence of the Buddha. Buddha Tissa then

called upon them, saying: "Come, O monks," and they all became summoned monastics. When the news of Nārivāhana's renunciation spread, people from all quarters came and followed his example. Then, in the midst of the monastics, numbering nine [175] millions, Buddha Tissa recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*).

3. Still at another time, in the city of Khemavatī or Khemaka, at the assembly of the Buddha Tissa's relatives, after listening to his narration of the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), eight million people became monastics in his presence and became Arahats. Surrounded by these monastics, Buddha Tissa recited the Advisory Rules.

The Bodhisatta as Recluse Sujāta

Meanwhile our Bodhisatta was King Sujāta in the city of Yasavatī. He had a prosperous city, his wealth was worth many millions and he had members of a retinue, who were always willing to attend upon him. He abandoned them all with no attachment whatsoever, as though they were blades of grass and stalks of reeds. With his heart filled with the fear of suffering in rebirth, etc., he renounced the world and became an ascetic even before Buddha Tissa's appearance, and acquired great psychic power and fame. On hearing that Buddha Tissa has appeared, his whole body was pervaded with the five kinds of ecstasy. Most respectfully, he approached the Buddha and paid respects to him, thinking: "I will honour the Buddha with such flowers as from the Salala, Pāricchattaka trees and others," he went to the celestial abode by means of his psychic power and entered the garden of Cittalatā. There he filled a basket, measuring a mile, with such celestial flowers and brought it across the sky and finally honoured the Buddha with these immensely fragrant flowers.

Besides, in the middle of the four assemblies, the Bodhisatta stood, holding over the Buddha's head a lotus (*paduma*) sunshade, which was an umbrella made of very sweet smelling pollens, with a rod of ruby, and a pinnacle of leaves of red ruby. In this way, he thus honoured the Buddha. Then the Buddha predicted concerning the Bodhisatta, Sujāta the ascetic: "In the 92nd aeon from the present one, this Sujāta will become a Buddha, Gotama by name."

On hearing the Buddha's prophecy, Bodhisatta Sujāta the ascetic, was filled with devotional faith and resolved to fulfil the ten perfections even more energetically.

Particulars of Buddha Tissa

Buddha Tissa's birthplace was Khemaka city.

His father was King Janasandha and his mother was Queen Padumā.

He reigned for 7,000 years.

His three palaces were Gūhasela, Nārisaya and Nisabha.

His chief consort was Subhaddā, who had 30,000 maids of honour.

His son was Prince Ānanda.

After seeing the four omens, he renounced the world riding a thoroughbred horse named Soṇuttara.

He practised the austerities for eight months.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Brahmadeva and Ven. Udaya.

His attendant was Ven. Samaṅga.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Phussā and Ven. Sudattā.

His Bodhi tree was an Indian Laurel (*Asana*) tree.

His noble male supporters were the wealthy persons, Sambala and Sirima.

His noble female supporters were Kisā Gotamī and Upasenā.

Buddha Tissa was ten cubits tall. He was matchless and unequalled. He appeared like a mountain in the Himālayas, to those who saw him.

The lifespan of Buddha Tissa, who was endowed with incomparable psychic power, was neither too short not too long. Buddha Tissa, the possessor of the five eyes, lived in the world for 100,000 years. [176]

Buddha Tissa, who had dispelled the darkness of ignorance (*avijjā*), after enjoying great fame, which surpassed the fame of those highly noble and admirable personages, attained Parinibbāna with his many Arahat disciples, just as a mass of fire that had become extinct after burning very brightly.

In this way, Buddha Tissa, conqueror of the five kinds of death (*māra*), attained Parinibbāna in Nanda Park, near Sunandavatī city. In that very park, a three leagues high shrine was erected, in the same way as mentioned with previous Buddhas, and was dedicated to Buddha Tissa.

18. The Chronicle of Buddha Phussa

After Buddha Tissa's Parinibbāna in that aeon of two Buddhas (*maṇḍa-kappa*), the human lifespan decreased from 100,000 years to ten years and then increased to immeasurables. When it reached 90,000 years on its next decline, Bodhisatta Phussa, on completion of his perfections, was reborn in Tusita which was a practice common to all Bodhisattas. Having accepted the request made by Devas and Brahmas to become a Buddha, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of Queen Sirimā, consort of King Jayasena, in the city of Kāsika. When ten months had elapsed, the Bodhisatta was born in Sirimā Park.

Early Life

When Prince Tissa came of age, he lived in three palaces, Garuḷapakkha, Haṁsa and Suvaṇṇabhārā. Being entertained and served by 30,000 female attendants headed by Princess Kisā Gotamī, he thus enjoyed a divine-like royal household life for 9,000 years.

When the Bodhisatta, Prince Phussa, had seen the four omens while thus enjoying life, and when Princess Kisā Gotamī had given birth to a son, named Anupama, he renounced the world, riding an elephant. Ten million men joined him and also became recluses themselves.

Awakening

With these ten million recluses, the Bodhisatta Phussa practised the austerities for six months. Thereafter, leaving his followers, he cultivated the practice of living a solitary life for seven days. On the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), the day of his Awakening, he partook of the milk rice offered by Sirivaḍḍhā, daughter of a certain wealthy man of a certain town, and spent the daytime in the local Indian Rosewood (*Siṁsapā*) grove. In the evening, he went alone to the Emblic Myrobalan (*Āmalaka*) Mahā Bodhi tree. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass offered by an ascetic, Sirivaḍḍha by name. As soon as he spread the grass at the foot of the Mahā Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat, measuring 38 cubits. Sitting cross-legged on the seat, he became a Buddha in the same manner as previous Buddhas.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After becoming a Buddha, Buddha Phussa stayed in the neighbourhood of the Mahā Bodhi tree for 49 days. Having agreed to the request made by a Brahma for his teaching, he contemplated who he should teach first and he saw the 10 million monks, who were his companions in renunciation and who were endowed with past meritorious deeds which could lead to the paths and fruitions. By his psychic power, he immediately appeared at the Deer Park, called Isipatana, near the city of Saṅkassa. In the midst of these recluses, the Buddha taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse to all the listeners, as had been done by former Buddhas. Then 1,000 billion Devas and humans attained the paths and fruitions. [177]

2. At another time, King Sirivaḍḍha of Bārāṇasī, having abandoned his great wealth, became an ascetic. Nine million people did the same as the king. Buddha Phussa went to the place of these ascetics and taught them the Dhamma. Then nine million beings attained the paths and fruitions.

3. Still at another time, Buddha Phussa taught to his son, Prince Anupama. Then eight million Devas and humans attained the paths and fruitions.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were three meetings of Buddha Phussa's disciples. The first took place at Kaṇṇakujja. There, Prince Surakkhita and the Brahmin chaplain's son, Dhammasena, both his future chief disciples and residents of the city, with six million men welcomed the Buddha who was on a visit to the city. They also respectfully invited him and performed a great alms giving ceremony for seven days. After listening to the Buddha's discourse, they developed faith in him and became monks together with their six million companions and together they became Arahats. In the midst of these Arahats, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*).

2. At another time, at the assembly of his relatives headed by his father, King Jayasena of the city of Kāsi, the Buddha narrated the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*). Having listened to the chronicle five million people became summoned monastics and became Arahats. At the meeting of these five million Arahats, Buddha Phussa recited the Advisory Rules.

3. Still at another time, when Devas and humans discussed what constituted the blessings (*maṅgala*) leading to prosperity in the world, but could not agree on an answer acceptable to all, and when they put the same question to Buddha, he taught the Discourse on the Blessings (*Maṅgala-sutta*, Snp 2.4). After listening to this discourse, four million people became monastics and became Arahats. In the midst of these Arahats, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules.

The Bodhisatta as King Vijitāvī

At the time of Buddha Phussa our Bodhisatta was King Vijitāvī, in the city of Arindama. Having listened to the Buddha's discourse, he developed faith in him, and performed a great alms giving by giving his city, and he became a monastic and learned the Three Baskets. Being well-versed in the Collections, he disseminated the Dhamma to all people, and also fulfilled the perfection of morality.

Then Buddha Phussa, a noble leader of the three worlds, made a prophecy concerning the Bodhisatta monastic Vijitāvī: "In 92 aeons from the present one, this monastic Vijitāvī will become a Buddha, Gotama by name." Having listened to Buddha Phussa's prophecy, the Bodhisatta Vijitāvī was filled with devotional faith and was determined to fulfil the ten perfections even more energetically.

Having become a monastic and a servant in the Dispensation of Buddha Phussa, and becoming accomplished in the studies of the Buddha's teachings which are of nine divisions together with the discourses and discipline (*sutta-vinaya*), the noble Bodhisatta contributed to the glory of the Buddha's Dispensation.

Without lying down at all, meditating only in the three postures of sitting, standing and walking, the Bodhisatta developed the sublime modes of living (*Brahma-vihāra*) without [178] negligence, and attained not only the eight attainments but also the apex of the five super knowledges, and was reborn in the Brahma world.

Particulars of Buddha Phussa

Buddha Phussa's birthplace was Kāsi city.

His father was King Jayasena and his mother was Queen Sirimā.

He reigned for 9,000 years.

His three palaces were Garuḷapakkha, Haṁsa and Suvaṇṇabhārā.

His chief consort was Kisā Gotamī, who had 30,000 maids of honour.

His son was Prince Anupama.

The vehicle he used in his renunciation, after seeing the four omens, was an elephant.

He practised the austerities for six months.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Surakkhita and Ven. Dhammasena.

His attendant was Ven. Sabhiya.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Cālā and Ven. Upacālā.

His Bodhi tree was an Emblic Myrobalan (*Āmalaka*).

His noble male lay supporters were the wealthy men Dhanañjaya and Visākha.

His noble female supporters were Padumā and Nāgā.

Buddha Phussa was 58 cubits tall.

He shone forth like the sun and was endowed with the pleasing qualities of the moon.

The lifespan in the aeon in which he appeared was 90,000 years. He lived for four-fifths of the lifespan. He rescued beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, from the flood waters of Saṁsāra and placed them on the shore of Nibbāna.

Endowed with unparalleled retinue and fame, Buddha Phussa, together with his Arahat disciples, attained Parinibbāna and came to the end of their final existence.

In this way, Buddha Phussa, conqueror of the five kinds of deaths (*māra*), attained Parinibbāna in a park named Sena, near the city of Kusinārā. In accordance with his resolve, his relics dispersed all over Jambudīpa and were honoured by humans, Devas and Brahmas.

> [For more about this Buddha see the story forming the basis on the Beyond the Walls discourse in chapter 15.]

19. The Chronicle of Buddha Vipassī

When the aeon in which Buddha Phussa had appeared came to an end, 91 aeons before the present one, there appeared Buddha Vipassī. The chronicle of Buddha Vipassī is as follows: In that aeon, when the lifespan of human beings decreased from immeasurables to 80,000 years, Bodhisatta Vipassī, on complete fulfilment of the perfections, was reborn in Tusita which was a practice common to all Bodhisattas. Having accepted the request made by Devas and Brahmas, he descended to the human world and was conceived in the womb of Queen Bandhumatī, consort of King Bandhuma, in the city of Bandhumatī. When ten months had elapsed, he was born in the Migadāya garden which is also called the Deer Park, for as a sanctuary, Khemā by name, it was full of deer.

Early Life

When the Bodhisatta Prince was born, wherever he went, by day or by night, a huge white umbrella of divine origin constantly hovered over him to protect him from heat and cold, dust and dew drops. He was ever adored by people. He was brought up being carried now in someone's lap and then in another's, having no chance to put his feet on the ground. [179]

Since his birth, he had possessed wonderful eyes which appeared as a result of his meritorious deeds (*kamma-vipākajā*), and powerful divine-like eyes. With these eyes, the Bodhisatta could see unobstructed as far as one league around, in daytime or at night. As Devas of Tāvatiṁsa always see with their ever-open eyes, so had the Bodhisatta Prince seen things with his never-closed but ever-open eyes since his birth; hence his famous name, Prince Vipassī.

Besides, one day, while a case was being tried in the law-court of his father, King Bandhuma, the duly adorned baby Prince was handed to the king who placed him in his lap and while he was fondly amusing him, his ministers judged against a certain owner of property, saying that he was not the owner. Unsatisfied with the unjust decision, the prince suddenly cried bitterly. The king then asked his men to look for the reason, saying: "Why has such a thing happened to my son? Investigate into this matter." When they investigated they could find no cause, other than that judges at the law court must have made a wrong verdict. So the verdict was reversed. Being satisfied then, the prince stopped crying. In order to find out whether the prince cried because he actually

knew the case, they reverted to the original decision. This made him cry again, as bitterly as before. Then only did the father realise: "My son really knows what is right and what is wrong." Since then the king ruled his country without negligence. From that time onwards, the Bodhisatta's name, Prince Vipassī, became more famous on account of his ability to distinguish between right and wrong.

When Prince Vipassī came of age, he lived in three palaces: Nanda, Sunanda and Sirimā. Being entertained and served by female attendants headed by Princess Sudassanā,[77] he thus enjoyed a Deva-like bliss in a royal household life for 8,000 years.

One day, Prince Vipassī summoned his charioteer and said: "I would like to see the gardens. I shall go there." On his way to the gardens in a chariot he saw an old man who was a Deva in disguise. Since it was a strange sight as he had never seen any aged person before, he asked: "Charioteer, what is this man doing? His hair and his body are not like the others."

"My lord, this is an old man," replied the charioteer. "What is an old man?" asked the prince again, as he did not actually know what the words "old man" meant. "My lord," answered the charioteer, "an old man is an aged person. He cannot live much longer." – "Charioteer, will I also become old? Am I subject to old age, too?" – "My lord, you and I, and everyone else is liable to grow old. Nobody can escape old age."

Then the Bodhisatta Prince said: "No longer do I want to see the gardens, turn back from here and return to the palace." When he arrived in the palace, he contemplated: "Oh, birth is indeed wearisome. When there is birth, there will definitely be old age." Contemplating this, the prince became very unhappy.

Having learnt about the matter from the charioteer, the king provided him with the means for enjoying sensual pleasures more than before in order to prevent his son from renouncing the world.

Several thousand years after that, the prince went to the gardens for a second time and he saw a sick person on the way. He did not proceed but turned back to

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[77] Or Sutanū.

the palace as before. When the father heard of his son's unhappiness and pensive mood, he enticed him with even more objects of sensual pleasures.

On his third trip to the gardens too, several thousand years after the second visit, having seen a dead body, he returned to the palace as before.

Several thousand years thereafter, when he made a fourth trip to the gardens, he came across a monk on the way and asked the charioteer about the monk. When he came to [180] know what a monk was, he was so pleased that he had the chariot driven towards the monk's direction.

On reaching the monk, he asked more details of the monk's life and became all the more delighted. Accordingly, he said to the charioteer: "Charioteer, take back the chariot to the palace and keep it there. I shall become a recluse in this very place." He thus sent the charioteer back. That was the day in which Princess Sudassanā gave birth to a son named Samavaṭṭakkhandha.

After sending back the charioteer, Prince Vipassī shaved his head, put on the robes and became a recluse. Then 84,000 citizens of Bandhumatī, on hearing of the prince's renunciation, joined him and also became recluses themselves.

Awakening

Being accompanied by the 84,000 recluses, Bodhisatta Vipassī made a tour of villages, market-towns, and cities. Wherever he went, people erected pavilions and gave him alms food on a grand scale, but the Bodhisatta was tired of such grand offerings. The day before the eighth month of his renunciation, i.e. on the fourteenth waxing moon of May (*Vesākha*), it occurred to him thus: "It is not proper for me to live in the company of my followers. What if I were to stay alone and away from them?" So he parted from his recluses. On the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), the day of his Awakening, he partook of the milk rice offered by the daughter of Sudassana, the wealthy man, and spent the daytime in the local Sāla grove.

In the evening, he went to the Trumpet Flower (*Pāṭali*) Mahā Bodhi tree. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass from Sujāta, a watchman of the barley fields. As soon as he spread the grass at the foot of the Trumpet Flower Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat, measuring 53 cubits high.

The trunk of the Trumpet Flower Bodhi tree was 50 cubits high, its main branches were also 50 cubits in length; so the total height of the tree was 100

cubits on the day the tree was approached by the Bodhisatta. That day, the tree looked as though it was covered, from the bottom to the top, by fragrant flowers which were strung together uniformly. It was pervaded with divine scents. On that day, not only the Trumpet Flower Bodhi tree but also all the trees and bushes in the 10,000 world-element bloomed.

Sitting cross-legged on the seat, the Bodhisatta concentrated his energy at four levels, in the same manner as described with previous Buddhas, and became a Buddha.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. Having become a Buddha, the Buddha stayed in the neighbourhood of the Bodhi tree for 49 days. Having accepted a Brahma's request, he considered who he should teach first and he saw his half-brother, Prince Khaṇḍa, and Tissa, the Brahmin chaplain's son, who were both his future chief disciples, and were endowed with the merits of their past deeds which could lead to the paths and fruitions, and he, by his psychic power, immediately appeared at the Deer Park, called Khema. Upon arriving, he sent the gardener for Prince Khaṇḍa and his friend Tissa. When they arrived, he advised them to renounce the world and he taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse to all humans, Devas and Brahmas who had gathered to listen to him. Then a large multitude of humans, Devas and Brahmas, who were headed by the prince and the Brahmin chaplain's son, attained the paths and fruitions. In particular, Prince Khaṇḍa and the Brahmin chaplain's son Tissa, who were the future chief disciples, became summoned monastics and became Arahats not long after.

2. At a later time, on hearing that: "Buddha Vipassī has arrived at Khema Deer Park near Bandhumatī," and that: "Prince Khaṇḍa and the Brahmin chaplain's son, Tissa, have also become monks in the presence of Buddha Vipassī," 84,000 male citizens of [181] Bandhumatī joined them and became monks themselves. To these 84,000 monks, the Buddha administered the elixir of immortality.

3. The 84,000 men, who were members of the retinue while Buddha Vipassī was a prince, came to attend upon him early in the morning of the day the Bodhisatta went to the royal gardens for the fourth time, which was also the day of his renunciation. When they did not see the prince at the palace, they returned home for the morning meal. After finishing their meal, they enquired

about the prince. Hearing that he had gone to the garden, they also went to the garden to see the prince.

On the way, they met the charioteer who was sent back by Prince Vipassī and heard from him of the prince's renunciation. Instantly they took off all of their layman's clothing, cut their hair and beards and became recluses wearing the robes which were bought at a market. Then these 84,000 recluses, who had followed his example, approached Bodhisatta Vipassī and sat around him. Surrounded thus by them, the Bodhisatta practised the austerities (*dukkara-cariyā*) for eight months. On the day before the full moon of May (*Vesākha*), the fourteenth waxing moon of the month, he became tired of association with them and thought: "I have been with them all along. While I was a prince, I roamed about in the company of these 84,000 men. It is not proper to have them with me now also. What is the use of such a band of people?" He also thought thus: "I shall depart from them immediately today." Then he changed his thought thus: "There is little time left for doing so today. If I go now they will all know my departure. I had better go tomorrow."

Meanwhile, residents of a certain village, which was like Uruvelā in the time of our Buddha, were busy preparing milk rice for the Bodhisatta and his 84,000 companions for the next day, after duly inviting them. On that day, which was the full moon of May (*Vesākha*), Bodhisatta Vipassī partook of the meal with his retinue at the village and returned to his sylvan residence.

On his return, the recluses, after performing their duties towards the Bodhisatta, withdrew to their respective places. Then only the Bodhisatta, who was in his little leaf-hut, decided: "It is the best time for me to leave," came out from his hut, shut its door and headed for the Mahā Bodhi tree.

In the evening, the recluses went to the Bodhisatta's retreat to attend upon him and waited around his hut, expecting to see their master. Only after a long time, they said among themselves: "A long time has elapsed. Let us investigate." So saying, they opened the door of the leaf-hut and looked inside but did not see the Bodhisatta.

Although wondering: "Where has the master gone?" they did not make any effort to search for him. "He must have been tired of our company and seems to like staying alone. We shall see him only when he becomes a Buddha." With such thoughts, they left the place and went towards the interior of Jambudīpa.

Later on, when they heard that Prince Vipassī has become a Buddha and taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, they left for the Khema Deer Park near Bandhumatī city and assembled there in due course. The Buddha then gave them a talk on the Dhamma. The 84,000 monks attained the paths and fruitions.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were three meetings (*sannipāta*) of Buddha Vipassī's disciples. The first took place at Khema Deer Park. There, in the midst of the 84,000 monks who had followed Buddha Vipassī and another 84,000 monks who had followed Prince Khaṇḍa and the Brahmin chaplain's son, Tissa, in renunciation, totalling 168,000 monks, Buddha Vipassī recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*). [182]

2. At a later time, there took place the meeting of 100,000 monks who had put on the robes after witnessing the twin miracle displayed by the Buddha.

3. At a still later time, Buddha Vipassī's three half-brothers, on their return after crushing an insurgency at the border, were asked to express their boons by their royal father who was so delighted with their success. "We have been permitted to ask what we want," said the princes among themselves, "we do not need to ask for any other boon than permission to attend upon our elder brother." When their request was granted, they invited the Buddha to the towns and villages under them and attended upon him and honoured him. Accordingly, the Buddha went and accepted the veneration shown to him. He also gave them a discourse, as a result of which, 80,000 people became summoned monastics and became Arahats. In the company of these 80,000 Arahats, in Khemaka Deer Park, Buddha Vipassī recited the Advisory Rules.

The Bodhisatta as the Nāga King Atula

Meanwhile our Bodhisatta was the Nāga King Atula of great might. In the company of many millions of Nāgas who were playing celestial musical instruments, he approached Buddha Vipassī, Lord of the Three Worlds. In order to honour the Buddha and his monastics, he invited the Saṅgha, headed by the Buddha to his place. He built a great pavilion which was adorned with the seven kinds of gems and was pleasing to the eye, like the orb of a full moon. He accommodated the Buddha with his Saṅgha in the pavilion and performed grand

alms giving to them for seven days. He also offered a golden bench, which was richly decorated, to the Buddha.

Sitting in the midst of the Saṅgha, the Buddha taught him a discourse in appreciation of his alms giving and, at the conclusion of the discourse, declared prophetically about him, saying: "In the 91st aeon from the present one, this Atula Nāga King will indeed become a Buddha."

Having heard the Buddha's prophecy, Bodhisatta Atula, the Nāga King, was overjoyed, and determined to fulfil the perfections even more energetically.

Particulars of Buddha Vipassī

Buddha Vipassī's birthplace was Bandhumatī city.

His father was King Bandhuma and his mother was Bandhumatī.

He reigned for 8,000 years.

His three palaces were Nanda, Sunanda and Sirimā.

His chief consort was Sudassanā, who had 120,000 maids of honour.

His son was Prince Samavaṭṭakkhandha.

The vehicle he used after seeing the four omens was a chariot drawn by thoroughbred horses.

He practised the austerities for eight months.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Khaṇḍa and Ven. Tissa.

His attendant was Ven. Asoka.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Candā and Ven. Candamittā.

His Bodhi tree was a Trumpet Flower tree.

His noble male lay supporters were the wealthy persons, Punabbasumitta and Nāga.

His female supporters were Sirimā and Uttarā.

The height of Buddha Vipassī, Lord of the Three Worlds, was 80 cubits.

His radiance spread as far as seven leagues.

The lifespan during Buddha Vipassī's time was 80,000. Living for four-fifths of this lifespan, he rescued humans, Devas and Brahmas from the waters of Saṁsāra and placed them on the shores of Nibbāna. [183]

After showing the light of Dhamma and the teaching about the deathless Nibbāna, Buddha Vipassī, with many of his Arahat disciples, finally attained Parinibbāna like a mass of fire which becomes extinct after burning brightly.

Buddha Vipassī's exalted power, exalted glory, and his body adorned with characteristic marks, vanished. Unsubstantial and futile are all conditioned things!

In this way Buddha Vipassī, conqueror of the five kinds of deaths (*māra*), attained Parinibbāna in Sumitta Park. A seven leagues high shrine was erected in that very Park and dedicated to him

20. The Chronicle of Buddha Sikhī

After the end of the aeon in which Buddha Vipassī appeared, no Buddhas appeared in the world for 59 aeons as these were empty aeons (*suñña-kappas*). There was no light of Dhamma. In fact, the total darkness of ignorance (*avijjā*) prevailed and only Māra, the Wicked One and the defilements, reigned supreme in the world without any opposition. It was their whim and fancy that beings were bound to follow. When the 59 empty aeons were over, 31 aeons previous to the present one, two Buddhas, Sikhī and Vessabhū, appeared in a two-Buddha aeon (*maṇḍa-kappa*).

The chronicle of the Buddha Sikhī, the first of the two is as follows: In that aeon, when the lifespan of human beings decreased from immeasurables and reached 70,000 years, on complete fulfilment of the perfections, Bodhisatta Sikhī was reborn in Tusita. Having agreed to the request made by Devas and Brahmas to become a Buddha, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of Pabhāvatī, consort of King Aruṇa of Aruṇavatī city. When ten months had elapsed, the Bodhisatta was born in Nisabha Park. On his naming day, learned readers of omens and his relatives named him Sikhī, because a band on his head, which was like a protuberance (*uṇhīsa*), stood out like the crest of a peacock.

Early Life

When he came of age, Prince Sikhī lived in three palaces: Sucandaka, Giri and Vāsabha. Being entertained and served by 24,000 female attendants headed by Princess Sabbakāmā, he thus enjoyed a divine-like royal household life for 7,000 years.

When Bodhisatta Prince Sikhī had seen the four omens while enjoying the royal household life and when Princess Sabbakāmā had given birth to a son, named Atula, he renounced the world riding an elephant. Seven million men also renounced the world, following his example.

Awakening

With these seven million recluses, Bodhisatta Sikhī practised the austerities for eight months. On the full moon day, the day of his Awakening, he left these recluses. He partook of the milk rice offered by Piyadassī, daughter of a wealthy man, resident of the market town of Sudassana, and spent the daytime in the local grove of young acacias. In the evening, he proceeded alone to the Mahā Bodhi tree and accepted, on the way, eight handfuls of grass offered by an ascetic named Anomadassī. As soon as he spread the grass at the foot of the Fragrant Mango (*Puṇḍarīka*) Mahā Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat, measuring 32 cubits.

The size of that Fragrant Mango Bodhi tree was the same as that of the Trumpet Flower Bodhi tree [184] of Buddha Vipassī. Its trunk was 50 cubits high and its main branches were also exactly 50 cubits high, on the day the Bodhisatta approached it. It stood as though it was covered by fragrant flowers of divine origin. It seemed to have been covered not only by flowers but also by fruits. They were hanging from here and there young fruits on one side of the tree and medium-sized fruits on another side. Those ripe enough were all very tasty as if celestial nutriments were put in them. In fact, they all possessed wonderful colour, flavour and taste. Likewise, all fruit-trees and flower-trees in the 10,000 world-element bore fruits and flowers on that very day.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After becoming a Buddha, Buddha Sikhī stayed in the neighbourhood of the Fragrant Mango Mahā Bodhi tree for 49 days. Having complied with a Brahma's request for his teaching, he contemplated who he should teach first, and he saw

the seven million fellow monastics who were endowed with the merits of their past deeds, which could lead to the paths and fruitions. By his psychic power he then immediately appeared in Migājina Park, their residence near the city of Aruṇavatī. Sitting gracefully in the midst of these seven million recluses, Buddha Sikhī taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, which was also taught by previous Buddhas, to Devas and humans who had come to listen. Then 1,000 billion Devas and humans attained the paths and fruitions.

2. At a later time, also near the city of Aruṇavatī, the Buddha taught Dhamma to his future chief disciples, Prince Abhibhū and Prince Sambhava and their retinues, and administered the elixir of immortality to 900 billion Devas and humans.[78]

3. Still at another time, near a Campak tree, close to the gate of Sūriyavatī city, the Buddha displayed the twin miracle and gave a discourse in order to suppress the arrogance of the heretics and to free beings from the bondage to the defilements. At that time, 800 billion Devas and humans attained the paths and fruitions.

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were three meetings of Buddha Sikhī's Arahat disciples. At the first meeting, in the midst of 100,000 Arahats, who were princes Abhibhū's and Sambhava's companions during their renunciation, Buddha Sikhī recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*).

2. At a later time, in the midst of 80,000 monks who had put on the robes at the meeting of his relatives at Aruṇavatī city, Buddha Sikhī recited the Advisory Rules.

3. Still at another time, in the midst of 70,000 monks, who had become monastics after he had tamed the elephant Dhanapālaka of Dhanañjaya city, Buddha Sikhī recited the Advisory Rules.

The Bodhisatta as King Arindama

Meanwhile, our Bodhisatta was King Arindama, in the city of Paribhutta. When Buddha Sikhī visited the city with his retinue, the king welcomed him. He paid

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[78] [The translation stated 90,000, but BvA states 90,000 crore, i.e. 900 billion.]

homage to the Buddha respectfully and invited him to the palace where he performed a grand alms giving befitting his status of kingship, high birth, of wealth and faith in the Buddha.

He opened his warehouse of clothing and offered to the Saṅgha, headed by the Buddha, several tens (*koti*) of garments, which was worth a great deal of money.

> In common parlance, a *koṭi* [185] means 20 sets of clothing. Here, however, it should be understood that ten pieces make one *koṭi* according to the commentary to the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*, PTS. 3.270).

Moreover, he offered the Buddha his state elephant which was possessed of strength, beauty, auspicious marks and speed and which was adorned with golden nets and flowers. Having assessed the value of the elephant together with his adornments, he also offered the Saṅgha, headed by the Buddha, objects that were permissible to monks.[79]

Then, with reference to the Bodhisatta Arindama, Buddha Sikhī declared prophetically: "In the thirtieth aeon from the present one, this King Arindama will indeed become a Buddha, Gotama by name."

Particulars of Buddha Sikhī

Buddha Sikhī's birthplace was Aruṇavatī city.

His father was King Aruṇa and his mother was Queen Pabhāvatī.

He reigned for 7,000 years.

His three palaces were Sucandaka, Giri and Vāsabha.

His chief consort was Sabbakāmā, who had 24,000 maids of honour.

His son was Prince Atula.

He renounced the world riding an elephant after seeing the four omens.

He practised the austerities for eight months.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Abhibhū and Ven. Sambhava.

His attendant was Ven. Khemaṅkara.

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[79] The cost of these objects was equal to the assessed total value of the elephant.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Sakhilā and Ven. Padumā.

His Bodhi tree was a Fragrant Mango tree (*Puṇḍarīka*).

His noble male supporters were the wealthy men, Sirivaḍḍha and Nanda.

His noble female supporters were Cittā and Suguttā.

Buddha Sikhī was 70 cubits tall. He was like a golden column, created as an object of worship. He was beautiful with the 32 marks of a Great Man.

Buddha Sikhī's normal physical radiance shone everywhere, day and night, uninterruptedly as far as 30 leagues, which could illuminate several world-elements, if he so desired.

The lifespan during Buddha Sikhī's time was 7,000 years. Living for four-fifths of this lifespan, he conveyed beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, from the flood-waters of Saṁsāra and placed them on the shore of Nibbāna.

Causing the rain of Dhamma, Buddha Sikhī had all beings drenched with the pure water of Dhamma, let them reach Nibbāna, which is the end of repeated suffering, and together with his Arahat disciples attained Parinibbāna.

The Buddha's physical frame, which possessed the 80 minor signs, such as red fingers and toe nails and adorned with the 32 marks of a Great Man, has completely vanished. Unsubstantial and futile are all conditioned things!

Buddha Sikhī attained Parinibbāna in the Park named Assa, near Sīlavatī city. The Buddha's relics remained in a mass without dispersing. The people of Jambudīpa constructed for their honour a memorial shrine of the seven kinds of jewels three leagues high. [186]

21. The Chronicle of Buddha Vessabhū

After Buddha Sikhī's attainment of Parinibbāna, in that very aeon of two Buddhas, the lifespan of human beings decreased gradually from 70,000 years[80] to ten years; then it increased to immeasurables, and when it reached 60,000 years on its next decline, on complete fulfilment of the perfections, Bodhisatta Vessabhū, accepting the request made by Devas and Brahmas to become a

[80] [Mistakenly written as 7,000 years in the translation.]

Buddha, descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of Queen Yasavatī, consort of King Suppatīta, in the city of Anoma. When ten months had elapsed, the Bodhisatta was born in Anupama Park.

When the Bodhisatta Prince was born, he uttered triumphant words that were pleasing to people and, on that account, on his naming day, learned readers of omens and his relatives named him Prince Vessabhū.

> By "triumphant words" was meant the three great words beginning with: *Aggoham-asmi lokassa*, "I am the greatest in the world," etc., uttered courageously like the roar of a bull.

Early Life

When he came of age, Bodhisatta Vessabhū lived in three palaces: Ruci, Suruci and Rativaḍḍhana. Being entertained and served by 30,000 female attendants headed by Princess Sucittā, he thus enjoyed a royal household life for 6,000 years.

When he had seen the four omens while enjoying royal household life, and when Princess Sucittā had given birth to a son, named Suppabuddha, Bodhisatta Vessabhū renounced the world riding a golden palanquin to the royal gardens. He then wore the robes offered by a Brahma, and 37,000 men joined him to become recluses themselves.

Awakening

With these 37,000 recluses, Bodhisatta Vessabhū practised the austerities for six months. On the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), the day he would become a Buddha, he partook of the milk rice offered by Sirivaḍḍhanā, resident of the market-town of Sucitta, and spent the daytime in the local Sāla grove. In the evening, he went alone to the Mahā Bodhi tree. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass offered by Narinda, King of the Nāgas. As soon as he spread the grass at the foot of the Sāla Mahā Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat, measuring 40 cubits. Sitting on the seat, the Bodhisatta concentrated his energy at four levels and become a Buddha, in the same manner as previous Buddhas.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After becoming a Buddha, Buddha Vessabhū stayed in the neighbourhood of the Mahā Bodhi tree for 49 days. Accepting a Brahma's request for his teaching, he contemplated who he should teach first and saw his younger half-brothers, Prince Soṇa and Prince Uttara, who were his future chief disciples, and who were endowed with the merits of their past deeds which led to the paths and fruitions, he immediately appeared in Aruṇa Park near Anupama city by his psychic power. He then sent the gardener for the two princes and, in the midst of the two princes and their retinues, he taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, which previous Buddhas had taught too, to Devas and Brahmas who had also gone to listen to the Dhamma respectfully. On that occasion, 800 billion Devas and humans attained the paths and fruitions.

2. At a later time, when Buddha Vessabhū made a tour of big towns in the country and taught Dhamma, 700 million[81] Devas and humans of his audiences attained the paths and fruitions.

3. Still at a later time, Buddha Vessabhū, in the same city of Anupama, eradicated wrong views that were entangled like meshes of net and highly injurious. In this way, he [187] pulled down the "banner of arrogance" of the heretics and hoisted the "banner of the noble Dhamma." In this assembly of human beings, who had gathered in an area of nine leagues, and a large multitude of Devas and Brahmas, he displayed the twin miracle of water and fire, and developing their faith, 600 million Devas and humans were delighted with the "elixir of immortality" administered by the Buddha.[82]

Three Occasions of the Disciples' Meeting

1. There were three meetings of Buddha Vessabhū's disciples. The first took place on the full moon day of February (*Māgha*). At that time, in the midst of 80,000[83] Arahats, who had previously become monks at the meeting of Ven. Soṇa and Ven. Uttara, his future chief disciples, Buddha Vessabhū recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*).

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[81] [Mistakenly written as 70,000 in the translation.]

[82] That is to say, 600,000,000 of Devas and humans gained Awakening.

[83] [Mistakenly written as 80,000 crores in the translation.]

2. At a later time, there took place a meeting of 37,000 recluses of the town of Soreyya. They were those who followed Bodhisatta Vessabhū's example when he renounced the world but, when the Bodhisatta left them and went alone to another place, they also moved on to somewhere else. On hearing that the Buddha had taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, they went to Soreyya and paid homage to the Buddha, who taught them Dhamma and made them summoned monastics. In the audience consisting of four features the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules.

3. Still at a later time, Buddha Vessabhū visited the city of Narivāhana to give blessings to the city's ruler, named Upasanta. Hearing of the Buddha's visit, King Upasanta and his retinue immediately went out to welcome the Buddha, invited him respectfully and performed a grand alms giving ceremony. Having listened to his Dhamma, the king was so filled with piety that he renounced the world. Joining him were 60,000 of his men who also became monks themselves. Together with Upasanta they became Arahats. Being surrounded by these monks, the Buddha recited the Advisory Rules.

The Bodhisatta as King Sudassana

At the time of Buddha Vessabhū our Bodhisatta was King Sudassana who had an appearance, fair and pleasing to the eye, in the city of Sarabhavatī. When Buddha Vessabhū, Lord of the Three Worlds, visited the city, he listened to the Buddha's Dhamma and became so pleased that, with his folded hands raised to his head, he made a great alms giving, including robes to the Saṅgha, headed by the Buddha. In the very city of Sarabhavatī, he built a hut called the Perfumed Chamber for the Buddha and also 1,000 encircling huts for the Saṅgha, and offered them.

Since the Bodhisatta was profoundly delighted with the Dhamma taught by Buddha Vessabhū, he desired fervently to become a monk. Accordingly, he gave away all his royal wealth to the cause of the Buddha's Dispensation and took up, in the Buddha's presence, the life of a virtuous monk, free from idleness, day and night. Having become a monk, he acquired moral qualities, observed the thirteen ascetic practices (*dhutaṅgas*) and lived in the Buddha's Dispensation, being happy in fulfilment of the perfections.

Filled with faith and joy, the Bodhisatta as a monk paid respects to Buddha Vessabhū. Then there occurred a great longing in him for omniscience.

Knowing that the Bodhisatta monk had undiminished energy, Buddha Vessabhū predicted: "In the Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*), the 31st aeon from the present one, this monk, Sudassana, will indeed become a Buddha, Gotama by name." Having heard Buddha Vessabhū's prophecy, the Bodhisatta monk Sudassana was overjoyed and he determined to fulfil the ten perfections even more energetically. [188]

Particulars of Buddha Vessabhū

Buddha Vessabhū's birthplace was Anoma city.

His father was King Suppatīta and his mother was Queen Yasavatī.

He reigned for 6,000 years.

His three palaces were Ruci, Suruci and Rativaḍḍhana.

His chief consort was Sucittā, who had 30,000 maids of honour.

His son was Prince Suppabuddha.

The vehicle he used in renunciation, after seeing the four omens, was a golden palanquin.

He practised the austerities for six months.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Soṇa and Ven. Uttara.

His attendant was Ven. Upasanta.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Rāmā and Ven. Samālā.

His Bodhi tree was a Great Sāla tree.

His noble male supporters were the wealthy persons, Sotthika and Ramma.

His two female supporters were Gotamī and Sirimā.

Buddha Vessabhū's height was 60 cubits and glorious like a golden column.

The radiance emitted from various parts of his body was particularly bright, like the fire on top of a hill at night.

The lifespan during Buddha Vessabhū's time was 60,000 years. He lived for four-fifths of this lifespan, rescuing beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, from the flood-waters of Saṁsāra and placed them on the shore of Nibbāna.

He explained Dhamma elaborately to people in accordance with their dispositions. Having bequeathed the Dhamma-boat to cross the waters of Saṁsāra for the benefit of posterity, Buddha Vessabhū with his Arahat disciples attained Parinibbāna.

Buddha Vessabhū and his Arahats, who were worthy of veneration shown to them by humans, Devas and Brahmas, and the monastic buildings where they had physically maintained themselves, all have vanished. Unsubstantial and futile are all conditioned things!

In this manner, Buddha Vessabhū, conqueror of the five kinds of deaths (*māra*) and teacher of Devas and humans, attained Parinibbāna in Khemā Park, near Usabhavatī city. His relics, according to his resolve, dispersed and reached everywhere in Jambudīpa to be placed in shrines, and became objects for honour by beings such as humans, Devas and Brahmas.

22. The Chronicle of Buddha Kakusandha

After Buddha Vessabhū's attainment of Parinibbāna, when the aeon in which he appeared had come to an end, 29 empty aeons (*suñña-kappa*) which were aeons having no Buddhas elapsed and then there emerged the present Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*) of five Buddhas. In this aeon appeared four Buddhas, namely, Kakusandha, Koṇāgamana, Kassapa and Gotama. The next Buddha, who is yet to come, is Buddha Metteyya.

The chronicle of Buddha Kakusandha, the first of these five Buddhas, is as follows: The Fortunate Aeon comprises 64 inclusive periods (*antara-kappa*). In the eighth inclusive period according to the Long Chronicle of the Kings (*Mahā-rāja-vaṁsa*) or in the first inclusive period according to the Glass Palace Chronicle (*Hmannan Rāja-vaṁsa*), when the human lifespan decreased from immeasurables to 40,000 years, Bodhisatta Kakusandha, on complete fulfilment of the perfections, was reborn in Tusita Heaven.

Early Life

Having complied with the request made by Devas and Brahmas to become a Buddha, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of a Brahmin woman, Visākhā [189] by name, wife of the Brahmin chaplain Aggidatta, who was advisor to King Khemaṅkara of the city of Khemavatī. When ten months had elapsed, the Bodhisatta was born in Khemavatī Park.

> As has been mentioned, all past Buddhas, from Dīpaṅkara to Vessabhū, belonged to royal families, but Buddha Kakusandha was born to a Brahmin family. In the society which is composed of four assemblies of people: nobles (*khattiya*), Brahmins, traders and lowly ones, never is a Buddha conceived, in his final existence, in the womb of a woman of the latter two classes.
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> As for nobles and Brahmins, sometimes nobles enjoy superiority and at other times, Brahmins do. At a time, when people show the highest honour to nobles, Bodhisattas are born into that class, for they are considered the best. At other times, when people show the greatest honour to the Brahmins, Bodhisattas are born in their families, for they are then supposed to be the foremost.
>
> In this way, Buddhas hail only from noble and Brahmin families. Since recognition of the former as the most superior is more frequent, Buddhas are generally nobles by birth; and because it is only sometimes that Brahmins gain superiority, Buddhas of Brahmin birth are fewer. Thus, the greater number of noble Buddhas and the smaller number of Brahmin Buddhas should be understood.

When the youthful Bodhisatta Kakusandha came of age, he lived in three mansions: Kāma, Kāmavaṇṇa and Kāmasuddhi. Being entertained and served by his Brahmin wife, Rocinī by name, who had 30,000 Brahmin maids, he thus enjoyed a divine-like household life for 4,000 years.

When he had seen the four omens and when Rocinī had given birth to a son named Uttara, Brahmin Kakusandha renounced the world riding a chariot drawn by a thoroughbred horse and became a recluse. Joining him were 40,000 men who also became recluses themselves.

Awakening

With these 40,000 recluses, Bodhisatta Kakusandha practised the austerities for eight months. On the full moon of May (*Vesākha*), the day he would become a Buddha, he partook of the milk rice offered by the daughter of a Brahmin, Vajirindhā, of the market-town of Vajirindha and spent the daytime in the local acacia grove. In the evening, he went alone to the Mahā Bodhi tree and on the way he accepted eight handfuls of grass from Subhadda, a barley field

watchman. As soon as he spread the grass at the foot of the Sirīsa Mahā Bodhi tree,[84] there appeared the unconquered seat of 26 cubits. Sitting cross-legged on the seat, he concentrated his energy at four levels and became a Buddha in the same way as previous Buddhas.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After becoming a Buddha, Buddha Kakusandha stayed in the neighbourhood of the Sirīsa Mahā Bodhi tree for 49 days. Having accepted the request made by a Brahma for his teaching, he contemplated who he should teach first and he saw his companions in renunciation. Using his psychic power, he immediately appeared at their residence in Isipatana Deer Park, near the town of Makila. When in their midst, he taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, which was also taught by previous Buddhas, to numerous Devas and Brahmas who went to listen to it respectfully. At that time, 400 billion Devas and humans attained the paths and fruitions. [190]

2. At a later time, Buddha Kakusandha displayed the twin miracle near a Sāla tree, close to the city-gate of Kaṇṇakujja and taught the Dhamma. 300 billion Devas and humans penetrated the four noble truths and gained emancipation.

3. Still at a later time, another Dhamma teaching occasion (*Dhammābhisamaya*) took place in the following manner. At a Deva shrine, not too far away from the town of Khemavatī, lived a divine Yakkha named Naradeva. At the time of propitiation, he received, in his visible frame, honour done to him by the people. He was, however, in the habit of catching human beings who, through a difficult road approach to a big pond in the middle of a huge forest, fetched various species of lotus. If there were no people there, he went back to his great forest-abode and caught those who happened to be there and devoured them.

In fact, the road through the forest was notorious for its difficult terrain. At one time, at both ends of the forest, people were discussing among themselves as to how to get through the wilderness. At that time, after emerging from his attainment of great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā-samāpatti*) early in the morning, Buddha Kakusandha surveyed the world and saw the Yakkha, Naradeva, and

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[84] Which was as big, etc., as the aforesaid Trumpet Flower Mahā Bodhi tree of Buddha Vipassī.

those people in his vision of wisdom. So, using his psychic power, he went through the sky and, while the people were looking up, he displayed various types of miracles. Then he descended into Naradeva's mansion and took a seat on the Yakkha's splendid couch.

Naradeva became delighted the moment he saw the Buddha in the sky emitting a radiance of six colours from his body, and thought to himself: "The Buddha is coming here out of compassion for me." With his attendant Yakkhas, he went to the Himālayas and brought back aquatic and terrestrial flowers of various hues and scents, with which he honoured the Buddha, singing in praise of him who still remained on the couch. Naradeva stood with his clasped hands touching his forehead in salutation.

On seeing the Buddha's miracles, the people's minds became serene and they all went to the Buddha and encircling him and paid respects to him. By explaining to the Yakkha how wholesome deeds are related to wholesome results, Buddha Kakusandha inspired the Yakkha and by giving a talk on the abodes of intense suffering, made him frightened. Thereafter, the Buddha taught the four noble truths. At that time, countless Devas and humans penetrated the truths and gained emancipation.

A Single Meeting of the Disciples

There was only one meeting of Buddha Kakusandha's disciples. It took place in the Isipatana Deer Park, near the city of Kaṇṇakujja, on the full moon of February (*Māgha*). Amidst 40,000 Arahats, who had been his companions in renunciation, Buddha Kakusandha recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*).

Bodhisatta as King Khema

At the time of Buddha Kakusandha our Bodhisatta was King Khema. Having made a grand offering of bowls and robes to the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha, and also having offered them such medicinal materials as minerals for preparing eye-ointment, and herbs including liquorice among others, he became so immensely pleased with the Dhamma taught by the Buddha that he renounced the world and became a monk in the Buddha's presence. With reference to him, the Buddha predicted: "This monk Khema will indeed become a Buddha, named Gotama, in this Fortunate Aeon."

Having heard the Buddha's prophecy, the Bodhisatta Khema became overjoyed and determined to fulfil the ten perfections even more energetically.

Particulars of Buddha Kakusandha

Buddha Kakusandha's birthplace was Khemavatī city.

His father was Brahmin Aggidatta, Brahmin chaplain to King Khemaṅkara, and his mother was Visākhā, a Brahmin [191] lady.

He lived a household life for 4,000 years.

His three mansions were Kāma, Kāmavaṇṇa and Kāmasuddhi.

His wife was Rocinī, a Brahmin lady, who had 30,000 attendants.

His son was Uttara.

The vehicle he used in renunciation, after seeing the four omens, was a chariot drawn by a thoroughbred horse.

He practised the austerities for eight months.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Vidhura and Ven. Sañjīva.

His attendant was Ven. Buddhija.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Sāmā and Ven. Campā.

His Bodhi tree was a Sirīsa.

His noble male supporters were the wealthy men, Accuta and Sumana.

His noble female supporters were Nandā and Sunandā.

Buddha Kakusandha's height was 40 cubits.

The radiance from his body spread around, up to ten leagues.

The human lifespan during his time was 40,000 years. He lived for four-fifths of this lifespan rescuing beings such as humans, Devas and Brahmas from the flood-waters of Saṁsāra and placed them on the shore of Nibbāna.

In the world of Devas and humans, he opened the "shop of Dhamma" for the virtuous, male and female alike, and bravely roared a lion's roar: "I am an omniscient Buddha indeed. The defilements and mental pollutants with their latent tendencies have all been rooted out from me." After that, with his Arahat disciples, Buddha Kakusandha attained Parinibbāna.

The Buddha, who was endowed with a voice of eight qualities:[85] clearness, sweetness, legibility, pleasantness, firmness, fullness, depth and echo, and his two chief disciples and other Arahat disciples who were possessed of morality that was unbreached, untorn, unmottled, and free at all times, they have all disappeared. Unsubstantial and futile indeed are all conditioned things!

In this manner, Buddha Kakusandha attained Parinibbāna in Khema Park. In that very park, a shrine was erected over the relics of Buddha Kakusandha. It was exactly one league high.

23. The Chronicle of Buddha Koṇāgamana

After Buddha Kakusandha's attainment of Parinibbāna, in the present Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*), the lifespan of human beings gradually decreased from 40,000 years to ten years and increased to immeasurables. When it reached 30,000 years on its next decline, Bodhisatta Koṇāgamana, on his complete fulfilment of the perfections was reborn in Tusita. Having complied with the request made by Devas and Brahmas to become a Buddha, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of a Brahmin lady named Uttarā, wife of the Brahmin Yaññadatta, in the city of Sobhavatī. When ten months had elapsed, he was born in Subhavatī Park.

> At the time of the boy's birth, there fell a heavy shower of gold over the whole of Jambudīpa and taking the significance of this event, "the coming down of gold from the sky," learned readers of omens and his relatives named him Kanakāgamana [192] *kanaka* means "gold," *āgamana* means "coming," hence Kanakāgamana "the boy for whom gold has come down." Owing to its antiquity, the original name Kanakāgamana has taken the corrupt form of Koṇāgamana. Or by means of derivation, the first syllable *ka* is changed into *ko*, *na* into *ṇa* and the final *ka* has been elided.

Early Life

When the boy Koṇāgamana came of age, he lived in three palatial mansions: Tusita, Santusita and Santuṭṭha. Being entertained and served by his wife Rucigattā, a Brahmin lady, and her host of 16,000 Brahmin female attendants, he thus enjoyed a divine-like household life for 3,000 years.

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[85] Read the Further Explanations for the voice of eight qualities.

When Brahmin Koṇāgamana had seen the four omens while living a household life and when his wife Rucigattā had given birth to a son, named Satthavāha, he renounced the world riding an elephant. Thirty thousand men, following his example also renounced the world.

Awakening

With his 30,000 recluses Koṇāgamana practised the austerities. On the full moon of May (*Vesākha*), the day in which he would become a Buddha, he partook of the milk rice offered by Aggisoṇā, daughter of Aggisoṇa, and spent the daytime in the local Acacia grove. In the evening, he went alone to the Mahā Bodhi tree. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass offered by Jaṭatinduka, a barley field watchman. As soon as he spread the grass at the foot of the Cluster Fig (*Udumbara*) Mahā Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat of 20 cubits. Sitting cross-legged on the seat, he concentrated his energy at four levels in the same manner as previous Buddhas, and became a Buddha.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After becoming a Buddha, Buddha Koṇāgamana stayed in the neighbourhood of the Mahā Bodhi tree for 49 days. Having accepted a Brahma's request for his teaching, he contemplated who he should teach first, and he saw the 30,000 recluses who were his companions in renunciation. By his psychic power, he immediately appeared at their residence in the Isipatana Deer Park, near the city of Sudassana. Sitting in the middle of these recluses, he taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, which was also taught by previous Buddhas, and which Devas and Brahmas went to listen to. By the end of this discourse, 300 billion Devas and humans attained the paths and fruitions.

2. At a later time, when Buddha Koṇāgamana displayed the twin miracle of water and fire near the Sāla tree, close to the city gate of Sundara, and eradicated wrong views and taught Dhamma, 200 billion Devas and humans attained the paths and fruitions.

3. After displaying the twin miracle, Buddha Koṇāgamana went to Tāvatiṁsa and sat on the stone-slab placed at the foot of the Pāricchattaka tree, he taught Abhidhamma to Devas and Brahmas who had assembled there from the 10,000 world-element. At that time, 100 billion attained the paths and fruitions.

Single Occasion of the Disciples' Meeting

The only meeting of Buddha Koṇāgamana's disciples took place when the Buddha was staying in a park, named Surindadeva, near the city of Sundaravatī. He taught Dhamma to princes Bhiyyosa and Uttara, who were to become his chief disciples, together with 30,000 [193] strong retainers and called upon them: "Come, monks." They became summoned monastics and became Arahats. In the middle of these 30,000 Arahats, on the full moon of February (*Māgha*), Buddha Koṇāgamana recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*).

The Bodhisatta as King Pabbata

At the time of Buddha Koṇāgamana our Bodhisatta was King Pabbata, in the city of Mithilā. He was a powerful ruler associated with strong allies. Hearing that Buddha Koṇāgamana had arrived in his city, he welcomed him with his retinue and army, invited him respectfully and performed a grand alms giving. He also requested the Buddha to observe the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in his city and he would look after him and his Saṅgha for the three months of the rainy season. Besides, he offered the Saṅgha, headed by the Buddha, cotton cloth, silk cloth, woollen cloth, golden sandals and many other things made in Pattuṇṇa country and Cīna country. The Buddha then predicted of him: "In this Fortunate Aeon, this King Pabbata will indeed become a Buddha, named Gotama." Having heard the Buddha's prophecy, the Bodhisatta, King Pabbata, was so pleased that he firmly resolved to fulfil the ten perfections even more energetically.

Since he was a man who had been seeking omniscience, he made a great offering of gifts to Buddha Koṇāgamana, renounced his magnificent kingship and became a monk in the presence of the Buddha.

Particulars of Buddha Koṇāgamana

Buddha Koṇāgamana's birthplace was Sobhavatī city, which was ruled by King Sobha.

His father was the Brahmin Yaññadatta and his mother was Uttarā, a Brahmin lady.

He lived a household life for 3,000 years.

He lived in three palatial mansions: Tusita, Santusita and Santuṭṭha.

His wife was Rucigattā, a Brahmin lady, who had a retinue of 16,000 female Brahmin attendants.

His son was Satthavāha.

He renounced the world riding an elephant after seeing the four omens.

He practised the austerities for six months.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Bhiyyosa and Ven. Uttara.

His attendant was Ven. Sotthija.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Samuddā and Ven. Uttarā.

His Bodhi tree was a Cluster Fig (*Udumbara*).

His noble male supporters were the wealthy men, Ugga and Somadeva.

His female supporters were Sīvalā and Sāmā.

Buddha Koṇāgamana's height was 30 cubits.

He was adorned with the radiance of six colours like the pure gold in the goldsmith's crucible.

The lifespan during Buddha Koṇāgamana's time was 30,000 years. For four-fifths of this lifespan he lived, rescuing beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, from the flood waters of Saṁsāra and placing them on the shores of Nibbāna.

In order that beings could stay and worship on the shrine platform of insight wisdom (*vipassanā-ñāṇa-paññā*), Buddha Koṇāgamana constructed the shrine of the 37 constituents of Awakening (*Bodhi-pakkhiya-dhammā*) that was adorned with the banner of the four noble truths, and made the "bouquet of Dhamma," after which, with his Arahat disciples, he attained Parinibbāna.

Buddha Koṇāgamana's disciples, who were accomplished in the exercise of supernormal powers, and Buddha Koṇāgamana, who had expounded supermundane Dhamma, all of them have passed away. Unsubstantial and futile are all conditioned things! [194]

In this way, Buddha Koṇāgamana, who had penetrated the four noble truths and other Dhammas that should be known, attained Parinibbāna in the pleasance named Pabbata. His relics were dispersed in accordance with his resolve,

reaching everywhere in Jambudīpa and were paid homage to by beings such as humans, Devas and Brahmas.

24. The Chronicle of Buddha Kassapa

After Buddha Koṇāgamana's attainment of Parinibbāna in this Fortunate Aeon, the lifespan of human beings gradually decreased from 30,000 years to ten years and increased to immeasurables. When it reached 20,000 years on its next decline, Bodhisatta Kassapa was reborn in Tusita.

Early Life

Having complied with the request made by Devas and Brahmas to become a Buddha, he descended to the human world to be conceived in the womb of Dhanavatī, a Brahmin lady and wife of the Brahmin Brahmadatta in the city of Bārāṇasī, which was ruled by King Kiki. When ten months had elapsed, the Bodhisatta was born in Isipatana Deer Park. On his naming day, learned readers of omens and his relatives named him Kassapa, for he was a descendant of the clan of that name.

When the boy Kassapa came of age, he lived in three mansions: Haṁsa, Yasa and Sirinanda. Being entertained and served by his wife Sunandā, a Brahmin lady, who had 48,000 female attendants, he thus enjoyed a divine-like household life for 2,000 years.

When he had seen the four omens while living a household life and when his wife Sunandā had given birth to a son, named Vijitasena, he was stirred with spiritual urgency and he thought to himself: "I shall renounce the world immediately today."

No sooner had he thought this than the Bodhisatta's mansion rotated like a potter's wheel and flew up into the sky. And, like the moon coming out in the company of the stars in autumn, it produced a very delightful light, and the mansion moved on, with hundreds of people accompanying it as though adorning the vault of heavens, as though exhibiting its glory, as though attracting spectators and captivating their hearts, and as though lending splendour to the treetops. Finally, it came down to the ground with the Banyan (*Nigrodha*) Bodhi tree in its centre.

Then the Bodhisatta got down from the mansion. Standing on the ground, he accepted the robes offered by a Brahma and put them on. The Bodhisatta's wife and female attendants also got down from the mansion and went to a distance of half a mile where they erected temporary shelters like the barracks of an army. Joining the Bodhisatta, all the men, who had come along with him, also renounced the world.

Awakening

With the recluses who had joined him, Bodhisatta Kassapa practised the austerities. On the full moon of May (*Vesākha*), the day on which he would become a Buddha, he partook of the milk rice offered by his wife Sunanda and spent the daytime in the local Acacia grove. In the evening, he proceeded alone to the Mahā Bodhi tree. On the way, he accepted eight handfuls of grass offered by Soma, a barley field watchman. As soon as he spread the grass at the foot of the Mahā Bodhi tree, there appeared the unconquered seat of fifteen cubit feet. Sitting cross-legged on the seat, he concentrated his energy at four levels and, in the same manner as previous Buddhas, he became a Buddha.

Five Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

1. After becoming a Buddha, Buddha Kassapa stayed in the vicinity of [195] the Mahā Bodhi tree for 49 days. Having complied with a Brahma's request for his teaching, he contemplated who he should teach first and he saw ten million recluses, his companions in renunciation, who were endowed with the merits of their past deeds which could lead to the paths and fruitions. By his psychic power, he immediately appeared at their residence, Isipatana Deer Park, near the city of Bārāṇasī. Staying in the middle of these recluses, the Buddha taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse by following the practice of previous Buddhas, as well as to Devas and Brahmas, who went to listen respectfully. By the end of the discourse, 20 million Devas and humans attained the paths and fruitions.

2. At a later time, when Buddha Kassapa taught Dhamma while travelling from town to town, from village to village, and from market-town to market-town, 100 billion Devas and humans attained the paths and fruitions.

3. Still at a later time, when Buddha Kassapa displayed the twin miracle of water and fire and taught the Dhamma near the Indian Laurel (*Asana*) tree,

close to the gate of Sundara city, 50 billion Devas and humans penetrated the four noble truths and gained emancipation.

4. Having displayed the twin miracle of water and fire, Buddha Kassapa, in the celestial Assembly Hall named Sudhamma in Tāvatiṁsa, taught Abhidhamma in order to benefit Devas and Brahmas who had assembled there and were listening respectfully. This Dhamma was especially meant for a Deva, who had been his mother. At that time, 30 billion Devas and Brahmas penetrated the four noble truths and gained emancipation.

5. There was once a Yakkha who was as powerful as the one named Naradeva during Buddha Kakusandha's lifetime. He was well known by the same name of Naradeva. Assuming the appearance of a king ruling in a city outside Jambudīpa and also assuming the king's voice, behaviour and other characteristics, he killed the king and devoured him. Then he ruled over the whole kingdom slaying many people for food. He also indulged in debauchery with women.

When intelligent queens, maids of honour and members of retinue discovered: "This man is not our master, nor our king; he is indeed a Yakkha," he felt threatened and then killed and devoured them all and moved on to another city where he made himself king in the similar manner.

Killing and devouring people in this way, Naradeva arrived at Sundara city. Having heard of his reign of terror, the citizens became scared of the danger of death and fled from their city. Seeing the tumultuous situation of the people, Buddha Kassapa went and stood before the Yakkha. When he saw the Buddha standing in front of him, he defied the Buddha by roaring thunderously. Unable to frighten the Buddha, he approached him for refuge. He also put forward some questions which the Buddha answered to his satisfaction. When the Buddha admonished him and taught a discourse, a large multitude of Devas and humans, who had assembled there respectfully to listen to it, penetrated the four noble truths and gained emancipation.

The Single Occasion of the Disciples' Meeting

The meeting of Buddha Kassapa's Arahat disciples took place just once, in the city of Bārāṇasī. When Tissa, son of the Brahmin chaplain, saw the 32 marks of a Great Man on the body of Bodhisatta Kassapa, he remembered his father's word that "only those who would become Buddhas can have such marks." As he

had not one iota of doubt about [196] it, he thought to himself: "This Kassapa will become a Buddha through supreme renunciation. I shall work hard to be free from the suffering of Saṁsāra after becoming a monk in the presence of this Buddha Kassapa." Accordingly, he went to the Himālayas and became an ascetic even before Bodhisatta Kassapa renounced the world. The ascetics of his company were 20,000 in number.

Later on, when he heard that: "Kassapa, after renouncing the world, has now become a Buddha," he left the Himālayas with his company of 20,000 ascetics, and requested to be ordained in the presence of the Buddha. Being called upon by the Buddha: "Come, monks," Tissa the ascetic with his 20,000 companions became summoned monastics and Arahats. In the assembly of these 20,000 monks, on the full moon of February (*Māgha*) Buddha Kassapa recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*).

The Bodhisatta as Jotipāla the Youth

At the time of Buddha Kassapa our Bodhisatta was famous as Jotipāla the youth. He could recite the Veda texts continuously, learned various hymns by heart, and he reached perfection in the Vedas and was accomplished in treatises on prediction that explain the physical marks of an extraordinary being, etc., treatises on legends that narrate ancient tales and all arts and crafts that had been handed down by generation after generation of teachers. No less accomplished, but fully well-versed and skilful was he in terrestrial science and celestial science.

Jotipāla was an intimate friend of Ghaṭikāra the potter, who, being a noble supporter of Buddha Kassapa, was greatly devoted to the Three Treasures and was famous as a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi*). Ghaṭikāra the potter took him to Buddha Kassapa.

After listening to the Buddha's Dhamma, Jotipāla became a monk in the Buddha's presence. Highly energetic, clever in performing duties, big and small, and not negligent in any matters associated with the three trainings of morality, concentration, and wisdom, he shouldered responsibilities in the Buddha's Dispensation.

Having learned the teachings (*pariyatti*) of the Buddha which comprised nine divisions, he glorified the Buddha's Dispensation. Discerning Jotipāla's aforesaid

marvellous qualities, Buddha Kassapa predicted of him: "This monastic Jotipāla will indeed become a Buddha, named Gotama, even in this Fortunate Aeon." On hearing the Buddha's prophecy, the noble monastic Jotipāla became overjoyed and resolved to fulfil the ten perfections even more energetically.

On account of his only wish, which was attainment of omniscience, our Bodhisatta, who would become the inconceivable Lord of the Three Worlds, kept himself far away from all demeritorious deeds that are to be avoided throughout Saṁsāra, and he put efforts unflinchingly to perform meritorious deeds, which ordinary people can hardly do, in absolute fulfilment of the ten perfections.

> From the above quoted Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) text, it seems that Ghaṭikāra the potter brought his friend, Jotipāla the youth, to Kassapa Buddha without difficulty. In reality, however, he did not succeed easily in doing so. He had to persuade Jotipāla again and again and finally, used force by dragging him along by his hair. This is mentioned in the Discourse about Ghaṭikāra (*Ghaṭikāra-sutta*, MN 81). The detailed story of Ghaṭikāra and that of Jotipāla should be known from that discourse.

Particulars of Buddha Kassapa

Buddha Kassapa's birthplace was Bārāṇasī city where King Kiki reigned.

His father was Brahmin Brahmadatta and his mother was Dhanavatī, a Brahmin lady.

He lived a household life for 2,000 years.

His three mansions were Haṁsa, Yasa and Sirinanda.

His wife was Sunandā, a Brahmin lady who had 48,000 female [197] Brahmin attendants.

His son was Vijitasena.

The vehicle in which he renounced the world was a mansion.

He practised the austerities for seven days.

His two male chief disciples were Ven. Tissa and Ven. Bhāradvāja.

His attendant was Ven. Sabbamitta.

His two female chief disciples were Ven. Anulā and Ven. Uruvelā.

His Bodhi tree was a Banyan (*Nigrodha*) tree.

His noble male supporters were Sumaṅgala and Ghaṭikāra the potter.

His female supporters were Vijitasenā and Bhaddā.

Buddha Kassapa's height was 20 cubits.

He was glorious like forceful lightning and the full moon surrounded by planets and stars.

The lifespan during his time was 20,000 years. He lived for four-fifths of this lifespan rescuing numerous beings from the waters of Saṁsāra and placed them on the shores of Nibbāna.

Buddha Kassapa created the big pond of Dhamma for beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, and gave the "unguent of the four kinds of monastic precepts (*catu-pārisuddhi-sīla*) for them to beautify their minds, made them put on the garments of conscience (*hirī*) and concern (*ottappa*), distributed among them the flowers of the 37 things on the side of Awakening (*Bodhi-pakkhiyā-dhammā*), and placed the spotless mirror of the path-knowledge of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga-ñāṇa*) so that they could see clearly for themselves, distinguishing between faulty things and faultless things, between deeds of merit and unwholesome deeds. He placed the mirror as though he were inviting those who were wandering in search of Nibbāna near the aforesaid pond: "Behold yourselves in all kinds of adornment."

He provided those who listened to his admonishment with the clothing of the five precepts, ten precepts and the four kinds of monastic precepts so that they could fight against their enemy, the defilements. By making them fasten their coats of mail of the four mundane and five supermundane absorptions (*jhāna*); by making them wear the leather robe of mindfulness (*sati*) and clear comprehension (*sampajañña*); by supplying them with the full military equipment of the sublime energy at four levels; by giving them the shield of the four steadfast mindfulnesses (*satipaṭṭhāna*) so that they could defend themselves from the various enemy defilements.

By making his army of disciples wield the lances of very sharp insight knowledges (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) and giving them the sword of path-wisdom (*magga-paññā*), the swords that had been sharpened on the whet stone of energy (*viriya*) and by handing to them the supermundane precepts so that they could

eradicate their inclinations to associate with defilements. By giving them various dressing articles such as the three understandings (*vijjā*) and the six super knowledges (*abhiññā*), having fashioned the crowning flower of supermundane fruitions so that they could adorn and beautify themselves, and by making a big cluster of the flowers of the nine supermundane attainments and together with it, the white umbrella of the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) so that they could protect themselves against the sun of demerits. By so doing, Buddha Kassapa created the great bloom of the eightfold path (*magga*), leading happily to the haven of Nibbāna. Then Buddha Kassapa and his numerous Arahat disciples attained Parinibbāna and came to the end of his final existence.

That Buddha Kassapa, the embodiment of unmeasurable qualities, whom others could hardly approach; the gem of Dhamma taught by him was in a position to extend its bold invitation saying: "Come, have a look and try it as a practice."

The gem of the Saṅgha, the Saṅgha of disciples who were most excellent and had practised that gem of Dhamma well, all these have vanished. Unsubstantial and futile indeed are all conditioned things!

In this way, Buddha Kassapa, conqueror of the five kinds of deaths (*māra*), teacher of Devas and humans, attained Parinibbāna in a great park called Setavya, near Setavya city, in the [198] country of Kāsi. The people of Jambudīpa unanimously held a meeting and, for honouring him, they erected a shrine (*cetiya*) with bricks; each brick cost ten million of money to lay externally and each brick to lay internally cost five millions. This shrine was one league high.

Our Bodhisatta had thus received the prediction concerning his Buddhahood from the former 24 Buddhas, beginning with Dīpaṅkara and ending with Kassapa, and this has been composed briefly in the Poem on the Dhamma Rays (*Dhammarasi Pyo*, vv. 7, 8 and 9).[86]

> [The chapter that followed this in the original was called Chapter X: Supplement, which summarised the Bodhisatta's lives during this period. This is now included in the Further Explanations.]

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[86] The author then gives pertinent extracts from the *pyo* which we leave untranslated.

1: The Birth of the Bodhisatta

The Story of Setaketu, the Bodhisatta

In this way, our future Gotama had adorned himself with the flower of prophecy: "This man will certainly become a Buddha amongst the three kinds of beings, humans, Devas and Brahmas," uttered by the 24 Buddhas, from Dīpaṅkara to Kassapa, out of the 27 Buddhas who appeared in the period of time lasting four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons. Throughout that period of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, the Bodhisatta had endeavoured to fulfil the perfections (*pāramī*), charity (*cāga*) and good conduct (*cariyā*) by the aforesaid four means of development (*bhāvanā*) and reached the pinnacle of the fulfilment of all these requisites, which were conducive to his becoming a Buddha. This being so, in the last existence as a Bodhisatta when he was reborn as Prince Vessantara, he brought to termination the entire period of the accumulation of the perfections by performing all the final deeds of merit which surpassed everything, which was beyond comparison and which was to be crowned with the success of Awakening. This commanded the awe and veneration even of the inanimate great earth (*mahā-paṭhavi*) that quaked and trembled seven times. And, having ended his lifespan in the human abode, the Bodhisatta was reborn as a Deva by the name of Setaketu in the abode of Tusita. He was endowed with the ten attributes, in which he was superior to other Devas:

1. Long life.
2. Physical beauty.
3. Great happiness.
4. Immense wealth and retinue.
5. Authority and power.
6. Sense of sight.
7. Sense of hearing.
8. Sense of smell.
9. Sense of taste.
10. Sense of touch.

With reference to the name of the Bodhisatta, it is mentioned in the chapter on Jewelled Walkway (*Ratana-caṅkama*), in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*, 1.66), as follows: *Yadāhaṁ Tusite kāye, Santusito nāmahaṁ tadā*. This shows that the Deva had the name of Santusita. Also, in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary and the sub-commentary on the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*), the same name is mentioned.

But in the exposition of the Discussion of Previous Lives (*Pubbe-nivāsa-kathā*) of the Expulsion (*Pārājika*) commentary, and in the commentary of the Discourse about Fear and Terror (*Bhaya-bherava-sutta*, MN 4), [213] the Deva's name is given as Setaketu. Moreover, successive authors of Myanmar Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), such as the Light on the Realised One's Exalted Utterances (*Tathāgata-udāna-dīpanī*), the Garland of Decorative Stories (*Mālālaṅkāra-vatthu*), the Illustration of the Meaning of the Victor (*Jinattha-pakāsanī*), etc., give Setaketu as the name of the Deva. Therefore, it has been explained by various teachers that Santusita was a common name derived from Tusita, the name of the celestial abode, whereas Setaketu was the proper name that specifically refers to the Deva who would become Buddha Gotama.

Also when it is said that: "The great ocean, starting from the Cakkavāḷa range of mountains, gets deeper and deeper till it reaches the foot of Mount Meru, and its depth becomes 84,000 leagues," it goes without saying that counting all droplets of water in the ocean is impossible.

In the same way, when virtuous people learned briefly from hearing or from reading that the Bodhisatta, in four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, untiringly and continuously fulfilled the perfections, charity and good conduct by the four means of development, one can reflect profoundly with devotional faith on how the Bodhisatta had developed the perfections, etc., in the course of existences that were more numerous than the countless droplets of water in the great ocean.

The Buddha Uproar

Setaketu, the Bodhisatta, enjoyed supreme divine bliss in the abode of Tusita for 4,000 years, according to Deva reckoning, which is equivalent to 576 million years in the human world. Then 1,000 years before the end of his lifespan by human calculations in Tusita, the Suddhāvāsa Brahmas proclaimed: "Friends,

1,000 years from today, there will appear in the human abode an omniscient Buddha!"

Because of this proclamation from the vault of heaven, the uproar announced the appearance of a Buddha (*Buddha-kolāhala*): "An omniscient Buddha will appear! An omniscient Buddha will appear!" and it reverberated across the entire human world, 1,000 years ahead of the event.[87]

The Request to the Bodhisatta

On hearing the uproar announcing the advent of a Buddha, all the Deva kings belonging to the 10,000 world-element, such as Catumaharājā, Sakka, Suyāma, Santusita, Sunimmita, Vasavattī, and all Mahā Brahmas congregated at a certain universe to hold a discussion about the Bodhisatta whose divine lifespan would last for only seven days by human reckoning, and whose approaching end of life had become manifest through the five signs (*pubba-nimitta*).[88]

Then they all approached Setaketu with their hands joined in adoration and requested him as follows: "Bodhisatta, you have completely fulfilled the ten perfections, not with the desire to gain the bliss of Sakka, Māra, Brahma or of a Universal Monarch. You fulfilled these perfections aspiring only after omniscient Buddhahood, in order to acquire for yourself freedom from the three worlds, as well as to liberate the multitudes of humans, Devas and Brahmas. Bodhisatta, this is the most propitious time for you to become an omniscient Buddha! This is truly the right moment to become an omniscient Buddha! Therefore, may you take conception in the womb of your mother in the human realm. After attaining Supreme Awakening, may you liberate humans, Devas and Brahmas from Saṁsāra by teaching the Dhamma leading to the deathless Nibbāna."

The Five Great Investigations

The Bodhisatta Setaketu did not hastily give his consent to the request of the Devas and Brahmas who had come together from the 10,000 world-element. In consonance with the tradition of previous Bodhisattas, he made the five great investigations as follows:

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[87] [For more on the different types of uproar, see the Further Explanations.]

[88] *Pubba-nimitta*: see the Further Explanations for details.

1. The appropriate time for the appearance of a Buddha.
2. The appropriate island-continent for the appearance of a Buddha.
3. The appropriate country for the appearance of a Buddha.
4. The family into which the Bodhisatta is reborn.
5. The lifespan of the Bodhisatta's mother-to-be.

1. Of these five great investigations, the Bodhisatta considered first: "Is the time right or not for the appearance of a Buddha in the human world?"

The time is not proper for the advent of a Buddha when the lifespan of human beings is on the increase from 100,000 years. Owing to such longevity, suffering caused by birth, suffering caused by disease, suffering caused by old age and suffering caused by death are not manifest. Veiled by their lengthy lifespan, human beings tend to be oblivious of all suffering.

The Dhamma sermons to be delivered by Buddhas invariably centre around the characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anatta*). If Buddhas appear when the lifespan is more than 100,000 years give sermons on the nature of impermanence, suffering and non-self, the people of that period will be perplexed, wondering what the Buddhas are teaching about. They will neither listen to nor believe the sermons. Without listening or believing, human beings will surely wonder what the Buddha's teaching is about. They will never realize the four noble truths and never achieve Nibbāna. It would be fruitless to teach the non-believers the discourse on the three characteristics which would liberate them from Saṁsāra. Therefore, the period when the lifespan extends more than 100,000 years is not the proper time for the Buddhas [214] to appear.

The period when the lifespan of human beings falls below 100 years is also not proper for a Buddha to appear, because beings belonging to such a period abound in the defilements of sensual pleasures. The Dhamma sermons given to such people will not endure. In fact, they will fade away instantly just as the scribbling with a stick on the surface of the water will disappear, leaving no mark whatsoever. Therefore, the short period of the declining lifespan below 100 years is also not the proper time for the Buddhas to appear.

Only the periods when lifespans range from 100,000 years down to 100 years are right for the appearance of a Buddha. These are the periods in which birth, old age and death manifest themselves clearly, in which the teaching on the three characteristics and the teaching as to how beings can be liberated from Saṁsāra is understood easily and in which beings are not so overwhelmed by the defilements of sensual pleasures, hence, it is the appropriate period for the most opportune arrival of a Buddha. Therefore, only the periods when lifespans range from 100,000 years down to 100 years, by human reckoning, is the most propitious time for a Bodhisatta to attain Buddhahood.[89] Thus, Bodhisatta Setaketu came to see the right time clearly, and decided: "This is the most propitious time for me to become a Buddha."

2. Then he investigated the island-continent which serves as the place for the appearance of Buddhas. There are four large island-continents, each surrounded by 500 smaller islands. Of these, one is called Jambudīpa, as it is distinguished by a rose-apple (*jambu*) tree growing in it, and was clearly discerned by the Bodhisatta as the only island-continent on which previous Buddhas had appeared.

3. Then he went on investigating thus: "This Jambudīpa is extremely vast measuring 10,000 leagues. Where did former Buddhas appear in this vast expanse of land?" Then he saw it was the Middle Country (*Majjhima-desa*) in Jambudīpa that was the place of the appearance of the ancient Buddhas.

> The Middle Country (*Majjhima-desa*) is demarcated on the east by the great Sāla tree east of the market-town of Gajaṅgala; on the south-east, by the river Salalavati; on the south, by the market town of Satakaṇṇika; on the west, by the Brahmin village of Thūna; on the north, by Mount Usīradhaja. The Middle Country, having the said five demarcations, is 300 leagues in length and 250 leagues in breath with a circumference of 900 leagues. Regions outside this boundary are called border areas (*paccanta*). Only in the Middle Country do omniscient Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas, chief disciples, great disciples, Universal Monarchs and powerful, wealthy noble, Brahmin and householder clans live and prosper.

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[89] When the Devas and Brahmas made their entreaties to Setaketu, the life span of human beings was in the 100 year range.

In the Middle Country was situated Kapilavatthu, the royal city of the kingdom of the Sakyas. Bodhisatta Setaketu decided that he should be reborn in that royal city.

4. Investigating the family in which the Bodhisatta, in his last existence, should be reborn, he clearly perceived: "The former Bodhisattas in their respective last existences belonged neither to the merchant class nor to the poor class. They were born only in a noble or a Brahmin family, whichever is considered superior by the people of the period. At the time when people show the highest honour to the ruling families, the Bodhisatta is born in their class. At the time when people do so to the Brahmins, he is born in one of their families. The present time witnesses the nobles being honoured by the people, I should be reborn in one of their families. Among them, King Suddhodana of Kapilavatthu is a direct descendent of Mahā Sammata, the first elected primeval king, through an uninterrupted noble lineage of the pure Sakya clan. This King Suddhodana of pure noble birth shall be my father."

5. Finally, he investigated as to who should be his mother in his last human existence. He clearly perceived: "The royal mother of a Buddha is a paragon of modesty and chastity; [215] she never indulges in liquor or intoxicants; she has accumulated merit and fulfilled the perfections throughout 100,000 aeons to become the mother of a Buddha. From the moment she is born as the future mother of a Buddha, she continuously observes and upholds the five precepts without any breach. Siri Mahā Māyā Devī, the chief consort of King Suddhodana, is fully endowed with all these qualities. Thus, this Chief Queen, Siri Mahā Māyā Devī, shall be my mother." Then investigating further the remaining lifespan of the queen, he perceived clearly that she had only ten months and seven days more to live.

The Consent

In this way, after making the five great investigations, the Bodhisatta Setaketu resolved: "I will descend to the human abode and become a Buddha." Having so resolved, the Bodhisatta gave his consent to the Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element who had assembled to request him: "Devas and Brahmas, now is the time for me to become a Buddha as you have requested. You may now take leave as you please, I will go down to the human abode to attain Buddhahood."

After delivering his pledge and bidding farewell to all the Devas and Brahmas, Bodhisatta Setaketu, entered Nandanavana, the celestial garden, accompanied by the Devas from the Tusita realm.

Nandana Grove

An account of the Nandana[90] grove will be given here as described in the commentary to the Chapter about Nandaka (*Nandana-vagga*, SN 1.1). The Nandana Grove is so named because it gives delight (*nandana*) to all the Devas who visit it.

Each of the six planes of the heavenly realm has its own Nandana Grove. All these gardens give the same delight, whether they belong to the lower or upper celestial planes. Therefore, only the Nandana Grove of Tāvatiṁsa abode is described in detail in the texts as an example.

This Nandana Grove is a pleasant, splendid place with all kinds of precious celestial trees, flowers, pavilions, vehicles and a variety of enjoyable things which are enchanting, marvellous and awe inspiring to the worldling. It is a true garden resort where Devas can amuse themselves with singing, dancing and other entertainments presented by dancers and artists of various ages, various beauties, various voices, various forms and various colours. Each troupe of performers tries to rival and outplay the other in providing freely all kinds of sensual pleasures to those who come from the four quarters.

This Nandana Grove, which is considered by the Devas to be a great adornment of their abode with all its splendour and auspiciousness, stands as the most charming resort, and those entering it seeking the five pleasures of senses: enjoyable sights, sounds, scents, tastes and touches, are all delighted and satisfied.

This Nandana Grove is also a place of solace to those Devas who are nearing the end of their lifespan, and experiencing the five portents of impending demise, which warn them of the coming fate and which inevitably appear. Many Devas break down, sobbing and grieving at the imminent predicament of losing their blissful life; but once they enter this enchanting garden, they feel transformed back into persons of serenity, peace and happiness in an instant.

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[90] [Throughout, the text gave the name as Nandavana, but this is a mistake, the proper name is Nandanavana, so I have changed it accordingly.]

On whatever account they are afflicted with despair and lamentation, once these Devas step inside the Nandana Grove, they are absorbed in pleasures. As the morning dew and mist evaporate at the touch of the radiance of the rising sun, as the flame of the oil lamp flickers and dies out through a strong gust of wind, so the worries of the dying Devas are laid to rest. A saying has come into existence thus: "He who has not been to Nandana Grove, where all the best sensual pleasures of the world converge, cannot understand worldly happiness." Such is the attraction of the Nandana Grove to all worldlings.

In the commentary to the Section about Verañjā (*Verañjā-kaṇḍa*, Vin Pār 1, PTS 3.1) in the Vinaya, the following description is given: "The Nandana Grove of the Tāvatiṁsa Devas covers an area of 60 leagues in extent.[91] It is [216] splendidly decorated with celestial trees of 1,000 different species."

The sub-commentary on the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) in its comment on the Threefold Buddha-field (*Tividha-buddha-khetta*) also says: "Nandana Grove lies to the east of Sudassana city of Tāvatiṁsa and is surrounded by walls, fire screens and arched gateways made of jewels. The area measures 1,000 leagues. It is a recreational resort for all Devas. Two beautiful lakes, Mahānanda and Cūḷananda, are located between Nandana Grove and Sudassana city. The environment of the lakes is clean. The surface water of the lakes is dark blue green, matching the sky free of mist and clouds."

The Time for the Bodhisatta Demise

When Bodhisatta Setaketu entered Nandana Grove, the accompanying retinue of male and female deities addressed him: "On your demise from this abode of Devas, may you procede to a good abode, the destination of beings accomplished in meritorious deeds!"

The Devas who were accompanying Bodhisatta Setaketu also urged him to recollect again and again his deeds of merit done in the past and moved around in Nandana Grove, surrounding the Bodhisatta. While the Bodhisatta was roaming about in Nandana Grove in the company of the Devas, who were urging him to reflect upon his previous meritorious life, the time of his demise arrived.

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[91] According to some teachers, its extent is 500 leagues.

The Conception of the Bodhisatta

At the precise moment of the demise of Bodhisatta Setaketu, Siri Mahā Māyā, the Chief Queen of King Suddhodana of the kingdom of Kapilavatthu, was enjoying magnificent regal pleasures. She had now reached the third portion of the second stage of life[92] called middle age (*majjhima-vaya*).

> The human life span then was 100 years. Thus the age of Sirī Mahā Māyā Devī was around 55 years and four months. This is elaborated on in the sub-commentary called the Light on the All-Seeing one (*Samanta-cakkhu-dīpanī*).

The Festival of the Constellation Uttarāsāḷha

It was the ninth waxing day of July (*Āsāḷha*) in the year 564 BCE, when the Chief Queen Siri Mahā Māyā was 55 years and four months old. The people of the kingdom were joyously celebrating the festival of the constellation Uttarāsāḷha, a traditional annual event. Everyone participated in the festivity, outdoing one another in merry-making.

Siri Mahā Māyā Devī also took part in the festival which was celebrated from the ninth to the fourteenth day of the waxing moon. The festival was distinguished by total abstinence from liquor and by beautification with flowers, perfumes and ornaments. On the full moon day of the month, the Chief Queen woke up early, took a perfumed bath and gave a most generous donation of money and materials worth 400,000 pieces of money. She then dressed herself and had a breakfast of the choicest food, after which she took the eight precepts from her teacher Devila, and proceeded to the exquisitely decorated royal chamber and spent the entire day on a couch of splendour, observing the eight precepts.

Mahā Māyā's Dream

Observing the eight precepts and lying on the couch of splendour in the last watch of the full moon night, Siri Mahā Māyā Devī fell into a short slumber and had a dream, which foretold the conception of a Bodhisatta, as follows: The four Four Great Kings lifted and carried her in her bed to Lake Anotatta in the

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[92] See the Further Explanations on this chapter.

Himālayas. Then she was placed on the flat surface of the orpiment slab measuring 60 leagues under the shade of a Sāla tree which was seven leagues high. [217]

Thereafter, consorts of the four Four Great Kings came to the scene. They took the queen to Lake Anotatta and bathed her and helped her clean herself. Then they dressed her in celestial costumes and applied celestial cosmetics to her. They also adorned her with celestial flowers. Then she was put to bed with her head towards the east, in the inner chamber of a golden mansion inside a silver mountain, which was not far away from the lake.

At that moment in her dream she saw a pure white elephant grazing around the golden mountain, which was not far from the silver mountain where there was the golden mansion, inside which she slept. Then the white elephant descended from the golden mountain, ascended the silver mountain and entered the golden mansion. The white elephant then walked around the queen clockwise, and entered into her womb from the right side.

The Conception of the Bodhisatta

At the time when the queen was thus dreaming, Bodhisatta Setaketu, was going round Nandana Grove in Tusita enjoying delightful sights and sounds; while doing so he passed away from the abode of Devas with full comprehension and awareness. At that very instant the Bodhisatta was conceived in the lotus-like womb of his mother with the first great resultant consciousness (*mahā-vipāka-citta*), one of the nineteen initial thought moments (*paṭisandhi-citta*), a resultant of the first great wholesome consciousness (*mahā-kusala-citta*) accompanied by joy (*somanassa-sahāgatā*), combined with knowledge (*ñāṇa-sampayutta*), unprompted (*asaṅkhārika*) and caused by preparatory development (*parikamma-bhāvanā*) prior to the attainment of the absorption of loving-kindness (*mettā-jhāna*). This event took place on the morning of Thursday, the full moon of July (*Āsāḷha*), in the year 624 BCE. The precise moment of his conception was marked by the conjunction of the moon with the constellation Uttarāsāḷha.

> The name of the year and the days of the Bodhisatta's conception and birth are mentioned here in accordance with the calculations given in secular works of astrology and the chronicles of the kings. The Pāḷi texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries are silent about them. The Ancient

History of Gotama (*Gotama-purāṇa*) gives the 2570th year of the Kāliyuga as the date of birth of Buddha Gotama.

Simultaneous with the Bodhisatta's conception, there occurred a violent earthquake. The 10,000 world-element trembled and shook in the following six modes: The earth surface rose up in the east and sank in the west; it rose up in the west and sank in the east; it rose up in the north and sank in the south; it rose up in the south and sank in the north; it rose up in the centre and sank along the circumference; it rose up along the circumference and sank in the centre.

The Thirty-Two Great Prophetic Phenomena

Moreover, there appeared the 32 great prophetic phenomena that usually accompany the conception of a Bodhisatta in his last existence. From these wonderful events the wise could learn that the Bodhisatta had been conceived. The 32 prophetic phenomena, as enumerated in the introduction to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary, are as follows:

At that moment:

1. A great light of unsurpassed brilliance spread throughout the entire 10,000 world-element.
2. The blind gained eyesight, as if they were desirous of seeing the glory of the [218] Bodhisatta.
3. The deaf gained hearing.
4. The dumb gained the ability to speak.
5. The deformed became normal.
6. The lame gained the ability to walk.
7. The imprisoned and those fettered with handcuffs, chains, etc., for confinement became free of all bondage.
8. Fires in every hell were extinguished.
9. Those suffering in the state of Petas were relieved of thirst and hunger.
10. Animals became free from danger.
11. All beings afflicted with diseases were cured.
12. All beings spoke endearingly to one another.

13. Horses neighed gleefully, in a sweet and pleasant manner.
14. Elephants trumpeted in a sweet and pleasant manner.
15. All musical instruments, such as cymbals, harps, trumpets, etc., produced their sounds without being played.
16. Ornaments, such as bracelets, anklets, etc., worn by human beings tinkled without striking one another.
17. Open spaces and sceneries in all directions became distinct and clear.
18. A soft breeze blew gently, bringing peace and comfort to all living beings.
19. Unseasonal rain fell heavily, although it was not the rainy season.
20. Subterranean waters oozed out of the earth and flowed away in various directions.
21. No birds flew in the sky.
22. River waters that normally flowed continuously ceased to flow like a frightened servant who stops moving at the shout of his master.
23. Salty water in the ocean became sweet.
24. All lakes and ponds had their water surface covered with the five kinds of lotus.
25. All aquatic and terrestrial flowers blossomed simultaneously.
26. Flowers on tree trunks (*khandha-paduma*) bloomed exquisitely.
27. Flowers on branches (*sākhā-paduma*) bloomed exquisitely.
28. Flowers on creepers (*latā-paduma*) bloomed exquisitely.
29. Inflorescent flowers (*daṇḍa-paduma*) sprouting all over the land appeared in seven tiers after breaking through stone slabs.
30. Celestial lotus flowers dangled earthwards.
31. Flowers rained down continuously in the environment.
32. Celestial musical instruments made the sound of music automatically.

These 32 great prophetic phenomena can also be called the 32 great wonders. The 32 wonders, which were mentioned in chapter IX on the Chronicle of the Twenty-Four Buddhas, were these 32 great prophetic phenomena.

The entire 10,000 world-element, being adorned with such great prophetic phenomena, appeared resplendent like a huge garland of flowers, or like a large bouquet massively made or a vast bed of flowers spread layer upon layer. The air around was laden with fragrance as though this were caused by the gentle movement of a yak-tail fly-flap.[93] [219]

The Interpretation of Mahā Māyā's Dream

When Queen Siri Mahā Māyā woke up, she reported her dream to King Suddhodana. On the following morning, King Suddhodana summoned 64 leading Brahmin teachers and offered them prepared seats which were fit for the noble ones and the ground was besmeared evenly with fresh cowdung and strewn all over with rice flakes and the like, as an act of honour. The king also offered the Brahmins delicious milk rice cooked with ghee, honey and molasses, filled to the brim of the gold cups which were covered with gold and silver lids. And to please and satisfy them, the king presented them with new clothes, milch cows, and did other forms of honour.

After serving them with food, drinks, etc., and honouring them thus to their pleasure and satisfaction, King Suddhodana had the queen's dream related to the Brahmins and asked them: "What does the dream mean, is it fortune or misfortune? Read it and give me your interpretations."

The Brahmins replied to the king, giving their interpretations: "Great King, lay all your anxieties to rest. The queen has now conceived. The baby in the womb is a boy, not a girl – a son will be born to you. If he chooses to lead a princely life, he will surely become a Universal Monarch reigning over the four continents. If he renounces the household life as a recluse, he will surely become an omniscient Buddha who destroys and removes the roots of the defilements in the three worlds."

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[93] More information about the 32 wonders can be found in the Further Explanations on this chapter.

The Protection by Deva Kings

From the moment the Bodhisatta was conceived, the Four Great Kings, namely, Vessavaṇa and others who lived in this universe, entered the splendid chamber of Queen Siri Mahā Māyā and gave protection continuously, day and night, each holding a sword to ward off Petas and Yakkhas, and unsightly beasts and birds which could be seen or heard by the Bodhisatta and his mother. In this way, 40,000 Great Kings residing in the 10,000 world-element – each system having four such deities – guarded the entire space from the doors of the queen's splendid chamber up to the edges of the world-element, driving away the Petas, Yakkhas, etc.

Such protection was afforded not because of the fear that someone would harm the lives of the Bodhisatta and his mother. Even if 1,000 billion Māras were to bring 1,000 billion gigantic Mount Merus to threaten the lives of the Bodhisatta in his last existence and his mother, all the Māras as well as the mountains would surely be destroyed and the Bodhisatta and his mother would remain unharmed. The protection was just to ward off evil sights and sounds which could possibly cause anxiety and fear to the queen. Another reason might be that the Great Kings protected the Bodhisatta through sheer veneration and devotion inspired by the Bodhisatta's glorious power.

The question may then arise, i.e. whether the Great Kings who came and kept guard inside the royal chamber of the Bodhisatta's mother made themselves visible or not to her. The answer is: They did not make themselves visible when she was bathing, dressing, eating and cleaning her body. They made themselves apparent when she entered her chamber of splendour and lay down on her excellent couch.

The sight of Devas might tend to frighten ordinary people, but it did not scare the Chief Queen at all by virtue of the Bodhisatta's and her own radiance. Seeing them was just like seeing familiar female and male palace guards.

Mahā Māyā's Observance of Moral Precepts

The mother of a Bodhisatta in his last existence is usually steadfast in observing moral precepts. Before the appearance of a Buddha, people usually took precepts from wandering ascetics by bowing and sitting respectfully before them, and Queen Siri Mahā Māyā, prior to the conception of the Bodhisatta, also used to

receive the precepts from the recluse Kāḷadevila. It should be noted that the precepts were kept but not at all by submitting herself as a disciple of the recluse Kāḷadevila. But once the Bodhisatta was conceived in her womb, it was no longer proper for her to sit at the feet of any other person. Only the precepts received from somebody as an equal and not as a subordinate were observed. From the time of her conception of the Bodhisatta she kept [220] the precepts by herself.

The mother of a Bodhisatta in his last existence, from the time of pregnancy, becomes totally free of all sensuous desire for any man, even for the father of the Bodhisatta. It is her nature to remain chaste and pure. On the contrary, it cannot be said that sensuous thoughts would not arise in worldlings at the sight of her person. By virtue of her long fulfilment of the perfections and performance of deeds of merit, the mother of a Bodhisatta in his last existence is endowed with splendour or superb beauty, and elegance, which could not be faithfully represented in any painting or sculpture of her by the most accomplished master artists and sculptors.

On seeing such a mother of the Bodhisatta, if onlookers are not satisfied with the mere sight of her, and if they would attempt to approach her with passionate thoughts, their feet would become transfixed on the spot as if they were fettered with iron chains. Therefore, it should be well borne in mind that the mother of a Bodhisatta in his last existence is a noble, unique woman inviolable by any man or Deva.

The auspicious womb in which a Bodhisatta is conceived is so sacred, it is like a temple that no one else is worthy of occupying or making use of. Besides, while the mother of a Bodhisatta is living, no woman other than herself can be raised to the highest position as Chief Queen. Therefore, seven days after giving birth to the Bodhisatta, it is a natural phenomenon that she should pass away to the Tusita abode of the Devas. The lotus-like womb of Mahā Māyā Devī in which the Bodhisatta remained was as if filled with brilliant diamonds.

On hearing the good tidings that Mahā Māyā Devī, Chief Queen of King Suddhodana, ruler of the kingdom of Kapilavatthu, had conceived a precious son of power and glory, kings from far and near sent most valuable gifts, such as clothing, ornaments, musical instruments, etc., which might delight the Bodhisatta. The gifts which arrived in tribute from various quarters, owing to

the deeds of merit performed in previous existences by the Bodhisatta and his mother, were too numerous to be measured or counted.

The Visibility of the Bodhisatta

Although Mahā Māyā Devī had conceived the Bodhisatta, she had no suffering at all, such as swelling, pain, heaviness, etc., in the limbs, unlike other pregnant women. Being thus free of these discomforts, she easily passed through the first stage of her pregnancy. When she reached the advanced stage and the embryo took concrete shape with the development of the five main branches of the body, she often had a look at her child to find out whether the child was in a proper, comfortable position and, if not, to do the needful as in the way of all mothers. Whenever she took a look, she saw the Bodhisatta clearly like iridescent silk thread passing through the pure, clean, beautiful lapis lazuli gem of eight facets; or, she saw him seated cross-legged reposefully leaning on the backbone of the mother like a speaker of Dhamma, seated on the Dhamma throne, leaning on its back-support.

The reason why Mahā Māyā Devī was able to see her son in the lotus-like chamber of her womb was by virtue of the deeds of merit performed by her in previous existences which resulted in her skin texture and colour becoming extraordinarily clean and smooth, free from all impurities. The skin around the stomach was also smooth, clean and translucent like a sheet of glass or that of a priceless ruby. Thus the embryo was plainly visible to the mother who could see the Bodhisatta with naked eyes through the skin of her stomach, like an object encased in a crystal clear glass box.

> Though Mahā Māyā Devī could clearly see the son inside her womb but he, from inside her womb, could not see her because his eye consciousness (*cakkhu-viññāṇa*) had not [221] yet developed.

The Birth of the Bodhisatta

Women other than the mother of a Bodhisatta in his last existence are apt to give birth either after or before the ten-month period of pregnancy. They know no definite time when their babies will be born. Their childbirth takes place unexpectedly while they are in one of the four postures. Some deliver their babies while lying, others while sitting, still others while standing or walking.

As for the mother of a Bodhisatta in his last existence, it is quite to the contrary. Her pregnancy lasts precisely ten full months or 295 days from the date of conception. Furthermore, a Bodhisatta is born only while the mother is assuming the standing posture. When he is born, he is immaculately clean, without even a speck of impurity, like a ruby placed on a freshly woven cloth of Kāsi origin.

An ordinary baby has to go through a very miserable ordeal at the time of birth. When the first spasms of the mother signalling the impending delivery begins, they set in motion a sequence of events, turning the baby into a head-down position; he also has to force his way out through the tight grip of the hard muscles in the region of the birth-canal thus suffering excruciating pains in the process, which could be compared to a man falling into a fathomless pit, or to an elephant being pulled through a narrow keyhole.

But unlike such childbirths, Bodhisattas always come out at birth as easily as water filtered through a water strainer. Like a preacher of Dhamma slowly and calmly descending from the Dhamma throne after having delivered a discourse; or like a man slowly coming down to the covered stairways of a relic shrine (*stūpa*); or like the sun with its 1,000 brilliant shafts of light breaking through the golden mountain and peering out, the Bodhisatta emerges in ease and comfort with stretched legs, open hands, wide-opened eyes, with mindfulness and comprehension, totally without fear.

Mahā Māyā's Journey to Devadaha

When Queen Mahā Māyā reached the final stage of her pregnancy, carrying the Bodhisatta for ten full months in the lotus-like chamber of her womb, as though she were carrying oil in a bowl, she felt the urge to visit her royal relatives' city Devadaha. She requested permission from King Suddhodana, saying: "Great King, I would like to pay a visit to my relatives in Devadaha."

King Suddhodana gave his assent and had adequate preparations made for the queen's journey. The entire stretch of road from Kapilavatthu to Devadaha was repaired and smoothed evenly; banana plants, betel palms, and water pots filled to the brim were placed on stands lining both sides of the roadway; flags and banners were also hoisted on poles along the road. Having prepared and decorated the highway which was comparable to a divine highway, the king had Mahā Māyā Devī seated in state on a newly made golden palanquin which was carried by 1,000 royal servants, accompanied by guards and attendants to

perform sundry duties on the way. With such pomp and grandeur, the queen was sent off to Devadaha city.[94]

The Lumbinī Garden of Sāla Trees

Between Kapilavatthu and Devadaha cities, there was a grove of Sāla trees by the name of Lumbinī Garden, which was frequented by people from both kingdoms for recreation. When Mahā Māyā Devī reached it, every Sāla tree in the grove was in full bloom, from the bottom of the tree to the topmost branches.

Amidst the flowers and twigs of Sāla trees, swarms of bumblebees in five colours hummed, and flocks of birds of many species chirped, producing sweet melodious sounds. The whole Sāla grove was so delightful and enjoyable, with special features that it might be likened to the [222] Cittalatā Garden of Sakka, the Lord of the Devas. It was also like a place constantly filled with the sounds of mirth and merriment at a feast well organized by a powerful king.[95]

On account of the melodious sounds emanating from the female bees – which were buzzing delightfully among the buds and flowers, the twigs and branches and which were excited with the intoxicating nectar produced by fragrant Sāla flowers, and which were hovering around and enjoying the nectar themselves and carrying it for others as well[96] – Lumbinī was very much like Nandana Grove, the delight of the Devas.

> *Vibhūsitā bāla-janāti-cālinī,*
> *vibhūsitaṅgī vaniteva mālinī,*
> *sadā janānaṁ naya-nāli-mālinī,*
> *vilumpinīvātiviroci Lumbinī.*[97]

Just as a youthful maiden who can infatuate all men, who is possessed of limbs adorned with strings of beads and ear-ornaments, who is wearing

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[94] Different versions regarding the journey of Mahāmāyā Devī from Kapilavatthu to Devadaha are given in the Further Explanations.

[95] This is the description of the garden given in the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary.

[96] For the note on the words in this phrase, read the Further Explanations.

[97] These are the words in praise of Lumbinī Garden by the Venerable Buddhadatta, the author of the commentary on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) [PTS 274].

> flowers and is exceedingly fair, even so the Lumbinī Garden with all its ornamental features, the ever delightful resort which human beings feast their bee-like eyes on, was exceedingly beautiful as though it could even vie in splendour with that fair damsel.

On seeing Lumbinī Garden of such immense splendour, Mahā Māyā Devī felt a desire to amuse herself in it. The ministers sought permission from King Suddhodana and with the royal consent they entered the garden carrying the Chief Queen on the golden palanquin.

The moment Mahā Māyā Devī entered Lumbinī Garden, all Devas proclaimed with an uproar which reverberated throughout the 10,000 world-element: "Today, the Bodhisatta will be born from the lotus-like chamber of his mother's womb." The Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element congregated, crowding the whole of this universe, bringing with them a large variety of auspicious treasures as gifts to pay homage and to celebrate the birth of the Bodhisatta. The vault of heaven was covered all over with their celestial white umbrellas and the entire universe resounded with their auspicious songs, celestial music and the sounds of conch shells blown by them.

As soon as Mahā Māyā Devī went into Lumbinī Garden, she felt a sudden urge to grasp with her hand a branch of the fully blooming Sāla tree, the trunk of which was straight and round. As if it were animate, the branch bent itself down like a cane stalk, made pliant by boiling, until it reached the palm of the queen. This is a marvellous event that stirred the minds of many.

Queen Mahā Māyā stood holding the Sāla branch that came down in the palm of her lovely outstretched right hand, which was adorned with newly made gold bracelets, her fingers were shapely like a lotus stem, her finger-nails were bright red, like the colour of a parrot's beak. The great beauty of Queen Mahā Māyā at that instant resembled the moon that newly emerges from the dark, sombre clouds showing signs of impending rain or the lightning that dazzles in a momentary flash, or a celestial nymph who makes her appearance in the Nandana Grove.

The Birth of the Bodhisatta

Holding the Sāla branch, Queen Mahā Māyā stood majestically in a dress of gold-threaded brocade and draped down to the tip of her feet in a full-length

white embroidered shawl with exquisite patterns resembling the eyes of a carp. At that very moment, she felt the unmistakable signs of the impending birth. Her retinue hastily cordoned off the area with curtains and withdrew. [223]

Instantaneously, the 10,000 world-element together with the great ocean roared, quaked, and trembled like the potter's wheel. The Devas and Brahmas acclaimed in joy and showered flowers from the sky; all musical instruments produced mellifluous melodies automatically. The entire universe became unveiled with unobstructed visibility in all directions. These and other strange marvellous phenomena, 32 in all, occurred simultaneously to herald the birth of the Bodhisatta. As the flying precious jewel emerging from the top of Mount Vepulla hovers and then descends slowly on a readily placed receptacle, so the Bodhisatta magnificently adorned with major and minor physical marks, was delivered clean and pure from the shrine-like lotus-womb of Mahā Māyā Devī on Friday, the full moon of May (*Vesākha*), a summer month in the year 563 BCE, when the moon was in conjunction with the constellation Visākhā.

The moment the Bodhisatta was born, two fountains of pure spring water, warm and cold, flowed down from the sky and fell on the already pure and clean bodies of the Bodhisatta and his mother as a token of homage, thereby enabling them to adjust the heat and cold in their bodies.[98]

Reception by Brahmas, Devas and Humans

The four Great Brahmas, who were free from all sensual defilements, first received the Bodhisatta with a golden net the moment he was born. Then they placed him before the mother and said: "Great Queen, rejoice, a son of great power has been born to you!"

Next, the Four Great Kings received the Bodhisatta from the hands of the four Brahmas with an antelope skin, which was regarded as an auspicious object. Again, from the hands of the Four Great Kings, human beings received the Bodhisatta with a piece of white cloth.

Then, after leaving the hands of the people, the Bodhisatta stood firmly on his feet with soles like those of golden footwear, and touching the ground fully and squarely, he looked towards the eastern direction. As he did so, thousands of

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[98] A note on this is given in the Further Explanations.

world-elements in the east became one continuous stretch of open space without any barrier or boundary between them. The Devas and human beings in the eastern quarter most respectfully paid homage to the Bodhisatta with perfumes, flowers, etc. and said: "Noble Man, there is no one in this eastern direction who is your equal. How can there be anyone who is superior to you?"

Similarly, the Bodhisatta looked into the rest of the ten directions – the four cardinal directions, the four intermediate directions, the downward and the upward directions – one after another. He saw no one equal to him in all these quarters. Thereupon, he faced northward from where he stood and took seven steps forward.

The Bodhisatta was followed by Mahā Brahma, King of Brahmas who gave shelter over him with a white umbrella and by Deva Suyāma who held a fly-flap made of a yak tail. Other Devas, with the remaining emblems of royalty, such as the footwear, the sword and the crown, also followed him from behind. The celestial beings in this procession were not visible to the people, who could see only the regalia.

> When the Bodhisatta walked, he walked on the natural ground, but to human beings, he appeared to be walking in the air. The Bodhisatta walked without any clothes on, but to the human beings, he appeared to be walking fully clad. As a new born child the Bodhisatta walked, but to the human beings, he appeared to be sixteen years old.
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> What has been narrated heretofore in connection with the Bodhisatta's taking the seven steps in the northern direction is in accordance with the commentaries on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*) and the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*). In the chapter on the Auspicious Birth (*Vijāta-maṅgala*) of the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*), however, the birth of the Bodhisatta is somewhat more elaborately related [224] as follows.

While the Bodhisatta took his steps, the Great Brahmas followed and shaded him with the royal white umbrella measuring three leagues. So did the Great Brahmas from the remaining worlds with their white umbrellas of the same size. Thus, the whole universe was fully covered by white umbrellas resembling the garlands of white blooms.

The 10,000 Suyāma Devas from the 10,000 world-element held individually their yak-tail fly-flaps; the 10,000 Santusita Devas of the same world-elements,

stood, holding their ruby-studded round fans, all swinging their fly-flaps and round fans right up to the mountain sides on the edge of the universe. In the same way, the 10,000 Sakkas residing in the 10,000 world-element stood blowing 10,000 conches.

All other Devas stood in like manner, some carrying flowers of gold while others carried natural flowers or glittering glass flowers; some carrying flaps and banners, while others carried gem-studded objects for offerings. Female deities with various gifts in their hands also stood there crowding the entire universe.

While the phenomenal display of homage, a gratifying sight for the eye, was in progress, while thousands of conches were being blown melodiously by Devas and humans, and celestial and terrestrial musical instruments were being played and female deities were joyfully dancing, the Bodhisatta halted after taking seven steps in the northward direction.

At that moment, all the humans, Devas and Brahmas maintained complete silence, waiting expectantly with the thought: "What is the Bodhisatta going to say?"

When he halted after taking the seven steps in the northerly direction the Bodhisatta made a fearless roar to be heard simultaneously by all throughout the entire 10,000 world-element as follows:

> *Aggohaṁ asmi lokassa!*
> *Jeṭṭhohaṁ asmi lokassa!*
> *Seṭṭhohaṁ asmi lokassa!*
> *Ayaṁ antimā jāti!*
> *Natthi dāni punabbhavo!*

> I am superior among the living beings of the three worlds! I am the greatest among the living beings of the three worlds! I am the most exalted among the living beings of the three worlds! This is my last birth! There is no more rebirth for me!

When the Bodhisatta made this bold speech, there was no one capable of challenging or rebutting him; the whole multitude of humans, Devas and Brahmas had to tender their felicitations.

The Bodhisatta's Extraordinary Acts

Out of the extraordinary acts at the time of the Bodhisatta's birth, the following were omens, each with its own significance.

1. The Bodhisatta's firm standing, with both feet evenly on the earth's surface, was the omen signifying his future attainment of the four bases of psychic power (*iddhi-pāda*).
2. The Bodhisatta's facing northwards was the omen signifying his future supremacy over all living beings.
3. The Bodhisatta's taking seven steps was the omen signifying his future attainment of the seven factors of Awakening (*Bodhyaṅga*), the jewel of the Dhamma.
4. The Bodhisatta's having the cool shade of the celestial white umbrella was the omen signifying his future attainment of the Arahat fruition. [225]
5. The Bodhisatta's acquisition of the five emblems of royalty was the omen signifying his future attainment of five kinds of emancipation (*vimutti*): 1) Emancipation through suppression (*vikkhambhana-vimutti*); 2) emancipation through the opposite (*tad-aṅga-vimutti*); 3) emancipation through cutting off (*samuccheda-vimutti*); 4) emancipation through tranquility (*paṭippassaddhi-vimutti*); 5) emancipation through escape (*nissaraṇa-vimutti*).
6. The Bodhisatta's seeing in the ten directions without any obstruction was the omen signifying his future attainment of unobstructed knowledge (*anāvaraṇa-ñāṇa*).
7. The Bodhisatta's fearless roar: "I am the most superior, the greatest and the most exalted!" was the omen signifying his future turning of the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) which no humans Devas, or Brahmas are capable of halting or reversing.
8. The Bodhisatta's fearless roar: "This is my last birth! There is no more rebirth for me!" was the omen signifying his future attainment of Nibbāna with no remaining physical and mental aggregates (*anupādisesa-nibbāna*).

The Three Existences in which the Bodhisatta spoke at Birth

The Bodhisatta spoke immediately after his birth, not only in this last existence as Prince Siddhattha, but also when he was born to become the wise Mahosadha, and when he was born to become King Vessantara. Hence there were three existences in which he spoke at birth. Here is a brief explanation:

1. In his existence as the wise Mahosadha, the Bodhisatta came out of the mother's womb, holding a piece of sandalwood which had been placed in his hand by Sakka, the Lord of the Devas. His mother on seeing the object in the hand of her newly born baby, asked: "My dear son, what have you brought with you in your hand?" – "Mother, it is medicine," answered the Bodhisatta. He was thus initially named Osadha Kumāra meaning: "Medicine Boy." The medicine was carefully stored in a jar. All patients who came with all kinds of ailment, such as blindness, deafness, etc., were cured with that medicine, beginning with the Bodhisatta's wealthy father, Sirivaḍḍhana, who was cured of his headache. Thus, because of the great efficacy of his medicine, the youthful Bodhisatta later came to be popularly known as Mahosadha, "Great Medicine," the possessor of the most efficacious medicine.
2. In the existence of the Bodhisatta as King Vessantara also, the moment he was born, he extended his right hand with open palm and said: "Mother, what do you have in your golden palace that I can give in generosity." The mother answered: "My dear son, you are born to wealth in this golden palace." Then the mother took the child's open hand, placed it on her palm and put a bag of 1,000 silver pieces. Thus, the Bodhisatta also spoke at birth in the existence of King Vessantara.
3. As has been narrated above, in his last existence as Prince Siddhattha, the Bodhisatta made the fearless roar the moment he was born.

The Phenomenal Events at the Bodhisatta's Birth

Also at the moment of the birth of the Bodhisatta certain events manifested clearly. These events and what they presaged will be explained below in accordance with the Long Discourse on the Traditions (*Mahāpadāna-sutta*, DN 14) and the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentaries.

1. At the time of the birth of the Bodhisatta, the 10,000 world-element quaked. This was the omen presaging his attainment of omniscience.
2. The Devas and Brahmas living in the 10,000 world-element congregated in this [226] universe. This was the omen presaging the assembly of Devas and Brahmas listening to the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse when delivered.
3. The Devas and Brahmas were the first to receive the Bodhisatta at the time of his birth. This was the omen presaging his attainment of the four absorptions of the form worlds (*rūpāvacara-jhāna*).
4. The human beings received the new born Bodhisatta after the Devas and Brahmas. This was the omen presaging his attainment of the four absorptions of the formless worlds (*arūpāvacara-jhāna*).
5. Stringed instruments such as harps made music without being played. This was the omen presaging his attainment of the nine successive attainments (*anupubba-vihāra-samāpatti*) consisting of the attainment of the four absorptions of the form worlds, the four absorptions of the formless worlds and the cessation attainment (*nirodha-samāpatti*).
6. Leather instruments, such as big and small drums, made music without being played. This was the omen presaging his beating the most sacred drum of Dhamma to be heard by Devas and humans alike.
7. Prisons and fetters, which kept men in bondage, broke into pieces. This was the omen presaging his complete elimination of the conceited notion of "I am."
8. All kinds of diseases afflicting the sick disappeared, like the dirt on copper when washed away by acid. This was the omen presaging the attainment by human beings of the four noble truths, the eradication of the suffering of Saṁsāra.
9. The blind since birth could see all forms and colours just like normal people do. This was the omen presaging the acquisition by human beings of the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu*).

10. The deaf since birth could hear all sounds just like normal people do. This was the omen presaging the acquisition by human beings of the divine ear (*dibba-sota*).

11. The crippled gained healthy legs and could walk about. This was the omen presaging the acquisition of the four bases of psychic power (*iddhi-pāda*).

12. The dumb since birth gained mindfulness and could speak. This was the omen presaging the acquisition of the four methods of steadfast mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*).

13. Ships on perilous voyages abroad reached their respective havens. This was the omen presaging the acquisition of the fourfold analytical knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*).

14. All kinds of precious gems, both celestial and terrestrial, glittered most brilliantly. This was the omen presaging the acquisition of the light of Dhamma. It was also the omen presaging the brilliant glory of the Buddha who disseminated the light of Dhamma to those who were bent on receiving it.

15. Loving-kindness pervaded among all beings who were at enmity with one another. This was the omen presaging the attainment of the four sublime states (*Brahma-vihāra*).

16. The fires of hell were extinguished. This was the omen presaging the cessation of the eleven kinds of fires, such as greed, anger, etc.

17. There appeared light in the Lokantarika hells which normally are in total darkness. This was the omen presaging the ability to dispel the darkness of ignorance and to [227] shed the light of wisdom.

18. The river water, which had been perennially flowing, ceased to flow. This was the omen presaging the acquisition of the fourfold confidence (*catu-vesārajja-ñāṇa*).

19. All the waters in the great ocean turned sweet in taste. This was the omen presaging the acquisition of the uniquely sweet taste of peace resulting from the cessation of defilements.

20. Instead of stormy winds, light winds blew, cool and pleasant. This was the omen presaging the disappearance of the 62 kinds of wrong beliefs.

21. All kinds of birds in the sky or on top of the trees or mountains alighted to the ground. This was the omen presaging the lifelong taking of refuge in the Three Treasures by human beings after listening to the teaching of the Buddha.

22. The moon shone forth, far brighter than ever before. This was the omen presaging the delighted mood of human beings.

23. The sun, being of moderate heat and clear radiance, brought clement weather. This was the omen presaging the physical and mental happiness of human beings.

24. The Devas, standing at the doorways of their mansions, slapped their arms with their hands, whistled and flung their clothes in merriment. This was the omen presaging his attainment of omniscient Buddhahood and making the Exalted Utterance.

25. Torrential rain fell all over the four continents. This was the omen presaging the heavy Dhamma rain of deathlessness which fell with the great force of wisdom.

26. All human beings felt no hunger. This was the omen presaging their attainment of the deathless Dhamma of the mindfulness related to the body (*kāyagatasati*), or freedom from hunger for defilements after enjoying the deathless food of mindfulness related to the body.

27. All human beings felt no thirst. This was the omen presaging their attainment of the bliss of the fruition of Arahantship.

28. Closed doors burst open by themselves. This was the omen presaging the opening up of the gates of Nibbāna which is the Eightfold Noble Path.

29. Flower trees and fruit trees bore flowers and fruits respectively. This was the omen presaging the people's bearing the flowers of emancipation (*vimutti*) and the fruits of the four noble ones (*ariya-phala*).

30. All the 10,000 world-element were covered with the one and only flower-banner. The 10,000 world-element were covered with the banner of victory. This was the omen presaging the spreading of the flower-banner, i.e., the noble path.

Moreover, the showering of exquisite flowers and exceedingly fragrant flowers; the brightness of stars and constellations even in sunlight; the appearance of springs of pure, clean water; the emergence of burrowing animals from their habitats; the absence of greed, hate and delusion; the absence of clouds of dust from the ground; the absence of obnoxious smells; the pervasion of celestial perfumes; the clear visibility of the Brahmas of the form worlds to human beings; the absence of birth and death amongst human beings, and other phenomena occurred distinctly. The occurrence of these phenomena constituted omens presaging the [228] Buddha's attainment of attributes other than those mentioned above.

The Seven Connatals of the Bodhisatta

At that precise moment of the birth of the Bodhisatta, the following seven were born simultaneously:

1. Princess Yasodharā, also named Bhaddakaccānā, and mother of Prince Rāhula.
2. Prince Ānanda.
3. The charioteer Channa.
4. Minister Kāḷudāyī.
5. The royal stallion Kanthaka.
6. The Mahā Bodhi tree.
7. The four jars of gold appeared.

Since they were born or came into being at the same time as the Bodhisatta, they were known as the seven connatals of the Bodhisatta. Of these seven:

1. Princess Yasodharā Bhaddakaccānā was born of Suppabuddha, King of Devadaha city, and Queen Amittā.
2. Prince Ānanda was the son of the Sakyan Amittodana, younger brother of King Suddhodana.

3. The Mahā Bodhi tree grew at the centre of the victory site where the Buddha attained Awakening in the Uruvelā forest in the Middle Country.
4. The four large jars of gold appeared within the precincts of the palace of Kapilavatthu.

Of these four jars:

1. One was named Saṅkha, the diameter of its brim was one mile.
2. Another was named Ela, the diameter of its brim was two miles.
3. The third was named Uppala, the diameter of its brim was three miles.
4. The last one named Puṇḍarīka, the diameter of its brim was four miles, equivalent to one league.

When some gold was taken out of these four jars, they became replenished; there was no trace of depletion.

> The account of these four jars of gold is given in the commentary on the Discourse concerning Caṅkī (*Caṅkī-sutta*, MN 95), and also in the commentary on the Discourse concerning Soṇadaṇḍa (*Soṇadaṇḍa-sutta*, DN 4). The order of the names of the seven birth-mates of the Bodhisatta given above is that contained in the commentaries on the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) and the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and also in the commentary on the Long Discourse on the Traditions (*Mahāpadāna-sutta*, DN 14).

In the exposition of the story of Kāḷudāyī in the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) commentary and also in the exposition of the story of Rāhula in the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*), Ānanda's name has been left out from the list.

There the list states:

1. The Bodhi tree.
2. Yasodharā.
3. The four jars of gold.
4. The royal elephant named Ārohanīya.
5. Kanthaka the steed.

6. The charioteer Channa.
7. Minister Kāludāyī.

The order of the items is given according to their respective [229] reciters (*bhāṇakas*).

After the birth the citizens from the two cities of Kapilavatthu and Devadaha conveyed Queen Mahā Māyā and her noble Bodhisatta son back to the city of Kapilavatthu.

The Story of the Recluse Kāḷadevila

The very day the new-born prince and his mother were brought back to the city of Kapilavatthu, the Tāvatiṁsa Devas, headed by Sakka, rejoiced on learning: "A noble son has been born to King Suddhodana in Kapilavatthu city," and that "the noble son will definitely become an Awakened One at the sacred grounds of the Bodhi tree," and they threw up their garments in the air, clapped their arms with their hands, etc., and indulged in merry-making.

At that time, the recluse Kāḷadevila, who had gained the five super knowledges and eight attainments and who was in the habit of frequenting the palace of King Suddhodana, took his meal there as usual and went up to Tāvatiṁsa to spend the daytime in that celestial abode. He sat on the throne of gems in the bejewelled mansion, enjoying the bliss of the absorptions (*jhāna*). When he emerged from his absorption, standing at the mansion's gate and looking around, he saw Sakka was joyous and other Devas were tossing up their headgears and costumes and extolling the virtues of the Bodhisatta at the main road of 60 leagues length. He asked: "Devas, what makes you so happy and so playful? Tell me the reason."

Thereupon the Devas answered: "Venerable sir, a noble son has been born to King Suddhodana today. That noble son, sitting cross-legged under the Bodhi tree at the most sacred spot, the centre of the universe, will attain omniscient Self-Awakening. He will then deliver the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse. We will thus get the opportunity of seeing the boundless glory of a Buddha and of listening to his supreme Dhamma discourse. That is why we are indulging ourselves in merry-making."

On hearing the Devas' reply, Kāḷadevila speedily descended from Tāvatiṁsa and took his seat prepared in the palace of King Suddhodana. After exchanging words of greeting with the king, Kāḷadevila said: "King, I have heard that a noble son has been born to you. I would like to see him." Then the king had his fully dressed son brought to him, and he carried the son straight to Kāḷadevila to make him pay homage to the royal teacher. When he was thus carried, the two feet of the prince flew aloft and rested on the recluse's matted hair, just as a streak of lightning flashed on the top of dark blue clouds.

> There is no one deserving of the homage by a Bodhisatta who is in his last existence. Should anybody, not knowing this, place the Bodhisatta's head at the feet of Kāḷadevila, Kāḷadevila's head would split into seven pieces.

Kāḷadevila, realizing this astonishing and extraordinary glory and power of the prince, decided: "I should not destroy myself." Then rising from his seat he paid respects to the prince with his hands clasped. Witnessing the marvellous scene, King Suddhodana also bowed down before his own son.

Kāḷadevila, having acquired the five super knowledges and the eight attainments, could recall events of the past 40 aeons (*kappa*) and also foresee those of the future 40 aeons. Thus he was capable of recollecting and discerning the events of 80 aeons in all.[99]

Having inspected the major and minor characteristics on the prince, Kāḷadevila pondered whether the prince would become a Buddha or not and came to know, through his foreseeing wisdom, that the prince certainly would become a Buddha. With the knowledge that: "Here is a superb man," he laughed in great delight.

Again, Kāḷadevila pondered whether he would or would not see the young prince attain [230] Buddhahood. He realized through his foreseeing wisdom that before the young prince's becoming a Buddha, he would pass away and be reborn in a formless abode of the Brahmas where he would not be capable of hearing the deathless Dhamma even if hundreds and thousands of Buddhas were to go and teach it. "I will not get an opportunity of seeing and paying obeisance to this man of marvel who is endowed with the unique merits of the perfections.

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[99] A detailed account of Kāḷadevila is given in the Further Explanations.

This will be a great loss for me." So saying and being filled with immense grief, he wept bitterly.[100]

When the courtiers saw Kāḷadevila laughing and weeping, it occurred to them thus: "Our venerable recluse laughed first, and later he wept, which is strange indeed." So they enquired: "Venerable sir, is there any danger that might befall our master's son?" – "There is no danger for the prince. In fact, he will become a Buddha." – "Then why do you lament?" the people asked again. "Because I shall not get an opportunity to see the attainment of Awakening by an extraordinary man who is endowed with such wonderful qualities, and this will be a great loss to me. So thinking, I lament," he replied.

> The above narration has been made in accordance with what is described in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentaries and the sub-commentary on the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*).
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> In some works on the life of the Buddha in prose, the story is as follows: When King Suddhodana asked: "At what age will the prince renounce the world and attain Buddhahood?" Kāḷadevila answered: "At the age of 35." This passage is a deduction from the words addressed by Kāḷadevila to his nephew, Nālaka the youth: "Dear Nālaka, a son has been born to King Suddhodana. The child is the Bodhisatta; he will attain Buddhahood at the age of 35." The king was not pleased to hear that his son would become a Buddha. He wanted to see his son as a Universal Monarch, not as a Buddha. Therefore, he must [232] not have asked about the time of his son's renunciation and becoming a Buddha. That is the reason for the omission of such a passage in the aforesaid commentaries and sub-commentary. Here in this work, too, we make no mention of it.

Nālaka the Youth

Having answered thus, the recluse Kāḷadevila pondered: "Though I will miss the prince's becoming a Buddha, I wonder whether somebody among my relations will have an opportunity of witnessing it." Then he foresaw that his nephew, Nālaka, would. So he visited his sister and summoned his nephew and urged him,

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[100] [A long section here on Kāḷadevila explaining why he was unable to meet the Buddha has been moved to the Further Explanations.]

saying: "My dear nephew, Nālaka, the birth of a son has taken place in the palace of King Suddhodana. He is a Bodhisatta. He will attain Buddhahood at the age of 35. You, my nephew, are somebody deserving of meeting the Buddha. Therefore, you had better become a recluse immediately."

Though born to the parents who had 870 millions worth of wealth, the young Nālaka had confidence in his uncle, and thought: "My uncle would not have urged me to do what is not beneficial. He did so because it is of benefit indeed." With this conclusion, he had the robes and the alms bowl bought and brought immediately from the market, thinking: "I have become a recluse with dedication to the Buddha, the noblest personage in the world."

Having said this, he faced the direction of Kapilavatthu where the prince was and made obeisance by raising his clasped hands in veneration. Thereafter, he put his bowl in a bag, slung it on his shoulder and entered the Himālayas. Waiting for the Buddha there in the forest, he devoted himself to asceticism.[101]

The 32 Marks of a Great Man

On the fifth day after the birth of the prince, his father, King Suddhodana, held the head-washing ceremony, and with the idea to name his son, he had his palace pervaded with four kinds of fragrant powder: jasmine (*tagara*), cloves (*lavaṅga*), saffron (*kuṅkuma*), and cinnamon (*tamāla*), and strewn with the five kinds of bulbs: grass (*saddala*), rice, mustard seeds, jasmine buds and puffed rice.

He had also pure milk rice cooked without any water, and having invited 108 learned Brahmins who were accomplished in the three Vedas and given them good, clean seats prepared in the palace, he served them with the delicious milk rice.

> The enumeration of the four kinds of fragrant powder here is in accordance with that given in the sub-commentary on the Discourse about the Trainee (*Sekha-sutta*, MN 53) and in the sub-commentary on the Discourse about the Great Emancipation (*Mahā-parinibbāna-sutta*, DN 16).
>
> In the sub-commentary on the Discourse about King Mahā Suddasana (*Mahā-sudassana-sutta*, DN 17), however, saffron is replaced by

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[101] In connection with the birth of the prince, the history of his lineage, together with the founding of Kapilavatthu city, is mentioned in the Further Explanations.

> frankincense (*turukkha*); in the exposition of the Introduction to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka-nidāna*), etc., the enumeration is black sandalwood, jasmine, camphor and essence of sandalwood; in the Light on the Dictionary (*Abhidhānappadīpikā*) glossary the four are saffron, cloves, jasmine and frankincense; the sub-commentary on the Discourse containing the Explanation of the Corrupt (*Avassuta-pariyāya-sutta*, SN 35.243) has saffron, frankincense, cloves, and cinnamon; the Garland of Decorative Stories (*Mālālaṅkāra-vatthu*) has Sāla, great jasmine, camphor essence and sandalwood essence; and the Illustration of the Meaning of the Victor (*Jinattha-pakāsanī*) mentions aloe (*aguru*), jasmine, camphor and sandalwood.

Having fed them, the king honoured them by making excellent offerings to them, and out of the 108 Brahmins, eight were selected and asked to prognosticate the marks on the body of the prince. Among the eight selected Brahmins, Rāma, Dhaja, Lakkhaṇa, Jotimanta, [233] Yaññа, Subhoja and Suyāma, having examined the physical marks of the prince each raised two fingers and made two alternative predictions with no decisiveness thus: “If your son, who is endowed with these marks, chooses to live the life of a householder, he will become a Universal Monarch, ruling over the four great islands; if he becomes a monk, however, he will attain Buddhahood.”

But Sudatta of the Brahminical clan Koṇḍaññа, the youngest of them, after carefully examining the prince’s marks of a Great Man raised only one finger and conclusively foretold with just one prediction thus: “There is no reason for the prince’s remaining in household life. He will certainly become a Buddha who breaks the root of the defilements.”

> The young Brahmin Sudatta of the Koṇḍaññа clan was one whose present existence was his last and who had previously accumulated meritorious deeds that would lead him towards the Arahat fruition. Therefore, he excelled the seven senior Brahmins in learning and could foresee the prospects of the prince that he would definitely become a Buddha. Hence his bold reading with only one finger raised.

This reading of the marks by young Sudatta, a descendent of the Koṇḍaññа family, with the raising of a single finger was accepted by all the other learned Brahmins.

It became possible for these Brahmins to read the physical marks of a Great Man, such as a Buddha and other noble ones, owing to the following events: At times when the appearance of a Buddha was drawing near, Mahā Brahmas of Suddhāvāsa abode incorporated in astrological works certain compilations of prognosticative matters with reference to the marks of a Great Man who would become a Buddha (*Buddha-mahā-purisa-lakkhaṇa*). The Brahmas came down to the human world in the guise of Brahmin teachers and taught all those who came to learn as pupils. In so doing their idea was: "Those, who are possessed of accumulated merit and mature intelligence, will learn the works of astrology which include the art of reading the marks of a Great Man." That was why these Brahmins were able to read the marks such as those indicating the future becoming a Buddha and others.

There are 32 major marks which indicate that their possessor is a Great Man or Bodhisatta. They are as follows:

1. The mark of the level soles of the feet which, when put on the ground, touch it fully and squarely.
2. The mark of the figures in the 108 circles on the sole of each foot together with the wheel having 1,000 spokes, the rim, the hub and all other characteristics.
3. The mark of the projecting heels.
4. The mark of the long and tapering fingers and toes.
5. The mark of the soft and tender palms and soles.
6. The mark of the regular fingers and toes like finely rounded golden rail posts of a palace window, there is only a narrow space between one finger and another as well as between one toe and another.
7. The mark of the slightly higher and dust-free ankles.
8. The mark of the legs like those of an antelope (*eṇi*).
9. The mark of the long palms of the hands which can touch the knees while standing and without stooping.
10. The mark of the male organ concealed in a sheath like that of a Chaddanta elephant. [234]

11. The mark of the yellow and bright complexion as pure gold (*siṅgī-nikkha*).
12. The mark of the smooth skin which was so smooth no dust could cling to it.
13. The mark of the body-hairs, one in each pore of the skin.
14. The mark of the body-hairs with their tips curling upwards as if they were looking up at the Bodhisatta's face in devotion.
15. The mark of the upright body like a Brahma's.
16. The mark of the fullness of flesh in seven places of the body: the two upper parts of the feet, the two backs of the hands, the two shoulders and the neck.
17. The mark of the full and well-developed body, like a lion's front portion.
18. The mark of the full and well-developed back of the body extending from the waist to the neck like a golden plank without any trace of the spinal furrow in the middle.
19. The mark of the symmetrically proportioned body like the circular spread of a banyan tree, for his height and the compass of his arms are of equal measurement.
20. The mark of the proportionate and rounded throat.
21. The mark of 7,000 capillaries with their tips touching one another at the throat and diffusing throughout the body the taste of food even if it is as small as a sesame seed.
22. The mark of the lion-like chin which is somewhat like that of one who is about to smile.
23. The mark of the teeth numbering exactly 40.
24. The mark of the teeth set proportionately in a row.
25. The mark of the teeth touching one another with no space in between.
26. The mark of the four canine teeth white and brilliant as the morning star.

27. The mark of the long, flat and tender tongue.
28. The mark of the voice having eight qualities like a Brahma's.
29. The mark of the very clear blue eyes.
30. The mark of the very soft and tender eyelashes like a new-born calf.
31. The mark of the hair between the two eyebrows.
32. The mark of the thin layer of flesh that appears by nature like a gold headband on the forehead.

These are the 32 marks of a Great Man.

This information is extracted from the Long Discourse on the Traditions (*Mahāpadāna-sutta*, DN 14) and the Discourse on the Marks (*Lakkhaṇa-sutta*, DN 30), as well as from the Discourse concerning Brahmāyu (*Brahmāyu-sutta*, MN 91). [A long explanation of these marks and their genesis has been moved to the Further Explanations.]

The 80 Minor Characteristics

The Bodhisatta, a Great Man, is also endowed with 80 minor characteristics (*asīti-anuvyañjana*), which accompany the major ones. These 80 minor marks will now be briefly mentioned, as they appear in the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) and other texts.

1. Close-knit fingers and toes with no intervening gaps (*citaṅgulitā*).
2. Fingers and toes tapering gradually from the base to the tips (*anupubbaṅgulitā*).
3. Round fingers and toes (*vaṭṭaṅgulitā*).

These are the three characteristics concerning the fingers and toes.

4. Red fingernails and toenails (*tamba-nakhatā*).
5. Tall, pointed and prominent fingernails and toenails (*tuṅga-nakhatā).*
6. Neat and smooth fingernails and toenails (*siniddha-nakhatā*).

These are three characteristics concerning the fingernails and toenails.

7. Neither receding nor protruding ankles, i.e. inconspicuous ankles (*nigūḷha-gopphakatā*).

This is the one characteristic concerning the ankles.

8. Evenness of the tips of all ten toes (*sama-pādatā*).

This is the one characteristic concerning the toes.

9. A manner of walking gracefully like an elephant king (*gaja-samānakkamatā*).

10. A manner of walking gracefully like a lion king (*sīha-samānakkamatā*).

11. A manner of walking gracefully like a goose king (*haṁsa-samānakkamatā*).

12. A manner of walking gracefully like a bull king (*usabha-samānakkamatā*).

13. A manner of walking clockwise (*dakkhiṇā-vaṭṭa-gatitā*).

These are the five characteristics concerning the manner of walking.

14. Round knees that are beautiful on all sides (*samantato cāru-jaṇṇu-maṇḍalatā*).

This is the one characteristic concerning the knees.

15. A well-developed male organ (*paripuṇṇa-purisa-vyañjanatā).*

This is the one characteristic of the male genitalia. [243]

16. A navel with uninterrupted lines (*acchidda-nābhitā).*

17. A deep navel (*gambhīra-nābhitā*).

18. A navel with a right turning ringlet (*dakkhiṇāvaṭṭa-nābhitā*).

These are the three characteristics concerning the navel.

19. Thighs and arms like an elephant's trunk (*dviradakara-sadisa-ūru-bhujatā*).

This is the one characteristic concerning the thighs and arms.

20. A well-proportioned body (*suvibhatta-gattatā*).

21. A gradually rising body (*anupubba-gattatā*).

22. A fine body (*mattha-gattatā*).

23. A body that is neither lean nor plump (*anussannānussanna-sabba-gattatā*).

24. A wrinkle-free body (*alīna-gattatā*).

25. A body free of moles, freckles, etc. (*tilakādi-virahita-gattatā*).

26. A regularly lustrous body (*anupubba-rucira-gattatā*).

27. A particularly clean body (*suvisuddha-gattatā*).

More characteristics concerning the body will follow later on.

28. Physical strength equal to that of one billion elephants (*koṭi-sahassa-hatthi-bala-dhāraṇatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning physical strength.

29. A prominent nose like a golden goad (*tuṅga-nāsatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the nose.

30. Dark red gums (*suratta-dvija-maṁsatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the gums.

31. Clean teeth (*suddha-dantatā*).

32. Neat and smooth glossy teeth (*siniddha-dantatā*).

There are the two characteristics concerning the teeth.

33. Pure faculties of sense, such as eyes, etc. (*visuddhindriyatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the sense-faculties of the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, and body.

34. Round canine teeth (*vaṭṭa-dāṭhatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the canine teeth.

35. Red lips (*rattoṭṭhatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the lips.

36. Long mouth-cavity (*āyata-vadānatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the mouth.

37. Deep lines on the palms (*gambhīra-pāṇi-lekhatā*).

38. Long lines on the palms (*āyata-lekhatā*).

39. Straight lines on the palms (*uju-lekhatā*).

40. Beautifully formed lines on the palms (*surucira-saṇṭhāna-lekhatā*).

These are the four characteristics concerning the palms.

41. Halo spreading around the body in a circle (*parimaṇḍala-kāyappabhā-vantatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the halo.

42. Full cheeks (*paripuṇṇa-kapolatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the cheeks. [244]

43. Long and broad eyes (*āyata-visāla-nettatā*).

44. Very clear eyes with five kinds of colour (*pañca-pasāda-vanta-nettatā*).

These are the two characteristics concerning the eyes.

45. Eyelashes with their tips curling upwards (*kuñjitagga-bhamukatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the eyelashes.

46. Soft, thin and red tongue (*mudu-tanuka-ratta-jivhatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the tongue.

47. Long and beautiful ears (*āyata-rucira-kaṇṇatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the ears.

48. Varicose-free veins (*niggaṇṭhi-siratā*).

49. Neither receding nor protruding, but inconspicuous veins (*niggūḷa siratā*).

These are the two characteristics concerning the veins.

50. Round elegant head like a circular umbrella (*vatta-chatta-nibha-cāru-sīsatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the head.

51. Long, broad and graceful forehead (*āyata-puthu-nalāṭa-sobhatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the forehead.

52. Natural and beautiful eyebrows that need not be groomed (*susaṇṭhāna-bhamukatā*).

53. Soft eyebrows (*saṇha-bhamukatā*).

54. Eyebrows in regular order (*anuloma-bhamukatā*).

55. Large eyebrows (*mahanta-bhamukatā*).

56. Long eyebrows (*āyata-bhamukatā*).

These are the five characteristics concerning the eyebrows.

57. A supple body (*sukhu-māla-gattatā*).

58. A very relaxed body (*ativiya-somma-gattatā*).

59. A very bright body (*ativiya-ujjalita-gattatā*).

60. A dirt-free body having an absence of body secretion (*vimala-gattatā*).

61. A non-sticky body with the body skin always looking fresh (*komala-gattatā*).

62. A neat and handsome body (*siniddha-gattatā*).

63. A fragrant body (*sugandha-tanutā*).

These are the fifteen characteristics concerning the body, including the eight above from 20 to 27.

64. Body hairs of equal length with no difference in length (*sama-lomatā*).

65. Non-sticky hairs (*komala-lomatā*).

66. Every body hair coiling clockwise (*dakkhiṇāvaṭṭa-lomatā*).

67. Blue body hairs like the colour of broken stones of collyrium (*bhinnañjana-sadisa-nīla-lomatā*).

68. Round body hairs (*vaṭṭa-lomatā*).

69. Smooth body hairs (*siniddha-lomatā*).

These are the six characteristics concerning the hairs of the body.

70. Very subtle inhaling and exhaling of the breath (*atisukhuma-assāsa-passāsa-dhāraṇatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the respiration. [245]

71. A fragrant mouth (*sugandha-mukhatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the mouth.

72. A fragrant top of the head (*sugandha-muddhanatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the top of the head.

73. Jet-black hair (*sunīla-kesatā*).

74. Hair curling clockwise (*dakkhiṇāvaṭṭa-kesatā*).

75. Naturally well-groomed hair (*susaṇṭhāna-kesatā*).

76. Neat and short hair (*siniddha-kesatā-saṇha-kesatā*).

77. Untangled hair (*aluḷita-kesatā*).

78. Hair of equal length (*sama-kesatā*).

79. Non-sticky hair (*komala-kesatā*).

These are the seven characteristics concerning the hair.

80. An aggregate of luminous radiance or halo which shines forth from the top of the head. The Bodhisatta is considered marvellous because of this halo (*ketu-mālā-ratana-vicittatā*).

This is the only characteristic concerning the halo.

The Bodhisatta possesses the above 80 minor characteristics. The enumeration made here is in accordance with that contained in the sub-commentary on the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*).

The aforementioned major and minor marks can also be termed as the hundred meritorious (*sata-puñña*) characteristics. The Bodhisatta has performed a hundredfold the number of times all other beings have performed each kind of meritorious deed throughout the innumerable world-elements. Hence, his merits are known as a hundredfold merit (*sata-puñña*), whereby he acquires the 32 major and 80 minor marks as a result.

In this way, having examined the prince's major and minor marks carefully, the learned Brahmins made a prediction saying: "The prince will attain Buddhahood." After discussing amongst themselves the matter of the naming of the prince, they gave him the name of Siddhattha as an omen indicating that he would successfully accomplish the task for the benefit of the entire world.

The Story of the Five Monastics

Regarding the foundation story of the Group-of-Five monastics (*pañca-vaggiya*) headed by Ven. Koṇḍañña, the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*) sub-commentary on one hand and the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) and the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentaries on the other, narrate different stories. The story of these five will be included here according to the versions of the said sub-commentary and commentaries.

The sub-commentarial story recorded in the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*) goes like this: At the time of the birth of the prince, out of the learned Brahmins who were the selected mark-readers: Rāma, Dhaja, Lakkhaṇa, Manti, Koṇḍañña, Bhoja, Suyāma and Sudatta, five, led by Koṇḍañña foretold, saying: "The prince will certainly become a Buddha." Thereafter, having handed over to their families the remunerations they received at the prediction ceremony, they put on the robes, dedicating themselves to the Bodhisatta as they had come to the conclusion: "That great man, the prince, will not remain in a household life, he will definitely attain Buddhahood."

These Brahmins had been well-versed in the Vedas since their childhood; they had been also treated as teachers since then. They agreed among themselves to renounce the world, for they thought to [246] themselves: "We will not be able to cut off the entanglement to our families when we get married. It is therefore better for us to go forth early," hence their dedication to the Bodhisatta immediately after their prediction when they were still young.

Taking up their residence in forest dwellings, they sometimes enquired, asking lay people: "Friends, has the young prince renounced the world?" – "How can you see the prince's renunciation? He is still enjoying royal luxuries in the midst of female dancers in the three palaces, as though he were a divine being," replied the people. Then the Brahmins, thinking that: "The wisdom of the prince is not mature yet," went on waiting unworriedly for the moment of the prince's renunciation.

The story recorded in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentaries is like this: After naming the Prince Siddhattha, the select eight learned Brahmins went home and summoned their sons and said: "Dear sons, we are now advanced in age. Prince Siddhattha, son of our King

Suddhodana, will certainly become an Awakened One. We do not know for sure, however, whether we will see the young prince attain Buddhahood. When he does, take up the ascetic life in the Dispensation of that Buddha."

Out of the eight learned Brahmins, seven lived till old age but expired before the prince's renunciation and were reborn in good or evil existences in accordance with their respective deeds. Koṇḍañña alone survived in good health. When the prince attained manhood and renounced the world, he went to Uruvelā forest and mused: "Delightful is this region! It is agreeable to one who is inclined to engage in meditation." And while the Bodhisatta was then devoting himself to asceticism (*dukkara-cariyā*) in that forest, Koṇḍañña, learning the news that: "The prince has become a recluse," went to the sons of the late seven Brahmins and said: "Young men, Prince Siddhattha is said to have become a recluse. The prince will certainly become a Buddha. If your fathers were still alive, they would have gone forth and taken up an ascetic life themselves today. If you are desirous of becoming recluses yourselves, do come along. I am going to follow the prince and become an ascetic." Of the seven Brahmins' sons, three remained laymen as they did not agree to go forth.

Only the remaining four agreed and became recluses with Koṇḍañña as their leader. These five persons came to be known as the Group-of-Five monastics (*pañca-vaggiya*).

Preventing the Prince from seeing the Four Omens

When King Suddhodana heard the prophecy about his son it was reported by the Brahmins that: "Your son will renounce and become a recluse," so he asked: "After seeing what will my son go forth?" – "On seeing the four omens of an old man, a sick man, a dead man and a recluse, your son will renounce the world and become a recluse," answered the Brahmins unanimously.

On hearing the Brahmins' reply, King Suddhodana ordered his servants, saying: "If my son will renounce only after coming across these four omens, from now on, do not permit any person who is aged, sick or a recluse visit my son. Otherwise they will create spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) in him and he will want to renuonce. I do not want my son to become a Buddha. I want to see him as a Universal Monarch ruling over the four great islands with their 2,000 surrounding smaller islands and travelling in the sky by means of the Wheel-Treasure in the company of his followers, 36 leagues in extent." Then guards, in

sufficient number, were placed around the four quarters at every distance of one mile to ensure the absence of the aged, the sick, the dead and the recluse within the sight of the prince.

That very day, an auspicious head-washing ceremony was held at which 80,000 royal relatives were present and they discussed among themselves thus: "Whether the prince will become a Buddha or a Universal Monarch, each of us will give a son to wait upon him. If he becomes a Buddha, he will travel magnificently in the company of recluses who are of royal blood. Or, if he becomes a Universal Monarch, he will tour majestically being accompanied by 80,000 princes." Then each of them promised to present a [247] son to the prince.

The Death of Queen Mahā Māyā Devī

On the seventh day after the birth of the prince, his mother, Mahā Māyā Devī, reaching the end of her lifespan, passed away and was reborn in Tusita abode as a Deva bearing the name of Santusita.

> The mother died, not because she had given birth to a Bodhisatta, but because her lifespan had come to an end. It may be recalled that even when the Bodhisatta Setaketu made the five great investigations Mahā Māyā had only ten months and seven days left to live. Nobody else is worthy of occupying the lotus-like womb of a Bodhisatta's mother, for it is like the perfumed chamber which has housed a Buddha or his statue or an object of worship. Besides, while a Bodhisatta's mother is still alive, it is not appropriate to keep her aside and make another woman Chief Queen. So it is the usual course of events (*dhammatā*) that a Bodhisatta's mother should remain alive for only seven days after giving birth to her son, hence the passing away of the mother at that time.

To the query: "In which period of life did Mahā Māyā die?" the answer is: "She died in the middle period." Since desires and passions abound in sentient beings in the first period of life, a woman who conceives in this period cannot take good care of her pregnancy. Accordingly, the baby at that time is susceptible to many diseases. But the womb of the mother remains clean when she passes two thirds of her middle period and reaches the last third. And whoever takes conception in such a clean womb is free from diseases. Therefore, the Bodhisatta's mother, after enjoying palatial luxuries in the first period of life,

gave birth to a son and died when she came to the third and last stage of the middle period of life.[102]

Strictly following the exposition of this commentary, famous teachers of old have composed an aphorism in a verse form to state that the mother of the Bodhisatta passed away when she was precisely 56 years, 4 months and 27 days old. There is also another one saying that the royal mother conceived at the age of 55 years, 6 months and 20 days.

At the time when mother Māyā was born as a human being, the general lifespan was 100 years which may be equally divided into three periods, each consisting of 33 years and 4 months. She enjoyed a luxurious life in the first period of 33 years and 4 months. If the second period of 33 years and 4 months are made into three portions, each portion covers 11 years, 1 month and 10 days. The sum of the first two portions will then be 22 years, 2 months and 20 days. To this, add the number of years and months of the first period, and the result is 55 years, 6 months and 20 days. At this age, Mahā Māyā conceived the Bodhisatta, hence the second aphorism.

If and when the pregnancy of ten months duration as well as the seven days that followed the prince's birth are added to the 55 years, 6 months and 20 days, the sum total will be 56 years, 4 months and 27 days, hence the first aphorism.[103]

Mother Māyā's Rebirth in Tusita Heaven

To the question as to whether the royal mother, Māyā, was reborn as a male or a female celestial being in the abode of Tusita, the answer, no doubt, should be that she was reborn as a male.

In this matter, after superficially studying the Pāḷi statement: *Mātaraṁ pamukhaṁ katvā*, "having put his mother to the front," some scholars say or write that she was reborn as a female deity; but such reliable works as the [248] Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*) commentary and others hold that:

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[102] See the Great Discourse on the Traditions (*Mahāpadāna-sutta*, DN 14) commentary, for an exposition of the natural law concerning Bodhisattas (*Bodhisatta-dhammatā*, PTS 2.427).

[103] An elaboration of the meaning of the subject-matter under discussion is given in the Light on the All-Seeing Eye (*Samanta-cakkhu-dīpanī*).

"Māyā was a male deity in the Tusita Realm of gods." Concerning Kāḷudāyī's verses in the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*, PTS 2.226) commentary it is said: *Devūpapatti pana purisa-bhāveneva jātā*, "(Māyā's) rebirth in the abode of gods took place in the form of a male."

Also in the section on the Bodhisatta's auspicious birth, the sub-commentary on the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) mentioned:

> *Yasmā ca Bodhisattena vasita-kucchi nāma cetiya-gabbha-sadisā hoti, na sakkā aññena sattena āvasituṁ vā paribhuñjituṁ vā, tasmā Bodhisatta-mātā gabbha-vuṭṭhānato sattame divase kālaṁ katvā, Tusita-pure deva-putto hutvā nibbatti.*
>
> The womb in which the Bodhisatta had stayed was like the chamber of a shrine, other beings were not able to stay there or to use it. Therefore, seven days after giving birth, the Bodhisatta's mother died and became a Devaputta in the celestial city of Tusita.

Still further, in the exposition on the Twenty Verses (*Vīsati-gathā*) of the sub-commentary, the Jewel Light (*Maṇi-dīpa-ṭīkā*),[104] it is asserted:

> *Siri Mahā Māyā hi Bodhisattaṁ vijayitvā, sattāha-mattaṁ ṭhatvā, ito cavitvā, Tusita-bhavane purisa-bhāveneva nibbattā, na itthi-bhāvenā ti.*
>
> Having lived only for seven days after giving birth to the Bodhisatta, Siri Mahā Māyā passed away from this world and was reborn as a male, not as a female.

It is a regular incident that all the mothers of Bodhisattas should live only seven days after childbirth and that they should all die and be reborn in the Tusita abode only as a god and never as a goddess. Therefore, the fact that Mahā Māyā was born as a Deva in Tusita should be accepted without doubt.

The Prince's Attendants

For his son, Prince Siddhattha, King Suddhodana selected and appointed 240 female attendants who were clean and fair, skilled in carrying out their duties such as breast-feeding, by giving sweet milk free of pungent, salty and other

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[104] [I have been unable to check this].

unpleasant tastes, bathing, carrying and nursing. The king also appointed 60 male servants to help the female attendants and further appointed 60 officers who would oversee the duties of these men and women.

Of the 240 female attendants, 60 were to breast-feed the prince; another 60 were to bathe him with scented water and dress him; still another 60 were to carry him, supporting him with their hands, or in their laps and so on; and the remaining 60 had to share the same duty by taking over the prince in turn. Thus the nursing work was distributed among 240 female attendants. With the 60 male servants and 60 officers, there were altogether 360 persons responsible for looking after the little prince.

All this is given in accordance with the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*) and its commentary, where mention is made of the appointment of attendants by King Bandhuma for his son Prince Vipassī, who was the Bodhisatta. On this basis, the appointment by King Suddhodana has been described.

In the *Swezon Kyawhtin* (Volume I, Question No. 33), a question is asked in verse form by Shin Nandadhaja, the celebrated novice of Kyeegan village. The answer given by Kyeethai Layhtat Sayādaw is: "There are 60 Myanmar hours in one day and one night; since four nurses had to take charge in turn every one hour, multiply 60 by 4, and the result is 240."

If we take the reckoning made in the *Swezon Kyawhtin*: "Four nurses had to take charge in turn every hour," in the sense that one was to feed, and another was to bathe and dress, still another to tend to him, supporting and clasping him with her hands or in her lap, and the last one to carry on the same task after taking over the prince in turn, then it is quite in consonance with what is contained in the exposition of the Long Discourse on the Traditions (*Mahāpadāna-sutta*, DN 14) of the aforesaid commentary.

The Selection of Attendants

In the commentary to the Birth Story about the Wise Temiya (*Temiya-jātaka*, Ja 538, actually called the Birth Story about the Wise Mūgapakkha, *Mūga-pakkha-jātaka*), the detailed description of how the King of Kāsi chose attendants for his son Temiya, the Bodhisatta, is recorded as follows: [249]

1. A tall woman was not appointed nurse because the child's neck is apt to become elongated for having to suck milk while remaining close to her bosom.
2. A short woman was not appointed nurse because the child's neck is apt to become stunted for having to suck milk while remaining too close to her bosom.
3. A thin woman was not appointed nurse because the child's limbs, such as his thighs, etc., are apt to be hurt by having to suck milk while remaining close to her bosom.
4. A fat woman was not appointed nurse because the child is apt to become crippled, with its thighs, knees and legs deformed, for having to suck milk while remaining close to her bosom.
5. A long-breasted woman was not appointed nurse because the child's nose is apt to be snubbed as it might be pressed by her long breasts as he sucks milk while remaining close to her bosom.
6. A woman with too dark a complexion was not appointed nurse because her milk is very cold and not suitable for the child in the long run.
7. A woman with too white a complexion was not appointed nurse because her milk is very warm and not suitable for the child in the long run.
8. A woman suffering from cough was not appointed nurse because her milk is very sour and not suitable for the child.
9. A woman suffering from consumption was not appointed nurse because her milk is pungent and bitter and not suitable for the child.

The above mentioned commentary says that such women were not appointed attendants; only those free from the above defects were appointed.

Relying on the statement of the commentary, Manli Sayādaw describes the same selection of attendants in verse form (vs. 498) in his Verses on Magha Deva and the Great Cause of Learning (*Mahā-suta-kārī-magha-deva-laṅkā*).[105]

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[105] The author then quotes the whole verse *in toto*, but we have left it out.

Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī

Though attendants were selected and appointed for Prince Siddhattha in the said manner, it was his aunt, or step-mother, Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī who more often than not breast fed him. After the demise of Mahā Māyā Devi, King Suddhodana raised the prince's aunt to the status of Chief Queen. Two or three days after the birth of the prince by Queen Māyā, his aunt Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī bore Prince Nanda. When Queen Māyā passed away on the seventh day after the prince's birth, Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī entrusted her own son Prince Nanda, who was only three or four days old, to nurses, and she herself breast-fed Prince Siddhattha and looked after him. It was in the lap of his aunt that Prince Siddhattha stayed most of the time.[106]

In this way, Prince Siddhattha, the Bodhisatta, grew up blissfully in a gradual manner under the care and treatment of hosts of attendants and in great pomp and splendour. [250]

[106] From the commentary on the Discourse giving an Analysis of Offerings (*Dakkhiṇā-vibhaṅga-sutta*, MN 142).

2: The Bodhisatta's Youth

King Suddhodana salutes for the Second Time

The day arrived for King Suddhodana to perform the ploughing ceremony which was an annual seasonal festival. On that day, the whole royal city of Kapilavatthu was decorated like the abode of the Devas. All the people of the city including workers dressed in their best attires, having perfumed and adorned themselves with flowers, assembled in the palace square. In the fields where the ploughing ceremony was to be held, 1,000 ploughs were kept in readiness, 800 of them were meant for the king and his ministers. 799 ploughs to be manned by the ministers were decorated with silver ornaments and equipped with ploughshares together with yokes, oxen and driving rods. The plough to be ridden and driven by the king was fully ornamented with red gold.

When King Suddhodana left the royal city with a great retinue of ministers, courtiers, bodyguards and other followers, he brought his son, the Bodhisatta, to the ceremonial sites and kept him under the delightfully cool shade of a big Rose-apple (*Syzgium jambos*) tree in full foliage. The ground underneath the tree was well-carpeted with the best velvet cloth, on which the royal child was placed. And above him was fixed a crimson-red velvet canopy embroidered with gold and silver stars. The whole place was screened off with heavy curtains, and guards were posted for security. The king then dressed himself in the regal accoutrement which was customarily put on for the ploughing ceremony. Accompanied by ministers and courtiers, he proceeded to the auspicious field where the ploughing ceremony would be held.

On arrival at the auspicious field, King Suddhodana mounted the golden plough which was specially prepared for him. The 799 courtiers taking part in the ceremony also rode and drove their respective silver ploughs. The remaining 200 ploughs were handled by 200 royal farm workers who proceeded to plough the field thoroughly, going back and forth many times across the field. King Suddhodana ploughed the field only once to bring auspicious blessing to the ceremony by driving across the field from one side to the other. The ceremony was magnificently performed.

The nursing attendants and security guards, who were assigned to look after the prince, left their posts and went out of the royal enclosure, saying: "Let us watch the grand spectacle of our lord performing the ploughing ceremony."

The Prince's Attainment of the First Absorption

In the meanwhile, the prince, on looking around and seeing no one, quickly rose and sat cross-legged quietly and calmly. He then practised breathing (*ānāpāna*) meditation, concentrating on the inhaling and exhaling breath, and thereby attained the first absorption of the form world (*rūpāvacara-jhāna*).

> It should be understood that the Bodhisatta achieved the first form absorption (*rūpāvacara-jhāna*) within a short time as a result of the habitual practice of breathing (*ānāpāna*) meditation throughout many existences of successive aeons.

The attendants, who left their charge, loitered around the food stalls enjoying themselves for quite a while. All the trees, with the exception of the rose-apple tree under which the Bodhisatta was sitting, cast their shade in a natural manner, in line with the movement of the sun. When past noon the shades of the trees fell on the east, however, the shade of the rose-apple tree, under which the prince was resting, did not move with the sun, even after noon-time, strangely remaining in a round shape as before.

The nursing attendants, eventually remembering: "Oh, the son of our lord has been left behind alone," hurried back and on getting inside, after parting the curtains of the [251] enclosure, saw with their own eyes and to their amazement the prince sitting cross-legged in the place of glory; and saw also the miracle (*pāṭihāriya*) of the shade of the rose-apple tree remaining fixed in the same position and in the same round shape. They went speedily to the king and reported: "Your majesty, your royal son is sitting quietly and calmly in a certain posture. And though the shadow of other trees moved with the changing position of the sun, the shade of the rose-apple tree, under which the prince reposes, remains unchanged even after noon-time, retaining its circular shape."

King Suddhodana quietly went and observed. On seeing with his own eyes the two strange miracles, he uttered: "Noble son, this is the second time that I, your father, salute you," and made obeisance to his son lovingly and adoringly.

Vissakamma creates an Auspicious Royal Lake

The following is from the commentary on the Discourse about the Refined (*Sukhu-māla-sutta*, AN 3.39).

In this manner, when the prince reached the age of seven, having grown up happily amidst a luxury like that of the Devas, King Suddhodana one day asked his ministers: "Men, what kind of sport pleases the children of tender age?" When the ministers informed him: "Your majesty, young children like to play in the water," King Suddhodana sent for artisans and ordered them to select a suitable site to dig a magnificent royal lake.

Thereupon, Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, becoming aware through reflection that steps were underway to select a site for the lake, thought to himself: "It is not proper at all for the Bodhisatta to use a lake built by human beings; only a lake created by Devas will be appropriate for him."

He summoned Vissakamma and assigned him the task of digging a lake, saying: "Go now, to the human abode, O Deva, and create a suitable lake for the Bodhisatta to play in." To the question: "What kind of lake would you like me to create?" Sakka replied thus: "The lake that you create should be free of mud and slime; its bed should be strewn with rubies, pearls and corals; it should be surrounded by walls made of the seven kinds of precious stones. The descending steps leading into the lake should be made with planks of gold, silver, and rubies; the hand-rails should be of rubies and the main balusters supporting the rails should have their tops encrusted with coral. Inside that celestial lake, for the Bodhisatta to play water-throwing, you should create a golden boat equipped with a silver throne, a silver boat with a golden throne, a ruby boat with a coral throne and a coral boat with a ruby throne. They should also be furnished with golden, silver, ruby and coral bowls for water-throwing. The lake should be beautifully covered and graced with the five kinds of lotus."

Vissakamma, after giving assent, descended to the human abode that very night and created a lake, complete in all details in accordance with Sakka's instruction, on the site chosen by King Suddhodana.

Here, it may be questioned as to how the five kinds of lotus could grow and blossom in the lake which was devoid of mud. The answer is as follows: Vissakamma created small golden, silver, ruby and coral boats in such and such places in the mud-free lake and made the solemn wish: "Let

> these small boats be filled with slime and thick mud and let the five kinds of lotus grow and bloom in these mud-filled boats." Thus created and resolved by Vissakamma, five kinds of lotus thrived and bloomed in the royal lake.

The pollen from the lotus flowers spread over the surface of the lake moving with the gentle breeze and rippling waves. Five species of bees in five different colours buzzed and droned merrily as they bustled from flower to flower. In this manner, Vissakamma created the royal lake as instructed by Sakka and returned to the celestial abode.

When the new day dawned, thousands of citizens seeing the awe-inspiring and magnificent lake, exclaimed joyously: "Surely, this lake must have been created by Sakka and the Devas for the prince!" And so, with joy and delight, they went and reported the matter to King Suddhodana. The king, accompanied by a vast retinue, went to see the lake. When he saw the magnificence and splendour of the lake, he exclaimed with delight: "This lake is verily the creation of divine beings because of the power and glory of my son!" Thereafter, the prince went to play in the water of the lake which was a requisite for celestial pleasures. [252]

The Bodhisatta, Prince Siddhattha, grew up in great comfort and luxury, enjoying such delights as playing in the water of the celestial lakes covered and graced with the five kinds of lotus as said above, wearing very soft and smooth garments which were newly made and produced in Kāsi country, being at all times given cover and protection against heat, cold, dust, mist and snow, with the white umbrellas of Devas and humans.

The Construction of Three Palaces for the Prince

When he had grown to the age of sixteen years, King Suddhodana thought: "It is time to build mansions for my son," and he had the most celebrated and skilled architects, carpenters, masons, sculptors and painters summoned to the palace for discussion. After making the necessary preliminary preparations, such as the ground breaking at the chosen site, and at the time indicated as propitious by the stars, he gave orders for the construction of three palaces named Ramma, Suramma, and Subha which were specially designed to suit the weather conditions of the three seasons. These three palaces were of equal length, breath and height. They differed only in the number of tiers in the spires.

These three palaces are not described in detail in the commentaries on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and Birth Stories (*Jātaka*). They are described at length in the commentary on the Discourse about the Refined (*Sukhu-māla-sutta*, AN 3.39); in the commentary on the Discourse to Māgaṇḍiya (*Māgaṇḍiya-sutta*, MN 75); and the sub-commentary on the Prosperity of the Household Life (*Agārika-sampatti*) chapter in the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*). What is presented here is the combined account of the expositions in these various texts.

1. Ramma palace was built for residence during winter.
2. Suramma palace was built for residence during summer.
3. Subha palace was built for residence during the rainy season.

1. The Winter Palace.

The Ramma palace had a nine tiered-spire. The structure and room formations were designed to keep the floors somewhat low so as to retain warmth. Meticulous care was taken in the arrangement of the lion-propped windows and ventilators to prevent elements of cold from outside, such as snow, mist, and breeze, from entering inside. Painters also drew pictures of blazing fires and flames on the walls, central planks, roofs, etc., of the said palatial mansion to dispel coldness on seeing them. Festoons of perfumes, flowers and pearls were hung, dangling here and there at appropriate places. The ceilings were canopied with fabrics of pure wool and silk which were very soft and smooth and warmth-giving and which were adorned with stars of gold, silver and rubies giving out bright and flaming colours. Besides, there were woollen partitions and gauze curtains adorned with velvet and woollen shawls which were very soft and smooth to the touch. Velvet garments and woollen apparel appropriate for the cold season were also kept in readiness for wear. In the winter season, nourishing seasonal food, such as hot, spicy delicacies, were prepared in readiness. To keep the room warm windows were kept open in the day and closed at night.

2. The Summer Palace.

There were five tiers in the spire of the palace named Suramma. The structure and room formations were so designed as to provide ventilation; the tiers were built high, windows and shutters kept spacious and wide to procure as much breeze and coolness as required from outside, the main doors and windows were

kept not too secure; some doors had perforations and others had nettings made of iron, gold and silver.

The walls, central posts, roofs, etc., were decorated with paintings of blue, red and white lotus to give soothing impressions to the observers. Newly made pots filled with water to the brim were installed near the windows and placed therein were aquatic flowering plants such as blue, red, white lotuses, and lotuses with 100 petals. Mechanical devices, such as fountains and [253] showers, were installed to cool and freshen appropriate places simulating the rainy season when greenness pervaded the scenery.

Inside the mansion, flower pots and barrels filled with scented mud and slime were placed at suitable corners and in them were planted the five varieties of lotus. The ceilings were canopied with pure cotton fabric, which were soft and smooth and capable of generating a cooling effect. Besides, there were golden partitions and soft, thin curtains which were beautifully and marvellously decorated. Floor carpets of very white cloth, which were capable of making the atmosphere cool. Sets of very thin white garments suitable for summer wear were also kept ready to wear. Cold and savoury food that are cooling (*sīta-viriya*) were also prepared.

On the roof of the Suramma palace was hung a network of small tinkling golden bells producing sounds which were sweet, soft and pleasant and excelling the sounds of the five kinds of celestial music. Ceilings made of fine gold sheets with very tiny holes were fixed under the roof. When the water from the four ponds on the four sides of the mansion was pumped up by mechanical devices onto the ceilings it fell on the ceilings and trickled down through the tiny holes like rain drops as if it were raining.

Above the ceilings of golden sheets were spread out dried sheets of buffalo hide; then pebbles were lifted aloft by machines to the rooftop and from there released to fall on the stretched buffalo hides. The sound produced by these falling pebbles resembled the rumbling of thunder during the rainy season.

108 huge pots made of gold and silver were filled with perfumed water and placed around the royal bed which was in an enclosure of embroidered netting with blue lotus designs. To have the effect of a cool and pleasant atmosphere, blue, red and white lotuses were planted in large bronze barrels filled to the brim with scented mud and placed everywhere. The lotus bloomed when

touched by the radiance of the sun. All species of honey bees came inside the mansion and hovered around these lotus flowers sucking their sweet nectar. Thus, Suramma palace, the summer resort of the prince, was always pervaded with the sweet fragrance of flowers. The main door and the windows of that summer residence were kept closed by day and open by night to give a cool breeze.

When the prince took up his residence in this palace, and when it was time for playing in the water, pebbles were thrown onto the sheets of buffalo hides, mentioned above, to produce roaring sounds similar to that of thunder; water pumped up to the ceilings trickled down in drops through the fine holes therein as if it were raining. At that time, the prince, wearing blue garments and robes and adorning himself in blue, revelled in water, enjoying its coolness for the day in the company of 40,000 attendants and followers who were also dressed and adorned in blue with their bodies perfumed.

On the four sides of the Suramma summer palace were four ponds in which the water was emerald green, cool and clean and covered all over with the five kinds of lotuses. Aquatic birds, such as swans, ducks, herons, etc., of various hues, rising from the ponds on the east, flew across the palace making melodious sounds continuously, and went down and gambolled in the pond on the west. In this manner, these water birds from the west pond flew to the east, those from the north lake to the south and those from the south pond to the north and so on. The summer palace, even during the summer months, was pleasant as in the rainy season.

3. The Rainy Season Palace.

There were seven tiers in the spire of the palace named Subha. The structure and room formations were so designed as to be of medium size, neither too low nor too high and neither too wide nor too narrow, in order to generate both heat and cold. The main door and windows were designed to suit both the cold and hot seasons, some fitted with closely knit planks and some with holes and wire meshes. There were paintings of blazing fires and flames and also pictures of lakes and ponds. Garments, robes and carpets, which would suit both the cold and heat, forming an assortment of apparels used in the two previously mentioned palaces, were kept ready to be used. Some of the doors and windows

were open by day and closed by night; and others were kept closed by day and open by night.[107] [254]

The Archery Display

After King Suddhodana, the royal father, had the three palatial mansions constructed for his son in such grandeur and magnificence which no succession of kings had ever enjoyed before, he thought to himself: "My son has reached the age of sixteen. After crowning him king with the white umbrella raised, I shall watch him enjoying the luxury and glory of kingship." He then ordered messages to be sent to his 80,000 Sakyan relatives thus: "Dear Sakyan princes, my son has come of age and is sixteen years old now. I will crown him king. All Sakyan princes should bring their daughters, who have come of age, to my palace."

When the Sakyan princes received the royal message from King Suddhodana, they refused to comply with his request, replying in derogatory terms: "Prince Siddhattha lacks education, although possessing a pleasant personal appearance. Not having acquired any skill of a livelihood he will not be able to discharge his obligation to support a family. So we cannot accede to the demands of King Suddhodana and give our daughters."

> These words are as given in the commentaries on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*), and also in the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*). However, in the Introduction to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary, in the section on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), it is mentioned that the Sakyan relatives made the derogatory remarks about Prince Siddhattha at one of their assemblies, when the Bodhisatta, Prince Siddhattha, had already been living in luxury in the three palatial mansions amidst 40,000 attendants headed by his chief Princess Yasodharā.

On receiving the replies from the Sakyan princes, the fathers of the princesses, King Suddhodana went to the Prince and related the matter. The prince asked: "My dear father, I do not have to learn anything. What skill do you want me to display?" King Suddhodana replied: "Dear son, you should demonstrate to the

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[107] The beauty and perfection of this palatial mansion for the rainy season was identical with that of the summer and winter residences.

royal relatives the art of archery with a bow which requires 1,000 units of weight (*pala*) to draw." Prince Siddhattha then said: "In that case, royal father, have it proclaimed by the beat of drums in the royal city that on the seventh day from today, I will give a display of archery." King Suddhodana accordingly had it proclaimed widely all over the kingdom of Kapilavatthu by the beat of drums.

> With regard to the term: "A bow which requires 1,000 units of weight (*sahassa-thāma-dhanu*)," the Light on the All-Seeing one (*Samanta-cakkhu-dīpanī*), says that it can also mean: "A bow which requires 1,000 men to draw," which is in accordance with the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) and its sub-commentary, and the commentary on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*). It adds: "If, however, the Pāḷi word is taken to refer to the force or weight, it should be translated: 'A bow which requires a force equal to 1,000 units of weight (*pala*) to draw.' "
>
> The author continues to discuss the units of weight, which are differently stated in the commentaries and sub-commentaries and in the Poem about the Kinnarī Candā (*Canda-kinnarī Pyo*) and the Verses about Magha Deva (*Magha-deva-liṅkā*), which are famous works in Myanmar literature. We have left them out from our translation.

After the proclamation had been made by means of beating the drum, arrangements were made to prepare a site for the prince's demonstration of his archery skills and to construct a decorated viewing panel for the ministers, palace ladies, retinue, service personnel, soldiers, and distinguished royal relatives. On the seventh day, when all the arrangements were completed, the king with his ministers, military commanders and guests were all seated in their respective places. The prince, after taking his seat on the gem-studded throne in the centre of the open ground, took hold of the big bow handed to him by the royal attendants.

Sitting cross-legged on the throne, the prince held the bow in his left hand, twisted the [255] bow string round one big toe with which was pulled to make it taut, then he struck the bow string with his right hand to adjust it. The vibrating sound emitted from the string was so loud that it echoed throughout the city of Kapilavatthu which appeared as if it was on the verge of flying up into the sky.

Thereupon, some people asked: "What is that sound?" and some people replied: "This is the roaring sound of thunder." Others, however, said: "Oh, you do not

know! This is not the sound of thunder, it is the sound produced when the Sakyan Prince Siddhattha, so graceful in form and resplendent in complexion, drew the bow which requires 1,000 men[108] to stretch, struck the bow string." All the 80,000 Sakyan princes and royal relatives witnessing the spectacular display by the prince of striking and adjusting the bow strings were exceedingly delighted.

The Twelve Minor Types of Archery

The prince sent for the most famous master archers of Kapilavatthu by the name of Akkhaṇavedhī, Vālavedhī, Saravedhī, and Saddavedhī and assembled them in the palace ground. As for himself, much like in a previous existence, when the Bodhisatta was born as the young Jotipāla, as mentioned in the Birth Story about the Teacher Sarabhaṅga (*Sarabhaṅga-jātaka*, Ja 522), he stood in the midst of the four kinds of audience with a majestic bearing like a serpent prince emerging from the earth or Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, at a military parade. He was clad in martial attire studded with rubies, wearing on his head a diadem adorned with the nine kinds of multi-faceted precious gems and girdled around his waist was a sash massively finished with the seven kinds of gems. He was holding a crescent-shaped bow, made of an animal horn, with coral-coloured strings and slung over his shoulder was a quiver of emerald colour.

The four aforesaid master archers were made to take up their positions at the four corners, as those of a rectangular tank, with their personal attendants carrying a supply of 30,000 arrows each. He himself, however, held an arrow with a diamond (*vajira*) tip and called upon the four master archers to shoot at him simultaneously.

1. Defending from the incoming arrows of the enemy with one's own arrow (*sara-paṭibāhana*).

The master archers pleaded: "Son of our lord, we are the most accomplished archers, who can shoot and hit the target many times in a flash of lightning (*akkhaṇa-vedhī*); who can split into two halves of a target as small as the tail hair or feather of an animal as if it were a target such as a brinjal (*vāla-vedhī*); who can shoot an arrow to hit another arrow which was shot ahead of it (*sara-*

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[108] Or 2,000 units of weight.

vedhī); and who can shoot to hit the target without seeing with the eyes but by listening to the sound (*sadda-vedhī*). Your highness is young and tender in age; we do not have the heart to shoot at you."

Replying: "Fear not! If you can shoot to hit, shoot at me," he stood erect, fearless like a golden lion in the centre of the open court. Thereupon, the master archers started shooting simultaneously thousands of arrows in a flash of lightning with all their might. The prince stopped all the incoming arrows, repulsing them by striking them only with a single arrow tipped with a diamond and manipulating them not to fall in disarray but making the arrow heads, tails, leaves and stems group together in a regular pattern to form a large chamber of arrows (*sara-gabbha*). In this manner, the four master archers had exhausted the 30,000 arrows allotted to each of them. When the prince knew that all the arrows had been used up, he jumped out of the chamber of arrows without disturbing it.

At this demonstration of archery skill of stopping and warding off the incoming arrows (*sara-paṭibāhana*), the spectators consisting of princes and princelings, Brahmins and rich people, etc., who filled the whole of the surrounding expanse, made joyous exclamations of praise and wonder, by the beating of breasts; and their tumultuous applause reverberated in the sky almost causing the earth to tremble.

Thereupon, King Suddhodana asked his son: "Dear son, what do you call the archery skill that you have just demonstrated?" – "Respected father, what I have demonstrated is the art of defending from the incoming arrows of the enemy with one's own arrow (*sara-paṭibāhana*)."

King Suddhodana asked again: "Dear son, is there anyone other than you who had mastered this skill?" In reply, the prince said: "Respected father, there is no one who has skill in this art in the whole of Jambudīpa besides myself."

2. Hitting all intended targets in a circle with a single arrow which returns to the archer's hand (*cakka-vedhī*).

King Suddhodana then said: "Dear son, proceed to demonstrate to us other kinds of archery skill." Thereupon the prince said: "These four master archers standing at the four corners were unable to shoot and hit me. Now I shall shoot with a single arrow and hit all the four master archers." Hearing these words of

the prince, the four master archers could not control themselves, shuddering with great fright.

Then the prince had four banana plants planted in the four corners where the four master archers were previously positioned; tying a piece of red silk thread to the tail of the arrow tipped with a diamond, he aimed at one banana trunk and released the arrow. The arrow bore through the first banana trunk but without stopping proceeded to the second banana trunk which it pierced; again continuing to pierce through the third and the fourth banana trunks, it finally hit and bore again the banana trunk he had first aimed at and came to rest in the hand of the Bodhisatta Prince. The four banana trunks each pierced through with red silk thread stood interconnected. The spectators exclaimed resoundingly and shouted in approbation.

King Suddhodana again asked his son: "Dear son, what is the name of the archery skill that you have just demonstrated?" – "Respected father, what I have just demonstrated is the archery skill of hitting all the intended targets in the form of a circle with a single arrow which returns to the archer's hand (*cakka-vedhī*)." Then King Suddhodana said: "Dear son, proceed with the demonstration of other kinds of archery skill."

The prince proceeded to display the following varieties of archery skill one after another:

3. Shooting the arrows continuously to form a stream resembling a long stretched-out vine or creeper (*sara-laṭṭhi*).
4. Shooting the arrows continuously to resemble a series of strings (*sara-rajju*).
5. Shooting the arrows in a formation resembling a terrace (*sara-pāsāda*).
6. Shooting the arrows in a formation resembling a stairway with tiered roofs (*sara-sopāna*).
7. Shooting the arrows in a formation resembling a pavilion (*sara-maṇḍapa*).
8. Shooting the arrows in a formation resembling a circular walling (*sara-pākāra*).

9. Shooting the arrows in a formation resembling a rectangular lake (*sara-pokkharaṇī*).

10. Shooting the arrows in successive tiers in a formation resembling a multi-petal lotus flower (*sara-paduma*).

11. Shooting the arrows in such a way that the preceding arrow is hit by the succeeding one (*sara-vedhī*).

12. Shooting the arrows to cause a shower of arrows resembling the falling of rain (*sara-vassa*).

These are the twelve minor skills in the art of archery. [257]

The Four Major Archery Skills

In addition, Prince Siddhattha demonstrated the following four major archery skills to his royal father, King Suddhodana, and the assembled royal guests:

1. The major skill of shooting volleys of arrows instantaneously in a flash of lightning at a target without missing (*akkhaṇa-vedhī*).

2. The major skill of shooting to split into two halves a tiny target such as a feather as if it were a brinjal (*vāla-vedhī*).

3. The major skill of shooting to hit every preceding arrow with the subsequent arrows (*sara-vedhī*).

4. The major skill of shooting to hit a target not by sight but by listening to the sound (*sadda-vedhī*).

Piercing the Seven Kinds of Massive Bodies

Besides, the prince also demonstrated to the assemblage of people, presided over by King Suddhodana, the skill of shooting to pierce through the seven kinds of massive bodies (*satta-mahā-kāya-padālana*).

The seven kinds of massive bodies are enumerated as follows: 1) A great mass of hide (*camma-kāya*); 2) a great mass of wood (*dāru-kāya*); 3) a great mass of bronze (*loha-kāya*); 4) a great mass of iron (*ayo-kāya*); 5) a great mass of sand (*vālikā-kāya*); 6) a great mass of water (*udaka-kāya*); 7) a great mass of planks (*phalaka-kāya*).

Of the seven kinds of massive bodies: 1) At their best, other archers could shoot through only one sheet of buffalo hide. But the prince shot through the mass of 100 sheets of buffalo hide. 2-7) Whereas other archers could shoot to penetrate through one plank of the cluster fig (*udumbara*) of the thickness of eight finger-breaths, or one plank of jack (*panasa*) of a thickness of four finger-breaths, the prince could shoot to pierce through 100 such planks.

Similarly, whereas other archers could pierce through only one copper sheet of two finger-breath thickness, or an iron sheet of one finger-breath thickness, the prince could penetrate many layers of such copper and iron sheets. Although other archers could shoot an arrow from the front through a cart loaded with sand or planks or hay and make it come out from the rear, or from its rear to make it come out from the front, the prince could shoot to penetrate through many such carts either from the front or from the back. Whereas other archers could shoot to cover a distance of just two and a half kilometres (*catu-usabha*)[109] in water and just five kilometres on land, the prince demonstrated shooting which could cover many kilometres, or even leagues, if desired, in water or on land. This is according to the commentary on the Birth Story about Prince Asadisa (*Asadisa-jātaka*, Ja 181).

The Archery Skill of the Bodhisatta

The Bodhisatta demonstrated his skill in archery not only in his last human existence as Prince Siddhattha, but also while he was still in the early stages of the fulfilment of the perfections, in his existence as Prince Asadisa.

Here follows a brief account of this episode: While still fulfilling the perfections, he was reborn in one of the existences as Prince Asadisa, the eldest son of King Brahmadatta of the city of Bārāṇasī. When he attained the age of sixteen, he proceeded to the university town of Takkasilā where under the world-famous teacher, Disāpāmokkha, he learned the three Vedas together with the eighteen branches of learning to the highest stage of perfection. In particular, he had mastered, without any equals, the archery skills. When he returned to Bārāṇasī after completion of his study, he refused the kingship offered to him as the elder son, in accordance with the [258] dying wishes of his father, King Brahmadatta.

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[109] *Usabha*: a measure of length equal to 640 metres.

The ministers then elected his younger brother, Prince Brahmadatta, to be king. The elder Prince Asadisa continued to live the princely life in a peaceful manner. But the sycophants and opportunists serving the king, in order to sow the seeds of discord, maligned Prince Asadisa, saying to the king: "Prince Asadisa is planning to seize your throne." Believing these slanderous words, the king ordered the arrest of his elder brother, Prince Asadisa.

On being informed of the said matter by a well-wishing palace attendant, Prince Asadisa felt deeply hurt and left the kingdom of Bārāṇasī for another country. From there, he had word sent to the king that a master archer had arrived at the palace gate, seeking permission to be in the king's service. Summoning the master archer to his presence, the king questioned him as to the remuneration he sought for his services. Agreeing to be employed on a salary of 100,000 pieces of silver per annum, Prince Asadisa remained henceforth in the service of the king as an archer. The incumbent archers were jealous of the newcomer being thus paid a salary of 100,000 a year, and spoke in disparagement of him.

One day, while in the royal garden near the auspicious stone slab, the king saw a bunch of mangoes on the top of a big mango tree. Considering: "It is impossible to climb up and pluck the mangoes," the king summoned the old archers and asked them: "Can you shoot down that bunch of mangoes with an arrow?" They submitted unanimously: "Your majesty, there is no trouble for us to shoot it down; but your majesty has seen our performance many a time. Let the new archer, who is earning much more than us, bring it down."

The king then sent for Prince Asadisa, and asked him: "My son, can you shoot down that bunch of mangoes with an arrow?" The prince replied: "Your majesty, if I have permission to use the place where you are reclining, the job can be done."[110] The king moved out from his reclining position and permitted the prince to shoot from there.

Unlike other archers, Prince Asadisa did not go about carrying his bow in his hand ostentatiously. He moved about with his bow folded and wrapped up in cloth. He had an enclosure formed of screens and curtains. Then entering the enclosure to take off the white outer garment, he changed into red attire. He

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[110] He made this request as the stalk of the mango bunch was directly above the place where the king had been reclining.

also then girded up his loins and had a red sash wrapped tightly round his chest, after which, he took out the sword from inside the bag and hung it on the left shoulder. He then put on a cloak of the colour of gold and with the quiver slung on his back, held the large bow made of a ram's horn, each sector of which was fastened properly at the joints and set the bow strings of coral red colour.

Then, with a frontlet of precious gems adorning his head, and rotating the sharp arrow with his fingernails, he parted the curtain and came out like a Nāga youth emerging from the earth. Then going straight to the place for shooting, he asked the king: "Your majesty, shall I shoot down the bunch of mangoes with the ascending arrow or with a descending one?" The king replied: "My son, I have seen many archers bring down fruit with the ascending arrow, but I have not seen archers shoot them down with the descending one. I want you to shoot and cut the stem with the descending arrow." The prince replied: "Your majesty, this first arrow I am shooting will go up as far as the Cātumahārājika abode, I beseech you to be patient and wait for the arrow's descent from the said Deva abode." – "So be it," said the king.

He further explained thus: "Your majesty, this first arrow I am shooting, on its way up will cleave in half the stalk of the mango bunch and when it descends from the sky, it will cut the remaining half precisely without missing it, even by a hair's breath, and bring down the bunch. Behold now, your majesty." Uttering these bold words, the prince shot the arrow which went skywards at an accelerating speed.

The said arrow went up after cleaving half the mango stalk as the prince had said. The prince, judging: "The arrow may have reached the Cātumahārājika abode by now," shot a second arrow with greater force and speed than the first one. The second arrow went up and struck the tail-feather of the first arrow to make it turn and fall downwards; and [259] itself went up and up till it reached the Tāvatiṁsa abode where it was caught by the Tāvatiṁsa Devas.

The sound, produced by the descending arrow cutting through strong winds in the atmosphere, roared loudly like that of thunder as if to make the earth tremble. When people asked: "What is that sound?" the prince replied: "It is the sound of the first arrow descending." He calmed the fears of the people who were feeling anxious lest the arrow might fall onto them, saying: "Do not be

afraid; the arrow will not be allowed to fall on the ground, I will catch it without causing harm to anyone."

The said arrow, on coming down, cut the remaining half of the stalk of the mangoes without veering even a hair's breath from it, in full view of the spectators, and fell downwards carrying the bunch of mangoes with it. Prince Asadisa clutched in midair the falling arrow with one hand and the mangoes with the other, not allowing them to fall to the ground.

The king and thousands of spectators marvelled at the astonishing and magnificent display and exclaimed: "We had never before witnessed such a wonderful demonstration." They applauded and praised the prince by clapping their arms with open hands, snapping their fingers and throwing up into the air their turbans and headgear. The king's audience, being pleased and delighted, lavished him with presents and rewards worth ten millions of money. The king showered on the archer prince much bounty and a large retinue which may be likened to a heavy downpour of rain.

In this manner, the Bodhisatta demonstrated his extraordinary and wonderful skill in archery also at the time when he was born as Prince Asadisa. In this last existence as Prince Siddhattha, he also demonstrated to the assembly not only the aforesaid skill in archery, namely, the twelve minor skills, the four major skills, the seven kinds of piercing through massive bodies, but all skills, dexterity and accomplishments which a prince should learn and master. Only then the doubts and suspicions of the 80,000 royal relatives, wondering: "Does he even have any manly accomplishments?" were cleared away.

In this manner, Prince Siddhattha displayed his skill in archery to dispel all distrust, disdain, slander and reproach heaped upon him by his royal relatives. His was a feat of skill which had no equal, it was so marvellous and rare to witness. Thereupon, all the royal relatives, being cleared of the doubts and misgivings which they had entertained earlier, joyously proclaimed: "Never before in the royal annals of the Sakyan dynasty had anyone witnessed such feats of mastery as we have witnessed now," and thus showering praises on the prince. They were so fully delighted with such incomparable prowess and all-round accomplishments of the prince, that they willingly sent him their own royal daughters, who were beautifully dressed and adorned, for royal betrothal.

The princesses of pure birth and matchless beauty sent to the royal court numbered 40,000.

The Beauty of Princess Yasodharā

Among the 40,000 Sakyan princesses, the crown, the crest, and the foremost was Princess Yasodharā whose maiden name was Bhaddakaccānā.

Yasodharā was one of the connatals of the prince. She was born out of the union of the Sakyan ruler Suppabuddha, the son of the prince's grandfather, King Añjana of Devadaha kingdom, and Princess Amittā, who was the younger sister of King Suddhodana. The princess earned the name of Yasodharā for being endowed with pristine fame and great retinue. [260]

> *Yaso* = great retinue and high repute; *dharā* = bearer; hence, the princess who is endowed with a great retinue and high repute.

She was of a golden colour, always eye-catching and beautiful, like an image cast of solid gold or as if the natural flesh and body was made of gold. With her matchless, proportionate body, and of dazzling radiance, she was comparable in beauty and comportment to the victory flag-post erected in the scenic and delightful celestial Kīḷāmaṇḍala amusement park of the Māra King named Manobhū.

Like that of the celestial Nymphs (*Devaccharā*), her bodily radiance could illuminate the whole of her private chamber which was otherwise shrouded in total darkness. She was also endowed with five feminine charms of a virtuous lady: 1) The beauty of skin (*chavi-kalyāṇa*); 2) the beauty of flesh (*maṁsa-kalyāṇa*); 3) the beauty of veins (*nhāru-kalyāṇa*), 4) the beauty of bone structure (*aṭṭhi-kalyāṇa*), or the beauty of teeth formation (*danta-kalyāṇa*); 5) the beauty of hair (*kesa-kalyāṇa*); or, in other words, the beauty of bones, skin, hair, flesh and youth.

She also was pleasurable to touch (*sukha-samphassa*) like the feel of cotton ginned 100 times. She was free from the six blemishes, viz., being too dark or too light; being too fat or too thin; being too short or too tall; the sweet fragrance of choice sandalwood emanating from her faultless graceful body always pervading the air; her coral-coloured mouth was always fragrant with the scent of the blue lotus. Bhaddakaccānā, Yasodharā, was the noble "treasure

of the woman" worthy to be the consort of a Universal Monarch ruling over the four continents.

The above description of the Princess Yasodharā gives only a few of the distinguishing features for easy portrayal. In fact, she was unique among human beings and excelling female deities too. She was enjoying the merits which had accrued finally and simultaneously from all the perfections she had fulfilled and the deeds of merit she had performed in the previous innumerable existences. Subsequently, she became a lady of excellence and great worth, endowed with the most admirable peerless beauty amongst ladies of virtue and nobility.

The Inauguration Ceremony

The 80,000 royal relatives headed by King Suddhodana, assembled at a grand and magnificent convention and celebrated the coronation of Prince Siddhattha, which included the raising of the royal white umbrella over his head, the sprinkling of cool water (*abhiseka*) and the formal ascension to the golden throne.

From among the 40,000 princesses presented by the Sakyan relatives, 10,000 princesses were assigned to Yasodharā to form her personal suite. The remaining 30,000 princesses were assigned to be resident attendants in the three palaces, 10,000 in each of them.

Prince Siddhattha, surrounded by young maidens of noble Sakyan origin, was like a youthful Deva being attended upon by Deva princesses or like Sakka, the Lord of the Devas; and he was entertained with very pleasant music played by all-female troupes. He lived amidst the great and magnificent luxury of royalty, comparable to that of a Universal Monarch. He took up residence in the three magnificent and elegant palaces of Ramma, Suramma and Subha in turn, according to the three seasons, leading a life of happiness and comfort. [261]

3: The Renunciation of the Prince

Visiting the Royal Garden

In this manner, Prince Siddhattha became a reigning prince in Kapilavatthu at the age of sixteen. When he attained the age of 29, after having enjoyed the comfort and luxury of a Universal Monarch, attended upon by a retinue of 40,000 Princesses headed by the chief Princess Yasodharā, one day, he became desirous, of visiting the Royal Garden. And so he sent for the charioteer and ordered him: "Charioteer, have the chariot ready! I will visit the royal garden." – "Very well," replied the charioteer and had the royal chariot, which was excellent and fit only for noble personages, adorned with ornaments and to it were harnessed four thoroughbred horses which were pure white like the full moon or the white lotus flower and as fast as the wind or Garuḍa, the king of birds. When informed by the charioteer that the chariot was ready, the prince rode in the chariot which was gorgeous like a celestial mansion and headed for the royal garden in a grand procession.

1. The Omen of an Old Man

When the prince had travelled some distance on his way to the royal garden, the Devas conferred: "The time for Prince Siddhattha to become a Buddha is drawing near. Let us show him omens which will cause him to renounce the world and become a recluse." They asked a Deva to assume the appearance of an aged man, having grey hair, no teeth, stooping back, and trembling with a walking stick in his hand. This omen of an old man created by the Deva could be seen by no one but the prince and the charioteer.

On seeing the old man, the prince asked the charioteer: "Charioteer, the hair of that man is not like that of others; his hair is totally white. His body is also not like that of others; the teeth are all gone; there is little flesh on his body; with a stooping back, he is trembling all over. By what name is he known?" The charioteer replied: "Your majesty, he is called an old man."

The prince, who had never even heard before the word "old man," much less seen one, again asked the charioteer: "Charioteer, never before have I seen any one of such a nature; whose hair is white, who has no teeth, who is emaciated and trembling, with a stooping back. What is meant by an old man?" The

charioteer replied: "Your majesty, one who cannot live for very much longer is known as an old man."

He then asked: "Charioteer, how is it? Am I also subject to old age? Am I also one who cannot overcome the nature of ageing?" When the charioteer replied: "Your majesty, all of us, including you as well as I, are subject to old age; there is no one who can overcome the nature of ageing," the prince said: "Charioteer, if all human beings, each and every one of them, including me, cannot overcome the nature of old age, please go no more to the royal garden and enjoy the pleasures therein. Turn back now, from this place where the old man is seen and drive me back to the palace." – "Very, well, your majesty," replied the charioteer who, instead of proceeding to the royal garden, turned the chariot around at the very place where the old man was seen and drove back to the golden palace.

It is the nature of lions, when shot by an arrow, not to seek primarily to remove the arrow which is the effect, but to seek the hostile hunter who has shot the arrow and who is the prime cause of the flight of the arrow. Of the two phenomena of cause and effect, Buddhas also do not seek to eliminate the effect, which is like the arrow, but they seek and find out through intelligence the cause, which is like the enemy hunter who shoots the arrow. Therefore, the Buddhas are like lions.

The charioteer had merely explained the [262] worldly nature of decay and old age (*jarā*) as far as he understood it, but the prince, as befitting one who desires to become a Buddha, knew distinctly on reflection that birth (*jāti*) was the prime cause of the process of ageing (*jarā*). After returning to the golden palace, he reflected with penetrative urgency (*saṁvega*): "Oh, birth is detestable indeed. To whoever birth is evident, to him ageing is also evident." Having reflected thus, he became cheerless and morose; he remained gloomy and dejected.

King Suddhodana sent for the charioteer and asked him: "Charioteer, why did my son return in a hurry without proceeding to the garden?" The charioteer replied: "Your majesty, your son saw an old man, so he came back in haste." King Suddhodana mused: "My son should become a ruler over the country. He must not renounce the world and become a recluse. The prediction of the court Brahmins that he would renounce the world and become a recluse must be proven wrong. O courtiers, why did you spoil my plans? Arrange quickly more

palace attendants than before; then with more female attendants and dancing girls surrounding him, my son, while enjoying the five sensual pleasures, will no longer think of becoming a recluse." So saying, he ordered an increase in the number of guards in the surrounding places at every couple of miles in all the four directions.

> When the prince went to the royal garden for enjoyment, he was accompanied by a contingent of troops half a league in extent; as the chariot reached a place where it forged ahead, leaving the forces behind in the procession, the great Arahat Brahmas of the Suddhāvāsa abode, by dint of supernatural power, created the form of an old man in front of the chariot, to be visible only to the prince and the charioteer. The Arahat Brahmas of the Suddhāvāsa abode, considering: "The Bodhisatta Prince is now being mired in the slough of the five sensual pleasures like the bull elephant getting swamped in a quagmire. We should let him regain a sense of mindfulness," showed him the form of an old man. The other omens which would appear later should also be understood in the same manner. This account is from the commentary on the Great Discourse about the Traditions (*Mahāpadāna-sutta*, DN 14).

2. The Omen of a Sick Man

Deceived and distracted by the five pleasures of the senses, increasingly provided and arranged for by his father to deter him from renouncing the world and becoming a recluse, Prince Siddhattha spent his time enjoying the pleasures and luxuries of the palace life. His sense of spiritual urgency, generated by the detestation of the nature of birth and old age, became somewhat diminished.

When four months had passed, after living such a life of luxury, the prince again rode to the royal garden in the chariot drawn by the thoroughbred horses, as before. On the way, the prince saw the form of a sick man, also created by Devas. The sick man was in great pain being oppressed by disease, and only when helped by others could he sit up or lie down. He was helplessly lying in a bed covered with his own filth.

Thereupon, the prince asked the charioteer: "Charioteer, the eyes of that man are not like the eyes of others; they are weak and unsteady. His voice is also unlike that of others; he keeps on crying with an unbearable lament. His body is also not like the bodies of others. It appears much worn out and exhausted. By

what name is he known?" The charioteer replied: "Your majesty, he is known by the name of a sick man."

The prince, who had never before seen a sick man or even heard of a "sick man" asked the charioteer again: "Charioteer, I have never come across such a person, who sits up and lies down only with the help of others, who sleeps mired in his own filth and keeps on shrieking unbearably. What is meant by a sick man? Explain the nature of this sick man to me." The charioteer replied: "Your majesty, a sick man is one who knows not whether he will or will not recover from the illness afflicting him now."

He then asked: "Charioteer, how is it? Am I also subject to illness? Am I also one who cannot avoid the nature of sickness?" When the charioteer replied: "Your majesty, [263] all of us, including you as well as I, are subject to illness. There is no one who can avoid the nature of sickness." The prince said: "Charioteer, if all human beings, each and every one of them, including me, cannot avoid the nature of ailments, we shall go no more to the royal garden and enjoy the pleasures therein. Turn back now, from this place where the sick man is seen and drive me back to the palace." – "Very well, your majesty," replied the charioteer who, instead of proceeding to the royal garden, turned the chariot around at the very place where the sick man was seen and drove it back to the golden palace.

As has been said above, although the charioteer merely explained the painful, unbearable, oppressive worldly nature of illness (*vyādhi*), as far as he understood it, the prince, like the lion king and befitting one who desires to become a Buddha, knew distinctly on reflection that birth was the prime cause of illness, and of old age. Back at the golden palace, he reflected with penetrative urgency: "Oh, birth is detestable indeed! To whoever birth has become evident, to him old age is bound to become evident; illness is bound to become evident." Having reflected thus, he became cheerless and morose; he remained gloomy and dejected.

King Suddhodana sent for the charioteer and questioned him as before. When the charioteer replied: "Your majesty, your son came back in a hurry because he had seen a sick man," King Suddhodana thought to himself as before and ordered a further increase of guards to be placed every three miles in the four directions. He also arranged to appoint more palace attendants and dancing girls.

3. The Omen of a Dead Man

Deceived and distracted by the five pleasures of the senses, increasingly provided and arranged by his father, King Suddhodana, to deter him from renouncing the world and becoming a recluse, Prince Siddhattha spent his time enjoying the pleasures and luxuries of the palace life, and his sense of spiritual urgency generated by the detestation of the nature of birth, old age and illness became somewhat diminished.

When four months had passed after living such a life of luxury, the prince again rode into the royal garden in the chariot drawn by the thoroughbred horses, as before. On the way, he saw an omen created and shown by the Devas for the third time, namely, a crowd of people and a bier decorated with multi-coloured cloth. Thereupon, he asked the charioteer: "Charioteer, why are all these people gathering around? Why are they preparing a stretcher decorated with multi-coloured cloth?" The charioteer replied: "Your majesty, the people are gathering around and preparing the bier because someone has died."[111]

The prince, who had never seen a dead person before or even heard of the dead, commanded the charioteer: "Charioteer, if they are assembled and engaged in making a stretcher, drive me to where the dead man lies." The charioteer said: "Very well, your majesty," and drove the chariot to where the dead man was lying. When the prince saw the dead man, he asked: "Charioteer, of what nature is this dead man?" The charioteer replied: "Your majesty, when a man dies, his relatives will never see him again nor will he see his relatives any more."

Thereupon, the prince asked further: "Charioteer, how is it? Am I also subject to death like that man? Am I also one who cannot avoid the nature of death? Will my father, mother and relatives not see me again one day? Will I also not see them again one day?" The charioteer replied: "Your majesty, all of us, including you as well as myself, are subject to death. There is no one who can avoid death. It is certain that one day your royal father, mother and relatives will not see you

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[111] He had never seen a bier before; he had seen only a stretcher. He asked, therefore: "Why are all these people gathering around and preparing a stretcher?"

anymore and it is equally certain that one day you will no longer see them."[112] [264]

Thereupon, the prince said: "Charioteer, if all human beings, each and every one of them, including me, cannot overcome the nature of dying, please let us go no more to the royal garden and enjoy the pleasures therein. Turn back now, from this place where the dead man is seen and drive me back to the royal palace." – "Very well, your majesty," replied the charioteer who, instead of proceeding to the royal garden, turned the chariot around at the very place where the dead man was seen and drove it back to the golden palace.

As has been said above, although the charioteer merely explained the worldly nature of death (*maraṇa*) as far as he understood, that when a man died, the relatives who were left behind would never see him again, and nor would the man who passed away see again the relatives he had left behind, the prince, like the lion king and befitting one who desires to become a Buddha, knew distinctly on reflection that birth was the prime cause of the three phenomena: death, old age, and illness, which he had seen previously.

After his return to the golden palace, he reflected with penetrative urgency: "Oh, birth is detestable indeed! To whoever birth has become evident, to him old age is bound to become evident, illness is bound to become evident, death is bound to become evident." Having reflected thus, he became cheerless and morose; he remained gloomy and dejected.

King Suddhodana sent for the charioteer and questioned him as before. When the charioteer replied: "Your majesty, the royal son came back in a hurry because he has seen somebody dead," King Suddhodana thought to himself as before and said in the same manner and ordered a further strengthening of guards to be placed at every league in the four directions; he also arranged to appoint more palace attendants and dancing girls.

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[112] The royal mother in this context refers to Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, the aunt and step-mother.

4. The Omen of a Recluse

Deceived and distracted by the five pleasures of the senses, increasingly provided and arranged by his father to deter him from renouncing the world and becoming a recluse, Prince Siddhattha spent his time enjoying the pleasures and luxuries of the palace and the sense of spiritual urgency generated by the detestation of the nature of birth, old age, illness and death became somewhat diminished.

When four months had passed living such a life of luxury, the prince again rode to the royal garden in the chariot drawn by the thoroughbred horses as before. On the way, he saw the omen created by the Devas for a fourth time, a man, who had embraced the life of a recluse, with a clean shaven head and beard, wearing a bark-dyed robe. "Charioteer," said the prince, "this man's head is not like the heads of others; it is a clean-shaven head and also he has his beard shaved. His clothes are also not like those of others and are bark-dyed. By what name is he known?" The charioteer replied: "Your majesty, he is known as a recluse."

The prince asked the charioteer again: "Charioteer, what is meant by a recluse? Explain the nature of a recluse to me." The charioteer replied: "Your majesty, a recluse is a person who, bearing in mind that it is good to practise the ten courses of wholesome actions (*kusala-kamma-patha*), beginning with generosity (*dāna*), has gone forth from worldly life and put on the bark-dyed clothes. He is a man who, bearing in mind that it is good to practise the ten courses of wholesome actions which are in accord with righteousness, which are free from blemish, which are clean and pure, has gone forth from the worldly life and put on the bark-dyed clothes. He is one who, bearing in mind that it is good to refrain from ill-treating sentient beings, to work for the promotion of their welfare, has gone forth from the worldly life and put on the bark-dyed clothes."

> Here, although the charioteer had no knowledge of a recluse or his virtues since it was a time prior to the appearance of a Buddha and his teaching, he said through the supernormal powers of the Devas, that the man was a recluse, and explained the [265] virtues of a recluse. This account is taken from the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary and the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*).
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> Those Bodhisattas with a much longer lifespan saw the four great omens, one after another, with the lapse of 100 years between each other. In the

case of our Bodhisatta, however, appearing during a far shorter span of life, the intervening period between two subsequent omens was four months. According to the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*) reciters, however, the Bodhisatta saw all the four great omens in one day. This note is based on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary.

Thereupon, the prince said to the charioteer: "This man is truly admirable and noble for having gone forth from the world, bearing in mind that it is good to practise the ten courses of wholesome actions, which are in accord with righteousness, which are free from blemish, and which are clean and pure. That man is admirable and noble for having gone forth from the world bearing in mind that it is good to refrain from ill-treating sentient beings and to work for the promotion of their welfare. Just because he is admirable and noble, charioteer, drive the chariot to the place where that recluse is.

Saying: "Very well, your majesty," the charioteer drove the chariot to where the recluse was. On reaching him, the prince asked the recluse, actually a supernormal form created by the Devas (*iddhi-rūpa*): "Man, what is that you are doing? Your head is not like the heads of others; your clothes are also not like those of others." When he got a reply from the recluse, saying: "Your majesty, I am known as a recluse," he asked him further: "What do you mean by a recluse?" The recluse, replied: "Your majesty, I am one who has gone forth from the household life, having shaved my hair and beard and wearing bark-dyed clothes, and bearing in mind that it is good to practise the ten courses of wholesome actions, beginning with generosity, which are also known by these four special epithets: for being righteous (*dhamma*), congruent (*sama*) for being in accordance with righteousness, skilful (*kusala*) for being blemish-free and meritorious (*puñña*) for being pure and clean both as to cause and effect; and also bearing in mind that it is good to refrain from ill-treating sentient beings and to work for the promotion of their welfare."

Thereupon, the prince said in acknowledgement and approval: "You are indeed admirable and noble. You have gone forth from the household life, having shaved the hair and beard, and wearing the bark-dyed clothes, and bearing in mind that it is good to practise the ten courses of wholesome actions, which have the special epithets of righteous, congruent, skilful and meritorious, and also

bearing in mind that it is good to refrain from ill-treating sentient beings and to work for the promotion of their welfare."

The Date of the Renunciation

Before he renounced the world by going forth from the household life, the prince made four visits to the royal gardens. On his visit to the royal garden riding on the chariot drawn by thoroughbred horses on the full moon of July (*Āsāḷha*) in the year 535 BCE, he saw, on the way, the first omen, that of an old man. On seeing this omen, he discarded the pride arising from the exuberance of youthfulness (*yobbana-māna*).

Then, when the prince proceeded again to the royal garden as before on the full moon of November (*Kattikā*), he saw, on the way, the second omen, that of a sick man. On seeing this second omen, he discarded the pride arising from the exuberance of sound health (*ārogya-māna*).

On proceeding again to the royal garden, as before, on the full moon of March (*Phagguṇa*), he saw, on the way, the third omen, that of a dead man. On seeing the third omen, the prince discarded the pride arising from the exuberance of being alive (*jīvita-māna*).

Then again, on the full moon of July (*Āsāḷha*), in the year 534 BCE, the prince went out to the royal garden, as before. He saw, on the way, the omen of the recluse. The sight of this omen awakened in him a liking for the life of a recluse; and, making the resolution: "I shall become a recluse this very day," he proceeded on his journey to reach the garden the same day.

> The Enumeration of Phenonema (*Dhamma-saṅgaṇī*, PTS 234) gives an exposition about spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) [266] as follows: The fear of birth (*jāti*) or the knowledge that birth is a big fearsome danger is called the danger of birth (*jāti-bhaya*); the fear of old age (*jarā*) or the knowledge that old age is a big fearsome danger is called the danger of ageing (*jarā-bhaya*); the fear of sickness (*vyādhi*) or the knowledge that sickness is a big fearsome danger is called the danger of sickness (*vyādhi-bhaya*); and the fear of death (*maraṇa*) or the knowledge that death is a big fearsome danger is called the danger of death (*maraṇa-bhaya*). The group of these four kinds of knowledge is known as religious urgency (*saṁvega*).

Of the four kinds of great omens already described, the first three are known as omens which give rise to a sense of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega-nimitta*), because, if birth takes place, there is an unavoidable certainty of the manifestation of ageing, sickness and death. Because of the arising of birth, there is bound to be the arising of ageing, sickness and death. There is no escape from ageing, sickness and death for one who has been born. To one who looks upon these phenomenal dangers as fearsome, harsh and dreadful, they cause the arising of terrible fright and alarm in them.

The last omen, that of a recluse, is a manifestation to encourage the practice of the Dhamma, as a way to escape from the said dangers of ageing, sickness and death. Hence it is called the omen which gives rise to sense of meditational exertion (*padhāna-nimitta*).

Vissakamma helps the Prince Dress

The prince spent the whole day in the royal garden, playing and enjoying himself. After taking a bath, as the sun began to set, he sat elegantly on the auspicious stone slab. At that moment, he felt inclined to dress up. Sakka, becoming aware of his wish, dispatched Vissakamma, who, taking the guise of a barber in the service of the prince, went to him and dressed him with celestial attire and adornments.

Just while the musicians were entertaining him with the five kinds of musical instruments, and others were singing and dancing, and even while the Brahmins were extolling him in sweet words of praise: "May your majesty be crowned with success, free from all forms of danger and hostility; may you be blessed with glory and happiness," the prince, thus dressed in five celestial adornments, ascended the royal chariot, decorated with precious ornaments, to return to the royal palace.

The Birth of Rāhula

At that moment, King Suddhodana, the royal father received the information that the prince's Chief Queen, Yasodharā, had given birth to a son. So he sent royal messengers to the prince with the glad tidings: "Go convey this good news to my son." When Prince Siddhattha heard the news that a son had been born, he remarked, as befitting one who kept in mind the sense of spiritual urgency

(*saṁvega*): "The Asura Rāhu,[113] who will seize and keep me captive, has been born; a great bondage has come into existence!"

When asked by King Suddhodana: "What has my son said?" the messengers related to him the remarks made by the prince. Thereupon, King Suddhodana announced the name and title of his grandson thus: "From now on, my grandson shall be known by the name of Prince Rāhula."

The prince entered the royal capital of Kapilavatthu riding the chariot accompanied by a large retinue with majestic elegance at its height. As he was thus entering the royal city by chariot, a Sakyan Princess by the name of Kisā Gotamī, who was possessed of charm and beauty, and who was not of lowly birth but of high noble lineage, on seeing the physique (*rūpa-kāya*) of the prince from where she was, on the outer terrace of her mansion, and feeling delighted, uttered her feeling of joy as follow: [267]

> *Nibbutā nūna sā mātā, nibbutā nūna so pitā,*
> *nibbutā nūna sā nārī, yassāyaṁ īdiso patī.*
>
> Peaceful and happy will be the mind of the fortunate mother who has given birth to such a son possessing splendour like the rising sun, an extraordinary son of noble birth: first in beauty, superb in grace, foremost in intelligence. Reflecting meticulously on the twin attributes of her son's talent and beauty, her joyful satisfaction, day after day, will result in peace of mind.
>
> Peaceful and happy will be the mind of the fortunate father who has given rise to such a son possessing splendour like the rising sun, an extraordinary son of noble birth: first in beauty, superb in grace, foremost in intelligence. Reflecting meticulously on the twin attributes of his son's talent and beauty, his joyful satisfaction, day after day, will result in peace of mind.
>
> Peaceful and happy will be the mind of the fortunate woman who has become the wife of such a husband possessing splendour like the rising sun, an extraordinary husband filled with virility: first in beauty, superb in grace, foremost in intelligence. Reflecting meticulously on the twin

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[113] Rāhu is the name of the Asura who is supposed to be responsible for the eclipse of the moon by swallowing it.

attributes of her husband's talent and beauty, her joyful satisfaction, day after day, will result in peace of mind.

When oil is poured into a pot and when it is filled to the brim, oil overflows. In the same way, when someone feels intensely joyful and satisfied for some reason or the other, the said feeling of joy and satisfaction (*pīti-somanassa*) becomes, as if it were full in the stomach and spills out. The outburst of such feeling of joy and satisfaction expressed in the form of a verse (*gāthā*) or in the form of prose (*cuṇṇa*) is called an exalted saying (*udāna*), an expression of an intense feeling of joy.

Hearing the joyful utterance by the Sakyan Princess Kisā Gotamī, the prince reflected: "This cousin-sister of mine, the Sakyan Princess Kisā Gotamī, has made the joyful utterance that the sight of such an individual (*atta-bhāva*) will give delight and serenity to the mother, the father and the wife. Now, what is that which, when extinguished, will bring true peace of mind?" It then occurred to the prince, whose mind was already detached from defilements (*kilesa*), thus: "There is true peace only when the fire of passion (*rāga*) is extinguished; there is true peace only when the fire of hatred (*dosa*) is extinguished; there is true peace only when the fire of delusion (*moha*) is extinguished; there is true peace only when the heat of defilements, such as conceit (*māna*), wrong views (*diṭṭhi*), etc., subside. This Princess Kisā Gotamī has spoken pleasant words about the element of peace. And, I am one who is searching for Nibbāna, the Ultimate Reality, which is the true extinction of all suffering. Even as of today, I should renounce the world by going forth and become a recluse in the forest, to seek Nibbāna."

With this thought of renunciation occurring to him, the prince, saying: "Let this pearl necklace be the teacher's fee for the Princess Kisā Gotamī for reminding me to go in search of the element of extinction (*nibbuta*)," and he took off the pearl necklace, which was worth 100,000 from his neck and had it sent to Kisā Gotamī. The Princess was overjoyed with the thought: "This cousin of mine, Prince Siddhattha, has sent me the present because his mind is inclined towards me."

The prince ascended the residential palace, which was dignified, elegant, marvellous encouraging delight in living, and reclined on the royal couch. The moment he reclined thus, all the female palace attendants and dancing girls who possessed a celestial beauty of form and complexion and who were adept in the

art of singing, dancing and making music, gathered round him with five kinds of musical instruments in their hands and started playing them, dancing and singing so he could enjoy the five kinds of sensual pleasure. But being disgusted [268] with and wearied of activities which would kindle the fire of the defilements, he found no pleasure in such entertainments and fell asleep in a moment.

As the prince had fallen asleep instantly, the female palace attendants and dancing girls thought to themselves thus: "We dance, sing and play music for the prince but he has fallen asleep. Why should we now exhaust ourselves?" and they too fell asleep with their musical instruments pressed around and underneath them. The fragrant oil lamps kept alight inside the golden palace continued to illuminate the scene brilliantly.

The Resolve of the Prince

On waking up, the prince sat cross-legged on the couch and looked around. He saw the dancing girls asleep, some with their musical instruments pressed around and underneath them, and with saliva flowing out from their mouths, soiling their cheeks and bodies, some grinding their teeth, some snoring, some jabbering, some with their mouths open, some with no clothes on but with bodies bare, some with their hair loose and in confusion, they looked like a heap of loathsome dead bodies in a cemetery. Seeing the said detestable changes and transformations in the dancing girls, the prince became all the more detached from objects of sensual pleasures.

> [A section here on the frightful nature of sensual desires has been moved to the Further Explanations.]

This royal palace of pomp and grandeur comparable to Vejayanta Palace, the residence of Sakka, is indeed like a cemetery where the dead are disposed of. The three planes of existences, namely, the sensual realm (*kāmāvacara*), the form realms (*rūpāvacara*) and the formless realms (*arūpāvacara*), are indeed like a big house burning in deep red, blazing flames. These sentient beings, humans, Devas and Brahmas, are bound to take conception, to grow old, to become sick and then to die; after death, they have to take conception again; then, to grow old, to become sick and to die again. Subjected to the repeated process of taking conception, growing old, becoming sick and dying, they

undergo great suffering. And yet, they do not know the way to escape from birth, ageing, sickness and death. When will they know it?

Thus contemplating and realising the frightfulness of birth, old age, sickness and death, and the fact that the objects of, and desire for, sensual pleasures as well as the three realms of existences of the sensual realm, the form realms and the formless realms are less of happiness and pleasure, and more of pain, suffering and defects, he became entirely divested of delight in and attachment for the five objects of sensual pleasure, the prince then expressed his intense feeling by uttering: "How distressing it is! How oppressive it is!" (*Upaddutaṁ vata bho, upassaṭṭhaṁ vata bho*), and he became inclined to renounce the world and become a recluse.

Thinking to himself: "It is time for me, even today, to go forth from the household life," the prince rose from the royal couch, approached the door and asked: "Who is here?" The charioteer Channa, who was sleeping with his head resting on the threshold of the door, replied: "Your majesty, I am, it is Channa." The prince commanded him, saying: "I wish to renounce the world today, without letting anyone know. Go now quickly and saddle a thoroughbred Sindh horse which possesses great speed." The charioteer Channa gave his assent, saying: "Very well, your majesty," and carrying with him the necessary equipment for saddling the horse, he went to the royal stable. In the brilliant illumination of the fragrant oil lamps, he saw the royal steed Kanthaka, a victor over all foes, standing on the delightful ground of the stable under a canopy decked with jasmine flowers. Thinking: "I should prepare this auspicious steed Kanthaka for the prince to go forth tonight," he proceeded to saddle Kanthaka with the complete equipment. [273]

While he was being saddled thus, Kanthaka came to realise: "I am being saddled rather tightly this time. On previous occasions, when going out to the royal garden, saddling was done differently. No doubt, the prince is going forth tonight riding on me to become a recluse." Being greatly overjoyed, he neighed vehemently. The neighing of Kanthaka in his fit of great delight could have reverberated throughout the whole of Kapilavatthu but the Devas let nobody hear the neighing sound.

While his connatal mate, the charioteer Channa, was thus gone to prepare and fetch the royal steed Kanthaka, the prince, with intent to have a look at the

royal baby before renunciation, went to the royal chamber of Rāhula's mother, Princess Yasodharā, and opened the door of the chamber. At that time, the chamber was brilliantly lit with scented oil lamps; and Rāhula's mother, Princess Yasodharā, was lying asleep on the bed strewn with jasmine flowers, with her hand resting on the head of her baby.

The prince stood at the door sill and, while looking, reflected: "If I remove the queen's hand and nestle my son in my arms, I will surely awaken the queen. If the queen wakes up, that will endanger my plan of renunciation which I am set on. So be it for now, I will not see him yet. Only after I have become a Buddha, will I come back and see my son." Having contemplated thus, he descended from the royal palace and approached the royal steed to whom he said: "Kanthaka, my connatal, assist me for this one night. After attaining Buddhahood through your help, I will rescue the world of sentient beings including Devas, from the stream of Saṁsāra and convey them to the high ground of Nibbāna." Then the prince jumped onto the back of the royal steed Kanthaka.

Kanthaka measured eighteen cubits from the neck and was of proportionate height. He possessed great power and speed as well. His whole body was snowy white; his physical appearance was as delightful and graceful as a newly polished conch. Sitting on the middle of Kanthaka's back, with his connatal charioteer Channa clutching the tail of the horse, the Bodhisatta rode out of the palace in the middle watch of the night on Monday, the full moon day of July (*Āsāḷha*) in the year 534 BCE, and arrived at the main gate of the royal city. As the Bodhisatta was departing from the palace riding the royal steed Kanthaka, Devas placed their hands under the steed's hoofs at every trot so that the sound of the hoofs could not be heard by anyone.

The prince, charioteer Channa, and the royal horse Kanthaka, each had their own plan. It was the time when the royal father, King Suddhodana, had taken precautions to prevent the prince from going forth by strengthening both sides of the main gate of the royal city so that each side could be opened only with the strength of 1,000 troops. He considered: "If it is so arranged, my son will not be able to go out unnoticed at any time through the main gate of the city."

The prince was endowed with great strength; he had the strength of one billion Kāḷāvaka elephants; he had the strength equivalent of ten billion middle-sized male persons (*majjhima-purisa*). Accordingly, he thought to himself: "If the

main gate will not open, I will escape today by making use of my own strength. Remaining seated on the back of the royal steed Kanthaka, I will clasp charioteer Channa who accompanies me by holding the horse's tail and the royal horse Kanthaka in between my two thighs and jump over the 18-cubit high city wall."

Charioteer Channa also thought to himself: "If the main gate of the city will not open, I will keep my lord's son seated on my shoulder, clasp Kanthaka under my right armpit, and hugging him with my right hand, I will jump over the 18-cubit high wall of Kapilavatthu city and escape."

The royal horse Kanthaka also thought to himself: "If the main gate of the royal city will not open, I will keep the royal son seated on my back as he is and along with the connatal charioteer Channa holding on to my tail, I will jump over the 18-cubit high wall of Kapilavatthu city and escape." [274]

> According to the commentary on AN 10.21 one elephant of *Kāḷāvaka* pedigree has the combined strength of 10 men of medium strength (*majjhima-purisa*); one *Gaṅgeyya* elephant has the combined strength of 10 *Kāḷāvaka* elephants, or 100 men of medium strength; one *Paṇḍara* elephant has the combined strength of 10 *Gaṅgeyya* elephants, or 1,000 men of medium strength; one *Tamba* elephant has the combined strength of 10 *Paṇḍara* elephants, or 10,000 men of medium strength; one *Piṅgala* elephant has the combined strength of 10 *Tamba* elephants, or 100,000 men of medium strength; one *Gandha* elephant has the combined strength of 10 *Piṅgala* elephants, or 1,000,000 men of medium strength; one *Maṅgala* elephant has the combined strength of 10 *Gandha* elephants, or 10,000,000 men of medium strength, one *Hema* elephant has the combined strength of 10 *Maṅgala* elephants, or 100,000,000 men of medium strength; one *Uposatha* elephant has the combined strength of 10 *Hema* elephants, or one billion men of medium strength; one *Chaddanta* elephant has the combined strength of 10 *Uposatha* elephants, or ten billion men of medium strength. The Bodhisatta has the combined strength of 10 *Chaddanta* elephants, or 100 billion men of medium strength.

The Deterrence by Vasavattī Māra

In this manner, the three of them were having similar intentions. Even if the main gate of the city would not open, any one of them would certainly act in fulfilment of his plan. Nevertheless, by virtue of the accumulated merits and

glory of the prince, the Devas guarding the gates of the royal city were very glad to keep the main gate readily open for him to go out. Just as he rode out from the main gate of the royal city on the back of Kanthaka accompanied by his connatal charioteer Channa, Vasavattī Māra, who did not like, and had always opposed and obstructed the emancipation of sentient beings from the round of rebirths, went to the human world from his abode in the Paranimmitavasavattī world in a moment, as quickly as a strong man might stretch out his folded arm or fold his out-stretched arm back in, and appeared in front of the prince. His purpose was to deter him from renouncing the world by tricking him into believing that the deterrence was for his own good. Standing in the sky, he uttered (BvA, PTS 282):

Mā nikkhama Mahā-vīra ito te sattame dine,
dibbaṁ tu cakka-ratanaṁ, addhā pātu bhavissati.

O very energetic Bodhisatta Prince, do not go forth and become a recluse. On the seventh day from today, the celestial Wheel Treasure will certainly make its appearance to you.

He discouraged the prince also by telling him: "You will become a Universal Monarch, ruling over the four great continents surrounded by 2,000 small islands. Do turn back, your majesty." Thereupon, the prince asked: "Who are you, speaking to me and discouraging me now?" Māra replied: "Your Highness, I am Vasavattī Māra." Then the prince made this bold reply:

Jānāmahaṁ Mahā-rāja, mayhaṁ cakkassa sambhavaṁ,
anatthikoham rajjena, gaccha tvaṁ Māra mā idha.

O powerful Māra, before you told me I already knew that the divine Wheel Treasure will certainly arise for me. As for myself, I do not have the least desire to become a Universal Monarch, ruling over the four continents. Go away from here now, O Māra; do not stand in my way.

Sakalaṁ dasa-sahassam-pi, loka-dhātum-ahaṁ pana,
unnādetvā bhavissāmi, Buddho 1oke vināyako. [275]

As for me, I will strive to become a Buddha to help and convey all sentient beings who are ready to listen to the Dhamma (*veneyya*) to the victorious land of Nibbāna, making the 10,000 world-element revolve and resound like the potter's wheel.

Thereupon, Māra threatened the prince with these words: "Friend Prince Siddhattha, keep your words constantly in mind. From this time on, I will make you know what I am, whenever your mind is filled with thoughts of sensual desires (*kāma-vitakka*), thoughts of malice (*vyāpāda-vitakka*), or thoughts of cruelty (*vihiṁsā-vitakka*)."

Thenceforward, he was constantly on the lookout for the occasion when the mental defilements (*kilesa*) would perchance arise in the mental continuum of the prince, following him closely like a shadow for a total period of seven years.

> He followed closely behind the prince for a total period of seven years with intent to kill him outright at that very place if defilements would perchance arise in the mind continuum of the prince.

The Escort to the Bank of the River Anomā

At the age of 29 years, when he was about to acquire the glory and powers of a Universal Monarch, he forewent and spurned them as if they were spittle. At midnight, on the full moon day of July (*Āsāḷha*) when the constellation Āsāḷha and the moon were in conjunction, in the year 534 BCE, he left the royal palace which was comparable to the magnificent palace of the Universal Monarch. But while he was thus leaving, the desire to turn round and take in a view of the royal city of Kapilavatthu arose in his mind.

Immediately after that thought had arisen in the mind of the prince, the very locality where the thought occurred revolved round like a potter's wheel as if the earth was addressing him: "Noble Bodhisatta, your deeds of merit were such that you need not turn round to look at anything, the object you want to see will present itself in front of you." The prince thus viewed the royal city of Kapilavatthu from where he was, without having to turn around. The site where the royal horse Kanthaka halted was marked for the erection of a relic shrine (*stūpa*) to be named Kanthakanivattana, or the turning of Kanthaka. He then proceeded on his journey in a majestic manner on the back of the royal horse Kanthaka. Along the route taken by the prince, all the Devas and Brahmas marched along in front and rear, and on the left and right, some holding 60,000

lighted torches;[114] others came along honouring him with festoons of fragrant flowers, sandalwood powder, yak-tail fly-flaps, banners and streamers. They came along singing celestial songs and playing all kinds of celestial musical instruments.

The prince, who, as described above, had gone forth in such magnificence, passed through the three kingdoms of Sākiya, Koliya and Malla in one single night, covering a distance of 30 leagues, eventually arriving on the bank of the River Anomā.

> The royal horse Kanthaka possessed the power of speed which enabled him to run around the mountains at the edge of the world-element in the early morning and arrive back in time for the morning meal, which was readily prepared for him. Nevertheless, it should be especially noted that at that time the garlands of scented flowers strewn by the Devas and Brahmas, Nāgas and Garuḷas, etc., from the sky were covering the ground up to the height of the horse's navel and so he had trudged along, struggling through the mass of garlands of flowers as though making his way through marshy ground and thus he was able to cover only 30 leagues in one whole night. [276]

[114] 600 lighted torches according to the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary.

4: The Early Days of the Renunciation

Crossing the River Anomā

Having reached the other bank of the river Anomā, the prince brought the royal horse to a halt at the edge of the river and asked charioteer Channa: "What is the name of this river?" When the charioteer replied that it was the Anomā, he took it as a good omen, saying: "My being a recluse will not be of poor quality; in fact, it will be a superior one (*anomā*)." Then by striking Kanthaka with the heel he gave it the signal for crossing the river, and Kanthaka jumped over to the other side of the very wide Anomā and stood there.

After alighting from Kanthaka, and while standing on the pearly sandbank, the prince addressed charioteer Channa: "Friend Channa, take Kanthaka together with my ornaments and return home. I will become a recluse." When Channa said that he would also like to do the same, the prince forbade him three times saying: "You do have permission to become a recluse, friend Channa. Just go back to the city." And he handed over Kanthaka and the ornaments to Channa.

Cutting his Hair

Thereafter, considering: "These locks of mine do not suit a recluse, I shall cut them with my sword," the prince, with the sword in his right hand, cut off the hair-knot and seized it together with the diadem with his left hand. His hair of two finger-breaths in length that was left behind cuffed to the right and lay close to the head. The length of the hair remained two fingers long till the end of his life with no further cutting. The beard and the whiskers also existed for his whole life with their length good enough to look beautiful like the hair. There was no necessity for the Bodhisatta to shave them again.

The Bodhisatta, holding the hair-knot together with the diadem, made a solemn resolution thus: "If I am one who will become a Buddha, let this hair-knot stay in the sky. If not, let it fall to the ground," and threw them up into the sky. Thereupon, the hair-knot together with the diadem went as far up as one league and marvellously remained in the sky like a hanging festoon of flowers.

At that time, Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, saw the Bodhisatta's hair by means of his divine eye; and he received it and the diadem with a jewel casket, one league in size, and took them to his abode of Tāvatiṁsa. He then enshrined them

in the Cūḷamaṇi Cetiya which he erected and embellished with the seven kinds of precious gems and which was three leagues high.

The Requisites

Again, the Bodhisatta reflected: "These garments of mine, made in the country of Kāsi, are priceless. They are not proper for one who is an ascetic." Then Brahma Ghaṭikāra, who happened to be an old friend in the lifetime of Buddha Kassapa, considered with his genuine and noble loving-kindness (*mettā*) that had remained throughout the whole aeon empty of Buddhas (*Buddhantara-kappa*): "Ah, today my friend the Bodhisatta, seeing danger in such miserable phenomena as birth, old age, etc., has gone forth on a great renunciation (*mahābhinikkhamana*). I shall go, taking the requisites of a recluse for this old friend of mine, the Bodhisatta Prince." So he brought the eight requisites, namely, a double robe, an upper robe, a lower robe, a belt,[115] a needle and thread, an adze,[116] a bowl with its bag, and a water-strainer,[117] and offered them to the Bodhisatta.

> The intervening period of time between the rise of one Buddha and another Buddha is called a period between Buddhas (*Buddhantara-kappa*). The period between Buddhas in this episode of the Brahma's offerings was the intervening period between the time of Buddha Kassapa's appearance and that of Buddha Gotama's. After Buddha Kassapa appeared at the time when the lifespan of beings was 20,000 years, it gradually dwindled down to ten years and from that stage it rose again up to an immeasurable period (*asaṅkhyeyya*). On its decline, it went down to 100 years, and that is when Buddha Gotama appeared. Therefore, the intervening period in this case was more than one inclusive period (*antara-kappa*) long. [277]

Thereupon, the Bodhisatta assumed the appearance of a noble recluse by putting on the robes properly – the robes which may be termed the banner of the Arahant, which were offered by the Brahma. Then he threw up also his layman's garments into the sky.

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[115] The four requisites that are close to, and go along with, the body.

[116] A kind of knife for making teeth-cleaning sticks and for peeling sugar-cane.

[117] These are the four external requisites.

> Though there was nobody who could instruct the Bodhisatta Prince how to use the robes, etc., it should be understood that he knew the manner of using the requisites because he was experienced in so doing, as he was a monk in the presence of former Buddhas and as he was of great intelligence.

Thereupon, Brahma Ghaṭikāra seized the Bodhisatta's garments that were thrown up into the sky. He erected a shrine (*cetiya*), twelve leagues in size and finished with various kinds of gems, where he kept these garments in reverence. As the shrine contains the garments, it is called the Dussa Cetiya.

> Here, in connection with the location and the height of the shrine, it is explicitly written by the Monywe Zetawun Sayādaw in the Light on the All-Seeing One (*Samanta-cakkhu-dīpanī*): "Since the garments were brought by Brahma Ghaṭikāra, who was of Akaniṭṭha Abode, it should be taken that the Dussa Cetiya exists in the same Abode." And quoting the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) and other works he adds: "The Dussa Cetiya, which is twelve leagues in height, should be considered to have existed in the Suddhāvāsa Akaniṭṭha Brahma world."
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> With reference to the eight requisites offered by Brahma Ghaṭikāra, the first volume of the Traditions (*Apadāna*) commentary (PTS 115) explains it differently: The Bodhisatta became a recluse after accepting the eight requisites which, by the power of the meritorious deeds of the perfections, appeared in a lotus-heart on the mound of the Mahā Bodhi at the beginning of the world and were brought therefrom by the Brahma (*Brahmunā ānīte iddhi-maye kappassa saṇṭhāna-kāle paduma-gabbhe nibbatte aṭṭha parikkhāre paṭiggahetvā pabbajitvā*).
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> It is relying on this statement of the Traditions (*Apadāna*) commentary that the incident is versified in the Poem on Restraint (*Saṁvara Pyo*). In the Illustration of the Meaning of the Victor (*Jinattha-pakāsanī*) too, it is said: "These eight requisites appeared in a complete set in the lotus flower that blossomed as an omen when the world first came into existence."
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> In the commentary on the Long Discourse on the Traditions (*Mahāpadāna-sutta*, DN 14), however, it is stated: "The region of the Mahā Bodhi disappears last, at the time of the dissolution of the world and rises first, at the time of its origination. When the world originates, a lotus-heart appears, as an omen, at the site of the Bodhi-maṇḍala. If Buddhas are to appear in that existing aeon, the lotus-heart blooms; if Buddhas are not to appear, it does not bloom. If it is an aeon of only one

> Buddha, a single flower blossoms; if it is an aeon of two Buddhas, two flowers blossom; if it is that of three, four or five Buddhas, three, four or five flowers blossom respectively from the same cluster. Thus mention is made only of whether flowers blossom or not, but there is no mention of the requisites readily borne in the flowers.
>
> Although the robes offered by Brahma Ghaṭikāra are explained in the Traditions (*Apadāna*) [278] commentary as: The requisites which appeared by the power of the Bodhisatta's meritorious deeds (*iddhi-maya-parikkharā*), Ven. Buddhaghosa in his Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*) commentary (PTS 2.382), says: After putting on the robes offered by Brahma Ghaṭikāra and taking the earthen bowl, the Bodhisatta entered the city by the eastern gate and went round for alms from house to house (*deva-dattiyaṁ paṁsukūla-cīvaraṁ pārupitvā mattikāpattaṁ gahetvā, pācīna-dvārena nagaraṁ pavisitvā, anugharaṁ piṇḍāya acari*).
>
> Taking into consideration this statement of Mahā Buddhaghosa, it should be understood that the robes offered by Brahma Ghaṭikāra were not the robes that appeared by the power of the Bodhisatta's deeds of merit (*iddhi-maya*), but the robes given by a celestial being (*deva-dattiya*). All this is mentioned for pondering the question whether it is a fact or not that the requisites offered by the Brahma were those contained in the lotus-heart that appeared as an omen on the mound of the Mahā Bodhi at the beginning of the world.

After becoming a recluse, the Bodhisatta sent back the charioteer Channa, saying: "Friend Channa, convey to my mother Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī and my father King Suddhodana that I am in good health." Then Channa, after doing obeisance respectfully to the Bodhisatta and circumambulating him, took the bundle of the Bodhisatta's ornaments along with the horse and departed.

The Rebirth of Kanthaka

Since he overheard the Bodhisatta's conversation with charioteer Channa, Kanthaka the horse had been lamenting with the thought: "From now on, I shall have no opportunity of seeing my master." When he went out of sight of the Bodhisatta, he could not bear the grief that arose from the suffering of separation from one's beloved (*piyehi vippayoga*). As he was leaving behind the Bodhisatta, whom he loved so dearly, he died of a broken heart and was reborn in Tāvatiṁsa as a celestial being by the same name of Kanthaka. As for charioteer Channa, he had at first a grief caused by his separation from the

Bodhisatta and now that Kanthaka had died, a second grief overcame him. Oppressed by the double sorrow, he made his way home to the city of Kapilavatthu, weeping and crying.

> On his death, Kanthaka was reborn a Deva with the same name amidst great luxury and retinue in the realm of Tāvatiṁsa. Since he had been closely associated with the Bodhisatta and at his service in many existences, he died, being unable to withstand the misery of separation from the Bodhisatta. His rebirth in Tāvatiṁsa was not due to that sorrow. In the Bodhisatta's speech made to him while he was about to be mounted, immediately before his master's renunciation, he heard: "Kanthaka, I am giving up the world in order to gain omniscience." On hearing the words of the Bodhisatta's renunciation which had nothing to do with sensual pleasures, he became filled with joy and satisfaction that accompanied his clarity of mind, leading to the development of merit headed by faith. As a result of this merit, his rebirth as a deity took place in Tāvatiṁsa. Later on, when he visited the Buddha and listened to the Dhamma, he became a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*). All this is mentioned in the Stories about Mansions (*Vimāna-vatthu*) commentary. Those who wish to read a detailed account may refer to it (VvA, PTS 311*ff*).

The Bodhisatta's Visit to Rājagaha

After becoming a recluse, the Bodhisatta spent seven full days in bliss in the nearby Mango Grove called Anupiya, and travelled a journey of 30 leagues on foot in one single day and entered the city of Rājagaha. This is the statement made in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary and the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary. According to the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*) commentary, however, the Bodhisatta, after becoming a recluse, observed the precepts with pure livelihood as the eighth (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*), and journeyed to Rājagaha, 30 leagues away from the banks of the river Anomā in seven days. [279]

When he was about to visit the city of Rājagaha for alms food, he stood at the eastern gate of the city, then it occurred to him thus: "If I send a message to King Bimbisāra about my visit, he will know that Prince Siddhattha, the son of King Suddhodana, has come to my city and, with due regard and attention, he will send plenty of offerings. It is not proper for me as an ascetic to inform him and receive the four requisites. Right now, I should go on alms round." So, after

putting on the rag robes (*paṁsukūlika*) offered by Brahma Ghaṭikāra and taking the bowl with his hand, the Bodhisatta entered the city by the eastern gate and went round from house to house for alms food.

For seven days before the Bodhisatta entered Rājagaha for alms, a festival was celebrated on a big scale and was enjoyed by all. The day the Bodhisatta entered the city, King Bimbisāra had the proclamation made to the people by beating the drum: "The festival is over. The people should now attend to their respective trades." At that time, the citizens were still assembled in the palace ground. When the king opened the window, which was supported by a lion figure, and looked out to give the necessary instructions, he saw the Bodhisatta, who was entering Rājagaha for alms, with his sense-faculties well composed.

On seeing the incomparably graceful appearance of the Bodhisatta, the people of Rājagaha as a whole became wildly excited and the whole city turned into a state of commotion in the same way as it happened when Nāḷāgiri, the elephant, also known as Dhanapāla, entered the city, or in the same way as the male and female residents of celestial Tāvatiṁsa became agitated and perturbed when Vepacitti, the Lord of the Asuras, entered their abode.

When the noble Bodhisatta went round with the elegance of a king of the Chaddanta elephants for alms, from house to house in the city of Rājagaha, the citizens, seeing the incomparably graceful appearance of the Bodhisatta, were filled with strong feelings of joy and astonishment and became occupied with the sole intention of viewing the Bodhisatta's unique demeanour.

One of the people then said to another: "Friend, how is it? Is it the lunar mansion that has come down to the human abode with all its radiance concealed in fear of Rāhu, the King of the Asuras?"

The second man ridiculed the first by saying: "What are you talking about, friend? Have you ever seen the full moon coming down to the human world? The fact is that Kāma Deva, the God of Desire, seeing the splendour of our king and his people, has come in disguise to play and have fun with us."

Then the third person ridiculed the second by saying: "Friend, how is it? Are you crazy? Kāma Deva is one whose body is jet-black as he has been terribly burnt by the flame of arrogance and anger. The truth is that the person we are seeing now is Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, endowed with 1,000 eyes, who has come into our city mistaking it for his abode of Tāvatiṁsa."

That third person was told in a rather smiling manner by the fourth: "How could you say so? Your words are self-contradictory. To name him Sakka, where are his thousand eyes? Where is his thunderbolt weapon? Why is he not riding elephant Erāvaṇa?[118] In fact, he is Brahma, who, knowing that Brahmins have forgotten their Vedas and all, has come to urge them not to forget their learning and to practise in accordance with them."

Another man, a man of learning, reproached them and stopped them, saying: "This is neither the moon-disc, nor Kāma nor Sakka nor Brahma. As a matter of fact, he is the most extraordinary man, the chief among men, the leader and teacher of the three worlds."

While the citizens of Rājagaha were thus talking among themselves, each from his own point of view, royal servants went to King Bimbisāra and reported thus: "Great King, a [280] wonderful person whom nobody knows whether he is a celestial being, a Gandhabba, a Nāga or a Yakkha, is going round for alms food in our city of Rājagaha." Upon hearing their words, the king, who had already seen the Bodhisatta while standing on the upper terrace of the palace, was struck with wonder and sent his ministers with the order: "Go and make careful inquiries about this man; if he is a Gandhabba, he will go through the air; if he is a Yakkha, he will disappear when out of the city; if he is a Nāga, he will sink into the earth and disappear. If he is a real human being, he will go to a certain place and eat his alms food."

With his sense-faculties and mind well-composed and in his unique elegance, with downcast eyes looking only a few feet in front of him, captivating the eyes of the Rājagaha people, he went round and collected food just enough for his sustenance. The food which he received included all kinds of edibles, coarse and fine, of various colours all mixed up together. Then he asked the people: "Where do those ascetics who come to this city usually stay?" The people answered: "They usually stay at the entrance of the cave, facing east, on top of Paṇḍava mountain." And so the noble Bodhisatta left the city by the eastern gate, through which he had entered. Thereafter he sat facing east at the entrance of the cave

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[118] If he is really Sakka, he must have a thousand eyes, the thunderbolt as his weapon and Erāvaṇa as his conveyance. He has none of them.

on the mountain and tried to eat the mixed meal of coarse and fine food that he had received.

Having enjoyed kingly bliss, which was as great as that of a Universal Monarch, only a few days previously, he made an effort to eat a morsel of food which was a mixture of coarse and fine foods in assorted colours. As he was about to put the morsel into his mouth, he felt miserable and almost vomited with his intestines turning upside down, for he had never seen such kinds of food in his life and found it particularly disgusting.

Then he admonished himself by saying: "You, Siddhattha, in spite of the fact that you have been reigning supreme in a palace where food and drinks are available at your pleasure and where you have meals of three-year-old seasoned fragrant rice with different delicacies whenever you like, you, on seeing a recluse in rag robes contemplated: 'When shall I eat the meals obtained by going on alms round from house to house after becoming a recluse like him? When will the time come for me to live on meals thus collected?' and have you not renounced the world and become a recluse with such thoughts? Now that your dream has come true, why do you change your mind?" Then without the slightest revulsion, he took the meal that was so rough and coarse.

The three ministers, sent by King Bimbisāra to investigate, approached the Bodhisatta and explored all the facts concerning him. Then two of the three stayed behind while the third returned to the king and reported: "Great King, that recluse who had gathered alms food is still sitting peacefully at the entrance of the cave, facing east, on top of mount Paṇḍava absolutely without fear like a lion king, or a tiger king or a bull king, after eating, in a normal manner, the meal that he had obtained." Thereupon, King Bimbisāra made haste and went in an excellent chariot to the Bodhisatta's place on Mount Paṇḍava, as far as the chariot could go; and then leaving the chariot, he continued his journey on foot.

When he got near the Bodhisatta, with permission he sat down on the cold stone slab and being very much impressed with the Bodhisatta's deportment, he gladly conversed with him. He said: "Friend, you are still young and tender in age. You are also endowed with a handsome physique and characteristics. I think that you are of good birth belonging to a pure ruling class. I offer you as much royal pleasure and wealth as you want in these two countries of Aṅga and Magadha

which are under my rule. Be a king and reign! Please also tell me your lineage." Thus the king asked about the Bodhisatta and offered kingship to him.

Then the Bodhisatta considered: "If I had the desire to be a king, such a Deva king as the Four Great Kings of the celestial world and others would have offered me their respective regal fortunes. Or, if I remained living a kingly life in my palace, it would have been certain that I would become a Universal Monarch. Not knowing this, this King Bimbisāra has made such a proposal to me saying in such a way. I will now let him know of my royal life." So thinking he stretched out his right hand pointing in the direction whence he had come; and then he said in verse: (Snp 424-426, PTS 73) [281]

Ujuṁ janapado rāja, Himavantassa passato,
dhana-viriyena sampanno Kosalesu niketino.

O, noble king, you who please your people with loving-kindness by ruling them with the four modes of support.[119] In the land of the Kosalan people near the mountains named the Himavanta, which is straight from here, in the direction of the north, exists the region of Kapilavatthu, full of grain, food and drink and famed like the divine city of Amaravati. That region belongs to my father, Mahā Suddhodana, the excellent torch of the lineage of the sun that has long had an aristocratic ancestry since the beginning of the world. It is the place which is endowed with the seven kinds of treasure and men of valour, numbering 82,000, who have the ability of plucking a star at the end of the sky by means of their prowess.

Ādiccā nāma gottena, Sākiyā nāma jātiyā,
tamhā kulā pabbajitomhi, na kāme abhipatthayaṁ.

O noble king, you who are recognized as a Deva! Because I am not a stranger but related to the Sun-god, I am Ādicca by clan, which is pure. I am Sākiya by birth, which is glorious, a new name which came about through the joyous utterance of King Ukkaka. Coming from the Ādicca clan and from Sākiya royal lineage, I have renounced the world with a view to becoming a Buddha, not because I aspire after objects of sensual pleasures.

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[119] Four modes of support (*saṅgaha-vatthu*). See the Further Explanations.

Kāmesvādīnavaṁ disvā, nekkhammam daṭṭhu khemato,
padhānāya gamissāmi, ettha me rañjatī mano.

O noble king, you who are recognized as a Deva! With my insight wisdom, I saw clearly more of suffering and less of enjoyment in the material objects of sensual pleasures. I also saw renunciation of both the objects and the defilements of sensual pleasures as a haven, free from dangers. Having seen thus, I became a recluse with becoming a Buddha as my goal. I will proceed to strive for the attainment of Nibbāna, the ultimate reality that comes of renunciation and that excels all other states immensely in its quality of peace. My mind always yearns for that state called Nibbāna which is far superior to all other states.

With these three verses, the Bodhisatta told King Bimbisāra that he had come from the lineage of Sākiya and had taken up an ascetic life; that he had no desire at all for material pleasures; and that, having become a recluse with the aim of achieving Nibbāna, he would be retreating to the forest for the practice of the austerities (*dukkara-cariyā*) in order to speedily attain that very state of Nibbāna.

When told thus, King Bimbisāra replied: "Venerable sir, I have already heard that: "Prince Siddhattha, the son of King Suddhodana, after seeing the four omens with his own eyes, renounced the world to become a recluse, in order to attain Perfect Self-Awakening, the supreme leadership in the three worlds." Having seen by myself your great aspiration after Nibbāna, I firmly believe that you will become a Buddha. Venerable sir, let me make a supplication to you. When you have become a Buddha, please visit my country first and foremost!" After thus solemnly extending his invitation, King Bimbisāra went back into the city. [282]

5: Praticing Meditation

The Bodhisatta's meeting with Āḷāra

The Bodhisatta took instruction from and had discussion with sect-leaders Āḷāra and Udaka, and thereafter gained the eight mundane attainments.

> *Atha Rājagahaṁ vara-Rājagahaṁ,*
> *nara-rāja-vare nagaraṁ tu gate,*
> *giri-rāja-varo muni-rāja-varo,*
> *migi-rāja-gato sugato pi gato.*
>
> Then, when King Bimbisāra, the noble ruler of the people of the Magadha country, having spoken and extended his invitation to the Bodhisatta, returned and entered the city of Rājagaha, founded by that glorious Universal Monarch, Mahā Govinda, lord of the people and leader of humans and other powerful monarchs. The blessed Bodhisatta who was endowed with all excellent qualities like Meru, chief of mountains, who was the righteous monarch of ascetics, and whose graceful deportment was like that of the lion, lord of the beasts, also went to the sylvan palace in search of Nibbāna, the supreme peace.

In accordance with this verse that occurs in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary (PTS 286) and the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*), when the righteous King Bimbisāra had gone back to the city of Rājagaha, the Bodhisatta set out on a journey in quest of the bliss of Nibbāna, which is known as sublime peace (*santi-vara*). On his way, he reached the place of a great religious teacher, Āḷāra by name and Kālāma by clan.

> As the meetings of the Bodhisatta with the sect-leaders Āḷāra and Udaka have been dealt with elaborately in the Pāḷi text, the commentaries, such as those on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*), contain only a brief account of it. But for our readers, it may not be easy to have access to the text. Therefore the chapter on this incident will be treated with a few more details in this chronicle.
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> In this connection, it may he asked: "Why did the noble Bodhisatta go to Āḷāra and Udaka and not to the famous heretical teachers who claimed to be Buddhas, such as Pūraṇa Kassapa and others?" The reason was that the systems of practice of the heretical teachers were not substantial ones. The

> Bodhisatta himself had made investigations, for as long ago as 91 aeons, by personally following their courses, just to know whether they were of true value or not. From his personal experiences, he knew thoroughly that they were not. Therefore, he did not go to these heretical teachers; he approached the well-known teacher Āḷāra, who was leading a religious life surrounded by numerous followers.

When he reached the place of Āḷāra, the sect-leader, the Bodhisatta made a request saying: "Friend, you of the Kālāma clan, I wish to lead a holy life in this system of yours." Then Āḷāra gave his permission and words of encouragement sincerely: "Noble friend, do practice in this system of ours! Ours is one that enables an intelligent practising person, in no long time, to realize the teacher's view and to abide blissfully."

As permitted by Āḷāra the sect-leader, the Bodhisatta soon underwent studies in the newly found system. Being a man of superb intelligence, the Bodhisatta could easily learn Āḷāra's doctrine and practice. Just by repeating what the teacher uttered with slight lip movements, the Bodhisatta reached the stage of learning at which he could say: "I have understood!" In fact, he did declare: "I have understood! I have seen the course!" and the sect-leader and his other disciples also agreed to his declaration.

On considering the way the sect-leader Āḷāra had spoken with authority on the course of practice, which resulted in the realization of the absorption on the sphere of nothingness (*ākiñcaññāyatana-jhāna*), he came to [283] know thus: "It does not appear that the sect-leader Āḷāra has just learnt by heart only through faith and without personal wisdom the course of practice leading to this absorption on the sphere of nothingness. Verily, this teacher must be one who has himself gained and realized the seven mundane attainments." And so he approached the teacher again and asked him thus: "Friend belonging to the Kālāma clan, to what extent do you say that you yourself dwelt realizing this doctrine of yours?" As he had himself realized it, Āḷāra replied in the manner of those who had practical knowledge, not simply theoretical knowledge, by giving a full account of the seven attainments up to the absorption on the sphere of nothingness.

Thereupon, it occurred to the Bodhisatta thus: "Not only does the sect-leader Āḷāra possess faith, firm enough to attain the absorptions, I, too, have faith firm enough to attain the absorptions. Not only does he possess energy, mindfulness,

concentration and wisdom strong enough to reach absorption (*appanā-jhāna*), I, too, have energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom strong enough to reach it. Āḷāra says that he has himself realized the seven mundane absorptions attainments up to the sphere of nothingness with super knowledges (*abhiññā*) and abides blissfully therein. It would be good if I, too, were to strive to realize like him the seven mundane absorption attainments." With this intent, he strenuously practised the preliminary duties (*kasiṇa-parikamma*), and within two or three days he himself realized, like his teacher Āḷāra, the seven mundane attainments up to the absorption on the sphere of nothingness and dwelt blissfully therein.

Then the Bodhisatta went to the sect-leader Āḷāra and asked: "Friend Kālāma, do you say that through this much of practice you have yourself realized with the super knowledges these seven mundane absorptions and dwelt blissfully therein?" When Āḷāra replied in the affirmative, the Bodhisatta informed him thus: "Friend, through this much of practice, I, too, have myself realized with the super knowledges these seven mundane absorptions up to the absorption on the sphere of nothingness and dwelt blissfully therein." Thereupon, as befitting a noble person free of the mental impurity of envy (*issā*) and selfishness (*macchariya*), Āḷāra the sect-leader spoke joyful words of altruism thus: "We have seen with our eyes a fellow recluse of sharp intelligence like your noble self. It is a great gain for us, friend!"[120]

> *Issābhibhūta lokamhi, Āḷāro yo anissukī,*
> *vaṇṇavādī sudhīrassa, aho uḷārachandata.*
>
> In the wide world dominated by the evil thought of envy (*issā*), which is a jealous feeling caused by another's welfare and good fortune, Āḷāra the sect-leader, being a true noble personage without envy, openly spoke words of praise to the Bodhisatta who was possessed of sharp, quick and incomparable intelligence. Being a person endowed with purely honest and Arahat desire (*chanda*) like that of Āḷāra the noble teacher, who has unblemished wisdom, is indeed exemplary and deserving of acclaim with the snapping of the fingers!

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[120] [I have been unable to locate this quotation.]

Āḷāra offers to share Leadership

Not only had the sect-leader Āḷāra spoken out words of praise, as has been said above, for he was a person free of such mental impurity as envy and selfishness, but he went further, saying: "Superb man, what I have, by myself, realized with super knowledges and taught, you have, by yourself, realized with super knowledges! What you have, by yourself, realized with super knowledges, I have, by myself, realized with super knowledges and taught. In this way, the doctrine I have discerned, you also have. The doctrine you have discerned, I also have. In this way, you are like me, and I am like you. Please come, friend, let us both take charge in harmony of this sect of such numerous followers." He then gave a signal to his followers to assemble and said: "Disciples, I have gained the seven attainments, so has this superb man, like me. You disciples numbering this many should take instruction from this superb man; you disciples numbering this many should take instruction from me." So saying he entrusted half of his disciples to the Bodhisatta. [284]

Not only did he equally share his followers but he also sent his male and female supporters, who came to wait upon him, bringing perfumes and flowers, to the Bodhisatta, saying: "Go and pay homage to the superb man!" As directed by the sect-leader, the male and female supporters first paid homage to the Bodhisatta and then paid homage to their master with what was left of the perfumes and flowers. When they went to offer costly couches and seats, they were asked to offer them to the Bodhisatta first and he would accept the remaining ones, if any. Wherever they went, he gave priority to the Bodhisatta in respect of excellent sleeping and living accommodations. In this way, as a man of magnanimity, Āḷāra treated the Bodhisatta, who was his disciple at the time, with high esteem and honour although he was the teacher.

The Bodhisatta Departs

Having put in effort and gained the seven mundane absorption attainments, as he had acquired absorption experiences in his previous existences and as he was highly intelligent, the Bodhisatta soon reflected on the nature and prospects of these attainments in the present life and the benefits to be derived therefrom in the next; and he came to know perfectly well the nature and prospects of the said seven attainments up to the absorption on the sphere of nothingness in the present life and his rebirth that would take place in the Brahma abode of the

Sphere of Nothingness (*Ākiñcaññāyatana*) in the next. Thereupon, he came to the conclusion that these seven mundane absorptions fell within the cycle of suffering (*vaṭṭa-dukkha*). He also contemplated thus: "The aggregate of these attainments cannot lead to weariness in the cycle of suffering, to detachment, to the cessation of defilements such as lust (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*), etc., to extinction of all these defilements, to knowledge of all that is to be known, to achievement of the knowledge of the four paths, to the realization of Nibbāna. In fact, these seven attainments result at most only in the Brahma abode of the Sphere of Nothingness (*Ākiñcaññāyatana*), where one lives for 60,000 great aeons (*mahā-kappas*), but they will not produce any benefit superior to that. The highest Brahma world of the Sphere of Nothingness in which the same absorption results is also only a realm which is not liberated from the dangers of birth, decay and death. It is, in fact, a region already encircled by the snares of the king of death.

A man, severely afflicted with hunger, at first eats with relish a big plateful of a delicious meal, but later on, he becomes fed up and feels repugnant at it, on account of derangement of the bile or the phlegm or of the falling of a fly onto the meal and he abandons it without the slightest thought of taking another morsel. In the same way, the Bodhisatta, after putting in effort and gaining the said seven mundane absorption attainments within two or three days without difficulty, at first dwelt in and enjoyed the said attainments; but from the moment he discerned the aforesaid defects, such as their being still within the cycle of suffering, etc., he entirely lost interest in exercising the seven attainments, even by means of one of the five kinds of mastery. He repeatedly abandoned the attainments, saying: "These seven attainments are of no use whatsoever! These seven attainments are of no use whatsoever!" And as he was wearied of them, he departed from the sect-leader Āḷāra.

The Bodhisatta's meeting with Udaka

Having departed from the sect-leader Āḷāra, and being desirous of seeking the bliss of Nibbāna, named sublime peace (*santi-vara*), the Bodhisatta went on searching until he came upon the leader of another sect, Udaka, the son of Rāma. Therefore, he asked the sect-leader Udaka for permission to study with him by saying: "Friend, I wish to lead a holy life in this system of yours."

Then the sect-leader Udaka, the son of Rāma, replied thus in giving permission: "Friend, please practice in this system of ours! Our doctrine, if put into practice with effort by learned persons, will enable them, in a short time, to realize with the super knowledges the teacher's view (*ācariya-vāda*) and to live in happiness."

Accordingly, the Bodhisatta lost no time to learn the doctrine and the course of practice of Udaka, the sect-leader. As with Āḷāra, the leader of the previous sect, the Bodhisatta, being highly intelligent, could easily learn the doctrine and the course of practice. Just by repeating what the teacher uttered with slight movements of the lips, the Bodhisatta reached the stage at which he could say: "I have understood!" In fact, he did announce: "I have understood! I have seen the course!" and this was confirmed by the sect-leader Udaka and his disciples. [285]

On considering the way Udaka explained, according to their traditional method he had learned from his father, the course of practice leading to the aborption on the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception (*nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana-jhāna*), the Bodhisatta came to understand thus: "It does not seem that Rāma, the deceased father of Udaka, had merely learnt by heart, believing what others speak of the course of practice leading to the aborption on the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. In fact, the teacher Rāma, the father of Udaka, must have been one who has personally gained and realized the eight mundane aborptions."

> When the sect-leader Udaka was having discussions with the Bodhisatta, he had not yet himself realized the eight attainments, he was then telling the Bodhisatta what had been told by his father Rāma. When the Bodhisatta had learnt from him and realized, within two or three days, the eight mundane aborptions up to the highest of them all, the aborption on the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, he parted company with Udaka.
>
> As for Udaka himself, only when the Bodhisatta had left him, he was greatly overcome by spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) and made exertion to gain the attainments; as befitting one who had previous experiences in meditation, he realized the aborptions up to neither-perception-nor-non-perception. Direct mention of this point is made in the sub-commentary to MN 26. This accounts for the Bodhisatta's consideration with reference to Udaka's father, Rāma, and his question about the great teacher Rāma alone in his discussion with Udaka.

The Bodhisatta approached the sect-leader Udaka again and asked him directly: "Friend, to what extent did your father, Rāma the master, say that he himself dwelt realizing this doctrine of his?" Udaka replied that his father did so to the extent of the aborption on the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

Then it occurred to the Bodhisatta: "Not only did Udaka's father, Rāma the master, possess faith firm enough to attain the aborption on the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, I, too, have such faith leading to that absorption. Not only did he possess energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom strong enough to reach the aborption on the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, I, too, have such energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom to get there.

Udaka's father, Rāma the master, said that he had personally realized the eight mundane aborption attainments up to the aborption on the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception with the super knowledges (*abhiññā*) and dwelt blissfully therein. It would be good if I, too, were to strive to realize, like him, the eight mundane aborption attainments." With this intent, he strenuously practised the preliminary duties (*kasiṇa-parikamma*), and within two or three days, he himself realized, like Udaka's father, Rāma the master, the eight mundane aborption attainments up to the aborption on the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception and dwelt blissfully therein.

Then the Bodhisatta went again to the sect-leader Udaka and said: "Friend, did your father, Rāma the master, say that through this much of the practice, he had, by himself, realized with the super knowledges the eight mundane aborptions and dwelt blissfully therein?" When Udaka replied in the affirmative, the Bodhisatta informed him thus: "Friend, through this much of practice, I, too, have, by myself, realized with the super knowledges the eight mundane aborptions up to the aborption on the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception and dwelt blissfully therein." Thereupon, as befitting a noble person free from the mental impurity of envy and selfishness, Udaka the sect-leader, like Āḷāra the leader of the previous sect, spoke joyful words of altruism thus: "We have seen with our own eyes a fellow recluse and spiritual companion of sharp intelligence like you. It is a great gain for us, friend!"

Udaka offers Him Leadership

Not only had the sect-leader Udaka spoken congratulatory words, as has been said above, as befitting one who was free from the mental impurity of envy and selfishness, he went further, saying: "Superb man, what my father, Rāma the master, had, by himself, realized with the super knowledges and taught, you, superb man, have, by yourself, realized with the super knowledges. What you have, by yourself, realized with the super knowledges, my father, Rāma the master, had, by himself, realized with the super knowledges and taught. In this way, the doctrine my father had [286] discerned, you have also. The doctrine you have discerned, my father, Rāma the master, had. In this way, you are like my father, and my father is like you. Please come friend, please take charge of this great sect." So saying, he entrusted the Bodhisatta with the whole sect. Thus Udaka appointed his fellow ascetic and spiritual companion, the Bodhisatta, as his own teacher. Not only did he entrust him with the entire sect but he honoured the Bodhisatta with reverence the way Āḷāra, the sect-leader, did, as has been mentioned before.

The Bodhisatta Departs

Having put efforts and gained the eight mundane aborption attainments, as he had acquired aborption experiences in his previous existences and as he was highly intelligent, the Bodhisatta soon reflected on the nature and prospects of the said eight aborption attainments, up to the aborption on the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception in the present life and the fruits that would accrue in the future. He came to know perfectly well the nature and prospects of these eight aborption attainments, up to the aborption on the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception in the present life and his rebirth that would take place in the Brahma abode of the Sphere of Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception (*Nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana*) hereafter.

Therefore, he came to the conclusion that these eight mundane aborptions fell within the cycle of suffering, and he also contemplated thus: "The aggregate of these attainments cannot lead to weariness in the cycle of suffering, to detachment, to the cessation of the defilements such as lust (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*), etc., to extinction of all these defilements, to knowledge of all that is to be known, to achievement of knowledge of the four paths, to realization of Nibbāna. In fact, these eight attainments result, at most, only in the Brahma

abode of the Sphere of Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception where one lives for 84,000 great aeons (*mahā-kappa*), but they cannot produce any benefit superior to that. The highest Brahma world of the Sphere of Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception in which the same aborption results, is a realm which is not liberated from the dangers of birth, decay and death. It is, in fact, a region already encircled by the snares of the king of death."

A man, severely afflicted with hunger, at first eats with relish a big plateful of a delicious meal, but later on, he becomes fed up and feels repugnant at it, on account of the derangement of the bile or the phlegm or of the falling of a fly onto the meal and he abandons it without the slightest thought of taking another morsel. In the same way, the Bodhisatta, after putting efforts and gaining the said eight mundane aborption attainments within two or three days without difficulty, at first dwelt in and enjoyed the said attainments; but from the moment he discerned the aforesaid defects, such as their being within the cycle of suffering, etc., he had entirely lost interest in exercising the eight attainments, even by means of one of the five kinds of mastery. He repeatedly abandoned the attainments, saying: "These eight attainments are of no use whatever! These eight attainments are of no use whatever!" And as he was wearied of them, he departed from the sect-leader Udaka. [287]

6: The Practice of Austere Striving

Austere Striving in Uruvelā

After his departure from the sect-leader Udaka, the Bodhisatta went about the Magadha country still with his mind set on Nibbāna and eventually arrived in the market town of Senā. Near Senā was Uruvelā forest. In the forest, the natural lay of the land was delightful enough for noble and virtuous men. The forest itself was pleasant. The river Nerañjarā had an attractive landing place, free of mud and mire, with a sand beach like silvery sheets spread out, with pleasingly clean and clear currents full of sportive fish and tortoises, and the river flowed continuously. There were also small villages where forest dwelling ascetics could easily receive alms food. When the Bodhisatta saw all these features, he noted them carefully and then decided: "This is an ideal place for sons of good families seeking Nibbāna to undertake meditation." Accordingly, he built a small dwelling place with available dry firewood and leaves and stayed in the forest of Uruvelā to engage in meditation.

The Three Similes

Then there appeared in the mind of the Bodhisatta three similes. They are:

1. In order to make fire, however hard a man rubs with a fire-kindling stick, a big piece of wet firewood soaked in water, he cannot produce fire and will only become miserable.

In the same way, in this world, the so-called recluses and Brahmins, in whom the wet and slimy elements of sensual passion have not dried up and who do not stay away from sense objects also will not realize the paths and fruitions but will only become miserable, however hard they work to rid themselves of defilements. This was the first simile that manifested to the Bodhisatta.

> In this simile, those in whom the slimy elements of sensual passion have not dried up are likened to the big piece of wet fig-tree wood. The act of keeping themselves in the water of sense objects is likened to the act of keeping in water the piece of wet fig-tree wood. The inability to secure the fire or the knowledge of the path however hard they work without giving up sense objects is likened to the non-producing of fire but the producing of misery however hard the big piece of wet fig-tree wood soaked in water is rubbed. This simile signifies the asceticism of those wandering ascetics

all of whom are living a household life with a wife and children (*saputta-bhariyā-pabbajjā*).

2. In order to make fire, however hard a man rubs with a kindling stick, a piece of wet firewood kept on land away from water, he still cannot secure fire because of the wetness of the wood; instead he will only become miserable.

In the same way, in this world, the so-called recluses and Brahmins in whom the slimy elements of sensual passion have not dried up will not realize the paths and fruitions but will only become miserable however hard they work, staying away from the water of sense objects physically as well as mentally. This was the second simile that manifested to the Bodhisatta.

In this simile, those in whom the slimy elements of sensual passion have not dried up are likened to the piece of wet fig-tree wood. The inability to secure the fire of the knowledge of the path, however hard they work, staying away from sense objects both physically and mentally, is likened to the non-producing of fire, but the producing of misery instead of fire because of the wetness of the wood, however hard the piece of wet fig-tree wood kept on [288] land away from water is rubbed. This simile signifies the asceticism of those Brahmins who, having renounced their wives and children (*brāhmaṇa-dhammika-pabbajjā*), devote themselves to the wrong practice (*pāsaṇḍa*).

3. In order to make fire, when a man rubs with a fire-kindling stick, a big piece of dry firewood kept on land away from water, he can secure fire easily as the wood has been kept on land away from water and is itself dry.

In the same way, in this world, those who are called recluses and Brahmins, in whom the wet and slimy elements of sensual passion have been destroyed and who stay away from sense objects physically as well as mentally, can realize the paths and fruitions when they practise the correct ascetic doctrine, whether with difficulty or with ease. This was the third simile that manifested to the Bodhisatta.

This smile signifies the asceticism of the Bodhisatta himself.

The Group-of-Five

The Group-of-Five recluses (*pañca-vaggiya*), who had already taken up an ascetic life just after the birth of the Bodhisatta, enquired whether the

Bodhisatta Prince had renounced the world and had become a recluse or not. On hearing that the Bodhisatta had, they began to visit villages, market towns, etc., one after another, to look for the Bodhisatta and finally caught up with him in Uruvelā forest. Having strong hopes that: "In no time he will become a Buddha! In no time he will become a Buddha!" they waited upon the Bodhisatta who was engaged in austere striving (*dukkara-cariyā*) which would last for six years. They moved about with him, fulfilling their duties, such as sweeping the place, fetching hot and cold water and so on.

The Bodhisatta's Strenuous Exertions

The austere striving of the fourfold determination: 1) "Let only the skin be left!" 2) "Let only the sinews be left!" 3) "Let only the bones be left!" and 4) "Let the flesh and the blood dry up!" is called the strenuous exertion (*padhāna-viriya*). The practices to be mentioned now are called the work of exertion (*padhāna*) as they are done with strenuous exertion. They are also called austere striving (*dukkara-cariyā*) as they are difficult for ordinary people to practise.

> The first paragraph below is from the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*); the next six paragraphs are from the Great Discourse about Saccaka (*Mahā-saccaka-sutta*, MN 36).

Having repaired to the market town of Senā for alms round, the Bodhisatta spent a lot of days practising meditation for the development of loving-kindness (*mettā-bhāvanā*), and then it occurred to him: "What benefit will accrue from depending on this coarse and rough food, swallowed in morsels? By eating such food to my heart's content and developing loving-kindness, I will not achieve omniscience which is my goal." And so he gave up living on alms food and sustained himself by eating big and small fruits, which fell from the trees in the Uruvelā forest. Failing to achieve omniscience even in this way, he thought to himself: "This food consisting of big and small fruits is still coarse. Searching for fruit is also an impediment (*paḷibodha*)." Accordingly, he sustained himself only with the fruit which dropped from the tree he was using as a shelter.

Then the Bodhisatta considered: "It would be good if I, grinding my teeth and clicking my tongue, were to suppress unwholesome consciousness associated with wrong thoughts, such as sensual thoughts, with my wholesome consciousness associated with powerful right thoughts. It would be good if I

were to eradicate it. It would be good if I were to remove it by means of the fire of energy."

So, grinding his teeth and clicking his tongue, he suppressed unwholesome consciousness with wholesome consciousness. He did not let it arise but eradicated it. He removed it from his person by means of the fire of energy. Thereupon, sweat poured out from his armpits like the pouring down of sweat from the armpits of a feeble man when a man of strength held him by the head or the shoulders and pressed him down. At that moment, the Bodhisatta's effort was very vigorous – it was not slackened at all. His mindfulness was extremely distinct and steadfast; never did he lose his awareness. But his painful effort battered, as it were, the whole of his body, which was heated all [289] over and knew no relief. Although he was in such a miserable plight, his willingness to pursue the struggle remained unflinching.

Then it occurred to the Bodhisatta: "It would be good if I were to develop absorption on non-breathing (*appānaka-jhāna*) by restraint of out-breathing and in-breathing." So, with unrelenting effort, he restrained exhalation and inhalation through his mouth and his nose so that the air could not go out or come in. Then the air accumulated and escaped through his ears, through his mouth and his nose. The sound produced by the wind escaping was forceful like that from the bellows of a blacksmith. At that moment, the Bodhisatta's effort was very vigorous. It was not slackened at all. His mindfulness was extremely distinct and steadfast. Never did he lose his awareness. But his painful effort battered, as it were, the whole of his body, which was heated all over and knew no relief. Although he was in such a miserable plight, his willingness to pursue the struggle remained unflinching.

Then it occurred to the Bodhisatta: "It would be good if I were to develop the absorption on non-breathing (*appānaka-jhāna*) again." So with unrelenting effort, he restrained exhalation and inhalation through his mouth, his nose and his ears. Then, having no chance to escape through his mouth, his nose and his ears, the wind rushed up to his head, battering and piercing it. It was as if a man of strength was churning his head with a sharp and pointed drill. Even at that time, his energy was as vigorous as before, it was not slackened at all. His mindfulness also was still very distinct and steadfast. Never did he lose his awareness. But his painful effort battered, as it were, the whole of his body,

which was heated all over and knew no relief. Although he was in such a miserable plight, his willingness to pursue the struggle remained unflinching.

Again, it occurred to the Bodhisatta: "It would be good if I were to develop the absorption on non-breathing (*appānaka-jhāna*) again." So, with unrelenting effort, he restrained exhalation and inhalation through his nose and his mouth and his ears. Thereupon, a violent wind battered his head and as a result, he suffered from very severe headaches. It was like a great suffering caused by a man of tremendous strength who fastens a leather strap around the head and tightens it.[121] At that time, too, his energy was as vigorous as before, it was not slackened at all. His mindfulness was still very distinct and steadfast. Never did he lose his awareness. But his painful effort made the whole of his body battered, as it were, which was heated all over and knew no relief. Although he was in such a miserable plight, his willingness to pursue the struggle remained unflinching.

Still again, it occurred to the Bodhisatta: "It would be good if I were to develop the absorption on non-breathing (*appānaka-jhāna*) again." So, with unrelenting effort, he restrained exhalation and inhalation through his nose, his mouth and his ears, as before. Thereupon, the air was of such great intensity that it injured his abdomen as if carving it up. It was as if a skilful butcher or his assistant cut up the abdomen with a sharp butcher's knife. At that time, too, his energy was as strong as before, it was not slackened at all. His mindfulness was very distinct and steadfast. Never did he lose his awareness. But the painful effort made the whole of his body battered, as it were, which was heated all over and knew no relief. Although he was in such a miserable plight, his willingness to pursue the struggle remained unflinching.

Once more, it occurred to the Bodhisatta: "It would be good if I were to develop the absorption on non-breathing (*appānaka-jhāna*) again." So, with unrelenting effort, he restrained exhalation and inhalation through his mouth, his nose and his ears, as before. Thereupon, the whole of his body suffered from a violent burning disease (*ḍāha-roga*). It was like a severe burn when a weak man was grilled over a big fire by two strong men, each on either side, holding him by the

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[121] Imagine that a man of strength puts a large loop of a strong leather strap around your head and he twisted it with a stick to tighten it. His headaches were similar to this.

right arm and the left. At that time, the whole of the Bodhisatta's body burned hot. At the same time, his energy was not slackened but remained as strong as before. His [290] mindfulness was extremely distinct and steadfast. On account of the trauma of his strenuous exertion (*padhāna*), he could not, however, get peace. Nevertheless, his willingness to pursue the struggle remained unflinching.

The Bodhisatta Faints

Afflicted thus with a great heat all over his body, the Bodhisatta fainted and fell down into a sitting position while walking.[122] When the Bodhisatta fell down in this manner, the Devas who were present near the walk made three different comments:

Some Devas said: "Ascetic Gotama is dead." Others said: "Ascetic Gotama is not dead, he is dying." Still others said: "Ascetic Gotama is neither dead nor dying, he has become an Arahat. Such is the posture in which an Arahat sits."

Out of these Devas making their comments, those who said. "Ascetic Gotama is dead," went to King Suddhodana and told him thus: "Your son is dead." When the king asked, "Is my son dead before or after attaining Buddhahood?" they replied: "Your son did not get the chance to become a Buddha. While striving, he fell down and died there on the walk." – "I do not believe you! Without attaining omniscience, death cannot occur to my son," asserted the king emphatically.

The Bodhisatta took Less Food

When he recovered from his faint, the Bodhisatta thought thus: "It would be good if I were to practise without eating food at all." Thereupon, the Devas said to him: "Bodhisatta, noble ascetic! Do not cut off food altogether. O Bodhisatta, noble ascetic! If you cut off the food altogether, we shall have to inject divine food through the pores of your skin. And with that food you will be sustained." Then it occurred to the Bodhisatta thus: "If I decide not to take food at all, and if these Devas give me divine food through the pores of my skin, and if I live on that despite my claim to fast completely, my sustenance with the aid of divine food will be deceptive and self-contradictory." So he said to the Devas: "Devas,

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[122] He did not fall down lying on his face in an unsightly manner. Being one endowed with great mindfulness, he just fell into a sitting posture while walking up and down.

do not inject divine food through the pores of my skin. I shall take just enough food to sustain myself."

Henceforth, the Bodhisatta did not cut off food altogether but took food just little by little. For one day's meal, sometimes he took a handful of lentil soup, sometimes a handful of bean soup, sometimes a handful of grain soup and at other times a handful of pea soup. Because of just taking a handful of bean soup, the physical frame of the Bodhisatta reached the stage of extreme exhaustion and emaciation.

Just because the Bodhisatta was taking very little food, his limbs, big and small, protruded at the joints of the bones and were thin and depressed at the places other than these joints, like the knots of the creepers named the Box-bean plant (*Āsītika*) and the Necklace plant (*Kāḷa*).

The hips of the Bodhisatta were wrinkled all over like the big hoofs of a camel and the anus was depressed. The spine of the Bodhisatta protruded with depressed intervals like a string of big beads. The flesh between his ribs sank, causing unsightliness, inelegance and a bad shape like the rafters of an old shed, house or a recluse dwelling. His eye-balls sunk into his eye-sockets like the bubbles of water in a large deep well. The skin of his head wrinkled and withered like a little tender gourd plucked and dried up in the sun. As the skin of his belly was stuck to his spinal column, his spinal column was felt when the belly skin was touched, and his belly skin was felt when the spinal column was touched. [291]

When sitting to answer the call of nature, his urine did not come out at all as there was not enough liquid in his body to turn into urine. As for the excrement, just one or two hardened balls of the size of a betel nut were discharged with difficulty. Sweat trickled profusely from his whole body. He fell on the spot with his face downwards.

When the Bodhisatta rubbed his body with his hand in order to give it some slight soothing effect, his body-hairs, which were rotten at the base because of getting no nourishment from the flesh and blood due to its scarcity, came off from his body and stuck to his hand.

The natural complexion of the Bodhisatta was bright yellow like the colour of pure gold (*siṅgī-nikkha*). But of those who saw him during his engagement in austerity, some said: "Ascetic Gotama is of dark complexion." Others said:

"Ascetic Gotama is not dark; his complexion is brown." Still others said: "Ascetic Gotama is neither dark nor brown; he has grey skin like that of a cat-fish."

> The Bodhisatta took up this practice of austerities, which ordinary people would find difficult to do, not for a short period of days and months. In fact, he did it for six long years. Despite his six years long struggle, it never occurred to him thus: "I have not attained omniscience although I have practised this with difficulty. Well, in view of this situation, I will go back to my golden palace, and being pampered by 40,000 palace ladies headed by my Princess Yasodharā. I will happily take care of my step-mother Gotamī, father and 80,000 relatives who are still alive," or "Having enjoyed excellent food which is like that of the Devas, I will rather stay comfortably in a luxurious bed." There had never been the slightest thought in him for an easy-going and self-indulgent life. An ordinary man would not dare to think of practising these kinds of austerities, much less, actually practising it. Therefore, it is called a practice which is difficult to undertake by ordinary people (*dukkara-cariyā*).

Māra's Visit to the Bodhisatta

Even at the time when the Bodhisatta was going forth, Māra discouraged him, saying: "Prince Siddhattha, on the seventh day from today, the Wheel-Treasure will arrive, do not go forth." But the Bodhisatta replied with tremendous boldness: "Māra, I know that the Wheel-Treasure will come to me. I do not, however, wish to enjoy the bliss of a Universal Monarch. Go away! Do not stay here! I will endeavour to become a Buddha, thereby making the 10,000 world-element resound throughout." Since then Māra had shadowed the Bodhisatta for six years looking for an opportunity to dispose of him, with the thought: "If thoughts of sensuality (*kāma-vitakka*), ill-will (*vyāpāda-vitakka*) or violence (*vihiṁsā-vitakka*) arise in his mental continuum, I will kill him right on the spot." Since then, for six long years Māra could not find any of these thoughts in the Bodhisatta.

When six years had elapsed, it occurred to Māra thus: "Prince Siddhattha is of great energy. His austerity (*dukkara-cariyā*) is so strenuous. He may become a Buddha at one time or another soon. What if I approach him and give him some words of advice, thereby causing him to stop his practice." Then he approached the Bodhisatta and told him of his intentions.

After his Awakening, the Buddha gave the monastics a discourse under the title of the Discourse on the Striving (*Padhāna-sutta*, Snp 3.2) explaining how Māra had come and persuaded him by feigning goodwill, and how he had boldly rebuffed him. The dialogue between Māra and the Bodhisatta will now be reproduced.

Having approached the Bodhisatta who had been repeatedly developing the absorption on non-breathing (*appāṇaka-jhāna*) in Uruvelā forest near Nerañjarā with the sole aspiration for Nibbāna, Māra said: "My friend Prince Siddhattha, the whole of your body is so emaciated with the loss of flesh and blood. Your beauty and complexion have much deteriorated. Your death is coming very close. The chance of your remaining alive is very faint. You have only one chance in 1,000 of staying alive. Prince Siddhattha! Please take [292] care of yourself so that you may live long. Longevity is excellent and commendable. If you live long, you can perform many deeds of merit. You can develop your merit by observing the precepts or by performing sacrificial rites. What is the use of living thus in the forest and practising austerity so miserably and feebly without knowing whether you will be dead or remain alive. In order to achieve your goal, Nibbāna, the old traditional path is very difficult to follow. It is also toilsome and hard. It is indeed not feasible to get on and realise such a goal." Māra said this with a semblance of compassion, as though he had goodwill for the Bodhisatta and as though he had pity on him.

On being spoken to with a semblance of compassion by Māra, the Bodhisatta said boldly to Māra as follows: "Māra, you who bind up those unmindful sentient beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, so that they may not be liberated from Saṁsāra! You have come into my presence for your own benefit and with an ulterior motive to create harm and disturbance to others. I do not have an iota of desire for the kind of merit that leads to the cycle of suffering (*vaṭṭa-gāmi*). You should have spoken thus only to those who are yearning for merit.

With these words the Bodhisatta rejected Māra's speech, saying: "If you live long, you can perform many deeds of merit. Māra, there are those who have no faith (*saddhā*) at all in Nibbāna; there are those who have faith but are of feeble energy (*viriya*); then there are those who have both faith and energy but are not endowed with wisdom (*paññā*), you should discuss with them and give encouragement to them to live long. As for me, I have absolute confidence that,

if I strive enough, I shall realize, even in this life, Nibbāna, where my body ceases to exist. I have flaming energy that is capable of burning into ash the grassy rubbish of the defilements. I have an incomparable wisdom which is like an explosive which can crush the rocky mountain of dark ignorance (*avijjā*) into pieces.

I also have both mindfulness (*sati*) and concentration (*samādhi*). The mindfulness that will enable me to become a Buddha who does not at all forget what has been done and spoken of over the ages gone by and the concentration which, standing firm against the forceful wind of vicissitude, is like an engraved stone pillar that does not sway in a storm. Fully endowed with these five qualities that enable one to reach the other shore of Nibbāna, I am working hard even at the risk of my life. With a person like me, why do you want to discuss long life and why do you flatteringly encourage me to live on? In reality, it is not commendable to stay alive just for a single day in the human world for one who exerts with firm diligence and strong perseverance, who possesses insight through concentration (*appanā-samādhi*) and who discerns thoroughly the rise and fall of the physical and mental aggregates!" With these words, the Bodhisatta made a counter threat to Māra who had threatened him, saying: "Prince Siddhattha, your death is very close, the chance of your remaining alive is very faint, you have only one chance in 1,000 for staying alive."

"Māra, this wind in my body, caused by the tempo of my exertion in practising the absorption on non-breathing (*appāṇaka-jhāna*) would be capable of drying up the water in the Rivers Ganges, Yamuna, etc. Why would it not be capable of drying up the little blood that is in me, whose mind has been directed to Nibbāna? Indeed, it is strong enough to dry it up. When the blood in my body, about five litres in capacity, has dried up on account of the oppressing wind which is generated by my exertion in practising meditation with a view to attain Nibbāna. The bile which is of two kinds, composed (*baddha*) and non-composed (*abaddha*); the phlegm that covers whatever is eaten and swallowed [293] so that no foul smell would come out; the urine and nutritive elements will certainly dry up too. If the blood, the bile, the phlegm, the urine and nutritive elements dry up, the flesh will certainly be depleted. When the blood, the bile, the phlegm, the urine and the flesh are all gone in this way, my mind becomes even clearer. Not only is my mind clear but my mindfulness, which is like the treasurer of a Universal Monarch, my wisdom which is like the diamond (*vajirā*) weapon of a

thunderbolt, and my concentration which is like Mount Meru, are unshaken, it becomes even more developed and steadfast. Exhaustion will not make me retreat. Only because you do not know that my mind is so keen, you spoke words of 'love for life' (*jīvita-nikanti*) such as: 'Prince Siddhattha, the whole body of yours is so emaciated with the loss of flesh and blood,' and so on.

Although the blood and the flesh in me have all been exhausted, my mind remains cheerful and even becomes clearer and has reached the excellent stage which has been experienced by those noble Bodhisattas, who are great men (*mahā-purisa*) and banners of male folk. Though my whole body has dried up to the point of almost emitting flames and though I am thereby thoroughly exhausted, my mind is not at all inclined towards sensual objects, such as my royal city with its palaces, Yasodharā, Rāhula, 40,000 palace ladies and attendants and so on. Māra, observe and investigate for yourself the purity and uprightness of the incomparable heart of mine, of a man who has fulfilled the perfections." With these words the Bodhisatta demonstrated the firmness of his spirit. The Bodhisatta then spoke of Māra's ten armies:

Māra's Ten Armies

1. "The objects of sensuality (*vatthu-kāma*) and the defilements of sensuality (*kilesa-kāma*) constitute the first army of Māra.

There are objects of sensuality (*vatthu-kāma*), animate or inanimate, and the defilements of sensuality (*kilesa-kāma*), which is craving for these sensual objects; both these forms of sensuality cause householders to become deluded so that they do not know the truth.

There are householders who die as worldlings (*puthujjana*) amidst their own worldly belongings (*gihi-bhoga*) because they cannot forsake them, though they know the rarity of the rise of a Buddha (*Buddhuppāda-dullabha*) and the rarity of the life of recluses (*pabbajita-bhāva-dullabha*).

As for recluses, the requisites, such as robes, bowls, monasteries, parks, beds, couches, bed sheets and coverlets, which may be craved and enjoyed by them, are all materials of sensuality. And there are recluses who die still as worldlings amidst the monastic materials of sensuality in the form of the four necessaries: dwelling places, robes, alms food and medicine donated by lay people. They die in that manner because they cannot give them up, though they have learnt at the

time of their ordination about using the foot of a tree as a dwelling place; using robes made of rags from a dust heap as clothing; using alms food as meals; and using putrid urine of a cow as medicine. These householders and recluses meet their hideous death on encountering Māra's first army of sensuality (*kāma)*.[123]

2. Aversion (*arati*) and dissatisfaction (*ukkaṇṭhita*) constitute the second army of Māra.

Although they have taken up an ascetic life after resolutely abandoning worldly belongings (*gihi-bhoga*), some tend to be disturbed and corrupted by such factors as aversion (*arati*) and dissatisfaction (*ukkaṇṭhita*) which are not taking delight in being a recluse, not taking delight in learning and practice, not taking delight in the seclusion of forest dwellings, and not taking delight in tranquility (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*). Some ascetics meet their death, being drowned in the sea of Māra's second army.

3. Thirst and hunger (*khuppipāsā*) constitute the third army of Māra.

Although some recluses have overcome that second army, while observing practices of austerity and because of the very strict rules of the thirteen austerities (*dhutaṅga*), which compel them to eat only what is available such as food of all kinds mixed together, some cannot eat to their hearts' content[124] [294] and are therefore not satisfied and become hungry again, suffering like a crazy earthworm which writhes at the touch of salt. As thirst and hunger sets in they lose interest in asceticism and are obsessed with the burning desire to take food.

4. Weariness (*tandī*) constitutes the fourth army of Māra.

When they are oppressed by hunger and thirst, some of them become physically and mentally weak and are at their wit's end. They become disheartened, indolent and unhappy. As weariness sets in, they do not wish to carry on with the asceticism they are engaged in.

5. Sloth and torpor (*thīna-middha*) constitutes the fifth army of Māra.

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[123] From Ledi Sayādaw's *nissaya* translation of the Discourse on the Striving (*Padhāna-sutta*, Snp 3.2).

[124] Lit. they cannot eat voraciously in the manner of "a thirsty bull quenching his thirst when led to water".

With no progress in their spiritual work and becoming lazy and despondent, they begin to feel bored and fall into a state of dejection. From that day, as sloth and torpor set in, they take to sleeping in their monasteries, rolling from one side to the other, and lying face downwards.

6. Fear (*bhīru*) is the sixth army of Māra.

Excessive sleep through laziness causes drowsiness in their meditation and dullness in their minds. Overwhelmed by craving, they become weak and confused over this or that trifle. As fear sets in, they are shaken with fright and, with trembling hearts, they mistake a tree-stump for an elephant, a tiger for a Yakkha.

7. Doubt (*vicikicchā*) is the seventh army of Māra.

Although they pursue meditation after overcoming fear and regaining courage through practice, the path to the absorptions (*jhāna*) and the course of the paths (*magga*) have sunk deep. As doubt sets in, they are not certain whether they are positively on the path or not, both in practice and theory.

8. Arrogance and haughtiness (*makkha-thambha*) constitute the eighth army of Māra.

After getting rid of doubt, some keep on putting effort in uninterruptedly day and night. As unusual signs from meditation appear to them, they think highly of themselves. As arrogance and haughtiness set in, they do not accord others their rightful place; they destroy their good reputation; they give no respects to their elders; they display overbearingness to them.

9. Craving and conceit (*taṇhā-māna*) constitute the ninth army of Māra.

When they go on meditating, having eradicated arrogance and haughtiness, they see more unusual signs and become proud of their advancement. Various forms of craving and conceit are likely to appear as follows: They are pleased and elated to have an abundance of gifts; they are pleased and elated to witness the spread of their fame to all four quarters; they are pleased and elated to receive some marvellous gains that nobody else has ever come across; and they are pleased and elated with their fame and followers, wrongfully acquired from their teaching of false doctrines and unjust boastfulness, shown through evil desire and craving to increase their gains.

10. Self-praise and condemnation (*attukkaṁsana*) constitute the tenth army of Māra.

Some recluses coming under the above ninth category practise self-praise and honour; they indulge in despising and condemning others (*paravambhanā*).

Māra, you who prevent by force the liberation of humans, Devas and Brahmas from the rounds of suffering and you whose forces are enormous! These ten factors, such as sensuality, aversion, etc., form your comrades-in-arm. You, Māra, whose heart is not white but totally black and whose craving is gigantic! They are also your guns, cannons, and explosives that kill every recluse or recluse in their way.

Those poor [295] worldlings, who possess no strong faith, will, energy and wisdom and who lack courage, are not capable of repelling your attacks and escaping from them. Only those extremely adventurous heroes, whose faith, will, energy and wisdom are great, do not reckon you even as a blade of grass; they can fight and put up resistance and escape. This escape after fighting and resisting can bring the bliss of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna which are away from the dangers of the swords, spears and other weapons that belong to the troops of these ten armies of yours, wicked Māra.

Māra, I would like you to know me as follows: "This Prince Siddhattha, as befitting a noble man, a true hero, on arrival on the scene of a battlefield, never takes a single step backward; he is indeed a feathered commander who wears the flowers of courage on his head, the flowers of muñja grass which are taken to be a good omen and the truly heroic, victorious flag and banner.[125] If I have to withdraw from battle and to be defeated by you and remain alive in this world, it will be shameful, ruinous, disreputable and disgusting. Therefore regard me as one who firmly believes thus: "It is far better to die on the battlefield than to concede defeat to your force."

Because in this world certain ascetics and Brahmins, who went to the battle against the defilements (*kilesas*) putting on the yellow robe and equipping

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[125] It used to be customary for a valiant warrior, who knows no retreat, to fasten some muñja grass on his head, on his banner or on his weapon to indicate that he is a brave man who would never withdraw. Such a military officer was called a "feathered commander" in olden days.

themselves fully with the requisites as their martial harness, but who are without strength, are overpowered by your tenfold great army. Thus they are like those who, without the light of such virtues as morality happen to have entered into darkness. As they are oppressed by your tenfold army, Māra, they can by no means know the road of the jewelled Dhamma Wheel, namely, the seven factors of Awakening (*Bojjhaṅga*) which is the excellent path taken by Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and other noble ones to attain Nibbāna. Therefore I would like you to take me as one who would fight and vanquish your tenfold army and raise the flag of victory."

On hearing the valiant words spoken by the Bodhisatta, Māra departed from that place being unable to utter a word in reply.

Questionable Points

In this chapter on his austere striving (*dukkara-cariyā*), the points which may be raised are: "Was the Bodhisatta incapable of becoming a Buddha without practising austere striving?"[126] The answer is: "With or without austere striving, the Bodhisatta would become a Buddha because he had completely fulfilled the perfections, charity and good conduct."

"If Buddhahood was possible without austere striving, why did he practise it laboriously?" Partly because he wished to demonstrate his incomparable energy to beings, including Devas and Brahmas and partly because he considered that his heart would be filled with joy on recalling the virtues of his energy some time after his becoming a Buddha, as such the Bodhisatta practised austere striving laboriously.

To give an example, a king who has earned kingship by virtue of customary succession, without warring with anybody but while remaining in the main palace, cannot rejoice as does a monarch who wins a kingdom after gathering his forces and fighting two or three battles and crushing his opponents. It is true, when he who ascends the throne after engaging in two or three wars and coming out triumphant, views his audience while enjoying the luxury of his kingship,

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[126] That is to say: "Is Buddhahood attained only through the practice of austere striving (*dukkara-cariyā*)?" or "Is Buddhahood unattainable without the practice of austere striving (*dukkara-cariyā*)?"

reflects on his energetic deeds, he feels immensely happy, thinking: "I have acquired this royalty by doing such and such a thing at such and such a place and by killing such and such an enemy in such and such a manner."

In the same way, the Bodhisatta practised austere striving laboriously because he wished to demonstrate his incomparable energy to beings, including Devas and Brahmas and because he had considered that his heart would be filled with joy on recalling the virtues of his energy [296] some time after his becoming a Buddha.

Austere striving was also practised out of kindness to help future disciples by setting an example. Those future disciples who come to know of the Bodhisatta's practice of austere striving would contemplate thus: "Even the Fortunate One attained omniscience only after undergoing the practice of austere striving though he had fulfilled the perfections for four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons. What to speak of us! We would perhaps attain the knowledge of the path (*magga-ñāṇa*) only if we could exert ourselves in meditation." Discerning the truth they would become convinced that strenuous exertion (*padhāna-viriya*) is something worth making.

When they are thus convinced and exert themselves, they will be able to put an end to birth, old age and death, and attain Nibbāna. Therefore, the Bodhisatta practised austere striving out of kindness to future disciples by setting an example to them.

It was usual for each and every Bodhisatta to practise austere striving at least for seven days in their last existence; our Buddha also was able to do it and accordingly practised it for six years. But he became a Buddha not because of his austere striving. In fact, he became a Buddha only through the middle practice (*majjhima-paṭipatti*). The Bodhisatta practised austere striving to show the world with its Devas, by way of contrast, at the outset that it was not the way leading to the knowledge of the path.

Though other Bodhisattas engaged in austere striving for a far shorter period of seven days at least or of a month or so at most, our Bodhisatta had to do so for six years as a result of a verbal misdeed committed by him when he was the Brahmin Jotipāla, who was very proud of his birth, during the lifetime of Buddha Kassapa. He uttered very harsh words then: "How can this shaven-

headed one realize the knowledge of the path and omniscience? Awakening is something that is very difficult to achieve!"[127] [297]

[127] [See the Traditions (*Apadāna*) 39.10].

7: The Attainment of Buddhahood

Changing the Mode of Practice

After the Bodhisatta had completed the austere striving (*dukkara-cariyā*) for six years, it was about the first waxing of May (*Vesākha*) following the month of April (*Citta*) of the year 528 BCE, that it occurred to him thus: "The ascetics (*samaṇa*) and Brahmins of the past, the future and the present in their practice of austerities, could have gone through only this much of pain and hardship at the most; they could not have gone through more hardship than what I am now enduring. What hardship I have endured will not be less, but may even be more than the pain and suffering undergone by the ascetics and Brahmins of the past, the future and the present. I have striven and practised the austerities strenuously for six long years. Although I have exerted so strenuously in this manner, I have not attained omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) and I have not become a Buddha. There may, perhaps, be another mode of practice, another path, to attain omniscience and to become a Buddha."

Reflecting thus, he came to perceive that he had developed and entered upon the first absorption on breathing (*ānāpāna-jhāna*) while sitting under the shade of the rose-apple tree, at the time of the auspicious ploughing ceremony performed by his father King Suddhodana. He recognised then that the practice of the first absorption on breathing must certainly be the true path, the correct mode of practice for the attainment of omniscience, and to become a Buddha. He further reflected: "Why should I be afraid of the absorption bliss realizable from the meditation on the breath. It is the bliss that arises purely from renunciation (*nekkhamma*) and it is entirely detached from the desire for material objects and sensual pleasures. I am certainly not afraid of the absorption bliss of the meditation on the breath."

Then again he continued to reflect: "I may not be able to exert and develop the said meditation on the breath with this body of mine which is so much exhausted and withered. It will be well if I take some solid, coarse food such as boiled rice to resuscitate and refresh this emaciated body before I endeavour to attain the said absorption through meditation on the breath."

Having considered thus, the Bodhisatta took the alms bowl which he had laid aside, went round the market town of Senāgāma for alms food and sustained his

withered, emaciated body with whatever food he received on his alms round. Within two or three days, he regained strength and the major physical characteristics of a Great Man (*Mahā-pūrisa-lakkhaṇa*), which had disappeared at the time of the strenuous practice of austere striving, reappeared distinctly in their original forms. At that time, the physical body of the Bodhisatta looked fresh once again, like the colour of gold.

> Here, it should be specially noted that at the time the Bodhisatta reflected on the correct path for the realization of omniscience, for becoming a Buddha, after discarding the practice of austere striving, he correctly considered that the eight mundane attainments of the absorptions that he achieved after meeting the sect-leaders Āḷāra and Udaka were just the basis of the round of suffering (*vaṭṭa-pādaka*).
>
> He also considered that the meditation on breathing, which was developed in the shade of [298] the rose-apple tree while his father, King Suddhodana, was performing the auspicious ploughing ceremony, was the correct path for the realization of omniscience and for his becoming a Buddha since the meditation on breathing was part of mindfulness meditation of the body (*kāyagatā-sati*), and the basis of insight meditation (*vipassanā*) for all Bodhisattas. See the sub-commentary on the Collection of the Middle Length Discourses (*Majjhima-nikāya*).

The Group-of-Five leave the Bodhisatta

It is a natural law (*dhammatā*) that when a Bodhisatta is about to become a Buddha after having completed the austere striving, that either the attendant monastics abandon him for some reason or other or he himself leaves them behind. This being so, when the Bodhisatta began to sustain his body by taking whatever coarse food he received on his alms round, the said Group-of-Five became disgusted with him, grumbling: “The ascetic Gotama has become one who practises for the gain of material wealth. He has become one who has abandoned the practice of meditation, and reverted to material accumulation.” Following the natural course of events, they abandoned the Bodhisatta and went on their way to Isipatana, the Deer Park near Bārāṇasī, where the first discourse, the Dhamma Wheel, is taught by all the Buddhas.

> It is a natural rule for the attendant monastics to abandon the Bodhisattas who are about to become Buddhas and to proceed to the Deer Park where

every Buddha will teach without fail the First Sermon or the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*).

The Group-of-Five monastics left the Bodhisatta about the new moon day of April (*Citta*) and moved to Migadāya, the Deer Park.[128] When the attendant monastics had abandoned him, the Bodhisatta, living a solitary life, gained a considerable degree of solitude which was conducive to extraordinary progress and strengthening of his mental concentration. Thus, living in complete seclusion for fifteen days practising meditation and making progress in it, the noble Bodhisatta dreamed five great dreams after midnight, just approaching dawn on the fourteenth waxing day of the month of May (*Vesākha*) 528 BCE.

The Five Great Dreams of the Bodhisatta

The said five great dreams were as follows:

1. He dreamed that he was sleeping with the surface of the earth as his bed, with the Himālayas as his pillow, placing his left hand on the eastern ocean, his right hand on the western ocean and both his legs on the southern ocean.

This first dream presaged his realization of omniscience and becoming a Buddha among humans, Devas and Brahmas.

2. He dreamed that a species of grass (*tiriyā*) with a reddish stalk about the size of a yoke emerged from his navel and while he was looking on, it grew up, first half a cubit, then one cubit, one fathom, two fathoms, one mile, half of a league, one league and so on, rising higher and higher until it touched the sky, outer space, many thousands of leagues above and remained there.

This second dream presaged that he would be able to teach the path of eight constituents (*aṭṭhaṅgika-magga*), which is the middle way (*majjhima-paṭipadā*), to humans and Devas.

3. He dreamed that hordes of maggots, with white bodies and black heads, slowly crept up his legs covering them from the tip of the toe-nail right up to the knee-cap.

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[128] This was after the Bodhisatta had completed the practice of austere striving.

This third dream presaged that a great many people with black heads who wear pure white clothes would adore the Buddha and take great refuge (*mahā-saraṇa-gamana*) in him.

4. He dreamed that four kinds of birds: blue, golden, red and grey in colour, came flying from the four directions and when they threw themselves down to prostrate at his feet, all the four kinds of birds turned completely white.

This fourth dream presaged that clansmen from the four assemblies of people: the princely class, the Brahmin class, the merchant class and the poor class, would embrace the teaching of the Buddha, become monastics and become Arahats. [299]

5. He dreamed that he was walking to and fro, back and forth on a large mountain of excreta without getting besmeared.

This fifth dream presaged a large acquisition of the four requisites of robes, alms food, dwelling places and medicines and that he would utilise them without any attachment and clinging to them.

The Four Causes of Dreams

Dreams occur through these four causes:

1. Due to a disturbance of metabolism, like the malfunctioning of bile, one dreams frightful dreams, for example, falling down from a mountain, travelling in the sky with a frightened heart, being followed closely by beasts of prey, such as wild elephants, horses, lions, leopards, tigers, etc., or by evil persons.

2. Because of experiences of the past, one dreams of seeing, hearing and using objects one had seen, heard or used before.

3. All kinds of illusory objects are made manifest by Devas in one's dream, a good vision if they want to do one a good turn, or a bad vision if they want to do one an ill turn. One sees all these objects through the supernormal powers of Devas.

4. When one experiences a dream giving an omen, one sees pleasant or unpleasant visions that predict coming events because of one's past good or evil deeds. Such dreams are like the dream of Mahā Māyā Devī which foretold the conception of a son or like that of King Kosala which presaged the sixteen great events or like the five great dreams of the Bodhisatta.

Of the four kinds of dream, those due to disturbance in metabolism and experiences of the past generally prove to be false. As for the dreams due to the deception by Devas, they may or may not turn out to be correct. The Devas, when angered, are apt to show visions in the dreams as a stratagem to cause ruin, as in the story below. The dreams which presage coming events invariably prove correct.

Wrong Visions in Dreams

At the Nāga monastery in the Rohana locality in Śrī Laṅkā the presiding monk ordered a large ironwood tree to be cut down without informing the Saṅgha. The tree Deva (*rukkha-deva*), who had his abode in the said ironwood tree, gave dreams to the presiding monk in order to trick him into believing them. After winning the monk's trust, the Deva told him in a dream: "On the seventh day from today, venerable sir, your lay supporter, the king, will die." The presiding monk, believing these words, informed the female palace attendants accordingly. Thereupon, they wept loudly in unison. When asked by the king, they told him what the presiding monk had said. With the king counting the days, the seven days had passed and the king, who was still alive, ordered the limbs of the presiding monk to be cut off for causing panic by giving out wrong information.[129]

The said four kinds of dream are experienced only by worldlings, the Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*), the Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmi*) and the Non-returners (*Anāgāmi*), because they have not divested themselves of hallucinations (*vipallāsa*). Arahats, who have discarded hallucinations, do not dream such [300] dreams.

> PED renders *vipallāsa* as reversal, inversion, perversion, derangement, corruption, distortion. In the translation of Ven. Ledi Sayadaw's Light on Insight Meditation (*Vipassanā Dīpanī*), Sayadaw U Ñyāṇa says: "*Vipallāsa* means halluciation, delusion, erroneous observation, or taking that which is true as being false, and that which is false as true. There are three kinds of *vipallasa*, to wit: 1) Hallucination of perception (*saññā-vipallasa*); 2) hallucination of thought (*citta-vipallasa*); 3) hallucination of views (*diṭṭhi-vipallasa*). Of these three, hallucination of perception is fourfold, thus it

[129] The Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*).

> erroneously perceives impermanence as permanence; impurity as purity; ill as good; and no-soul as soul. The same holds good with regard to the remaining two *vipallāsa*, i.e., those of thinking and viewing."

According to the commentary on the Discourse about the Great Dreams (*Mahā-supina-sutta*, AN 5.196), as regards the time of the dreams, those dreamed during the day time, the first watch, the middle watch and the last watch of the night are usually not correct, whereas those dreamed at day break, when the food eaten has been digested and the resulting nutrients are absorbed by the body, are apt to be correct. A dream conveying good omens usually brings good fortune, whereas one with bad omens usually brings ill-luck.

The aforesaid five great dreams are not dreamed by worldlings, kings, Universal Monarchs, chief disciples, Paccekabuddhas or omniscient Buddhas. Only the Bodhisattas dream such dreams. Our Bodhisatta dreamed the said five great dreams after midnight, just before daybreak on the 14th waxing day of May (*Vesākha*) in the year 528 BCE.

The Bodhisatta, rising from sleep and sitting cross-legged, after having dreamed the five great dreams, thought to himself: "Had I dreamed the five great dreams at the time when I was living in the royal city of Kapilavatthu, I could have related them to my father, King Suddhodana. I could have related them also to my mother, if she were alive. But now, in Uruvelā forest, there is no one to listen to the five great dreams and interpret them for me. I, myself, will read these omens. And then he himself read the dreams thus: "This first dream presages the attainment of such and such a benefit; this second dream such and such a benefit," and so on as has been said above.

After dreaming the five great dreams and having himself interpreted their meanings, the Bodhisatta concluded: "It is true that I will certainly become a Buddha this very day."

The Offering of Milk-Rice

Then, when daybreak came on the morning of the full moon day, he cleansed his body and departed from that place and when he reached the banyan tree which was visited every year for worship by Sujātā, the daughter of a wealthy man, he stopped and sat at the base of the tree, facing east, waiting for the time to go for

alms round. Thereby the whole banyan tree shone brilliantly with his bodily radiance.

At that time, in the market town of Senāgama, in the locality of Uruvelā, Sujātā, the daughter of a rich man by the name of Senānī, on coming of age, had prayed at the foot of the banyan tree thus: "Guardian Deva of the banyan tree, if I be married into a rich family of the same caste, I will pay homage to you with the offering of thick milk rice." The prayer of Sujātā had been fulfilled. As a result, she had been paying homage to the guardian Deva of the banyan tree with thick milk rice on the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*) every year.

> When reading the account of the offering of milk rice by Sujātā, readers are generally apt to think, if care is not taken, that Sujātā paid homage for fulfilment of her prayer to the guardian Deva of the banyan tree with the offering of milk rice for the first time on that full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), the day on which the Bodhisatta was to attain the state of a Buddha.
>
> In fact, the prayer had been fulfilled and the guardian Deva of the banyan tree had been worshipped with an offering of milk rice for about 20 years before that day, for the said son of Sujātā was, in fact, the wealthy young man, Yasa. In the year when the Buddha was to appear, Yasa was already a married man, enjoying the luxury of a well-to do family. In view of this fact, it should be noted that Sujātā, had been paying homage to the guardian Deva of the banyan tree with the offerings of thick milk rice every year on the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*) over the past 20 years when her prayer for a first born son had been answered.

The preparations that were made by lady Sujātā to make offerings to the guardian Deva of the banyan tree on that full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), when the Bodhisatta had completed six years practice of austere striving, were: She first let 1,000 milch cows graze in the [301] wood of liquorice; and the milk obtained from these 1,000 milch cows was fed to another 500 milch cows. The milk produced by these 500 cows was fed to another 250 cows. Again, the milk produced by the said 250 cows was fed to another 125 cows. Then the milk produced by these 125 cows was fed to another 64 cows. Then the milk from these 64 cows was fed to another 32 cows. Then the milk from these 32 cows was fed to another sixteen cows. Then the milk from these sixteen cows was fed to another eight cows. In this manner, lady Sujātā took the above step-by-step

procedure of transfering milk in order to obtain a thick, savoury and nutritious cow's milk to prepare milk rice.[130]

> According to the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*), lady Sujātā first let 100 milch cows graze in the wood of liquorice. Then she let 100 milch cows born of the first 100 cows graze in the same wood. Then again she let the 100 milch cows born of the said second 100, the third 100, the fourth 100, the fifth 100, the sixth 100 milch cows graze in the pasture of liquorice wood. In this manner, she milked the seventh generation milch cows and made preparation to cook thick milk rice.

With the intention, "I will make the sacrificial offering of thick milk rice early today," lady Sujātā rose early in the morning on the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*) and had the above said eight milch cows milked. The calves, without having to tie them with rope, did not come near the dugs of their mother milch cows. What was strange was that, even as the milk bowl was placed close under the udder, the milk flowed down continuously in profusion without being drawn. Lady Sujātā, on seeing such a wonderful event, personally conveyed the flowing milk and poured it into a new pot, and kindled the fire by herself to cook the thick milk rice.

When the thick milk rice was being cooked, froth appeared in a large quantity, turning clockwise, but not even a drop spilled out; smoke did not, in the least, rise above the oven; the Four Great Kings, the guardians of the world, came and stood guard at the oven; the Great Brahma provided an umbrella to cover over the pot of thick milk rice; Sakka arranged the faggots evenly and set fire to them to burn in a blaze; by their supernormal powers, Devas collected the nutrients, which were suitable for Devas and humans living in the four continents surrounded by 2,000 small islands. They did so as if they were gathering honey from honey combs hanging from branches. Then they poured the nutrients so collected into the pot of thick milk rice.

> At other times, Devas put the aforesaid nutrients, suitable for Devas and humans, into each and every morsel of food as the Buddha was preparing to put it into his mouth. On two special occasions, however, the day the Buddha became a Buddha, and the day he passed into Parinibbāna, Devas poured the said nutrients into the pot.

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[130] This account is as narrated in the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary.

Having seen in one single day many things of wonder at the place where the thick milk rice was being cooked, lady Sujātā, called the maid servant, Puññā by name and ordered her thus: “Dear Puññā, today our guardian Deva of the banyan tree appears to be in good mood. For the past 20 years, I have never seen such wonderful things. Make haste, go and clean up the banyan tree, the residence of the guardian Deva.” The maid servant thus made haste and was near the banyan tree when she saw the Bodhisatta sitting at its foot facing east and also the whole tree shining golden yellow with the radiance emitting from the Bodhisatta’s body. Frightened and thinking: “Today, the guardian Deva of the banyan tree has come down from the tree. It seems to me he is sitting there to receive the offering with his own hands,” she hurried back home and reported the matter to lady Sujātā.

On hearing the words of the maid servant, lady Sujātā felt very happy and saying: “From today, be an elder daughter of mine,” bestowed upon her all the apparel and ornaments befitting a daughter. [302]

It is a natural law (*dhammatā*) for a Bodhisatta to be offered the alms food of thick milk rice on the day he is to attain Buddhahood; and it is proper to receive that food only in a gold cup worth 100,000. The lady Sujātā, intending: “I shall put thick milk rice in a gold cup,” had one worth 100,000 taken out from her chamber. She then poured the cooked thick milk rice into the cup, tilting the pot. Thereupon, all the milk rice flowed into the cup to the last drop, like water drops gliding down from a lotus leaf. The entire thick milk rice was just enough to fill the cup to the brim, no more or less.

Lady Sujātā covered the gold cup full of thick milk rice with another gold cup and wrapped them up with a piece of clean white cloth. Then, having adorned herself in full attire and carrying the gold cup on her head, she went to the banyan tree with great pomp and grandeur. She was overjoyed on seeing the Bodhisatta and mistaking him to be the guardian Deva of the banyan tree, she proceeded in a respectful manner from where she saw him. She then lowered the gold cup from her head and opened it and carrying a golden jar of water perfumed with all kinds of fragrant flowers she approached the Bodhisatta and stood nearby.

The earthen alms bowls, which had been offered to the Bodhisatta by Brahma Ghaṭikāra at the time of the renunciation and which had remained with him

during the whole six years of austere striving, disappeared inexplicably just at the time when the rich man's wife Sujātā came to offer the alms food. Not seeing the bowl, the Bodhisatta spread out his right hand to receive the water. Lady Sujātā offered the alms food milk rice in the gold cup, placing it in his hands. He looked at lady Sujātā, who, understanding perfectly well the way the Bodhisatta looked, addressed him: "Venerable one, I have offered you the milk rice in this gold cup; may you accept it together with the gold cup and go anywhere you like." Then uttering words of prayer: "My heart's desire is fulfilled. So too, may your heart's desire be fulfilled," she departed without showing the least concern for the gold cup which was worth 100,000, as if it were a withered leaf.

The Bodhisatta also rose from his seat and, after circumambulating the banyan tree, proceeded to the bank of the river Nerañjarā carrying with him the gold cup containing the thick milk rice. At the river Nerañjarā there was a bathing ghat, by the name of Suppatiṭṭhita, where many Bodhisattas went down and took a bath on the day they were to become Buddhas. The Bodhisatta left the gold cup at the bathing ghat and, after taking a bath, came up and sat facing east under the cool shade of a tree. Then he prepared exactly 49 morsels of thick milk rice, each about the size of the seed of a ripe palmyra nut and ate the whole lot without water. The thick milk rice, which was taken after being made into 49 morsels, served as nutrient (*āhāra*) to sustain him completely for 49 days (*satta-sattāha*), while he was residing in the vicinity of the Bodhi tree after his becoming a Buddha. During these 49 days, the Buddha passed the time absorbed in the peace of the absorptions and of fruition, without having any other meal, without taking a bath, without washing his face and without making his body and the limbs clean.

After he had partaken of the alms food of thick milk rice offered by Sujātā, the Bodhisatta made the resolution while holding the gold cup: "If I will become a Buddha today, may this gold cup float upstream; if I will not become a Buddha today, let it float downstream with the current." He then let the gold cup float in the river Nerañjarā. The gold cup cut across the current and went straight to the middle of the river and then floated upstream from there with the speed of a fast running horse for about 80 cubits and sank in a whirlpool. On reaching the mansion of the Nāga King Kāḷa it hit all the three gold cups used by the three previous Buddhas, namely, Kakusandha, Koṇāgamana and Kassapa, on the day

they were to attain Buddhahood, producing the metallic sound of *kili, kili* and came to rest under the said three golden cups.

On hearing the sound, the Nāga King Kāḷa said: "It was only yesterday that a Buddha appeared; today, another Buddha appears," and then he rose uttering words of praise in many verses.

> The period of time intervening between the appearance of Buddha Kassapa and our Buddha was so long that in the meantime the great earth had risen by one league and three miles. But as for the Nāga King Kāḷa it was so very short that he could say of these appearances [303] as happening "yesterday and today."

Then the Bodhisatta rested for the day in the Sāla grove, on the bank of the Nerañjarā, which was replete with very fragrant flowers, verdant and delightful to everyone. He then proceeded to practise breathing meditation. After attaining the eight mundane absorptions (*jhāna*) and the five super knowledges (*abhiññā*), at twilight, in the coolness of the evening, he walked along the path decorated by Devas and Brahmas to the Nerañjarā and, after taking a bath, he headed towards the Mahā Bodhi tree by the same path. Thereupon, Nāgas, Yakkhas and Gandhabbas paid homage to him with offerings of celestial flowers, perfumes and scented paste. They also sang soft and sweet celestial songs. Then the whole of the 10,000 world-element were almost covered with celestial flowers and perfumes and also with wild acclaim by Devas and Brahmas.

Sotthiya gives Sacred Grass

At that time, Sotthiya, a Brahmin grass-cutter, was coming from the opposite direction carrying grass. Sensing the wish of the Bodhisatta to have some grass, he offered him eight handfuls of grass. The Bodhisatta, carrying the eight handfuls of grass, went up the high ground of the Mahā Bodhi tree and stood at the south of it, facing north. At that moment, the southern part of the 10,000 world-element sank, so much so that it looked as if it would touch Mahā Avīci; and the northern part of the 10,000 world-element rose, so much so that it looked as if it would fly up to reach Bhavagga.

On seeing this phenomenon, the Bodhisatta considered thus: "This is not the place where the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) and omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) can be realized," and so, making a clockwise

turn round the Mahā Bodhi tree, he proceeded to the west of the tree and stood there facing east. Just at that moment, the western part of world-element sank, so much so that it looked as if it would touch Mahā Avīci and the eastern part of it rose, so much so that it looked as if it would fly up to Bhavagga.

On seeing this phenomenon, the Bodhisatta considered again: "This is not the place where the path-knowledge of an Arahat and omniscience can be realized," and so, making a clockwise turn round the Mahā Bodhi tree, he proceeded to the north and stood there facing south. Just at that moment, the northern part of the world-element sank, so much so that it looked as if it would touch Mahā Avīci; and the southern part of it rose, so much so that it looked as if it would fly up to reach Bhavagga.

> The positions of the great earth, at the places in the south, the west and the north where the noble Bodhisatta had stood, was such that it sank at his back and rose in front of him, like the wheel of a cart resting flat on its central hub on the ground, it rocks or reels when trampled upon at the fringe.

On seeing this phenomenon, the Bodhisatta considered again: "This is also not the place where the path-knowledge of an Arahat and omniscience can be realized," and so making a clockwise turn round the Mahā Bodhi tree, he proceeded to the east and stood facing west.

> About this matter, the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary mentions only this: "The noble Bodhisatta proceded to the Bodhi tree, and circumambulating it three times, stood at the north-east corner scattering the eight handfuls of grass." It does not mention the fact that the great earth tilted over to one side when he stood on the south, the west and the north. The Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*), however, states: "When the Bodhisatta stood on the south, the west and the north, the great earth trembled like a drop of water falling on a lotus leaf," and that, standing at the north-east corner, he scattered the eight handfuls of grass.

The locality, where the unconquered (*aparājita*) throne would appear to the east of the Mahā Bodhi tree, stood unshaken and firm, being the place not to be abandoned (*avijahitaṭṭhāna*), where the thrones of all the Buddhas had appeared. Knowing: "This place is certainly the auspicious site of victory where all the

Buddhas destroy the defilements," and holding them up, the noble Bodhisatta scattered the eight handfuls of grass which he had brought.

The moment he scattered the eight handfuls of grass, they were transformed into a large jewelled throne, fourteen cubits in size, which was so magnificent that no painter or sculptor would be able to paint or carve the likeness of it, and they existed in this marvellous form of a jewelled throne. [304]

With the Mahā Bodhi tree as the backdrop, facing east and with a steadfast mind, the Bodhisatta declared: "Let only the skin remain, let only the sinews remain, let only the bones remain, let my whole body, and all the flesh and blood dry up, unless and until I attain Buddhahood, I will not, in anyway, change the cross-legged posture I have now assumed."

Thus developing a firm resolution of four factors, he sat on the jewelled throne assuming the unconquered (*aparājita*) cross-legged posture, the posture for conquering the enemies, not for conceding defeat, which cannot be destroyed, though struck simultaneously by hundreds or thunderbolts.

Vanquishing Vasavatti Māra

When the Bodhisatta had taken his seat on the unconquered (*aparājita*) throne, at the foot of the Mahā Bodhi tree, for realization of omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*), Sakka came to pay homage and stood blowing the Vijayuttara conch, which was 120 cubits in length and when blown, its sound ceased only after four months. The Deva Pañcasikha came to pay homage and stood playing the harp made of Beluva wood, the Deva Suyāma stood waving the yak-tail fly-flap, the Deva Santusita stood waving the circular ruby fan, and Brahma Sahampati stood holding the white umbrella, three leagues in length.

The Nāga King Kāḷa arrived with a company of 80,000 female Nāga dancers and stood paying homage by chanting hundreds of verses in praise of the Bodhisatta. All the Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element arrived to pay homage with offerings of festoons of very fragrant flowers, perfumes, scented powder and incense sticks and singing thousands of songs in acclaim.

Vasavatti Māra, forsaking his celestial pleasures, had all the time been following closely behind the Bodhisatta during the whole six years of austere striving, waiting for the occasion when the Bodhisatta might have wrong or evil thoughts (*micchā-vitakka*) such as sensual desires (*kāma-vitakka*). But not finding the

slightest sign of deviation from the right thoughts on the part of the Bodhisatta, Māra thought to himself: "Now, Prince Siddhattha had arrived at the Bodhi tree to become a Buddha. At present, he is striving to escape my domain,[131] I cannot concede to him the opportunity of escaping from the three worlds which are under my sway."

With this thought, he went to the Vasavatti realm and, having assembled the fighting forces of the Māras, he commanded them: "Māras, transform yourselves into various frightening forms, and each holding a different weapon, proceed quickly to Prince Siddhattha like a huge torrent of water rushing down overwhelmingly." He himself followed them, riding on Girimekhala elephant, which was 150 leagues in size and, creating 1,000 arms on his body, he held various weapons, each arm grasping a different one.

> The Māra here was not the lawful ruler of the realm of Vasavatti. The Deva King lawfully ruling over Vassavatti was a different deity. Just like a rebel leader with many followers in the human world, rising in active revolt against the country, looting and committing acts of robbery, the Māra was in fact just a powerful inhabitant of the Paranimittavasavatti realm, leading an insurgency there with a large retinue of evil Devas, causing a great nuisance to humans, Devas and Brahmas in their performance of meritorious deeds.

The great hordes of Māras, advancing towards the Bodhisatta, were so enormous numerically that it was twelve leagues deep in front of Māra, twelve leagues wide to his right, twelve leagues wide to his left, and nine leagues high above him and in the rear it reached as far as the end of the 10,000 world-element. The frightening sounds of intimidation, shouting and exclamation of the great armies of Māra could be heard from a distance of 1,000 leagues, just like that caused by an enormous landslide. Māra, holding 1,000 various weapons in his 1,000 created arms, and his numerous troops each holding a different weapon, transforming themselves into hideous figures with [305] variegated faces, advanced towards the Bodhisatta in order to overpower and destroy him.

While the great armies of Māra were thus advancing towards the Mahā Bodhi tree, not a single one of the Devas headed by Sakka, who had been there hitherto

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[131] Of the three worlds of humans, Devas and Brahmas.

paying homage to the Bodhisatta, could withstand them. They fled helter-skelter in all directions. Sakka ran away with his large Vijayuttara conch hung on his back and remained standing on the fringe of the 10,000 world-element. Mahā Brahma also, throwing away the white umbrella at the edge of the world-element, went back to the Brahma world. The Nāga King Kāḷa also, abandoning all the Nāga dancers dived into the earth, went to the Nāga mansion named Mañjerika, 500 leagues in size and slept covering his face with the hand. There was not a single Deva or Brahma who dared to remain standing in the neighbourhood of the Bodhisatta and the Mahā Bodhi tree. At that time, the Bodhisatta remained sitting all alone like a Great Brahma residing alone inside a secluded mansion.

Bad omens appeared distinctly in advance to portend the arrival of Māra. These omens were: A falling of thousands of very violent frightful meteors; a falling of total darkness with the rising of haze; a severe quaking of oceans and the great earth; an arising of mists in the oceans; a flowing of many rivers upstream; a falling of mountain tops to the ground; a toppling over of trees; a blowing of violent storms and winds; an appearance of fearful sounds from these violent storms and winds; a vanishing of the sun in the darkness and roaming about in the sky of headless bodies. When Māra arrived with the clear appearance of these ominous signs, the Bodhisatta remained seated courageously without the least fear, like a Garuḷa in the midst of birds or like the lion-king, Kesarāja, amidst beasts.

Even as the aforesaid inauspicious omens appeared, Māra arrived, but remained standing, being unable to enter the immediate vicinity (*maṇḍala*) of the Mahā Bodhi tree. Not daring to make an approach, Māra's great armies kept the Bodhisatta surrounded from all sides. Viewing his hordes, Māra could just give them the command: "Come on! Seize him!" but he himself was unable to go anywhere near the Mahā Bodhi tree, just as a fly is incapable of approaching a red hot iron. He said to his hordes: "Men, there is not a single person to match this Prince Siddhattha, the son of King Suddhodana. We are unable to make a frontal attack on him, we shall attack this Prince Siddhattha from the rear."

On surveying the three sides, the front and left and right of himself, the Bodhisatta did not see anything but emptiness, since all the Devas and Brahmas had fled. Then seeing Māra's troops advancing to overrun him from the northern side, he thought to himself: "Such an overwhelming number of Māra's

troops are making great efforts with the sole object of attacking me. There is neither my mother nor father, nor my brother nor any other relatives of mine here at this place. Only the ten perfections – which I have so long developed and nurtured – will serve me as my companions and retinue. So relying only on these comrades of mine, the ten perfections, it will be proper to destroy these hordes of Māras by attacking them with my perfection-weapons." Then he reflected on the meritoriousness of the ten perfections.

Māra's Attack with Nine Kinds of Missiles

While the Bodhisatta was thus reflecting on the meritoriousness of his ten perfections, Māra was planning: "By discharging nine kinds of missiles, I will force the Prince Siddhattha to flee."

1. First, he let loose a violent cyclone. Immediately, the east wind, the west wind, the south wind and the north wind started rising in force and although they were capable of breaking and blasting away mountain tops of sizes measuring a half league, one league, two or three leagues, and uprooting trees and jungle bushes and also pulverising villages and towns in the surrounding area, they became powerless on coming near the Bodhisatta and were incapable of even ruffling the edge of his robe on account of the glory and power of the Bodhisatta's deeds of merit. [306]

2. Māra expectently looked about with the thought: "By this time, the ascetic Gotama should have been carried away by the storm missiles discharged by me and dashed against the Cakkavāḷa mountain range and broken into smithereens." He became much troubled in mind on seeing the Bodhisatta seated as he was, unshaken like a firmly erected gate post. So, thinking: "I will kill him by drowning him in the very strong currents of water," he made the rain clouds rise in a moment and a torrential rain fell. This great earth turned into a hollow depression by the force of the rainfall commanded by Māra. When this torrent of water, after eroding and overflowing the fringe of forests and hills and trees, reached the Bodhisatta, it was incapable of even wetting a single thread of his robe, it changed its course and flowed away elsewhere without touching him.

3. On seeing the said phenomenon, Māra, thinking: "I will turn this Prince Siddhattha into dust by hitting him with stones," caused to fall a rain of stones. Stones of very large sizes came falling through the sky like huge mountain tops, sending off fumes of dust. On nearing the Bodhisatta, they became big celestial garlands and balls of flowers.

4. Thereafter, with the thought: "I will cause death to this Prince Siddhattha, I will kill him, by making mince meat of him," Māra caused a rain of weapons to fall. All kinds of weapons, such as single-edged and double-edged spears and knifes, etc., emitting fumes and flames and flying through the sky, only for them to fall in the form of jasmine flowers, etc., in the Mahā Bodhi tree area.

5. Although Māra had intended that: "Prince Siddhattha will become like a heap of minced meat," he was struck with wonder when he saw Prince Siddhattha seated as before without being destroyed, like a huge diamond mountain. So he again caused burning coals to rain down. They came falling down smoking and blazing, but were transformed into jasmine flowers, etc., on coming near the Bodhisatta.

6. Thereafter, he caused hot ashes to rain down. The mass of ashes, very hot, like fire, came down from the sky but turned into celestial sandalwood powder as it reached the feet of the Bodhisatta.

7. Again, he caused hot sand to fall like rain. Sand, in the form of very soft fine powder, coming down through the sky, fell at the feet of the Bodhisatta as celestial flowers.

8. Thereafter, he caused a shower of hot mud to fall like rain. The mud, with fumes and flames, also coming through the sky, fell at the feet of the Bodhisatta after turning into celestial perfumed paste.

9. Thereafter, he caused a pall of great darkness to form, thinking: "I will make this Prince Siddhattha flee by frightening him with a pall of darkness." The darkness created by Māra was like the great darkness resulting from four factors: a new moon night, a cloudy sky, midnight and the middle of a deep forest; but, on reaching the presence of the Bodhisatta, it disappeared like the darkness eliminated by sunlight.

> Here, knowing that the Māra was creating a mass of great darkness, the Bodhisatta sent out from his body a network of radiance which was the size of the pore of a body-hair. It was this network of radiance which destroyed the massive darkness created by Māra and produced a great illumination.

Māra's Mechanical Weapons

Although Māra launched his attacks by means of the above-mentioned nine kinds of weapons, which were ineffective, he continued to let meteors fall, as a consequence of which the whole 10,000 world-element was completely covered with fumes and smoke. The entire sky rumbled with thunder although there were no clouds, and thousands of lightning bolts struck frighteningly. When Māra was unable to cause any harm to the Bodhisatta, even with such aggressive actions, he renewed his offensive with evil intentions by launching mechanised weapons, saying: "Prince Siddhattha, I will have your head smashed into bits and fall to the ground."

The might of that mechanical weapon was such that if it was thrown on the ground, no grass could grow for twelve years; if discharged into the sky, there would be drought and [307] not a single drop of rain would fall for a total period of twelve years. If directed at the top of mount Meru, the mountain would break into two and fall asunder. Such was the might of the said mechanised weapon. However, when it was launched by Māra, although it came down through the sky, roaring like thunder, it fell down helpless at the feet of the Bodhisatta curling like a rope-coil used as a foot-scraper, thereby humbling the pride of Māra.

Not knowing how to proceed further and being greatly agitated with wrath, Māra shouted out commands to his hordes: "Why are you just standing there! Don't give this Prince Siddhattha any chance to attain his cherished wish of becoming a Buddha. Seize him! Kill him! Cut him up! Break him down! Don't allow him to escape!" he himself approached the Bodhisatta, sitting on the back of the elephant Girimekhala, and brandishing an arrow with one hand, and said to him: "Prince Siddhattha, remove yourself henceforth from the jewelled throne." At that time, the hordes of Māras manifested themselves in various hideous forms, acting in many frightening ways.

Here, the author inserted Taungdwin Sayādaw Khingyiphyaw's verses of reverence relating the Bodhisatta's vanquishing of the nine kinds of weapons launched by Māra together with their expositions. We have left them out from our translation.

The Bodhisatta's Compassion

This episode of victory over Devaputta Māra is described in the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) in greater detail and in a way which inspires more devotional piety than in the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary and the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary. So most of what follows has been extracted from the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*).

Sapāda-mūle kīḷantaṁ passanto taruṇaṁ sutaṁ,
pitā vudikkhi taṁ Māraṁ mettāyanto dayāparo. [124]

The very compassionate father, to whom children are indebted, would not show anger in the least, if his young son, playing about at his feet, hit him with hands and feet or somehow offended him. Far from being angry with him, he would hug him by the neck and hold him to his chest to let him sleep with fatherly love and affection. In the same way, the noble Bodhisatta showed forbearance for all the wrongdoings on the part of the wicked Māra and was not in the least grieved; and he looked at Māra without any fear but with loving-kindness and compassion.

Tadā so asambhivācaṁ sīha-nādaṁ nadī muni,
na jānāti sayaṁ mayhaṁ, dāsa-bhāva-piyaṁ khaḷo. [125]
Yena kenaci kammena jāto Deva-pure vare,
sakaṁ gatiṁ ajānanto loka-jeṭṭho ti maññati. [126]

When thus Māra advanced on him with his great armies and harassed him, he uttered these bold words: "This wicked Māra is not at all aware that he himself has become a servant of mine: Having been born in the Vasavatti realm just because of a few deeds of merit, but having not the slightest knowledge about his own lifespan, the time of his death and the realm of suffering which he is destined to after his death, he is thinking to himself: "I am permanent. I am the only one who rules over the whole world." He does not reflect, nor is he aware, of his own plight and of the hazard of falling into the lower worlds. Due to such ignorance, he dares commit such wrongs." [308]

Ananta-loka-dhātumhi sattānaṁ hi kataṁ subhaṁ,
mayheka-pāramiyā pi kalaṁ nagghati soḷasiṁ. [127]
Tiracchāno saso hutvā disvā yācakam-āgataṁ,
pacitvāna sakaṁ maṁsaṁ patitoggimhi dātave. [128]

If the accumulated deeds of merit performed by sentient beings in the whole of the infinite number of world-elements are placed on one side of the pair of scales of wisdom and weighed against the accumulated meritorious deeds of mine, in the form of the perfections (*pāramī*), placed on the other side of the scale, the accumulated deeds of merit of all sentient beings cannot come up to even one 256th part of the merit accruing from a single perfection of mine, out of the ten performed by me. Even in my existence as a small hare in the animal world, I had jumped into a heap of fire with great courage in order to be roasted and gave away my flesh in generosity with joy and delight, when I saw a recipient who had come to ask for it.

Ordinarily, the bold words spoken by the Bodhisatta: "If the accumulated deeds of merit performed by the beings in the whole of the infinite number of world-elements are compared with the merits accruing from only one out the ten perfections of mine, they would not come up to even 256th part of the merits of a single perfection." would appear hyperbolic. In reality, it was not so, the words were very natural and true.

Persons other than the Bodhisatta generally performed meritorious deeds with a wish for human and celestial happiness.[132] Thus, the accumulated deeds of merit performed by others result in the round of suffering. It is as if these people spent their merit on the acquirement of human existence and human happiness, or celestial existence and celestial happiness. Therefore, like one who spends money on personal requisites each time he earns money and is unable to save any, all the sentient beings other than the Bodhisatta, who delight in the suffering of the round of existences

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[132] Even those Buddhists, who are born as human beings in the present Buddha dispensation, and who know that the act of generosity with the wish for further existences and pleasures (*vaṭṭa-nissita-dāna*), is not so beneficial and excellent as the act of abandoning with the wish for Nibbāna (*vivaṭṭa-nissita-dāna*), have in their subconscious mind the desire for a good existence with a happy life even though they do not express this explicitly when they perform alms-giving.

(*vattābhirata*), are all paupers with no accumulated wealth from their meritorious deeds.

As for the Bodhisatta, he aspired only after omniscience every time he performed an act of merit in fulfilment of the perfections. As a result, all the meritorious deeds performed by the Bodhisatta remained intact, without loosing momentum in his mind continuum as an endowment of merits (*kamma-samaṅgi*) as long as they have not yet produced the fruit of omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*). Therefore, just as one who does not squander and dissipate but saves his money and accumulates more and more wealth day by day, so the Bodhisatta, coming into possession of more and more wealth from meritorious deeds existence after existence, became a very rich person in respect of his merit.

A single rich person possessing billions of money cannot be equalled by a large number of poor and destitute persons in matters of wealth. They will indeed fail in this competition. Similarly, a Bodhisatta, who was immensely wealthy, possessing untold riches of meritoriousness derived from the perfections, cannot be rivalled [309] in terms of the wealth of meritoriousness, by sentient beings in the infinite world-elements. They are bound to be defeated because they are impoverished in respect of the wealth of meritoriousness as they have spent all of it as soon as they have earned it in pursuit of good life (*bhava-sampatti*), and enjoyment of pleasures (*bhoga-sampatti*). Therefore, the Bodhisatta's bold utterance is no exaggeration; it is natural and true.

Evaṁ ananta-kālesu kataṁ dukkara-kārikaṁ,
ko hi nāma kareyyañño anummatto sacetano. *[129]*

Māra does not know what I really am; that I gain this personality of mine in this life as a result of the aforesaid infinite deeds of merit. And so he thinks I am just an ordinary man.

Nāhaṁ manussomanusso na Brahmā na ca devatā,
jarā-maraṇaṁ lokassa dassetuṁ panidhāgato. *[130]*

In fact, I am not an ordinary seven-days old human being; nor am I a Yakkha, a Brahma or a Deva. I have taken conception in the womb of a female human, even though I am not an ordinary seven-days old human being, in order to show all sentient beings the suffering of old age, sickness and death in the round of existences.

It cannot be said with certainty that the Bodhisatta was a man, a Yakkha, a Deva, a Māra or a Brahma because each of these beings has nothing of the kind of tasks undertaken by the Bodhisatta.

Then it may be asked why should the Bodhisatta be born of the female human, Queen Māyā? It has therefore been said that he had taken conception in the womb of a female human in order to show all sentient beings of humans, Devas and Brahmas, the suffering of old age, sickness and death in the round of existences.

There is no Deva, Māra, Brahma or self (*atta*) that can bring into existence or create any sentient being. In reality, it is only craving (*taṇhā*), which arises in the mind continuum of each individual that is responsible for the recurrence of rebirth (*paṭisandhi*). It is also the power of craving which brings about the commission of deeds of merit and demerit.

A deed (*kamma*) is like a field in a consciousness (*viññāṇa*), that which accompanies it, is like a seed; craving (*taṇhā*) or greed (*lobha*) is like water. It is through the combination of soil, seed and water that the sprout of a tree appears. In the same way, it is through the combination of the soil of the deed (*kamma*), the seed of consciousness (*viññāṇa*) and the moisture of craving or greed that a sentient being appears. In the absence of the moisture of craving or greed, even though there is the soil of the deed and the seed of consciousness, the sprout of the tree of existence would not come into being. Hence noble Arahats, who have eradicated the moisture of craving or greed, do not take rebirth in a new existence.

Thus, sentient beings who appear on account of the coming together of the three causes, are overwhelmed by the flood of various sufferings such as birth, etc. The Bodhisatta is one who wants to remove all these sufferings afflicting sentient beings.

The root cause of all the suffering, such as birth, etc., is craving (*taṇhā*). If craving is uprooted, birth does not take place. If birth does not take place, old age, death, etc., do not happen. Therefore, it is craving that should be eradicated first and [310] foremost; and from delusion (*moha*) springs that craving in sentient beings who long for happiness by perceiving the six sense objects (*ārammaṇa*), such as visible objects (*rupārammaṇa*), as being permanent (*nicca-saññā*), delightful (*sukha-saññā*), pleasant (*subha-saññā*) or durable (*atta-saññā*). And craving can be abandoned only if the defects of the six sense objects, the origin of craving, are made manifest.

Again, the defects of the six sense objects mean that the state of impermanence is inherent in them; the state of impermanence in turn, is discernable only when the nature of old age and death is seen; only when old age and death is seen, the defects of the six sense objects, such as the state of impermanence can be seen; and only when these defects of the six sense objects are seen can craving and greed, which cling to the six sense objects, be discarded. Only when craving and greed can be discarded will the suffering in Saṁsāra, such as birth, old age, etc., cease. This being the case, discernment of old age and death forms the basic and most essential factor in the cessation of the suffering in Saṁsāra. And so, the Bodhisatta came to this human world and took conception in the lotus-like womb of Queen Māyā in order to show all sentient beings the nature of old age and death which forms the basic and essential factor in the cessation of suffering in Saṁsāra.

If the Bodhisatta, having been born a Deva or a Brahma, were to teach the nature of old age and death and perform miracles, others would not believe him, thinking: "This Deva or Brahma, although being himself someone who enjoys happiness, who is permanent and durable, comes and teaches us the doctrine of impermanence, suffering and non-self, what kind of teaching is this?" They would not listen to him respectfully either. They would merely opine: "Can there be anything which a Deva or a Brahma cannot teach? There is nothing he cannot teach. And can there be any miracles which he cannot perform? Indeed he can perform all miracles. So his teaching of a doctrine or the performance of a miracle is nothing wonderful."

As witnessed by many, the Bodhisatta was born of Queen Māyā; when he came of age, he enjoyed sensual pleasures; when a son was born to him, he forsook the son, renounced the world and became a recluse; after he had practised austere striving (*dukkara-cariyā*), he eventually achieved the knowledge of the path and omniscience and he became a Buddha. When, therefore, he started teaching the Dhamma, or making manifest the nature of old age and death, or explaining the three characteristics (*anicca, dukkha, anatta*), all the people would respectfully listen to his teaching, with the thought: "Even this noble person, endowed as he is with great power and wisdom, and knowing all aspects of Dhamma, cannot overcome old age, sickness and death, what about us?"

Our Buddha, who teaches us to do away with sufferings, such as birth, old age, etc., indeed thoroughly understands the real nature of all things!

Indeed, Nibbāna, where there is no suffering, such as birth, old age, etc., is blissful!" With this faith, they follow the Bodhisatta's teaching, applying intelligence to it and they came to discern this individual (*atta-bhava*), which in reality is the five aggregates of grasping (*upadānakkhandha*), as suffering (*dukkha*), and as the origin of suffering.

They also discern perfectly the defects of craving and greed which give rise to this body, which in reality are the five aggregates of grasping. Having discerned this, sentient beings will feel frightened, ashamed and disgusted with craving, which is the truth of the origin of suffering (*samudaya-saccā*); and also with the five groups of grasping, which is the truth of suffering (*dukkha-sacca*) arising through craving, and they will cause the complete cessation of craving. When they have done so, they will be qualified to attain final Nibbāna (*anupāda-parinibbāna*), the complete cessation of suffering. Hence the Bodhisatta said: "I came to this human world and took conception in the lotus-like womb of Queen Māyā, in order to show all sentient beings the suffering of birth, old age and death in the round of existence." [311]

Anupalitto lokena jātonanta-jino ahaṁ,
Buddho bodhi-tale hutvā, tāremi janataṁ bahuṁ. [132]

Hey, Māra, although I have been born into this human world, I have not in the least been tainted with any of the conditioned states of beings. Having surmounted the infinite conditioned states of beings and infinite mental defilements, I have gained the title of "Infinite Conqueror" (*Ananta-jina*). Even while I remain seated on this unconquered throne without moving from this cross-legged posture, I have burnt up and got rid of all the mental defilements, I have indeed truly become a Buddha amidst humans, Devas and Brahmas. And I will save all these beings from the stream of Saṁsāra and carry them over to the high ground of Nibbāna. You are not in any way capable of restraining me. It is no concern of yours.

Samantā dhajinaṁ disvā, yuddhaṁ MāraṁsavāhanaṁSavāhanaṁ,
yuddhāya paccugacchāmi, mā maṁ ṭhānā acāvayi. [133]

Hey, Māra, seeing your great armies advancing from all sides with flags flying, and you on Girimekkhala's elephant, I have advanced facing you

with the wisdom to do battle with you valiantly.[133] You cannot make me rise or move from this unconquered throne. I will see that you will not be able to do so.

Yan-te taṁ nappasahati senaṁ loko sadevako,
tan-te paññāya gacchāmi, āmaṁ pattaṁ va asmanā. *[134]*

Hey, Māra, in the same way a strong man breaks and destroys, with a large stone, all the baked or unbaked pots and cups made by a potter, I will repulse and smash single handedly, without rising from this place and by the power of wisdom, your ten great armies of sensual passions (*kāma-rāga*), to which the whole world concedes defeat with repugnance; or I will drive away your armies, your great armies, which measure twelve leagues each, in front on the right and left, nine leagues in height and reach as far as the walls of the world-elements so that not a single soldier of yours is left behind. Even in a moment from now, I will make you, as well as your hordes, flee like a flock of crows is made to fly away by throwing a stone.[134]

Icchanto sāsape gabbhe caṅkamāmi ito cito,
icchanto loka-dhātumhi, attabhāvena chādayi. *[135]*

Hey Māra, indeed, if I want to be small, I can walk to and fro inside a mustard seed. If I want to be big, I can keep even the whole of the world-element covered with my individuality (*atta-bhava*). [312]

Ete sabbe gahetvāna, cuṇṇetuṁ accharāya pi,
atthi thāmaṁ balaṁ mayhaṁ pāṇa-ghāto na vaṭṭati. *[136]*

Hey Māra, I have the power to seize and pulverise you together with all your hordes just by snapping my fingers; but I do not take the slightest delight in taking another's life, which is a wrong doing.

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[133] What is meant here is, not advancing physically, but only exercising of his power of wisdom.

[134] Verses 9 and 10 are those delivered by the Buddha in the Discourse on the Striving (*Padhāna-sutta*, Snp 3.2). Verses 1 to 8 and those following hereafter were composed by Buddharakkhita Thera, the author of the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*), taking extracts from Pāḷi discourse texts which are in accordance with the teaching of the Buddha.

Imassa gaṇḍuppādassa āyudhena balena kiṁ,
mayhaṁ hi tena pāpena, sallāpo pi na yujjati. *[137]*

What benefit will accrue if I make use of a weapon or physical strength against this Māra who is just the size of an earthworm? True, I dislike even to engage this much in conversation with this wicked Māra.

Before the Bodhisatta uttered these bold words, Māra had questioned: "Prince Siddhattha, why are you occupying this unconquered throne which belongs to me?" The Bodhisatta replied: "Who is the witness to prove that the unconquered throne belongs to you?" Māra stretched out his hands, saying: "What is the use of producing others as my witness, all the Māra troops, who are now in your presence, are my witnesses." At that moment millions of his hordes appeared simultaneously making an uproar as if there was a landslide, shouting: "I am the witness, I am the witness." So the Bodhisatta, restraining the hordes of Māra, recited the following verse with the intention of producing his witness.

Pallaṅkaṁ mama bhāvāya, kim-atthaññena sakkhinā,
kampitā maddiyā dānā, sakkhi hoti ayaṁ mahī. *[138]*

Hey Māra, because of my wish for this unconquered throne, there was no gift (*dāna*) which I have not given; no morality (*sīla*) which I have not observed; no austerity (*dukkara*) which I have not practised throughout many existences in many worlds.

Hey Māra, let alone the perfections of generosity, morality, etc., performed by me in my many existences in many worlds, even in just one existence as Vessantara, when I performed great charities seven times, reaching the height of my generosity with the giving away of Queen Maddī, this great earth trembled a total of seven times. Now that I am sitting on this unconquered throne, in order to conquer the whole world, and your great Māra armies came to make war upon me, why does this great earth remain quiet without trembling?

Hey Māra, you have made your hordes give false evidence but this great earth, having no volition, is just and fair to you as well as to me, this great earth is impartial to you and me, and having no volition at all, will now be my witness." So saying, the Bodhisatta brought his glorious right hand from inside the robe and pointed towards the great earth like a streak of lightning flashes from a cloud-opening.

At that very moment, the great earth revolved swiftly like a potter's wheel and rolled around violently. The sound from the earth caused the whole stretch of the sky to resound loudly, like the rumbling of thunder. The seven mountain ranges, encircling Mount Meru as well as the Himālayas, made a deep, continuous sound. The whole of the 10,000 world-element rolled with frightening and fierce sounds, crackling and exploding like a bamboo grove on fire. The entire cloudless sky was rumbling frighteningly as if parched rice-grains were crackling with loud retorts in a red hot pan; burning sparks rained down profusely like a cascade of red hot embers; and thunderbolts crashed intermittently.

Māra, finding himself caught between the earth and the sky with continuous din and clamour, [313] greatly frightened with no refuge or help, laid down his battle-banner and, discarding his 1,000 weapons at that very place, fled in confusion at full speed without being able to glance back at his elephant, Girmekhala. Even as Māra fled, his great armies broke down in disorder and fled, being scattered in disarray in all directions, like ashes blown away by a storm; they eventually returned to the Vasavatti realm.

In this manner, with the victory over Vasavatti Māra before sunset on the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), in the year 528 BCE, the Bodhisatta became the conqueror of the whole world of sentient beings and reached the harmless, dangerless, fearless state.

At that moment, on seeing the great armies of Māra breaking up in disorder, the Devas and Brahmas who had fled out of fear on the arrival of Māra and who had been watching to find out: "Who will emerge the victor? Who will be the loser?" proclaimed simultaneously in profound praise the good news: Māra has been vanquished. Prince Siddhattha has emerged the victor. We will celebrate and honour his victory (*jayo hi buddhassa sirimato ayaṁ*). It was transmitted by one Nāga to another Nāga, one Garuḷa to another Garuḷa, one Deva to another Deva, one Brahma to another Brahma. Carrying perfumes and fragrant flowers, etc., in their hands, they congregated at the Mahā Bodhi throne where the Bodhisatta was residing.

> [The following four verses are quoted from the Introduction to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka-nidāna*, PTS 1.74).]

Jayo hi Buddhassa sirīmato ayaṁ,
Mārassa ca pāpimato parājayo,
ugghosayuṁ Bodhi-maṇḍe pamoditā,
jayaṁ tadā Nāga-gaṇā Mahesino.

This unique victory, acclaimed by this inanimate earth and sky that rumbled as if animate, belongs only to the Buddha, who by means of omniscience, without leaving out even the tiniest detail, possesses the knowledge of all the truth worthy of knowing; who is the depository of the incomparable glory of glories in the whole of the 10,000 world-element.

This victory is celebrated by the humans, Devas and Brahmas resounding throughout the sky. And it is the vile and wicked Māra who suffers utter defeat, a complete rout and total retreat, fearing the power of the Buddha, and who is blinded by ignorance and marched with his great armies as if it would cause upheavals in the eight quarters of the earth's surface, and started the offensive with intimidation trying to capture the Bodhi-crested throne (*Bodhi-makuṭa-pallaṅka*).

Thus, on this day of the great victory, the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), in the year 528 BCE, at the site of the unconquered throne where omniscience was attained by the Buddha, all the hosts of divine Nāgas, happy and delighted with the victory of the Buddha, who has cultivated such extraordinary attributes as the aggregates of moral conduct (*sīlakkhanda*), proclaim the victory resoundingly, and so loud as to reach the whole of the 10,000 world-element.

Jayo hi Buddhassa sirīmato ayaṁ,
Mārassa ca pāpimato parājayo,
ugghosayuṁ Bodhi-maṇḍe pamoditā,
Supaṇṇa-saṅghāpi jayaṁ Mahesino.

This unique victory, acclaimed by this inanimate earth and sky that rumbled as if animate, belongs only to the Buddha, who by means of omniscience, without leaving out even the tiniest detail, possesses the knowledge of all the truth worthy of knowing; who is the depository of the incomparable glory of glories in the whole of the 10,000 world-element. This victory is celebrated by humans, Devas and Brahmas resounding throughout the sky. And it is the vile and wicked Māra who

suffers utter defeat, a complete rout and total retreat, fearing the power of the Buddha, and who is blinded by ignorance and marched with a great army as if it would cause upheavals in [314] the eight quarters of the earth's surface, and started the offensive with intimidation trying to capture the Bodhi-crested throne (*Bodhi-makuṭa-pallaṅka*).

Thus, on this day of the great victory, the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), in the year 528 BCE, at the site of the unconquered throne where omniscience was attained by the Buddha, all the hosts of the Garuḷas, happy and delighted with the victory of the Buddha, who has cultivated such extraordinary attributes as the aggregates of moral conduct (*sīlakkhanda*), proclaim the victory resoundingly, and so loud as to reach the whole of the 10,000 world-element.

Jayo hi Buddhassa sirīmato ayaṁ,
Mārassa ca pāpimato parājayo,
ugghosayuṁ Bodhi-maṇḍe pamoditā,
jayaṁ tadā deva-gaṇā Mahesino.

This unique victory, acclaimed by this inanimate earth and sky that rumbled as if animate, belongs only to the Buddha, who by means of omniscience, without leaving out even the tiniest detail, possesses the knowledge of all the truth worthy of knowing; who is the depository of the incomparable glory of glories in the whole of the 10,000 world-element. This victory is celebrated by the humans, Devas and Brahmas resounding throughout the sky.

It is the vile and wicked Māra who suffers utter defeat, a complete rout and total retreat, fearing the power of the Buddha, and who is blinded by ignorance and marched with a great army as if it would cause upheavals in the eight quarters of the earth's surface, and started the offensive with intimidation trying to capture the Bodhi-crested throne (*Bodhi-makuṭa-pallaṅka*).

Thus, on this day of the great victory, the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), in the year 528 BCE, at the site of the unconquered throne where omniscience was attained by the Buddha, all the hosts of Devas, happy and delighted with the victory of the Buddha, who has cultivated such extraordinary attributes as the aggregates of moral conduct (*sīlakkhanda*)

proclaim the victory resoundingly, and so loud as to reach the whole of the 10,000 world-element.

Jayo hi Buddhassa sirīmato ayaṁ,
Mārassa ca pāpimato parājayo,
ugghosayuṁ Bodhi-maṇḍe pamoditā,
jayaṁ tadā Brahma-gaṇā pi tādino ti.

This unique victory, acclaimed by this inanimate earth and sky that rumbled as if animate, belongs only to the Buddha, who, by means of omniscience, without leaving out even the tiniest detail, possesses the knowledge of all the truth worthy of knowing; who is the depository of the incomparable glory of glories in the whole of the 10,000 world-element. This victory is celebrated by humans, Devas and Brahmas resounding throughout the sky. And it is the vile and wicked Māra who suffers utter defeat, a complete rout and total retreat, fearing the power of the Buddha, and who is blinded by ignorance and marched with a great army as if it would cause upheavals in the eight quarters of the earth's surface, and started the offensive with intimidation trying to capture the Bodhi-crested throne (*Bodhi-makuṭa-pallaṅka*).

Thus, on this day of the great victory, the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), in the year 528 BCE, at the site of the unconquered throne where omniscience was attained by the Buddha, all the hosts of Brahmas, happy and delighted with the victory of the Buddha, who has cultivated such extraordinary attributes as the aggregates of moral conduct (*sīlakkhanda*), proclaim the victory [315] resoundingly in the sky and so loud as to reach the whole of the ten housand world-elements.

All the Devas and Brahmas, who had their abodes in the other 10,000 world-elements beside this one, also congregated in the presence of the Bodhisatta, prostrating before him, paying homage with flowers, perfumes and scented paste, singing auspicious words of praise and eulogies in many and various ways.

In describing the route taken by the Bodhisatta on his journey and his activities on the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), in the year 528 BCE, the commentaries to the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), the Introduction to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka-nidāna*) and the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) generally agree in the purport of their accounts. They

differ slightly only in their presentation, some stating things briefly and others more elaborately.

However, in depicting the midday rest taken by the Bodhisatta in the Sāla forest, the commentaries to the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and the Introduction to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka-nidāna*) make no mention of the attainment of absorption (*jhāna-samāpatti*) and of the super knowledges (*abhiññā*). The Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*), on the other hand, states that the Bodhisatta attained the eight mundane absorptions and the five mundane super knowledges (*abhiññā*) while spending the day in the Sāla forest.

It also states that at the time of his arrival at the Mahā Bodhi tree, the noble Bodhisatta was already endowed with the physical strength equal to that of 1,000 billion average men (*majjhima-purisa*) and the strength of the super knowledges (*abhiññā*). The said statement by the author of the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) is in accord with his other statements, namely: "When Māra advanced on him to do battle, the noble Bodhisatta said: 'If I wish, I can keep the whole of the world-element covered with my body frame,' and also: 'Pointing out as witness the great charities performed in his existence as Vessantara,' " which could be known only through the knowledge of former existences (*pubbe-nivāsānussati-abhiññā*). It is therefore faultless.

According to the author of the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*), the Bodhisatta had already acquired the eight mundane absorptions and the five mundane super knowledges at the time he met the sectarian leaders, Āḷāra and Udaka. Not having made use of them during the whole of six years practice of austere striving (*dukkara-cariyā*), they became as if defiled just as gold cups kept unused become tarnished; the Bodhisatta re-purified them while in the Sāla forest as though polishing the stained cups. What is meant apparently is that, only after vanquishing Māra, the Bodhisatta made full use of the already acquired knowledge of past existences (*pubbe-nivāsa-abhiññā*), and the divine power of sight (*dibba-cakkhu-abhiññā*), in order to reach the stage of penetrating the truths. These observations are made here because the view of the author of the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) appears to be unusual and worthy of note.

Realization of the Three Knowledges

Having won his victory over Vasavatti Māra also known as Devaputta Māra, before sunset on the full moon of May (*Vesākha*), in the year 528 BCE, the Bodhisatta realised the three understandings (*vijjā*), in succession, as follows: the knowledge of past existences (*pubbe-nivāsānussati-ñāṇa*) in the first watch of that night; knowledge of the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu-ñāṇa*) in the middle watch of the night and knowledge of the extinction of the pollutants (*āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*) in the last watch of the night, and became a Buddha in the very last watch of the night of the May (*Vesākha*) full moon.

Knowledge of Past Existences

The physical and mental processes which had taken place in the past: Nibbāna, which becomes known from these physical and mental processes, one's personal names, clan names etc., which are merely conventional terms – all this belonging to the past is called past existences (*pubbe-nivāsa*). The super knowledge (*abhiññā*) accompanying the remembrance of [316] past existences is the knowledge of past existences (*pubbe-nivāsānussati-abhiññā*). The Buddha taught it as the first of the three understandings (*vijjā-ñāṇa*).

The following is an account in detail as to how the first understanding was realized by the Bodhisatta: When the noble Bodhisatta was sat on the unconquered throne, delighted and happy after being victorious over Vasavatti Māra, many Devas and Brahmas dwelling in the 10,000 world-element including the earth-bound spirits (*bhumma-deva*), went to the Bodhisatta simultaneously and assembled, shouting and exclaiming: "Come, friends, Devas and Brahmas, the victory of the noble Bodhisatta and the defeat of Māra have been made clear. Let us hold together an auspicious celebration in honour of the victory of the noble Bodhisatta and the coming attainment of his Buddhahood."

At that time, the sun disc, 50 leagues in size, magnificent with a thousandfold radiance, was about to disappear like a gold wheel of a cart being held by the rim and dipped into the whirlpool of the great ocean. The moon chariot, 40 leagues in size, giving out cool, shining beams of light, brightening up the entire universe, was just rising up slowly from the milky ocean in the east, as if the

silvery wheel of a cart being thrown into the sky by someone holding it by the rim.[135]

In the middle of this golden palace, the Bodhisatta looked very graceful, the golden colour of his body made the high ground around the Mahā Bodhi tree and all the animate and inanimate objects in the surrounding area appear as if immersed in a stream of liquid gold. The Bodhisatta, so graceful in this manner, sitting cross-legged on the unconquered throne at the foot of the Mahā Bodhi tree which may be likened to an umbrella of precious sapphire stones, was reflecting on the Dhamma.[136]

At that time, standing in the Tāvatiṁsa realm, Sakka sounded the Vijayuttara conch which was 120 leagues long, to summon the Devas and Brahmas. The sound of his conch could be heard from all over the realm, 10,000 leagues in width. Even while blowing the conch continuously, Sakka was running fast to reach the Bodhi tree. It was not only the Sakka of this universe, but all the Sakkas of the other 10,000 world-elements went blowing conches into the presence of the Bodhisatta.

Mahā Brahma arrived and paid homage by holding the white umbrella, which had been left behind on top of the mountains called Cakkavāḷa, and sheltered the Bodhisatta with it from above; and all the Mahā Brahmas from the other 10,000 world-elements arrived and stood holding their white umbrellas, touching one another so as to leave no gap between them.

Suyāma, King of the Yama abode of Devas, also arrived and stood near the Bodhisatta, paying homage by fanning him with the yak-tail fan which was three miles in size; and all the Suyāma Devas from the other 10,000 world-element also arrived and paid homage, each holding a yak-tail fan, crowding the whole of this world-element.

Santusita, King of the Tusita abode of Devas, also arrived and paid homage by fanning the Bodhisatta with a circular ruby fan, three miles in size; and all the Santusita Devas from the other 10,000 world-element also arrived and paid

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[135] Try to visualise the universe as a large golden palace.

[136] The detail regarding the reflection on the Dhamma by the Bodhisatta will be given later.

homage, each holding a circular ruby fan, crowding the whole of this world-element.

Pañcasikha arrived, carrying the celestial harp, Beluva, accompanied by a group of celestial dancers, and paid homage by dancing, singing and making music; and all the celestial dancers dwelling in the other 10,000 world-elements also arrived and paid homage by dancing, singing and making music.

Furthermore, all male and female deities dwelling in the 10,000 world-elements gathered together in this world-element and paid homage, taking their positions in the vicinity. Some of them standing and holding a jewelled archway, others stood around in various groups of their own, some carrying offerings made of the seven kinds of jewels, some holding golden plantain plants, some holding mansions of splendour, some holding yak-tail [317] fans, some holding goads for driving elephants, some holding pairs of carp, some holding primrose flowers, golden circular platforms, bowls filled with water, jars filled with water, conches, fire-stirrers, oil lampstands with rubies, golden mirrors, stone-studded mirrors, mirrors with the seven jewels, oil lamps finished with rubies, bunting and streamers, and wish-fulfilling trees. All the Devas dwelling in the 10,000 world-element arrived, assumed the appearance of celestial dancers, and paid homage, dancing celestial dances, singing celestial songs, offering celestial flowers, perfumes and scented powder. At that time, the whole sky was full of cascades of celestial flowers and celestial perfumes as if the whole environment was filled with the rain drops and rain water of a heavy downpour.

This tremendous ovation and ceremonious homage was made with such grandeur by all the Devas and Brahmas because they were exulted with the belief: “When this noble Bodhisatta becomes a Buddha, we will certainly get the opportunity to listen to the Dhamma from him and thereby receive the immortal supermundane Dhamma of the paths and fruitions and Nibbāna; and we will have delightful satisfaction (*pīti*), by applying our mind to the nine supermundane Dhammas of the four paths, four fruitions and Nibbāna. We will also witness all kinds of miracles which will be objects of delight for the eye. The Buddha, by teaching us the deathless Dhamma, will bring about our emancipation and safety from the difficult journey of birth (*jāti*), ageing (*jarā*), sickness (*vyādhi*), death (*maraṇa*), grief (*soka*), lamentation (*parideva*), pain (*dukkha*), distress (*domanassa*) and despair (*upāyāsa*).”

Although the Devas and Brahmas paid him homage with great joy and respect, crowding the whole 10,000 world-element for the aforesaid reason and although he saw clearly, with his own eyes, these extraordinary acts of reverence performed in numerous ways, the Bodhisatta had no feeling of attachment and enjoyment at all; and he paid no attention to them. He dwelt reflecting only on the Dhamma which he relied upon as his support.

The mountains called Cakkavāḷa, which protected the Bodhisatta who was so positioned, was like a curtain and the open sky above him with its stars and constellations, was like a canopy studded with gold and silver stars. The 10,000 world-element, with its seven planes of happy existences (*sugati-bhūmi*), was like a great seven-tiered palace. The high ground of the Bodhi tree was like a great audience hall, the unconquered throne was like a great audience throne and the Mahā Bodhi tree was like a great umbrella finished with precious emeralds – all inside this seven-tiered palace of the 10,000 world-element.

While he remained sitting on the unconquered throne, which resembled a great audience throne, on the high ground of the Mahā Bodhi tree, which resembled a great audience hall, covered from above by the Mahā Bodhi tree, 100 cubits high from bottom to top and 100 cubits in circumference, which resembled a great umbrella decorated with precious emeralds, the Bodhisatta was oblivious of the Devas and Brahmas around him, crowding the whole of the 10,000 world-element and paying homage to him. Since he had been reflecting only on the Dhamma, his energy (*viriya*) was undiminished and very keen; his mindfulness (*sati*) was steadfast and clear, and he was physically and mentally very calm and peaceful. He, therefore, achieved and remained absorbed again in the first form absorption (*rūpāvacara-jhāna*).

The mind continuum of the Bodhisatta, who was thus absorbed in the first absorption, was entirely free from the hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) and being detached from sensual objects (*vatthu-kāma*) and sensual desires (*kilesa-kāma*), delightful satisfaction (*pīti*) and happiness (*sukha*) arose in him profusely.

And again, when the Bodhisatta achieved and remained absorbed in the second form absorption, his mind continuum was free of agitation and disturbance from thoughts (*vitakka-vicāra*); there was internal purity and clarity and his concentration was uniquely firm. On account of that concentration, his delightful satisfaction and happiness increased.

And again, when the Bodhisatta achieved and remained absorbed in the third form absorption, even delightful satisfaction, which had manifested itself in his mind continuum, disappeared and [318] he dwelt only with the feeling of happiness (*sukha-vedanā*). Fully detached even from that feeling of happiness at its height, he became imbued with the mental state of specific neutrality (*tatra-majjhattatā*) or equanimity (*jhānupekkha*). His mindfulness became pellucid and his insight-wisdom greatly sharpened.

And again, when the Bodhisatta achieved and remained absorbed in the fourth form absorption, since he had already dispelled both physical and mental pain and pleasure from his mind continuum, he dwelt in the state of viewing sensual objects calmly and with equanimity (*upekkhā-vedanā*). By virtue of this equanimity and the mental state of specific neutrality (*tatra-majjhattatā*), his mental concomitants, such as mindfulness, etc., which were part and parcel of the fourth absorption, were pellucid like the light of the moon.

The Eight Mind Qualities of the Bodhisatta

If a review is now made of the mind continuum of the Bodhisatta out of devotion, it will be found that, at the time when he was practising austere striving for six years, his mind continuum was exceedingly pure, undefiled by the three wrong thoughts (*micchā-vitakka*), namely, sensual thought (*kāma-vitakka*), malevolent thought (*vyāpāda-vitakka*) and cruel thought (*vihiṁsā-vitakka*), so that Māra could not find any opportunity of censuring him.

Again, while he was spending the day in the Sāla forest on the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), the day he was to attain Buddhahood, his mind continuum was worthy of veneration, for it was highly purified with the attainment of eight mundane absorptions. Moreover, when all the Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element assembled, crowding this universe, and paid him homage while he was sitting on the unconquered throne after his victory over Devaputta Māra, he remained oblivious of them, concentrating his attention on the practice of the Dhamma only. And so the mind continuum of the Bodhisatta, who had once again achieved and remained absorbed in the fourth form absorption (*rūpāvacara-jhāna*), a feat for those of sharp intelligence, he had his power of concentration greatly enhanced by the concentration of the fourth form absorption as follows:

1. By virtue of the very pure mental state of the fourth form absorption (*rūpa-jhāna-cittuppāda*), the mind continuum was completely pure throughout its entire process.

2. On account of such purity, it appeared glittering like polished, newly-refined gold.

3. Having discarded happiness and joy (*sukha-somanassa*), which is the cause of greed (*lobha*), and also having discarded sorrow and distress (*dukkha-domanassa*), which is the cause of hatred (*dosa*), it was free from the mental defilements of greed and hatred.

4. Freedom from the defilements and taints of the mind leads to freedom from impurities which soil and oppress the mind (*upakkilesa*).

5. Being controlled by the fivefold mastery over his mind (*vasī-bhāva*), and being tamed and trained in fourteen ways, the mind continuum of the Bodhisatta became pliable, gentle so as to be amenable to his wishes, like a well-tanned piece of leather or like the well-treated block of lac.

6. Being soft and tender, like the newly refined, polished pure gold, which was ductile and malleable easily made into desired ornaments, it became amenable to the wishes of the Bodhisatta, enabling him to accomplish effectively and easily all kinds of feats, such as recollecting, discerning the events of previous existences, or seeing as if with the divine eye, distant objects, hidden objects and very fine, microscopic objects.

7. Having been well developed and trained so as not to become deprived of the aforesaid qualities, the mind continuum remained firmly established in the qualities; or being pliable and malleable for effective accomplishment of anything desired, the mind continuum remained amenable to the wish of the Bodhisatta.

8. Being thus firmly and securely established, his mind was completely unshaken; or, being established thus, the mind continuum was very strong in respect of faith (*saddhā*), energy (*viriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*) and the light of wisdom (*paññā*). There was, therefore, no shaking of the mind at all which occurs owing to faithlessness, laziness, heedlessness, restlessness, ignorance and gloom

arising from the mental defilements. In other words, faithlessness, laziness, etc., could not make [319] even the slightest inroad into the mind continuum of the Bodhisatta.

Alternatively:

1. The mind continuum of the Bodhisatta was well-established in the concentration of the fourth absorption.
2. It was entirely pure, being free from the hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*).
3. Having gone beyond the grosser factors of the absorptions (*jhānaṅga*), such as thought (*vitakka*), and so on, which agitate and disturb the mind, the mind continuum was shining pure, as if about to glitter.
4. It was free from such defilements as pride (*māna*), deception (*māyā*), treachery (*sāṭheyya*), etc., apt to be generated through attainment of the absorptions.
5. It was also free from covetousness (*abhijjhā*), etc., which forms the cause of the minor defilements (*upakkilesa*).
6. It was malleable, having gained the fivefold mastery (*vasī-bhāva*).
7. Having become the basis of all kinds of supernormal powers (*iddhi*), it was in a position to accomplish whatever was desired by the Bodhisatta.
8. Having been perfected by mental development (*bhāvanā*), his mind continuum remained unshaken and firmly established.

The mind of the Bodhisatta, which was thus endowed with these eight attributes, finds it easy, needing only an inclination, for realization of the Dhamma which should be realized by means of the super knowledges (*abhiññā*). When the mind was bent towards the object of the super knowledges, the super knowledge thought moments (*abhiññā-javana*) arise quite easily.

1. The attainment of the super knowledge of former existences (*pubbe-nivāsānussati-abhiññā*) was the first understanding (*vijjā-ñāṇa*).

The mind continuum, endowed with the aforesaid eight attributes and very pure and pellucid, being in such a perfect state in which the super knowledge thought moment (*abhiññā-javana*) arose easily when the mind was inclined to the object of the super knowledge, the Bodhisatta inclined it towards the super knowledge

of former existences (*pubbe-nivāsānussati-abhiññā*), which could recollect past activities, events and experiences. Thereupon, the super knowledge of former existences arose in him easily. Through that super knowledge, he recollected and saw all his past activities, the events and experiences of his past existences, going back from his previous life right up to the existence when he was the recluse Sumedha. He recollected, also in backward order, many existences and aeons prior to them, and recollected, in forward order, his existences up to that of Setaketu the Deva in the Tusita realm, just before the present one.

This super knowledge was achieved in the first watch of the night. Here, there can be doubt as to how it was possible to know all the happenings and experiences in so many existences with one single thought-moment (*abhiññā-javana*), which arises only once in one thought-process (*vīthi*). Although there arose only one single thought moment in one thought process, ignorance (*moha*), which kept the happenings and experiences in those existences hidden, was done away with through that thought-moment. All kinds of happenings and experiences of those existences were recollected only thereafter, through the successive processes of reflection (*paccavekkhaṇa-vīthi*), which followed the processes of the super knowledge (*abhiññā-vīthi*).

The noble Bodhisatta, who recollected successive existences of the past through the super knowledge of former existences (*pubbe-nivāsānussati-vijjā-ñāṇa*), also acquired super knowledges which could assure him of the attainment of the supermundane (*lokuttara*) paths and fruitions with penetrative insight thus: "There were only the phenomena of mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*) throughout the countless rounds of existence; the beginning of which is not known. On all three occasions of birth, living and death, there were only these two phenomena of mind and matter. Indeed in all abodes and at all times, the phenomena of mind and matter are in a continuous state of flux, like the flame of an oil lamp or like the current of a river, and through a succession of causes and effects, it is only the continuum of mind and matter which fulfils the various functions concerned, such as seeing the sight, hearing the sound, etc., at the six doors of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, thus giving rise to various modes of intimating one's intention (*viññatti*) by bodily movement and verbal expression, etc. In reality there is no sentient individual at all to be called 'I,' 'he,' 'she,' 'man,' etc. Indeed, there is not [320] a single Deva, Māra or Brahma who can create such a sentient being."

This being the case, the Bodhisatta had, through the super knowledge of former existences, temporarily put away to a distance (*vikkhambhana-pahāna*) the 20 wrong views of self-belief (*atta-vāda*), which are the four wrong views of self-belief relating to the aggregates of corporeality, namely: form is self, self has form; form exists in self, self exists in form and similarly, each set of these four wrong views relating to the remaining aggregates of feeling, perception, volitions and consciousness. In a similar manner, he had also discarded delusion (*moha*) which had taken place in the distant past.

2. Attainment of the super knowledge of divine sight (*dibba-cakkhu-abhiññā*), which is the second understanding (*vijjā-ñāṇa*).

After the noble Bodhisatta had realised the attainment of the super knowledge of former existences in the first watch of that night, he recollected many past events and existences through that super knowledge; and, having temporarily put away, to a distance, the 20 wrong views (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*) together with delusion (*moha*) which had taken place in the distant past, he directed his mind continuum, which was endowed with the aforesaid eight attributes, towards acquiring the knowledge of seeing the deaths and births of sentient beings (*cutūpapāta-ñāṇa*), and towards acquiring the knowledge of analysing the deeds which cause rebirth (*yathā-kammūpaga-ñāṇa*).

> The knowledge of analysing the deeds which which cause rebirth is the same as the knowledge of divine sight. When the knowledge of divine sight is developed, the knowledge of analysing the deeds which cause rebirth and knowledge of foreseeing the future (*anāgataṁsa-ñāṇa*) also become developed.

When the mind was thus inclined to acquire the super knowledge of divine sight the second understanding (*vijjā-ñāṇa*) arose quite easily. Through that super knowledge, he could see sentient beings on the verge of death or just after taking conception; those who were low-born or high-born by lineage, caste, etc., those who were beautiful or not beautiful, and attain a happy existence or a miserable existence. In other words, he saw those who were rich and prosperous because of their past deeds of merit based on absence of greed (*alobha*) and those who were indigent and poverty-stricken because of their past deeds of demerit based on greed (*lobha*).

After seeing, through the super knowledge of divine sight, the denizens of the downfall (*apāya*) suffering misfortune, he reflected: "What kind of deeds have these beings of the lower realms done to suffer such awful miseries?" Thereupon, the super knowledge of analysing the deeds which cause rebirth which enabled him to see the deeds of demerit done by these beings arose in him.

Likewise, after seeing, through the super knowledge of divine sight, immense happiness enjoyed by sentient beings of the realms of humans, Devas and Brahmas in a progressively higher and better manner, he reflected: "What kind of deeds have these humans, Devas and Brahmas done to enjoy such progressively magnificent bliss in their respective realms?" Thereupon, the super knowledge of analysing the deeds which cause rebirth which enabled him to see the deeds of merit done by these beings arose in him.

By means of the knowledge of analysing the deeds which cause rebirth, he reviewed in detail the past deeds of merit and demerit done by beings and came to know them as they really were: "These denizens of the lower realms had, in their past existences, committed evil by deed, word and thought; they had maligned, abused and reviled the noble ones (*ariyas*). They held wrong views and with these wrong views they themselves committed, and also caused others to commit, various demeritorious deeds. After death and dissolution of their bodies, they reappeared in the lower realms, in the downfall (*apāya*), namely, the realm of continuous suffering (*avīci*), the realm of animals (*tiracchāna*), the realm of Petas and the realm of the Asuras.

He knew that: "These beings in good existences had performed good deeds bodily, verbally and mentally; they did not malign, abuse or revile the noble ones (*ariya*); they held right views and with right views, they performed various kinds of meritorious deeds and they caused others to do so. After death and dissolution of their bodies, they were reborn in the happy destinations of humans, Devas and Brahmas." [321]

This super knowledge of divine sight, the second understanding was achieved by the noble Bodhisatta at midnight of that day. By virtue of this second understanding, the mind continuum of the Bodhisatta became devoid of the element of ignorance and delusion (*avijjā-moha-dhātu*) which was apt to keep hidden the passing away and arising of sentient beings. Then with the super knowledge of analysing the deeds which cause rebirth, which has the super

knowledge of divine sight as its basis, he was able to review and became enlightened as to the true facts of the past deeds of sentient beings; and having done away with the sixteen kinds of doubt (*kaṅkhā*) the Bodhisatta attained the stage of purity by the removal of doubt (*kaṅkhā-vitaraṇa-visuddhi*).

Sixteen kinds of doubts are caused by wondering: Have I been in the past? Have I not been in the past? What have I been in the past? How have I been in the past? From what state into what state did I change in the past? Shall I be in the future? Shall I not be in the future? What shall I be in the future? How shall I be in the future? From what state to what state shall I change in the future? Am 1? Am I not? What am 1? How am I? Whence has this being come? Whither will it go?

3. The attainment of the knowledge of the extinction of the pollutants, (*āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*), the third understanding (*vijjā-ñāṇa*) and becoming a Buddha.

The noble Bodhisatta attained the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*), also called the knowledge of the destruction of the pollutants (*āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*), in the last watch of the night thereby realising omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*).

Then to become a Buddha among humans, Devas and Brahmas, he inclined his mind continuum, which was endowed with the aforesaid eight attributes, to attain the path-knowledge of an Arahat; then letting it dwell on the doctrine of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) which is made up of twelve factors: ignorance (*avijjā*), volitions (*saṅkhāra*), consciousness (*viññāṇa*), mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*), the six sense spheres (*saḷāyatana*), contact (*phassa*), feeling (*vedanā*), craving (*taṇhā*), attachment (*upādāna*), continuation (*bhava*), birth (*jāti*), old age (*jarā*), and death (*maraṇa*). Going over this doctrine of dependent origination in forward and reverse order repeatedly, he attained the noble path (*ariya-magga*), which is also known as knowledge and insight into things as they really are (*yathā-bhūta-ñāṇa-dassana*).

This knowledge of the four paths (*magga-ñāṇa*) did not appear in the mind continuum of such individuals as Sakka and Brahma who were very mighty in the world and the noble recluses, Kāḷadevila and Nārada, who were highly accomplished in the absorptions (*jhāna*) and super knowledges (*abhiññā*). So, it may be asked: “Why did this knowledge of the four paths which was so subtle and profound, which was not even dreamed of throughout the beginningless

Saṁsāra, and never realised before, appear in the mind continuum of the Bodhisatta who had no teacher and who had entered the ascetic life by his own volition?"

The noble Bodhisatta had, during the period spanning four immeasurable periods and 100,000 world aeons, been passing through existences – so numerous that they could not be counted in hundreds, thousands and hundreds of thousands – and he had accumulated meritorious deeds of the perfection of generosity (*dāna-pāramī*), which were performed on the basis of the four modes of development, even to the extent of risking his own life. And in every existence, he had conducted himself to completely eradicate or lessen the defilement of greed that arose whenever he gave attention to this or that object. This led him to reach the stage at which others started remarking: "Is there no defilement of greed in the mind continuum of this noble person?"

Similarly, by virtue of the perfection of morality, forebearance and loving-kindness, which were [322] developed through the whole period of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, he prevented the arising of anger (*kodha*) and faults (*dosa*), and by pouring the cool water of loving-kindness over a long period of time, he had extinguished the fires of anger and also done away with its company of jealousy (*issā*), stinginess (*macchariya*) and remorse (*kukkucca*).

By means of the perfection of wisdom (*paññā-pāramī*), which was well developed and accumulated throughout his many existences and aeons, he had dispelled the element of darkness which is delusion (*moha*). He had also discarded wrong views; he was therefore a great man of very pure wisdom. He had also approached all the Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas, and noble disciples, as well as other learned individuals whom he happened to encounter and asked them such questions as: "Which Dhamma is faulty and which Dhamma is faultless? Which Dhamma is defiled and which Dhamma is pure?" Because of such enquiries, he had eliminated doubts in matters of Dhamma and had progressed in wisdom, existence after existence.

In the house of his relatives, he showed respect to those older than himself, such as mother and father, maternal uncles, etc., by bowing, by adoring, by honouring, by offering seats, by rising from the place in advance and by extending a welcome to them. He also showed respect to learned persons of virtuous conduct.

He had thereby removed conceit (*māna*) and distraction (*uddhacca*) and became free from arrogance, like a snake with broken fangs, or a bull with broken horns, or a rope coil used as a foot-scraper. He was in the habit of praising the virtues of forbearance, the virtue of wishing for the welfare of others, and the virtue of being helpful to others with compassion.

By renouncing the world, the Bodhisatta had abandoned the luxuries of his domain and kingship, and became a recluse. After achieving the absorptions in the forest, he discarded the five hindrances and did away with sensuality (*kāma-rāga*) and delight in womenfolk (*itthi-rati*) whenever they appeared in each and every existence. With the perfection of truthfulness, he also abstained from false speech (*micchā-vaca*) which tends to mislead the world; with the perfection of energy, he also removed displeasure (*arati*) and indolence (*kosajja*) in concentration and insight meditations which are practices of extraordinary merit, by keeping his mind continuously active and diligent in performing meritorious deeds. In the aforesaid manner, he had endeavoured to make his mind continuum purer and purer one existence after another.

The noble Bodhisatta, who had thus removed the moral defilements (*kilesa*) by means of the accumulated merit which was accrued from the meritorious deeds of the perfections, such as generosity, morality, etc., had to go through, even in a single existence, the process of repeated purification because the defilements which he had removed would reappear soon. He would then remove them, only to find them making their appearance again since they had not yet been completely eradicated (*samuccheda-pahāna*) by means of the path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*). The Bodhisatta, however, would not concede defeat and would not give up but put them away temporarily to a distance (*tad-aṅga-pahāna*) and through putting away to a distance (*vikkhambhana-pahāna*) by means of deeds of great merit (*mahā-kusala*) and supernormal deeds of merit (*mahāggata-kusala*).

> The following notes, based on the Manual of Insight (*Vipassanā-dipanī*) of Ledi Sayadaw are provided here for further elucidation of this paragraph. Moral defilements arise in common worldlings in three stages: When the defilements are very active and violent producing evil deeds (*vītikkama-bhūmi*). The defilements of this stage can be got rid of or put away by the meritorious deeds of the perfection of morality but only temporarily.

> Therefore, the putting away by morality, etc., is called a temporary putting away (*tad-aṅga-pahāna*).
>
> The defilements at the next stage come into existence as mental properties at the mind door when any object which has power to wake them up produces perturbances at one of the six doors (*pariyuṭṭhāna-bhūmi*). The defilements which appear thus can be subdued only by the cultivation of the absorptions through the practice of concentration. The putting away of defilements by concentration (*samādhi*) is called putting away to a distance (*vikkhambhana-pahāna*). The absorptions can dispose of the defilements for a considerable time so that they do not rise again.
>
> But there still remain the defilements of the third stage which do not come into existence as mental properties but lie latent surrounding the life-continuum (*anusaya-bhūmi*). They cannot be removed by morality and concentration and are left undispelled by them. Only the knowledge of the path (*magga-ñāṇa*) attained by development of insight meditation which produces wisdom (*paññā*) can get rid of these defilements leaving nothing behind. This putting away of defilements by means of wisdom so that they will never rise again is called abandoning by cutting off (*samuccheda-pahāna*).
>
> Here, the fulfilment of the perfections and the practice of morality which put away the defilements temporarily (*tad-aṅga-pahāna*) come under the great deeds of merit (*mahā-kusala*); practice of concentration meditation to develop concentration, which puts away defilements to a distance is regarded as great deeds of merit (*mahāggata-kusala*). The practice of insight meditation to produce wisdom, the path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*), which completely cuts off by abandoning (*samuccheda-pahāna*), is a supermundane deed of merit (*lokuttara-kusala*). [323]

In this manner, throughout the period of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, he had eradicated the aggregates of impurities which defiled his mind, and also eliminated ignorance and delusion (*avijjā-moha*) which act as a general of the army leading the hordes of defilements (*kilesa*), accompanying him. At the same time, he made the five faculties: faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom, grew stronger, existence after existence. Thus, he had travelled through the difficult journey of Saṁsāra, continuously engaged in developing and fulfiling the perfections (*pāramī*) with fiery zeal till the time when, as King Vessantara, he gave away Queen Maddī in generosity, as the final act of merit which would enable him to become a Buddha. Thereafter, he spent

his life in the Tusita realm, enjoying the celestial pleasures and awaiting the time when he would become a Buddha.

Since he was one who had thus reached the pinnacle of wisdom, having done away with the factors of defilements, such as greed, hatred, etc., by means of accumulated merits of the perfections such as generosity, morality, etc., the fourfold knowledge of the path (*magga-ñāṇa*), which is very deep and subtle, arose unaided in the mind continuum of the Bodhisatta.

Furthermore, beginning from the time when he prostrated himself at the feet of Buddha Dīpaṅkara, he had endeavoured to develop and accumulate merit through fulfilment of the perfections, such as generosity, morality, etc., which are difficult to accomplish by ordinary men without making any wish for the pleasures of any realm of existence whatsoever as the fruits of his meritorious deeds. For all the deeds of merit, such as generosity, morality, etc., performed by him, the Bodhisatta made only this wish: "Let the accumulated merits of these deeds become sufficing conditions (*upanissaya-paccaya*) for the arising in me of omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*)."

As for others, they pray for the pleasures of Devas and humans after performing deeds of merit. And, in accordance with their wishes, they gain the pleasures of the Devas and human worlds as the fruits of their good deeds. It is like spending and squandering whatever wealth of merit they have accumulated from their good deeds. Unlike these people, the Bodhisatta, after the manner of one who fills his granary with paddy and always keeps guard over it without making use of it, properly stores up the merit acquired from every performance of his good deeds, wishing: "Let this deed be the sufficing condition only for the realisation of knowledge of the path (*magga-ñāṇa*) with omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) as its pinnacle."

Such being the case, the accumulation of merits from the perfections and good deeds, over the long period of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, found an occasion to bear fruit, of which his becoming a Buddha was the greatest in this last existence as Siddhattha. But, as there were countless merits still to come to fruition all in one existence that very existence appeared congested with fruit-bearing merits.

By virtue of the aspiration, solely for becoming a Buddha, the merits of his good deeds that would come to fruition in a great rush in this last existence were very

powerful. Consequently, it was only in the mind continuum of the noble Bodhisatta that the knowledge of the four paths which are so subtle and deep arose unaided. [324]

The Development of Insight by the Bodhisatta

Having done away with the factors of defilements, such as greed, hatred, etc., by means of the merits accumulated through the fulfilment of the perfections, such as generosity, morality, etc., the Bodhisatta – who had also eliminated delusion (*moha*), the general of the defilements, together with its concomitants, which is apt to hinder and conceal the way to Nibbāna – practised and developed the great diamond insight (*mahā-vajira-vipassanā*) in the last watch of the night, on the full moon of May (*Vesākha*).

The method of practice and development in brief is as follows: There are 1,000 billion world-elements known as the field of authority (*āṇā-khetta*) of a Buddha.

> The field of authority of a Buddha: There are three fields (*khettas*) concerning a Buddha according to the sub-commentary on the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) and the Expulsion (*Pārājika*) commentary: 1) the field of birth limited by the 10,000 world-element that quaked on the Fortunate One's taking re-birth linking (*jāti-khetta*); 2) the field of authority (*āṇākhetta*), limited by the 1,000 billions of world-elements where the following safeguards (*paritta*), are efficacious: the Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*), the Safeguard of the Constituents (*Khandha-paritta*), the Safeguard through the Top of a Banner (*Dhajagga-paritta*), the Āṭānāṭiya Safeguard (*Āṭānāṭiya-paritta*) and the Peacock's Safeguard (*Mora-paritta*); 3) the field of scope (*visaya-khetta*) is boundless and immeasurable in which the Buddha-knowledge can exercise omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*), knowing anything anywhere that he wishes.

When the Bodhisatta contemplated the true nature of those beings living in each universe and belonging to the three passages of time: past, present and future, he came to know full well that, no matter how numerous humans, Devas and Brahmas were in a single universe, they could be reduced to the twelve factors of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) as the ultimate reality, past factors as cause: ignorance (*avijjā*) and volitions (*saṅkhāra*); present factors as effect: consciousness (*viññāṇa*), mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*), the six sense spheres (*saḷāyatana*), contact (*phassa*), feeling (*vedanā*); present factors as cause:

craving (*taṇhā*), attachment (*upādāna*) and productive deeds (*kamma-bhava*); future factors as effect: birth (*jāti*), old age (*jarā*) and death (*maraṇa*).

When he contemplated the true nature of humans, Devas and Brahmas living in the remaining world-elements and belonging to the three passages of time, he came to know full well that, as in the case of the beings of this universe, the same twelve factors of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) form objects of insight (*vipassanā*), ranging from ignorance to birth, old age and death.

Summing up the number of the objects of insight (*vipassanā*), as there are 1,000 billion world-elements, there are also 1,000 billion each of the twelve factors. The total number of these objects will then become 1,200,000 billion.

Like a man, who cut and cleared a thick jungle with tangled bushes and undergrowth, sharpened his sword again and again on the whetstone, the Bodhisatta also, in order to clear away the thick jungle and bushes of the defilements (*kilesa*) numbering 1,500, repeatedly sharpened the sword blade of great diamond insight knowledge (*mahā-vajira-vipassanā-ñāṇa*), his personal weapon, on the whetstone of the fourth absorption on breathing (*ānāpāna-jhāna*) attainment. After which, he contemplated each of the factors of dependent origination, numbering 1,200,000 billion by reflecting on their characteristics of impermanence (*anicca-lakkhaṇa*), suffering (*dukkha-lakkhaṇa*) and non-self (*anatta-lakkhaṇa*).

As each of the factors of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), numbering 1,200,000 billion, promotes three insight knowledges: insight knowledge of impermanence (*anicca-vipassanā-ñāṇa*); insight knowledge of suffering (*dukkha-vipassanā-ñāṇa*) and insight knowledge of non-self (*anatta-vipassanā-ñāṇa*), there arose altogether 3,600,000 billion great adamantine insight knowledges.[137] [325]

It is the usual practice of every Bodhisatta on the eve of his becoming a Buddha to reflect on the doctrine of dependent origination in forward and backward

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[137] A brief account of the great diamond insight wisdom is contained in the exposition of the Sequential Discourse (*Anupada-sutta*, MN 111) and in the exposition of the Going Forth of Sāriputta and Moggallāna (*Sāriputta-Moggallāna-pabbajjā-kathā*) in the Vinaya sub-commentary the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*).

orders. Our Bodhisatta, like the previous Bodhisattas, also reflected on the doctrine of dependent origination in both orders. Thereupon, all the 10,000 world-element that form the field of birth (*jāti-khetta*) quaked, the effect of which reached to the limit of the bordering oceans.

After the Bodhisatta had cultivated the knowledge of conditioned things (*sammasana-ñāṇa*) of the 3,600,000 billion great adamantine insight knowledges by reflecting on the twelve factors of the doctrine of dependent origination as was usual for all the Bodhisattas, he again entered upon the fourth absorption on breathing (*ānāpāna-jhāna*) in order to sharpen the sword blade of the higher insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) such as the knowledge of arising and passing (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*),[138] on the whetstone on the fourth absorption on breathing. Having thus entered upon the fourth absorption on breathing, and having sharpened the sword blade of the higher insight knowledge, he rose from it and realised, with ease, the higher insight knowledges such as the knowledge of rising and falling (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*).

> It should be noted here that the Bodhisatta realized the higher insight knowledges with ease because, as he had entered the Saṅgha in the presence of past Buddhas and learnt the Three Baskets and practised insight meditation, he cultivated and developed even to the extent of attaining the knowledges of rising and falling (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*), dissolution (*bhaṅga-ñāṇa*), fear (*bhaya-ñāṇa*), danger (*ādīnava-ñāṇa*), cooling (*nibbidā-ñāṇa*), desire for deliverance (*muccitukamyatā-ñāṇa*), reflecting-knowledge (*paṭisaṅkhā-ñāṇa*) and equanimity about formations (*saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*); and also because his insight knowledge had developed and grown immensely by virtue of the aforesaid 3,600,000

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[138] *Udayabbaya-ñāṇa*: knowledge of arising and passing away of conditioned things; *bhaṅga-ñāṇa*: knowledge of dissolution of conditioned things; *bhaya-ñāṇa*: knowledge of fear of conditioned things; *ādinavā-ñāṇa*: knowledge of disgust and dread of conditioned of things; *nibbidā-ñāṇa*: knowledge of weariness with conditioned things; *muccitukamyatā-ñāṇa*: knowledge of longing to escape; *paṭisaṅkhā-ñāṇa*: knowledge of special effort; *saṅkhārupekkha-ñāṇa*: knowledge of detachment from conditioned existence.

> billion great adamantine insight knowledges of conditioned things (*mahā-vajīra-vipassanā-sammasana-ñāṇa*).[139]

Just as a man who, on reaching the eaves of his house after taking a long journey, did not halt at all at the threshold but went straight into the house on finding the door wide open, so the noble Bodhisatta having realized higher and higher insight knowledges (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) with ease by successively passing through the series of the eight stages of knowledges, such as the knowledge of rise and fall (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*), and so on, finally reached the last stage which was the knowledge of conformity (*anuloma-ñāṇa*), and did not stop there. Instead of stopping at the knowledge of conformity to the truth (*saccānuloma-ñāṇa*), which is like the gateway to the city of Nibbāna, he immediately proceeded to clear away the clouds and darkness of ignorance and delusion (*avijjā-moha*), which conceal the four truths, namely, the truth of suffering (*dukkha-sacca*), the truth of the origin of suffering (*samudaya-sacca*), the truth of the cessation of suffering (*nirodha-sacca*), and the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering (*magga-sacca*) by means of the three kinds of conformity to the truth (*saccānuloma-ñāṇa*): preliminary impulsion (*parikamma*), access impulsion (*upacāra*), and conformity (*anuloma*) which are included in the mind-process (*magga-vīthi*).[140]

Having thus dispelled the thick murk that hides the truth, he clearly saw, as one sees the moon clearly in the cloudless sky, and realized the great light of Nibbāna through the knowledge of the first path of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga-ñāṇa*), which immediately follows the knowledge of the overcoming of worldly ties and changing over to noble lineage (*gotrabhū-ñāṇa*).

> The thought moment of Stream-entry path-knowledge (*Sotāpatti-magga-ñāṇa*) appeared once and ceased. This was [326] immediately followed by the appearance and cessation three times of impulsion (*javana*) to Stream-entry fruition (*Sotāpatti-phala*) which is the effect of the said Stream-entry path, in accordance with the attribute of the Dhamma known as

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[139] This is according to the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) and the sub-commentary to the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*).

[140] For better comprehension of the entire paragraph, see Chapter XXI § 129 ff and Chapter XXII § 3.4 of The Path of Purification. Ñāṇamoli. 3rd edn. B.P.S, Kandy.

immediate fruition (*akālika*), then followed the flow of the life-continuum consciousness (*bhavaṅga-citta*).

Because the Stream-entry path had been attained thus, the mind continuum of the Bodhisatta was completely rid of the three defilements: personailty view (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), doubt (*vicikicchā*) and adherence to practices and vows (*sīlabbata-parāmasa*). These defilements would never rise again in the Bodhisatta's mind continuum.

Doubt or wavering (*vicikicchā*) of mind about: 1) the Buddha; 2) the Dhamma; 3) the Saṅgha; 4) the training rules (*sikkha*); 5) the past; 6) the future; 7) both past and future, and 8) dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*). Adherence to practices and vows (*sīlabbata-paramāsa*); the misleading belief that there are paths, other than the Noble Eightfold Path, that can liberate one from suffering (*dukkha*).

The Awakening

After realizing Stream-entry and fruition, the Bodhisatta, reviewed 1) The Stream-entry path (*Sotāpatti-magga*); 2) the Stream-entry fruition (*Sotāpatti-phala*) which was the result of the path; 3) Nibbāna which was their object; 4) the defilements destroyed by means of the Stream-entry path; and 5) the defilements not destroyed yet by means of the said path. This fivefold reflective knowledge is known as the fivefold reflection-knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*).

Having thus reviewed the fivefold reflective knowledge, the Bodhisatta again cultivated and developed the series of insight knowledges (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*), such as the knowledge of rise and fall (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*), and so on. Soon he realized the second stage of the Once-returning path (*Sakadāgāmi-magga*) and the Once-returning fruition (*Sakadāgāmi-phala*). By the Once-returning path he uprooted the grosser defilements, namely, sense-desires (*kāma-rāga*) and ill-will (*vyāpāda*). Henceforth, the mind continuum of the Bodhisatta had become completely rid of the latent elements of the grosser defilements of sense-desires and ill-will, the way seeds are burnt up in fire.

Having realized the Once-returning path and fruition, the Bodhisatta, with the occurrence in him of impulsive thought moments (*javana-vāra*) of the fivefold reflective knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*), contemplated the Non-returning path (*Anāgāmi-magga*), and the Non-returning fruition (*Anāgāmi-phala*), their

object, Nibbāna, the defilements so far already destroyed and the remaining defilements. Again he developed the series of insight-knowledges (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*), such as the knowledge of rise and fall (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*), and so on. Soon he realized the third stage of the Non-returning path and the Non-returning fruition.

By the Non-returning path he completely discarded the subtle defilements of sense-desires and ill-will. Henceforth, the mind-continuum of the Bodhisatta had become completely divested of the tendencies of the past lingering in the mind (*vāsanā*) as well as the latent elements of the subtle defilements of the sense-desires and ill-will.

Having realized the Non-returning path and the Non-returning fruition, the Bodhisatta, with the occurrence in him of impulsive thought moments (*javana-vāra*) of the five reflective knowledges (*paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*), contemplated the Non-returning path and fruition, and their object, Nibbāna, the defilements destroyed, and the remaining defilements.

Again he developed the series of insight-knowledges, such as the knowledge of rise and fall, and so on. Soon he realized the fourth stage of the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*) and the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*). By the Arahat path, the Bodhisatta completely uprooted all the remaining defilements, namely, craving for existence in the material realm (*rūpa-rāga*), craving for existence in the immaterial realm (*arūpa-rāga*), pride (*māna*), restlessness (*uddhacca*) and ignorance (*avijjā*), without leaving the slightest trace of the tendencies of the past. Henceforward, the mind continuum of the Bodhisatta had become entirely rid of the 1,500 defilements together with the tendencies of the past (*vāsanā*) and the seven kinds of latent elements (*anusaya*).

Having realized the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*) and fruitions, there occurred impulsive [327] thought moments (*javana-vāra*) of the reflective knowledges (*paccavekkhaṇa*) which reflected on the Arahat path and fruitions, their object, Nibbāna, and the defilements which had been eradicated. There are altogether nineteen reflective knowledges: five each arising after the attainments of Stream-entry path and fruit, Once-returning path and fruit, Non-returning path and fruit and four arising after the attainment of Arahat path and fruit. These nineteen reflection-knowledges are also known as the insight and knowledge of freedom (*vimutti-ñāṇa-dassana*). After the attainment of the Arahat path, there

were no defilements remaining and hence there was no reflection on it; therefore there are only four reflection-knowledges after the attainment of the Arahat path and fruit.

When the Bodhisatta realised the Arahat fruition immediately after the realisation of the Arahat path, his mind continuum was very clear and he attained the state of a Perfectly Self-Awakened One (*Sammā-sambuddha*), the Lord of the Three Worlds, by gaining omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) along with the four noble truths, the four analytical knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*), the sixfold unique wisdom (*asādhāraṇa-ñāṇa*), making up the fourteenfold wisdom of a Buddha, and the eighteen special qualities (*āveṇika-dhamma*) and the fourfold valorous wisdom (*vesārajja-ñāṇa*). Simultaneously with the attainment of omniscience came the dawn.

The Seven Purifications of a Buddha

In this connection, we propose to insert in this chronicle an account of the seven purifications of a Buddha (*visuddhi*) for brief information.

1. Purity of morality (*sīla-visuddhi*). At the time the Bodhisatta stopped at the banks of the river Anomā and put on the robes of a recluse, he began to observe moral restraint (*saṁvara-sīla*).

> The practice of the precepts (*sīla*) varies in accordance with the mode of life adopted by the disciple, whether as a monastic or a lay person. The discourses give extensive explanations of the practice of the precepts, the type of moral training which necessarily precedes meditation. The Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) explains the moral training in general under four heads: 1) The restraint according to the Monastic Rules (*Pāṭimokkha-saṁvara*); 2) the restraint of the senses (*indriya-saṁvara*); 3) purity of livelihood (*ājiva-pārisuddhi*); and 4) dependence on the requisites (*paccaya-sannissita*). The restraint according to the Monastic Rules is meant for observance by the monastic disciples of the Buddha; hence it is not mentioned in this account of the purity of the Bodhisatta's morality.

Moral restraint is the eight precepts with right livelihood as the eighth (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*). These are restraint from taking life; restraint from stealing, or taking things not given in deed or in word by the owner; restraint from sexual misconduct, or restraint from improper sexual acts whether major or minor;

restraint from telling lies; restraint from slanderous talks; restraint from using harsh and abusive language; restraint from frivolous and unbeneficial talk; restraint from wrong livelihood. With the observance of these precepts, the Bodhisatta also accomplished the observance of the purity of livelihood (*ājīva-pārisuddhi-sīla*).

Secure restraint of the six doors of the senses (*indriya-saṁvara-sīla*). Unlike ordinary worldlings, the Buddha required no special effort to develop a new restraint of the six doors of the senses since restraint of the senses was, for him, already an innate and accomplished fact.

It was also not necessary for him to especially exert himself for observance of moral conduct in respect of the requisites (*paccaya-sannissita-sīla*) to keep away the defilements which may arise because of the four requisites.

Even at the time when he was about to renounce the world, he had already discarded temporarily a number of unwholesome defilements headed by greed and craving. But the [328] latent tendencies (*anusaya*) are eradicated only by the Arahat path. This was the Bodhisatta's purity of morality (*sīla-visuddhi*).

2. Purity of mind (*citta-visuddhi*). The eight attainments of the absorptions and the five mundane super knowledges (*abhiññā*), acquired during his stay with the sect leaders Āḷāra and Udaka, had turned unclean and dim, as if stained with impurities, like unused large gold vessels through neglect of practice and development throughout his six years of austere striving (*dukkara-cariyā*). On the day he was to become a Buddha, he partook of the thick milk rice offered by lady Sujātā and spent the daytime in the Sāla forest. While he was staying there, he purified the eight attainments and the five super knowledges by developing them once again, like washing and cleaning the stained gold vessel. These eight attainments and five super knowledges constituted the Bodhisatta's purity of mind (*citta-visuddhi*).

3. Purity of views (*diṭṭhi-visuddhi*). Thereafter, the noble Bodhisatta proceeded to the high ground of the Mahā Bodhi tree in the evening and remained seated on the unconquered throne. He vanquished Devaputta Māra before sunset. In the first watch of the night, he developed the knowledge of past existences. He perceived well the phenomena of mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*) and destroyed the 20 wrong beliefs in regard to personality (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*). This was the Bodhisatta's purity of views (*diṭṭhi-visuddhi*).

4. Purity of overcoming doubts (*kaṅkhā-vitaraṇa-visuddhi*). Then in the middle watch of the night, he discerned sentient beings reaching different destinations according to their deeds, by means of the knowledge of analysing the deeds which cause rebirth (*yathā-kammūpaga-ñāṇa*) which had knowledge of the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu-ñāṇa*) as its basis. On seeing them, he realised distinctly the law of productive deeds (*kamma*) and because of this realisation, he became free of doubts. This was the Bodhisatta's purity of overcoming doubts (*kaṅkhā-vitaraṇa-visuddhi*).

5. Purity of knowledge and insight into the right and wrong paths (*maggāmagga-ñāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*).[141] In the last watch of the night, the Bodhisatta dwelt on the twelve factors of the doctrine of dependent origination; and beginning with the contemplation of mind and body (*kalāpa-sammasana*) on the basis of the seven contemplations such as contemplation of impermanence (*aniccānupassanā*), suffering (*dukkhānupassanā*), non-self (*anattānupassanā*), he realised the knowledge of rise and fall (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*) of all mental and material phenomena (*nāma-rūpa*). At that time, there arose in the Bodhisatta the defilements of insight (*vipassanūpakkilesa*) such as illumination, etc. [329]

> A yogi practising insight meditation, at a certain stage of advancement, contemplates again and again the rising and falling of all mental and physical phenomena and attains the initial stage of the knowledge of rise and fall (*udayyabbaya-ñāṇa*). "At this stage, he generally beholds a supernormal light (*obhāsa*), feels a thrill of zest (*pīti*), calmness (*passaddhi*), determination (*adhimokkha*), great energy (*paggaha*), happiness (*sukha*), knowledge (*ñāṇa*), intensity of mindfulness (*upaṭṭhāna*), equanimity (*upekkhā*), and a mild desire for this state (*nikanti*)."[142] These states arising in a yogi at the stage of knowledge of rise and fall (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*) in ten phases are termed the defilements of insight.
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> Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, in The Path of Purification translates it as "imperfections of insight" and enumerates them, ten in number, as follows: 1) illumination, 2) knowledge, 3) rapturous happiness, 4) tranquillity, 5)

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[141] Knowledge as to whether it is the right path leading to Nibbāna or not (*maggāmagga-ñāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*).

[142] Essential Themes of Buddhist Lectures given by Ashin Thittila (The Department of Religious Affairs. Yangon, Myanmar, 1992).

> bliss, 6) resolution, 7) exertion, 8) assurance, 9) equanimity and 10) attachment. "The yogi, arriving at this stage, is liable to these defilements and his mind may be seized by 'spiritual excitement' or 'agitation about higher states' (*dhamma-uddhacca*). For example, he may, on having an illumination, feel that this constitutes path-experience and so inhibits his further progress through deceiving himself. When an illumination appears, the meditator thinks: 'Never indeed has such illumination as this arisen in me before. Surely, I have reached the path; I have reached the fruition. Thus he takes what is not the path for the path, and what is not the fruition for the fruition. Through this mistake, the progress of insight (*vipassanā*) is checked; leaving the original subject of meditation, he lingers, delighting in the illumination."[143]

The illumination of the Buddha, unlike that of others, was not confined to one spot, one area, or one portion of a region. The Bodhisatta, by means of the very sharp, penetrating aforesaid great adamantine insight knowledge, contemplated the aggregates of phenomena (*dhammā*) in his own mind continuum, as well as the mind continuum of the inestimable number of sentient beings throughout the three passages of time. In a summary manner, he reduced them into the twelve factors of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*); and again dividing these twelve factors into two groups of mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*) when he contemplated them by means of the knowledge of rise and fall (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*).

His energy was very strong, his mindfulness very steadfast, his mind very composed and so his insight wisdom was very sharp. His faith very strong, his physical and mental happiness and tranquillity were developing incessantly. The mental factors of specific neutrality (*tatra-majjhatattā-cetasika*) also called euqnimity-insight (*vipassanūpekkha*), which views with even-mindedness all conditioned states, was also very strong.

The mind continuum of the Bodhisatta, thus supported and assisted by happiness (*sukha*) and tranquillity (*passaddhi*) was suffused with five kinds of zest: 1) Joy that makes the hairs stand on end (*khuddaka-pīti*); 2) the joy that occurs off and on like a flash of lightning (*khaṇika-pīti*); 3) the joy flooding the body and then

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[143] Buddhist Meditation in Theory and Practice, by Vajirañāṇa Mahā Thera (Buddhist Missionary Society, Malaysia. 1975).

receding like waves breaking the sea shore (*okkantika-pīti*); 4) the joy so strong as to transport one up into the air (*ubbega-pīti*); and 5) the joy that pervades the whole body, as soft cotton wool soaked in oil. His blood, heart and sense faculties were also very lucid.

Therefore, illumination from the Bodhisatta flooded the earth, the mass of air and the mass of water of the lower regions, and made them golden yellow. It then plunged into the boundless space below as well as in the upward direction to the highest abode of beings, Bhavagga, turning everything into golden yellow. The illumination then continued to penetrate further into the upper boundless space. It also light up the whole of the 10,000 world-element, and rapidly extended throughout the infinite world-elements.

When such defilements of insight appear, inexperienced meditators mistake them for the paths and fruitions. They abandon the original subject of meditation and dwell taking delight in defiling elements. When, however, these defilements of insight appeared in the mind continuum of the Bodhisatta, he reflected: "These are not the path which will lead to the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) and omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*), they merely defile insight. Only the knowledge of rise and fall in my original meditation forms the true path to the path-knowledge of an Arahat and omniscience." He did not allow his mind to hover over these defilements of insight and to become attached to them. Instead, he made it incline to the object of insight.

When thus the defiling elements of insight appeared in the Bodhisatta's mind continuum, as in the case of others, he did not allow the subtle craving and greed, known as attraction (*nikanti*) that longed for those defiling elements to arise. He had lucid, extraordinary knowledge, which discerned clearly that this group of defiling elements was not the proper path to Awakening but just led to the defilement of insight. Only the knowledge of rise and fall and so on form the right path leading to Awakening. This was the Bodhisatta's purity of knowledge and insight into the right and wrong path (*maggāmagga-ñāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*). [330]

6. Purity of knowledge and insight into the path (*paṭipadā-ñāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*).

7. Purity of knowledge and insight (*ñāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*).

The set of nine knowledges of insight (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*), beginning with the knowledge of rise and fall (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*) and ending with the knowledge of conformity (*anuloma-ñāṇa*) which arose in the mind continuum of the Bodhisatta, is known as purity of knowledge and insight of the path. The four noble paths (*ariya-magga*) are known as the purity of knowledge and insight (*ñāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*).

> The nine knowledges of insight are, according to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*): 1) Knowledge of contemplation of rise and fall (*udaya-vayānupassanā-ñāṇa*), which is free from imperfection and steady on its course; 2) knowledge of the contemplation of dissolution (*bhaṅgānupassanā-ñāṇa*); 3) knowledge of appearance as terror (*bhayānupassanā-ñāṇa*); 4) knowledge of contemplation of danger (*ādīnavānupassanā-ñāṇa*); 5) knowledge of contemplation of dispassion (*nibbidānupassanā-ñāṇa*); 6) knowledge of desire for deliverance (*muñcitukamyatā-ñāṇa*); 7) knowledge of contemplation of reflection (*paṭisaṅkhānupassanā-ñāṇa*); 8) knowledge of equanimity about formations (*saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*); and 9) knowledge in conformity with truth (*anuloma-ñāṇa*).[144]
>
> It should especially be noted that the Stream-entry path (*Sotāpatti-magga*) attained by the Buddha was the first absorption-path (*jhāna-magga*) with the five factors of initial application (*vitakka*), sustained application (*vicāra*), joy (*pīti*), happiness (*sukha*), and one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*). The Once-returning path (*Sakadāgāmi-magga*) was the second absorption-path with the three factors of joy, happiness, and one-pointedness. The Non-returning path (*Anāgāmi-magga*) was the third absorption-path with the two factors of happiness and one-pointedness. The Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*) was the fourth absorption-path with the two factors of equanimity (*upekkhā*) and one-pointedness.[145]

In this manner, the series of the seven purities, described above, constitute the right and proper way to Nibbāna. Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and noble disciples of the past, present and future, realise Nibbāna only through the series of these seven purities; and, to say the least, so do the noble individuals who attain the noble path by developing at least the skin as the fifth (*taca-pañcaka*) meditation

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[144] For further elucidation, see Chapter XXI of The Path of Purification.

[145] See the commentary on the Discourse on the Impurities (*Upakkilesa-sutta*, MN 128).

or by hearing a Dhamma discourse in verse delivered by a Buddha through the projection of his image while he remained behind at the monastery. They attain the noble path (*ariya-magga*), going through these seven purities successively.

> The skin as the fifth (*taca-pañcaka*) meditation is meditation on the first five features of the body with skin (*taca*) as the fifth, the other four being hair on the head (*kesa*), hair on the body (*loma*), nails (*nakha*) and teeth (*dantā*). It is part of the mindfulness meditation of the body (*kayagatāsati bhāvanā*).

A question may be raised thus: If all the Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and disciples of the three passages of time realise Nibbāna only through the series of the seven purities, should not all these noble persons be alike in every respect? Why should there be such differences as: He was a Buddha, a Paccekabuddha, a chief disciple (*agga-sāvaka*), a great disciple (*mahā-sāvaka*), an ordinary disciple (*pakati-sāvaka*)?

The answer is: Although Nibbāna is realised by all the Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and noble disciples only through the series of the seven purities, they are originally different in wisdom (*paññā*), in practice (*paṭipadā*), in faith (*saddhā*) and in inherent disposition (*ajjhāsaya-dhātu*).

Therefore, the noble individuals who realise the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) through knowledge acquired by hearing the Dhamma from others (*suta-maya-ñāṇa*), after having developed the perfections (*pāramī*) according to the strength of his faith (*saddhā*) and wisdom (*paññā*) throughout a period of around 100,000 aeons are designated ordinary disciples (*pakati-sāvaka*) and great disciples (*mahā-sāvaka*).

The noble individuals who realise the Arahat fruition through knowledge based on hearing (*suta-maya-ñāṇa*) after having developed the perfections throughout one immeasurable period and 100,000 aeons, or slightly less, are designated chief disciples (*agga-sāvaka*).

The noble individuals who realise the Arahat fruition through knowledge independently acquired, without being taught by others (*sayambhū-ñāṇa*), but after having developed [331] the perfections throughout a period of two immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons but are incapable of teaching others the Dhamma which will enable them to attain the paths (*magga*), fruitions (*phala*) and Nibbāna, are designated Paccekabuddhas.

The noble, peerless individuals, who after valiantly fulfilling their perfections for the minimum period of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons and performing the five great abandonings, which are not the concern of Paccekabodhisattas and Sāvakabodhisattas, attain the Arahat fruition with omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) without being taught by others (*sayambhū-ñāṇa*).

Superbly skilled in the use of words, they give Dhamma discourses with four profundities: the profundity of the deep and subtle text, the profundity of meaning, the profundity of the teaching, and the profundity of penetrating wisdom. They do so in many ways to suit the inherent dispositions of sentient beings. They are able to convey all teachable beings (*veneyya*) to the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna and thus become their refuge. They are designated Perfectly Self-Awakened Ones, omniscient Buddhas, lords of the three worlds. Since our noble Bodhisatta was also of such a nature, he too is a Perfectly Self-Awakened One, Lord of the Three Worlds, and an incomparable Buddha.

Many Miracles

When the Bodhisatta attained omniscience and became a Buddha in the three worlds of beings at daybreak, he thereby caused all the 10,000 world-element to vibrate and resound, and reached the height of beauty with such decorations as follow: The colours of cylindrical streamers set up on the edge of the universe in the east reached the edge of the universe in the west; and the coloured cylindrical streamers set up on the edge of the universe in the west also reached the edge of the universe in the east. Similarly, the coloured cylindrical streamers set up on the edge of the universe in the south reached the edge of the universe in the north; and the coloured cylindrical streamers set up on the edge of the universe in the north reached the edge of the universe in the south. The coloured cylindrical streamers set up on the surface of the earth reached the Brahma world; and the coloured cylindrical streamers set up in the Brahma world reached the surface of the earth.

All kinds of flowering trees in the 10,000 world-element blossomed simultaneously, irrespective of the season. All kinds of fruit-bearing trees also bore fruit in bunches and clusters simultaneously, irrespective of the season. Flowers also blossomed strangely on the trunks, branches and creepers. Flowers dangled from invisible plants in the sky. Lotus flowers on leafless stems

bloomed strangely, each in seven layers, coming out and breaking through big slabs of rock which formed the lower stratum of the earth. This being the case, the 10,000 world-element of the realm of birth of a Bodhisatta (*jāti-khetta*), quaked gently at that moment and looked like huge spheres of flowers flown up or like well-arranged flower-beds. Besides these miracles, the 32 great omens, described in the chapter on the birth of the Bodhisatta, also made themselves manifest.

The Exalted Utterance

The Bodhisatta, who had thus attained omniscience and became endowed with all the attributes and glories of Buddhahood, reflected thus: "I have been emancipated indeed from the enormous suffering of Saṁsāra. I have achieved indeed the most exalted state of a Perfectly Self-Awakened One, a teacher of the three worlds. I have achieved indeed a great victory. I am one who can liberate all sentient beings from the fetters of the three worlds by teaching the Dhamma."

When he thus reflected, there arose in the mind continuum of the Buddha exulting joy (*pīti*). With the tempo of the joy thus appearing, the Buddha uttered forth, as was the established practice with all the omniscient Buddhas after achieving Buddhahood, the following two verses of intense joy (Dhp 153-4): [332]

> *Aneka-jāti-saṁsāraṁ, sandhāvissaṁ anibbisaṁ,*
> *gahakāraṁ gavesanto, dukkhā jāti punappunaṁ.*
>
> Unable to cut off the root of repeated existences in Saṁsāra, taking conception in four ways: egg-born, womb-born, mositure-born and spontaneously-born, is a great misery, for a body from rebirth is followed and oppressed inexorably by ageing, sickness and death, it is no happiness at all but toilsome and distressing. Therefore, as a Bodhisatta, searching the diligent builder of this house of the aggregates (*khandha*), and not finding him because I had then not yet acquired the great omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) which discerns clearly the real culprit, namely, craving, the carpenter, as the cause of suffering (*dukkha*), I had to wander restlessly, revolving with the wheel of Saṁsāra although I had no liking for, and was in constant fear of, the generator of suffering, comprising the five aggregates.

Gaha-kāraka diṭṭhosi, puna gehaṁ na kāhasi,
sabbā te phāsukā bhaggā, gaha-kūṭaṁ visaṅkhataṁ,
visaṅkhāra-gataṁ cittaṁ, taṇhānaṁ khayam-ajjhagā.

You! Craving, the carpenter, the wicked cause of suffering, diligently building up the house of the five aggregates which are enmeshed in suffering! Now, having become a Buddha and being endowed with omniscience, I clearly discern you, craving, the house builder! You shall not build again the house of the five aggregates intertwined with suffering, because your legs, your hands and your life have been cut off four times with the axe of the path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*) and you are like an uprooted stump. All the rafters of the defilements firmly fixed in the decorated house of the aggregates have now been broken to pieces without leaving even a slight trace of past tendencies and inherent inclinations. Ignorance (*avijjā*), the king of the house, which keeps the four truths and Nibbāna hidden from view and which keeps them far, far away has been pulverised. My mind, which is free from the dirt-like defilements, has reached Nibbāna, the palace of peace, out of the scope of the conditioned (*saṅkhāra*) and all suffering of Saṁsāra. I, the supreme Buddha of the three worlds, have realised the fourth (*Arahatta*) path and fruit, the extinction of the 108 forms of craving to the delight and encomium of the Devas and Brahmas of the 10,000 world-element.

The 108 forms of craving (*taṇhā*) are the chief root of suffering and the cause of the ever-continuing cycle of rebirths. They are synonymous with greed (*lobha* or *rāga*). It is of three aspects: sensual craving (*kāma-tanhā*); craving for rebirth, especially in higher realms (*bhava-taṇhā*); craving for annihilation of the self (*vibhava-tanhā*).

Corresponding to the six sense objects, each of these aspects of craving multiplies into six forms of craving, viz. craving for visible objects (*rūpa-tanhā*), for sounds (*sadda-taṇhā*), odours (*gandha-taṇhā*), tastes (*rasa-taṇhā*), bodily impressions (*phoṭṭhabbha-taṇhā*), mental impressions (*dhamma-taṇhā*), thus totalling eighteen forms of craving.

Again, taking into consideration the three periods of time, as present, past and future, which apply to each of these eighteen forms of craving, one can distinguish 54 different forms of craving. Finally, these 54 forms of craving can arise in the mind continuum of one's own or of others; thus 108 forms of craving are enumerable in all.

There are two kinds of exalted utterance (*udāna*): that which is uttered only mentally (*manasā-udāna*) and which is uttered verbally (*vacasā-udāna*). The exalted utterance beginning with *Aneka-jāti-saṁsāraṁ*, "unable to cut off the root of repeated existences in Saṁsāra," etc., was recited by the Buddha only mentally and thus should be deemed as uttered mentally (*manasā-udāna*). The exalted utterances in the Udāna text beginning with (Ud 1.1): *Yadā have pātu bhavanti dhammā*, "when the nature of things becomes really manifest," etc., were uttered verbally by the Buddha. So the exalted utterances in the Udāna text should be regarded as uttered verbally (*vacasā-udāna*).

The categories of Dhamma mentioned in this chapter on his becoming a Buddha, namely, dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), the fourfold analytical knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*), the sixfold unique knowledges (*asādhāraṇa-ñāṇa*), [333] the ten strengths (*dasa-bala-ñāṇa*), the fourteenfold Buddha knowledges (*cuddasa-buddha-ñāṇa*), the eighteen special qualities (*āveṇika-guṇa*) and the fourfold valorous wisdom (*vesārajja-ñāṇa*) will be described later, neither too briefly nor too elaborately, in the chapter on the Dhamma Jewel. [334]

The Buddha Treasure

8: The Buddha's Stay at the Seven Places

1. The Week on the Unconquered Throne

After becoming a Buddha in this way, as the first waning day of the month of May (*Vesākha*) newly broke, the Buddha breathed forth an exalted utterance (*udāna*), and while sitting cross-legged on the unconquered (*aparājita*) throne, he conceived an idea thus: "In order to win this unconquered throne, I have moved from one birth to another over four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, fulfilling the ten perfections several times in a unique manner.

For four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, in order to possess this unconquered throne, many a time have I cut off and given away my ornamented head; many a time have I taken out and given away my two eyes and my heart; many a time have I given away my son such as Jāli, my daughter such as Kaṇhājinā and wife such as Maddī to those who asked for them as slaves. This is the throne on which I have completely overcome the fivefold Māra. It is also a highly auspicious and glorious seat. While remaining on this seat, all my wishes, including the one to become a Buddha, have been fulfilled. I will not get up yet from this throne to which I owe so much."

Thus the Buddha spent seven days on the throne engaged in the fourth aborption (*jhāna*) that led up to the fruition of Arahantship, the attainments of which numbered more than 1,000 billion.

Engaging thus in the aborption for the whole first waning day of the month of May (*Vesākha*), the Buddha enjoyed the bliss of emancipation (*vimutti*) or Awakening. During the first watch of the night of the first waning May (*Vesākha*) moon, he contemplated the doctrine of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) thus: *Avijjā-paccayā saṅkhārā*, "because of ignorance (*avijjā*), the three kinds of volitions (*saṅkhāra*), namely, wholesome volitions (*puññābhisaṅkhāra*), unwholesome volitions (*apuññābhisaṅkhāra*) and inpertubable volitions (*āneñjābhisaṅkhāra*) arise."

Beginning in this way, the Buddha went on contemplating in forward order the process in which the round of suffering arose. Again he contemplated: *Avijjāya tveva asesa-virāga-nirodho saṅkhāra-nirodho*, "because of the complete

cessation of ignorance by not arising through the path of Awakening, the three kinds of volitions: wholesome, unwholesome and inpertubable, cease by not arising." Beginning thus, the Buddha went on contemplating in backward order the process in which the round of suffering ceased.

> Here it should be particularly noted that, though the Buddha had clearly understood all the doctrines, he contemplated only the doctrine of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) both in forward and backward orders because, when he took up insight meditation, he did so by initially reflecting on this doctrine and also because this doctrine is very subtle, deep and hard to discern.

When the Buddha repeatedly reflected on this Doctrine in both forward and backward order, he understood more and more clearly, the process of the arising of suffering in Saṁsāra in forward order that, on account of the causes, such as ignorance, there arose volitions and so on. In like manner, the Buddha also understood the process of the cessation of suffering in backward order, that because of the cessation of ignorance, and so on, there ceased volitions, and so on. This led to the continuous appearance in the Buddha of a series of such mental impulsions that were unprompted and joined with knowledge and happiness (*somanassa-sahagata-ñāṇa-sampayutta-asaṅkhārika-javana*) preceded by joy (*pīti*) in the heart.

When a vessel is filled with butter or oil up to its brim, the surplus will overflow; similarly, when the vessel of the Buddha's heart was filled with the oil of rapture preceded [335] by the increasingly distinct knowledge of the Dhamma, the Buddha uttered an exalted utterance (Ud. 1.1) as though it overflowed his heart:

> *Yadā have pātu-bhavanti dhammā,*
> *ātāpino jhāyato brāhmaṇassa;*
> *athassa kaṅkhā vapayanti sabbā,*
> *yato pajānāti sahetu-dhammaṁ.*

> When the 37 constituents of Awakening (*Bodhi-pakkhiya-dhamma*) appear vividly in the mental continuum of an Arahat, who has rid himself of all that is evil, who is endowed with the right exertion to burn up the 1,500 defilements, whose meditation is steadfast and keen to the extent of reaching the path of the absorptions (*appanā-jhāna*), by reflecting on the characteristics of impermanence, suffering and non-substantiality of various tranquility (*samatha*) objects such as breathing-out and breathing-

in and of both the material and mental aggregates; then on account of the vivid appearance of the 37 constituents of Awakening, he thoroughly knows the aggregate of suffering comprising ignorance as the causes, and volitions as the effects. On discerning clearly this doctrine of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), all the doubts regarding the doctrine, or all the sixteen doubts regarding mind and matter, that would occur in the three phases of time: past, present and future, owing to ignorance of the doctrine of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) disappear in the mental continuum of that Arahat just as dewdrops vanish with the onset of the heat of the sun.

In the middle watch of night, the Buddha contemplated dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) repeatedly in forward and backward orders throughout the watch. When he was contemplating, his knowledge of Nibbāna, the cessation of the cause, became clearer and clearer. This led to the continuous appearance in the Buddha of a series of such mental impulsions that were unprompted and joined with knowledge and happiness preceded by wisdom and rapture. Since he was unable to control that rapture, again he uttered another exalted utterance (Ud. 1.2) on account of that rapture preceded by wisdom as though the rapture spilled over:

Yadā have pātu-bhavanti dhammā,
ātāpino jhāyato brāhmaṇassa,
athassa kaṅkhā vapayanti sabbā,
yato khayaṁ paccayānaṁ avedī.

When the 37 constituents of Awakening appear vividly in the mental continuum of an Arahat, who has rid himself of all that is evil, who is endowed with right exertion to burn up 1,500 defilements, whose meditation is steadfast and keen to the extent of reaching the path of the absorptions, by reflecting on the characteristics of impermanence, suffering and non-substantiality of various tranquility objects such as breathing-out and breathing-in and of both the material and mental aggregates; then, on account of this vivid appearance of the 37 constituents of Awakening, he penetrated the unconditioned Nibbāna, the cessation of all the causes such as ignorance, volitions, etc. On discerning clearly the unconditioned ultimate Nibbāna called the destruction of causes (*paccayakkhaya*), all the doubts that would occur owing to

ignorance of Nibbāna disappear in the mental continuum of that Arahat, just as dewdrops vanish with the onset of the heat of the sun.

In the last watch of the night, the Buddha contemplated the doctrine of dependent origination repeatedly in forward and backward orders throughout the watch. When he was thus contemplating, his knowledge of the noble path that sees thoroughly the incessant arising and cessation of the cycle of suffering became clearer and clearer. [336]

This led to the continuous appearance in the Buddha of a series of such mental impulsions that were unprompted and joined with knowledge and happiness preceded by wisdom and rapture. Since he was unable to contain that rapture, still again he uttered a third exalted utterance (Ud. 1.3) on account of that rapture preceeded by wisdom, as though the rapture spilled over:

Yadā have pātu-bhavanti dhammā,
ātāpino jhāyato brāhmaṇassa,
vidhūpayaṁ tiṭṭhati Māra-senaṁ,
sūriyo va obhāsayam-antalikkhaṁ.

When the 37 constituents of Awakening appear vividly in the mental continuum of an Arahat, who has rid himself of all that is evil, who is endowed with right exertion to burn up 1,500 defilements, whose meditation is steadfast and keen to the extent of reaching the path of the absorptions, by reflecting on the characteristics of impermanence, suffering and non-substantiality of various tranquility objects such as breathing-out and breathing-in, and of both the material and mental aggregates; then, just as the sun that rises and stands on the top of Mount Yugandhara, illuminating the whole vault of heaven with its own light, even so that Arahat by means of the 37 constituents of Awakening crushes the ten Māra armies, such as sensuality, aversion, etc., and remains in the brilliance of the torch of his wisdom resembling the sun.

In the exalted utterance (*udāna*) it is stated that during the first watch of the night, the doctrine of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) was reflected on in forward order; during the middle watch it was reflected on in backward order, and during the last watch it was reflected in both forward and backward orders. This statement refers to the Buddha's reflection on the seventh night that completed his week-long stay on the unconquered throne.

After reflecting on the doctrine of dependent origination in forward and backward orders throughout the three watches of the night of the first waxing moon of May (*Vesākha*), the Buddha uttered the aforesaid three exalted utterances; on the second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh days too, he remained on that unconquered throne, enjoying the bliss of being an Arahat.

2. The Week of the Unblinking Gaze

> The seven days during which the Buddha was gazing steadfastly at the Mahā Bodhi tree and the undefeated (*aparājita*) throne without closing his eyes are known as the seven days without blinking (*animisa-sattāha*).

After becoming a Buddha and enjoying the bliss of being an Arahat, and without changing his cross-legged position throughout the whole sitting, the Buddha remained on the unconquered throne for seven days. In the mental continuum of some ordinary Devas and Brahmas, partially because they had the experience of attaining the paths and fruitions in the time of former Buddhas, doubts arose as they wondered: "The Buddha has not yet got up from the throne even up till now. Apart from the attributes he has already, are there still other attributes that would enable him to attain Buddhahood?"

Then on the eighth day, the eighth waning moon, the Buddha got up from his enjoyment of Awakening. Knowing about the doubts of the Devas and Brahmas, he rose up into the sky and performed the twin miracle of water and fire in order to eradicate their doubts.

> The twin miracle displayed here at the Mahā Bodhi tree, at the congregation of his relatives in the city of Kapilavatthu, and at the gathering formed because of the heretic Pāthikaputta in the city of Vesālī, were the same as that performed near the mango tree of Kaṇḍamba. The detailed description of the last will be described later in chapter 24: The 6th Rains Retreat (Miracles).

Having removed the doubts entertained by the Devas and Brahmas by performing the twin miracle of water and fire, the Buddha descended from the sky and stood erect like a golden-post on the spot to the north-east of the unconquered throne, pondering: "I have indeed attained omniscience." He spent [337] seven days without closing his eyes but gazing at the throne and the Mahā Bodhi tree where he had attained the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) and omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) as a result of the perfections

fulfilled by him throughout the period of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons. That spot is known as the Unblinking Shrine (*Animisa-cetiya*).

3. The Week on the Walkway

In the third week, the Buddha spent seven days walking up and down on the jewel walkway created by Devas and Brahmas and stretching from east to west between the unconquered throne and the Unblinking Shrine, while at the same time he was reflecting on the Dhamma and was absorbed in fruition attainment (*phala-samāpatti*). That place is called the Jewelled Walkway (*Ratana-caṅkama-cetiya*).

4. The Week at the Treasure House

In the fourth week, the Buddha reflected on the supreme doctrine of the Abhidhamma while sitting cross-legged in the Treasure House (*Ratana-ghara*), created by Devas and Brahmas, at the north-west corner of the Mahā Bodhi tree.

According to the sub-commentary on the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*), when the Buddha sat cross-legged in the Treasure House and reflected on the Dhamma, as well as surveying the beings worthy of teaching, he discerned perfectly the course of practice composed of morality, concentration and wisdom (*sīla-samādhi-paññā*). He saw that humans, Devas and Brahmas would attain the noble state of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna by establishing themselves in morality (*sīla*), by concentrating their minds (*samādhi*) and by putting efforts in their attempts at wisdom (*paññā*). Therefore the Buddha reflected first on the Basket of Discipline (*Vinaya-piṭaka*) which teaches morality, then on the Basket of Doctrine (*Sutta-piṭaka*) which teaches concentration and lastly on the Basket of the Abstract Teaching (*Abhidhamma-piṭaka*) which teaches wisdom.

When he reflected on the Basket of the Abstract Teaching, he tackled first the six lower treaties of the Enumeration of Phenonema (*Dhamma-saṅgaṇī*), the Analyses (*Vibhaṅga*), the Discussion about Elements (*Dhātu-kathā*), the Designation of Persons (*Puggala-paññatti*), the Debates (*Kathā-vatthu*) and the Pairs (*Yamaka*), but there occurred no radiance at that time because his omniscience was comparatively vast and the doctrinal methods in those treatises are comparatively limited. But when he contemplated the seventh treatise of the all-embracing Causal Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*) with an unlimited number of

methods (*ananta-naya-samanta*), his omniscience found the opportunity to display its extensive brilliance, just as the giant fish, Timiṅgala, which was 1,000 leagues in size, only got a chance to play about when in the great ocean.

As the Buddha applied his mind to the most subtle and profound points in the all-embracing Causal Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*) with an unlimited number of methods, there arose in his mental continuum great rapture. Because of this rapture, his blood became clearer; because of the clearer blood, his skin became cleaner; because of the cleaner skin, the radiance of the size of a house or a mountain radiated from the front part of his body and spread out, shooting through the countless world-elements in the east, just like Chaddanta, the king of elephants, flew across the sky.

In the same way, the radiance appeared from the rear part of the Buddha and rushed to the countless world-elements in the west; the radiance appeared from the Buddha's right side and rushed to the countless world-elements in the south; the radiance appeared from the left side and rushed to the countless world-elements in the north; and from the soles of the feet the coral-coloured radiance appeared, plunging into the space below after penetrating the mass of earth, the mass of water, and the mass of air, just as a sapphire-studded chain was made to turn round and round; balls of blue radiance arose one after another from his head, reaching the space above, after passing through the six Deva abodes and 20 Brahma abodes of the sense spheres (*kāmāvacara*). At that time, countless beings in the countless world-elements shone with a golden radiance.

> The radiance emanating from the body of the Buddha, on the day he contemplated the doctrine of the Causal Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*), is still moving towards the countless world-elements even today as a continuous chain of temperature-conditioned [338] matter (*utuja-rūpa*).

Verses on the Six Rays

In this connection, the verses eulogizing the six radiances of the Buddha and their translations written by Mahāvisuddhārāma Sayādaw will be reproduced here for the benefit of those seeking knowledge (*suta-kāmī*).

> *Satta-sattāha-majjham-pi, Nātho yo sattā sammasi,*
> *patvā samanta-Paṭṭhānaṁ, okāsaṁ labhate tadā.*

The noble Buddha, lord of the three types of beings, reflected on the seven books of the Abstract Teaching (*Abhidhamma*), namely, the Enumeration

of Phenonema (*Dhamma-saṅgaṇī*), the Analyses (*Vibhaṅga*), the Discussion about Elements (*Dhātu-kathā*), the Designation of Persons (*Puggala-paññatti*), the Debates (*Kathā-vatthu*), the Pairs (*Yamaka*) and the Causal Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*), while staying in the Ratanaghara in the middle of the seven weeks or during the middle seven days of the 49 days he spent on the throne (*pallaṅka-sattāha*), one week each at the unblinking gaze (*animisa-sattāha*), the walkway (*caṅkama-sattāha*), the jewelled house (*ratana-ghara-sattāha*), the Ajapāla (*Ajapāla-sattāha*), the Mucalinda (*Mucalinda-sattāha*) and the Royal Tree (*Rājāyatana-sattāha*). He reflected by means of his omniscience that is incomparably deep, subtle and powerful owing to the variety of glorious perfections which were fulfilled aeons after aeons. Then by applying his wisdom, he reached the all-embracing Causal Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*) which, with its various new methods, is even larger and deeper than the ocean which is 84,000 leagues in size and surrounded by the range of rocky mountains. Having reached the Causal Relations thus, his omniscience, that is incomparably deep, subtle and powerful owing to the variety of glorious perfections, which were fulfilled aeons after aeons, has an opportunity to display its brilliance.

Yojanānaṁ satāyāmo pañca Timira-piṅgalo,
kīḷokāsam samuddeva gambhīre labhate yathā.

To give an illustration for the purpose of comparison: The gigantic fish named Timirapiṅgala, 500 leagues long, gets the chance to swim and play, flapping his tail, only in the ocean, 80,000 leagues in depth and fringed by mountains. Similarly, the Buddha's omniscience, uniquely profound, subtle and powerful owing to the variety of glorious perfections, which were fulfilled through successive aeons, had the occasion to display its brilliance only when reflecting on the Causal Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*).

Samma-santassa taṁ[146] *tadā Satthu sarīrato,*
taṁ taṁ dhāvanti chabbaṇṇā lohitādi-pasīdanā.

When he had the occasion to display the radiance of six colours from his body of eighteen cubits height of the blue, gold, white, red, pink and a

[146] [This pāda is defective by two syllables].

massive brightness, all these assorted colours spread overwhelmingly to all places: left and right, front and rear, above and below, because of the clear and shining state of his blood and so on, which arose while reflecting on the doctrine of the Causal Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*) which was subtle like atomic particles. He is the Teacher who poured out his words of advice from his cheerful, golden heart to those of the three worlds of humans, Devas, and Brahmas. [339]

Nīlāyo nīlaṭṭhānehi pītodātā ca lohitā,
tamhā tamhā tu mājeṭṭhā nikkhamiṁsu pabhassarā.

From the blue-black parts of the Buddha's physical body, such as the hair and the pupil of the eye, emanated a blue-black radiance about the size of a house or a mountain. Shining brightly, the radiance – that was somewhat greyish, somewhat bluish and somewhat greenish like butterfly-peas, blue lotus and blue collyrium – making the whole sky and the earth blue, or like blue fans of rubies and cloths that were swinging gently and smoothly, has been spreading since the day the Buddha reflected on the Causal Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*) up till now.

From the yellow and golden parts of the Buddha's person such as the skin, emanated the yellow and golden radiance about the size of a house or a mountain. Shining brightly, the radiance, that covered the ten directions, making them all yellow like cloth of gold sprinkled with liquid gold and spread out and placed in the vicinity, or like powders of saffron and realgar and golden Kaṇikāra flowers filling up the sky, has been spreading since the day the Buddha reflected on the Causal Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*) up till now.

From the white parts of his body, such as the bones, the teeth and the white portions of the eyes, emanated the white radiance about the size of a house or a mountain. Shining brightly, the radiance, that is like a stream of milk poured from a silver jar, or like a silver canopy completely covering the sky, or like silver fans swinging gently and smoothly from the high clouds in the sky, or like silvery jasmine, Maghya, white lotus, jasmine (*sumana*) and Muggara mixed together, has been spreading since the day the Buddha reflected on the Causal Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*) up till now.

From the red parts of his body, such as the eyes, the flesh and the blood, emanated the red radiance about the size of a house or a mountain. Shining brightly, the red radiance, that is like the powder of red-lead, molten lac, China Rose, the flower of the noon flower (*bandhu-jīvaka*), the flower of the Indian coral tree (*pārijāta*), making the surface of land and water and the whole sky red, has been spreading since the day the Buddha reflected on the Causal Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*) up till now.

Besides, from the various unascertainable spots of the Buddha's body emanated the radiance of light and dark colours (*mañjeṭṭha*) resulting from a mixture of black, red and blue and the radiance of sparkling, flaming and glittering hues (*pabhassara*) about the size of a house or a mountain. Shining brightly, the radiance, like the lighting in the sky during the month of May (*Vesākha*) or like the skin of playful insects, or sparks of a blazing fire, has been spreading since the day the Buddha reflected on the Causal Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*) up till now.

Evaṁ chabbaṇṇa-raṁsiyo etā yāvajja-vāsarā
sabbā disā vidhāvanti pabhā nassanti tatthikā.

Thus the six radiances of blue, gold, white, red, darkish and glittering colours shine in the directions of all ten quarters at the same time as the Buddha's teaching still shines forth. The radiance of the body and the glory of those Devas and Brahmas, that happened to be at the wish-fulfilling trees (*kappa-rukkha*), gardens and mansions which were along the course of the Buddha's six radiances and which could illuminate the entire 10,000 world-element, only by means of their ten fingers, disappeared as they were not capable of outshining the radiance from the Buddha. [340]

Iti chabbaṇṇaraṁ sittā Aṅgīraso ti nāmaso,
loke patthaṭa-guṇaṁ taṁ vande Buddhaṁ namassiyaṁ.

To the Buddha, lord of the world, who has earned the name Aṅgīrasa because he possessed the radiance of six colours in the aforesaid manner, who is endowed with a good reputation spreading throughout the three worlds, who is worthy of the honour done to him by the whole world, who knows the four noble truths thoroughly as though they were written on the palm of his hands, like a lively ruby, the so-called 'I,' whose body on contemplation is found to be composed of 32 portions of a dirty,

> disgusting nature, that 'I' pays homage repeatedly in full faith with my head bowing, recalling the time when the Lord was still alive.

The Causal Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*) teaching has an unlimited number of methods, like the sky; it is extensive, like the mass of the earth; it is deep, like the mass of water in the ocean. And yet its survey by the Buddha was completed within seven days because omniscience is vast and quick in its application. The place where the Buddha contemplated this Dhamma Treasure for seven days came to be known as the Treasure House (*Ratana-ghara-cetiya*).

5. The Week at the Ajapāla Banyan Tree

After spending the four weeks, or 28 days, near the Mahā Bodhi tree, in the fifth week, the Buddha proceeded to the foot of the Ajapāla banyan tree, situated to the east of the Mahā Bodhi tree and stayed for seven full days at the foot of this tree reflecting on the Dhamma and absorbed in fruition attainment (*phala-samāpatti*).

> The banyan tree was so-called because it was there that goatherders (*aja-pāla*) gathered together; therefore, it is the banyan tree where the goatherds took shelter (*aja-pāla-nigrodha*).

At that time, a Brahmin of unknown clan and name, one seemingly violent and haughty by nature, approached the Buddha and had a pleasant and joyful conversation with him. Having finished the pleasant and joyful conversation, which was worthy of lifelong remembrance, the haughty Brahmin stood at a suitable distance and asked the Buddha: "Venerable Gotama, what virtues make a true Brāhmaṇa in this world? What does it take to become a noble one?"

The haughty Brahmin could not penetrate the four truths even if the Buddha made him a disciple and taught him. Those who heard the Buddha's utterance of Dhamma verses prior to his teaching of the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse would get benefit only as an impression on the mind, like the taking of the refuges by the merchant brothers, Tapussa and Bhallika, who would never realize the paths and fruitions through the penetration of the four truths. Such is a natural law (*dhammatā*) according to the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*). Since the haughty Brahmin could not absorb the Dhamma as he was not a person capable of discerning the four truths, the Buddha did not

make him a disciple. But being aware of the meaning of the Brahmin's question, the Buddha breathed forth this exalted utterance (Ud. 1.4):

Yo brāhmaṇo bāhita-pāpa-dhammo,
nihuṁhuṅko nikkasāvo yatatto,
vedantagū vūsita-brahma-cariyo,
dhammena so Brahma-vādaṁ vadeyya,
yassussadā natthi kuhiñci loke.

An Arahat, called a Brahmin, is he who has rid himself of all that is evil. He is free from violence and haughtiness; he is free from the stains of defilements; he is intent on developing meditation, or he has a heart restrained with morality; or he has reached Nibbāna, the true cessation of the conditions, by realising it through the fourfold path-knowledges (*magga-ñāṇa*); or he has reached the stage of the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*), the climax of the fourfold path-knowledges. [341]

He has accomplished the noble practice of the path which leads to Nibbāna. In this world, where things rise and fall, there is absolutely nothing of the five evil prominences (*ussada*) in any of his sense objects, namely, the prominences of passion (*rāgussada*), hate (*dosussada*), delusion (*mohussada*), conceit (*mānussada*) and wrong view (*diṭṭhussada*). That Arahat, who is called a Brahmin, should fearlessly declare, properly and correctly: "I am indeed a true Brahmin!"

What is meant here is this: A Brahmin is one who is endowed with the seven virtues, namely, he is: 1) Rid of evils; 2) free from violence and haughtiness; 3) free from the stains of defilements; 4) he has restraint of heart through morality; 5) he has realization of Nibbāna; 6) he has completed the noble practice of the path; and 7) he has the non-occurrence of the five evil prominences (*ussada*).

Māra's Concession of Defeat

Māra had been following the Buddha for seven years to get a chance of finding fault with him, but had not come across the slightest opportunity to do so. He therefore approached the Buddha who was still at the foot of Ajapāla Banyan tree and said in verse: "Ascetic Gotama, are you brooding here in this forest because you are overwhelmed by grief? Have you incurred loss of property worth hundreds and thousands? Or, are you brooding here because you want to

have property worth hundreds and thousands? Or, are you brooding here, in this forest, because you have committed a serious wrong deed in a village or a town and do not dare to face others? Why do you not make friends with the people? You have absolutely no friendship with anybody!"

The Buddha replied: "Māra, I have uprooted and destroyed all the causes of grief. I have not even an iota of evil. Being completely free from worry, I remain absorbed in two absorptions. I have cut off desire for existence (*bhava-taṇhā*). I have no attachment whatever. I remain blissful in the two forms of absorption."

Māra: "Ascetic Gotama, in this world, some men and some recluses are attached to their objects, such as gold and silver, etc., and their requisites, such as robes and bowl, etc., saying: "This is mine." If your mind is attached, like these men and recluses, to that gold and silver, etc., and to that robe and bowl, etc., you will never escape from my domain in the three existences."

Buddha: "Māra, I have no attachment at all to the objects, such as gold and silver, etc., nor to the requisites, such as robes and bowl, etc., saying: "This is mine." Unlike others, I am not one who says: "This is mine." Māra, take me as such a one! Since I have abandoned the three existences, you will never see my path in your domains, such as the three existences (*bhava*), the four ways of rebirth (*yoni*), the five courses (*gati*), the seven consciousness states (*viññāṇa-ṭhiti*), and the nine abodes of sentient beings (*sattāvāsa*)."

Māra: "Ascetic Gotama, if you know the good, secure path leading to Nibbāna, go alone. Why do you want to teach others and convert them?" [342]

Buddha: "Māra, however much you try to hinder me, I shall keep teaching them the noble path leading to Nibbāna, if I am asked about the good path and Nibbāna, which is free from death, by humans, Devas and Brahmas, who are desirous of reaching Nibbāna, the other shore of existence."

When this was said, Māra, being at his wit's end, like a crab whose thumb had been broken by village children, uttered the two following verses to concede his defeat (SN 4.34):

> *Meda-vaṇṇañ-ca pāsāṇaṁ, vāyaso anupariyagā,*
> *apettha muduṁ vindema, api assādanā siyā.*

> Buddha, Gotama by name, a descendent of the great elected monarch Mahā Sammata! A simile says that a starving foolish crow jumped about in the eight directions, encircling a stone that has the semblance of a lump of fat and tearing it apart by piercing it with its beak, for he thought that be would get a soft piece of fat together with some flesh out of it and that its taste would be really delicious and pervade his whole body.
>
> *Aladdhā tattha assādaṁ, vāyasetto apakkame,*
> *kāko va selam-āsajja, nibbijjāpema Gotama.*
>
> Failing to get the delicious taste from that stone, the foolish crow left it. Like that foolish crow, having failed to relish the slightest taste, though it had tried to tear apart the stone resembling a lump of fat, and departed from it, we give up, feeling sad and despondent almost to the point of heartbreak, being unable to accomplish anything desired after annoying, offending and deterring you, Lord.

Thereafter Māra mused thus: "Though I have all along followed the Buddha to find fault with him, yet I could not find even the slightest amount of wrongdoing which is worthy of blame. Now, this Prince Siddhattha has escaped from my domain in the three worlds." Thus he brooded and was so dejected that he sat, squatting alone on the main road not far from the Buddha and scratched sixteen lines on the ground pondering over sixteen events. The sixteen lines meant:

1. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the perfection of generosity in my former existences. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the first line.

2. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the perfection of morality in my former existences. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the second line.

3. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the perfection of renunciation in my former existences. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the third line.

4. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the perfection of wisdom in my former existences. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the fourth line.

5. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the perfection of energy in my former existences. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the fifth line.

6. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the perfection of forbearance in my former existences. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the sixth line. [343]

7. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the perfection of truthfulness in my former existences. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the seventh line.

8. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the perfection of resolution in my former existences. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the eighth line.

9. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the perfection of loving-kindness in my former existences. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the ninth line.

10. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the perfection of equanimity in my former existences. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the tenth line.

11. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the ten perfections in my former existences to acquire the knowledge of the thoughts and intentions of others (*indriya-paro-pariyatti-ñāṇa*), which is not common to others. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the 11th line.

12. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the ten perfections in my former existences to acquire the knowledge of the inclinations and disposition of others (*āsayānusaya-ñāṇa*), which is not common to others. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the twelfth line.

13. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the ten perfections in my former existences to acquire the knowledge of the attainment of great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā-samāpatti-ñāṇa*), which is not common to others. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the thirteenth line.

14. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the ten perfections in my former existences to acquire the knowledge of the performance of the twin miracle (*yamaka-pāṭihāriya-ñāṇa*), which is not common to others. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the fourteenth line.

15. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the ten perfections in my former existences to acquire the unobstructed knowledge (*anāvaraṇa-ñāṇa*), which is not common to others. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the fifteenth line.

16. "Unlike this Prince Siddhattha, I have not fulfilled the ten perfections in my former existences to acquire omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*), which is not common to others. On this account, I cannot be the equal of the prince." With this thought Māra drew the sixteenth line.

The Daughters of Māra

At that time, Māra's three daughters, Taṇhā, Arati and Ragā, looked around, thinking: "We do not see our father, Māra, where is he now?" and they saw him brooding, squatting and scratching lines on the ground. So they approached him quickly and asked: "Father, why do you look so sad and dejected?" – "Dear daughters," replied Māra, "this ascetic Gotama has escaped my domain in the three worlds. Though I have been shadowing him for this period of seven years to find faults with him, yet I could not find the least chance to blame him for any wrong. Therefore, I am sad and dejected." – "Father, please do not be worried at all. We shall entice this ascetic Gotama and bring him into your presence," promised the three daughters.

Then Māra said: "Dear daughters, nobody in the world is able to entice this ascetic Gotama. He is well established in his unshaken faith." – "Father, we are womenfolk. We shall bind him in the snares of passion and bring him to you quickly. Please do not be disappointed and worried." Saying thus, the three female deities approached the Buddha and said to him enticingly: "Venerable recluse, permit us to attend on you, sitting respectfully at your feet and satisfying all your needs." The Buddha, however, ignored them, and remained enjoying the bliss of Nibbāna, absorbed in fruition attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) without opening his eyes. [344]

The three daughters of Māra discussed among themselves: "Menfolk have different tastes. Some love young and tender females, others like women in the first phase of life. Still others prefer those of the middle phase. So let us assume various ages and allure this recluse." Accordingly, each of them created 100 ladies: 1) Under the guise of young women; 2) under the guise of prenatal ladies; 3) under the guise of those having given birth but once; 4) under the guise of those having given birth twice; 5) under the guise of middle-aged women; and 6) under the guise of older ladies – each and every one of them was made beautiful. Then they approached the Buddha six times and said alluringly as before: "Venerable recluse, permit us to attend on you, sitting respectfully at your feet and satisfying all your needs." As on the previous occasions, the Buddha ignored them and remained enjoying the bliss of Nibbāna, absorbed in fruition attainment, without opening his eyes.

Thereafter, the Buddha said: "Go away, deities. What benefit did you think to have by tempting me like this? Such a thing should be done to those who are not free yet from passion (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*). As for me, I have absolutely done away with passion; I have absolutely done away with hatred; I have absolutely done away with delusion." Then the Buddha uttered the following two verses as mentioned in the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 179-180):

Yassa jitaṁ nāvajīyati,
jitaṁ yassa no yāti koci loke,
taṁ Buddham-ananta-gocaraṁ,
apadaṁ kena padena nessatha?

The Buddha, having overcome the defilements, has nothing to conquer again. No defilement that has been conquered follows the Buddha. That Buddha, who has an infinite range of sense perception through all-embracing wisdom, who is devoid of such factors as passion, by which way will you lead him away?

Yassa jālinī visattikā,
taṇhā natthi kuhiñci netave,
taṁ Buddham-ananta-gocaraṁ,
apadaṁ kena padena nessatha?

> The Buddha is devoid of such factors as craving, which like a net would ensnare him in any existence, which has the nature of a violent poison; or which is particularly able to cling or adhere to things. The Buddha, who has an infinite range of sense perception through all-embracing wisdom, who is devoid of such factors as passion, by which way will you lead him away?

After speaking in praise of the Buddha among themselves: "Our father has told us the truth. This ascetic Gotama, being endowed with such attributes as Arahat and Well-gone, cannot be easily enticed by means of passion," and they returned to their father, Māra.

The Buddha honours the Dhamma

While the Buddha was staying during the week at the Ajapāla Banyan tree, he pondered: "It is miserable indeed to live without showing respects to others, having nobody to respect. Who should be approached and held by me in high esteem. One who has rid himself of all defilements, who has removed evils?" Then he pondered thus: "I should live near someone who is superior to me in morality, concentration, wisdom and emancipation so that my morality, concentration, wisdom and emancipation which are still incomplete and inadequate will become complete and adequate." Then he made a survey with his omniscience to find someone superior to him in morality, concentration, wisdom and emancipation. Seeing no such person in the three worlds, he thought: "It will be good if I live paying respects only to the Dhamma that I have penetrated."

At that moment, knowing the Buddha's intention, Brahma Sahampati arrived instantly in [345] the presence of the Buddha and having put his shawl on his left shoulder and touched the ground with his right knee he raised his folded hands in adoration and said: "Exalted Buddha, what you have thought of is correct. Fortunate One, those Buddhas, who appeared in the past, lived honouring only the Dhamma. Those Buddhas, who will appear in the future, will also live honouring only the Dhamma. Exalted Buddha, as a present Buddha you should live honouring only the Dhamma." He also added the following three verses (SN 6.173):

> *Ye ca atītā Sambuddhā, ye ca Buddhā anāgatā,*
> *yo cetarahi Sambuddho, bahūnaṁ sokanāsano.*

Lord, glorious, there exist those Buddhas who appeared in the past, those who will appear in the future, and he, who is appearing now, who removes or destroys the thorn of worry for many humans, Devas and Brahmas.

Sabbe Saddhamma-garuno, vihaṁsu viharanti ca,
tathāpi viharissanti, esā Buddhāna' dhammatā.

All these Buddhas, of the three phases of time, lived paying respect to the Dhamma, are living and will live in the same manner. Such a living with respect paid to the Dhamma is a natural law of omniscient Buddhas.

Tasmā hi attakāmena, mahattam-abhikaṅkhatā,
Saddhammo garukātabbo, saraṁ Buddhāna' sāsanaṁ.

Therefore, he, who wishes for benefits and who is desirous of being a highly honoured person, should pay respect, day and night, to the Dhamma-jewel which is the property of the virtuous, bearing in mind the three aspects of the teaching.

After uttering these three verses, Brahma Sahampati saluted the Buddha respectfully, circumambulated him and disappeared from that very place and appeared in his Brahma abode. Then knowing thoroughly that the request made by Brahma Sahampati was quite appropriate for him, the Buddha lived paying respect only to the Dhamma that he had realized.

Later on the Saṅgha became complete with the four greatnesses (*mahatta*) in number: 1) Greatness in elders (*rattaññu-mahatta*); 2) greatness in members of the Saṅgha (*vepulla-mahatta*); 3) greatness in number of teachings (*brahma-cariya-mahatta*); and 4) greatness in number of material gains (*lābhagga-mahatta*).

At that time, the Buddha showed respects to the Saṅgha also. For that reason, when his aunt Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī offered him a pair of cloths meant for robes, the Buddha said: "Dear aunt, give it to the Saṅgha. Giving to the Saṅgha would mean giving to me as well as to the Saṅgha." Thus the Buddha clearly displayed his respect and adoration for the Saṅgha.

6. The Week at Mucalinda Lake

After spending seven days reflecting on the Dhamma under the Ajapāla Banyan tree, the Buddha left it for the Mucalinda[147] tree, towards the east of the Mahā Bodhi tree. There, at the foot of the Mucalinda tree, the Buddha spent seven days sitting cross-legged and enjoying the bliss of being an Arahat.

At that time, a great untimely rain fell for seven days. Such rain falls only on two occasions: one, when a Universal Monarch appears and when a Buddha appears. When the great rain fell, a very powerful Nāga King, Mucalinda, who ruled the Nāga abode underneath the lake thought thus: "This great unseasonal rain fell as soon as the Buddha took shelter in my abode. It will be good if a dwelling place for the Buddha can be found."

The Nāga King was powerful enough to create by himself a big mansion with the seven kinds of jewels but he considered: "It will not be of great benefit if I were to create a big mansion of jewels and offered it to the Buddha. I shall render my service to him by means of my body." So he assumed a huge physical frame and coiled round the Buddha with his body seven times and covered the Buddha's head with his expanded hood so that he would not be harmed by the cold, heat, gnats, mosquitoes, flies, etc. [346]

> The inside of the coils was as vast as the lower storey of the Iron Palace (*Lohapāsāda*) built by King Duṭṭhagāmani in Śrī Laṅkā. It was the intention of the Nāga King to let the Buddha stay in the four attitudes of lying, sitting, standing and walking as he pleased. That was why the Nāga King created such a vast place with his coils. The Buddha, however, spent seven days in sitting position. Inside of the coils, at the centre, was placed a bejewelled throne. Above the throne was a canopy from which fragrant festoons of flowers, exquisite with golden stars, were hanging. In the four corners were scented oil lamps which were burning brightly. Caskets containing sandalwood were left open in the four directions. On the bejewelled throne, at the centre of the coils, the Buddha sat enjoying the bliss of fruition attainment.[148]

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[147] *Barringtonia acutangula*.

[148] [Commentary to the Heap of Snares (*Pāsarāsi-sutta*, MN 26, PTS 2.185)].

In this manner, the Buddha stayed inside the seven coils of Mucalinda, the Nāga King, and spent seven days enjoying the bliss of being an Arahat as though he was passing time in a scented chamber of not too narrow a size. When the Nāga King looked up very high into the sky and saw it was free of clouds, and it was no longer necessary to cover the Buddha with his body and hood, he discarded the Nāga form and assumed the guise of a handsome young man standing with his hands clasped in front of the Buddha.

Then reflecting and realizing the fact that: "To him who enjoys the bliss of Nibbāna happiness occurs wherever he sojourns." The Buddha breathed forth the following two solemn exalted utterances as he was not able to contain his joy (Ud. 2.1):

> *Sukho viveko tuṭṭhassa, suta-dhammassa passato,*
> *abyāpajjaṁ sukhaṁ loke, pāṇa-bhūtesu saṁyamo.*
>
> Nibbāna, which is seclusion from the four substrata of rebirth (*upadhi*), is bliss. With no display of anger, but only loving-kindness towards humans, Devas and Brahmas by him, who is content with his accomplishment through the four knowledges of the path, who has realized the Dhamma by means of his eyes of wisdom, or who has penetrated the Dhamma, and who has seen through his eyes of wisdom, Nibbāna, which is devoid of the four substrata of rebirth and the Dhammas that are worth-knowing, is bliss in this world. Development of compassion, a practice of Brahmas, free of violence and cruelty, is bliss.
>
> *Sukhā virāgatā loke, kāmānaṁ samatikkamo,*
> *asmimānassa yo vinayo, etaṁ ve paramaṁ sukhaṁ.*
>
> The noble Non-returning path, which gives rise to the knowledge of detachment from passion, which resists and escapes by eradicating sensual pleasures, is bliss in this world. There exists the fruition of Arahantship that completely eliminated the egoistic idea, "I am." That fruition of Arahantship is indeed the best happiness of all conditioned things.

7. The Week at the Rājāyatana Tree

After spending seven days enjoying the bliss of being an Arahat at the foot of Mucalinda tree, in the seventh week, the Buddha moved from that place to the

Rājāyatana[149] tree to the south of the Mahā Bodhi tree and sat at the foot of that tree enjoying the bliss of being an Arahat for seven days.

In this way, or 7x7 (*satta-sattāha*) days = 49 days had been completed. During these 49 days, the Buddha did not do any of the following: rinsing the mouth, washing the face, cleansing the body; bathing, taking meal, drinking water, or lying down. He spent the time entirely enjoying the bliss of the absorptions and fruition.

When the 49 days were complete, on Wednesday, the fifth waxing moon of [347] July (*Āsāḷha*), while staying at the Rājāyatana tree, Sakka appeared and offered the medicinal fruit of myrobalan (*Terminalia citrina*) as he knew of the Buddha's desire to wash the face and clean himself. The Buddha ate the fruit. As soon as he had eaten the fruit, he answered the call of nature. Thereafter, Sakka gave a tooth-cleaner from the Nāga abode, and the water from Lake Anotatta to him. The Buddha used the tooth-cleaner, rinsed his mouth and washed his face with the Anotatta water, and remained sitting under the Rājāyatana tree.

Tapussa and Bhallika

The two merchant brothers, Tapussa and Bhallika, were travelling with 500 carts from their home in the state of Ukkalā to the Middle Country (*Majjhima-desa*) for trading. As they were travelling along the main road and approaching close to the Rājāyatana tree, their carts stopped suddenly, as if they were stuck in the mud, but the ground was even and free from water. Just while they were asking: "What is the cause?" and were discussing between themselves, a male deity, who happened to have been closely related to them in a past existence, revealed himself clearly in his physical form from the fork of a tree and said: "Young men, not long after Awakening, the Buddha, absorbed in the bliss of being an Arahat, is staying at the foot of the Rājāyatana tree at present, without having taken any food for the whole duration of 49 days. Young men, adore and honour the Buddha with an offering of alms food. This will bring you welfare and happiness for a long time."

On hearing this, they became much delighted and considering that: "It will take time to cook rice," they went to the Buddha taking with them rice-cakes and

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[149] *Buchanania latifolia*.

balls of honey which they had brought along with them. Having approached the Buddha, they respectfully paid respects to him, and stayed at a suitable distance and said: "May the Fortunate One accept our rice-cakes and balls of honey. Your acceptance will be the cause for our welfare and happiness for a long time."

Thereupon the Buddha wondered: "My Buddha predecessors had never received alms food with their hands. So, with what shall I now receive these rice-cakes and balls of honey being offered by these merchant brothers?" The earthen bowl, given by Brahma Ghaṭikāra at the time of his renunciation, had disappeared on the day he received Sujātā's milk-rice. Knowing the thought of the Buddha, the Four Great Kings of the four directions, namely, Dhataraṭṭha, Virūḷhaka, Virūpakkha and Kuvera, respectfully handed him four bowls of blue stone. The Buddha, however, refused to take them. Again, the Four Great Kings gave the Buddha four bowls of natural stone, having the colour of green gram (*Phaseolus mungo*). These four bowls the Buddha accepted, and out of compassion and goodwill towards the Deva kings, he placed one bowl upon another and resolved thus: "Let there be only one bowl." No sooner had the Buddha resolved thus, than the four bowls reduced themselves to just one bowl with four rims.

The Buddha then received the rice-cakes and balls of honey-food with that alms bowl and partook of them and then delivered a discourse of appreciation which was suitable to the merchant brothers. Then the two brothers took refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma only, as the treasure of the Saṅgha had not come into existence at that time, and thereby they became devotees who had only to pronounce the two-sentence refuge (*devācika-saraṇa*) with reference to the Buddha and the Dhamma, saying: *Ete mayaṁ bhante, Bhagavantaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāma Dhammañ-ca*, "we take refuge, sir, in the Fortunate One and the Dhamma." These two were the first devotees in whom the two-sentence refuge formula was established.

Thereafter, the two merchant brothers made a request saying: "Blessed Buddha, give us something, out of compassion for us, that we can worship forever." The Buddha then rubbed his head with the right hand and gave them his hair, acceding to their request. Obtaining the hair, the brothers were very much delighted, as if ambrosial waters were poured on them. After finishing their trading, they returned and arrived back at their native town of Pukkharavatī in the district of Ukkalā where they built a shrine (*cetiya*), enshrining in it the hair-relics kept in a golden casket. [349]

9: The Buddha Reflects on the Dhamma

Thereafter, on Thursday, the sixth waxing moon of July (*Āsāḷha*), which was 50 days after his becoming a Buddha on Wednesday, the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), having passed the 49 days (*satta-sattāha*), the Buddha rose from his seat under the Rājāyatana tree, and again he proceeded to the foot of Ajapāla Banyan tree and remained there, sitting cross-legged.

Thereupon, the Buddha, in solitary quietude, reflected thus: "This Dhamma aggregate, the four noble truths, discerned by me distinctly with self-born knowledge (*sayambhū-ñāṇa*) is indeed profound, like the mass of water sustaining the solid earth below. It is indeed difficult to see, like a mustard seed covered by the great Mount Meru. It is indeed difficult to know, as difficult as hitting directly the tip of an animal's tail hair split into 100 threads with the tip of another such hair-thread. It is indeed peaceful, it is indeed noble. These two attributes refer to supermundane things (*lokuttara-dhamma*). It is not the Dhamma which is for the logicians to delve into through reasoning (*vitakka*). It is the Dhamma to be resorted to and accepted by means of knowledge and wisdom (*ñāṇa-paññā*). It is indeed subtle, it is a Dhamma discerned only by the wise who practice correctly.

All these sentient beings, however, find delight in two forms of attachment, namely, attachment to the five objects of sensual pleasure (*kāmālaya*) and attachment to the enjoyment of the five sensual objects (*taṇhālaya*). Those sentient beings, who take delight in these two forms of attachment, are in fact unable to discern this doctrine of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), the relationship of cause and effect. It will be even more difficult for them to discern Nibbāna, which is the extinction of all conditioned things (*saṅkhāra*), the total rejection of all the substrata of sensuality (*kāma-upadhi*), aggregates (*khandha-upadhi*), defilements (*kilesa-upadhi*) and of formations (*abhisaṅkhāra-upadhi*), which is the drying up of the 108 kinds of craving (*taṇhā*); which is the exhaustion of the 1,500 forms of defilement and passion (*kilesa-rāga*) and which is the cessation of all suffering. Also, if I were to teach the Dhamma of such profundity, those Devas and humans, who are of immature faculties (*indriya*), who are not fully developed yet for emancipation, will not see or understand the Dhamma. To teach the Dhamma to such Devas and humans will only mean weariness and exhaustion for me."

Moreover, two exceedingly marvellous verses, which had never been heard of before, appeared distinctly in the mind continuum of the Buddha. They were (*Pāsarāsi-sutta*, MN 26):

> *Kicchena me adhigataṁ, halaṁ dāni pakāsituṁ,*
> *rāga-dosa-paretehi, nāyaṁ Dhammo susambudho.*
>
> It is not opportune yet to teach Devas and humans the Dhamma of the four noble truths, which has been achieved by me, through much effort, while developing the perfections (*pāramī*). At this very moment, when there is only my feeling of compassion, which is the internal cause [350] (*ajjhattika-nidāna*) but there is not yet the request by Brahma, who is respected by the world (*loka-garu*), which is the external cause (*bāhira-nidāna*) for my teaching. This Dhamma of the four noble truths is not easy to know and comprehend clearly by those who are overcome by the evil influence of greed and hate.
>
> *Paṭisotagāmiṁ nipuṇaṁ, gambhīraṁ duddasaṁ aṇuṁ,*
> *rāga-rattā na dakkhanti, tamokhandhena āvuṭā.*
>
> All Devas and humans, who being covered by the darkness of ignorance (*avijjā*), so much so that they have no eye of wisdom, crave for sensual pleasure (*kāma-rāga*), continued existence (*bhava-rāga*), and false doctrines (*diṭṭhi-rāga*), will not be able to see the Good Dhamma of the four noble truths, which is subtle, profound, like the mass of water sustaining the solid earth from below, difficult to see, like a mustard seed covered by the great Mount Meru, fine as an atom; and which leads to Nibbāna by going against the stream of Saṁsāra.

This thought is in fact a natural law (*dhammatā*) which happens to all the Buddhas. The Buddha, who had thus reflected, was inclined not to make an effort to teach the Dhamma forthwith, for the following three reasons: 1) The minds of sentient beings were full of defilements; 2) the Dhamma was very profound and 3) the Buddha held the Dhamma in high esteem.

The Buddha's thought process may be likened to that of a physician who, having given treatment to a patient afflicted with various kinds of illness, would reflect: "In what way and with what medicine should this patient be treated for recovery from his illness?" So too the Buddha, being aware of all sentient beings afflicted with various ailments of the defilements (*kilesa*) on the one hand and of the

Dhamma being immensely profound and not easily discernible on the other, reflected: "What Dhamma should be taught to these beings and what method should be employed in teaching them."[150]

Another explanation is that there are two causes (*nidāna*) for the Buddhas to teach the Dhamma: 1) The feeling of compassion for sentient beings generated in the mind continuum of the Buddhas, i.e. the great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā*), which is the internal (*ajjhattika*) cause; and 2) the act of asking by the world-respected Brahma for the Buddha's teaching of the Dhamma, i.e. the request by Brahma (*Brahma-yācana*), which is the external (*bāhira*) cause.

At the time when the Buddha thus reflected on the profundity of the Dhamma and on the abundance of the defilements (*kilesa*) in sentient beings, the great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā*) of Buddha, the internal cause, had already arisen, but the external cause was still lacking as Brahma had not made the request yet. The Buddha was inclined to teach the Dhamma only when Brahma had made the request, thereby fulfilling the external cause.

The teaching of the Dhamma, only when requested by Brahma, was a natural law (*dhammatā*) for every Buddha. The reason for the teaching of the Dhamma, only when thus requested by Brahma, was this: Outside the Buddha's Dispensation, before the appearance of the Buddha, those who were considered virtuous, whether laymen, wanderers, ascetics or Brahmins, worshipped and revered only Brahma. If the world-respected Great Brahma showed reverence to the Buddha by bowing before him, the whole world would do likewise, and develop faith in the Buddha. For this reason, it was usual for the Buddhas to teach the Dhamma only when requested by Brahma. Thus only when the external cause, the request of Brahma, had been made, did the Buddha teach the Dhamma.

The Great Brahma Sahampati's Request

The great Brahma Sahampati was previously a noble elder (*thera*) by the name of Sahaka at the time of Buddha Kassapa's Dispensation. In that

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[150] It was not that the Buddha had entirely given up his intention thus: "I will not at all teach the Dhamma to sentient beings." For details, see the Questions of King Milinda (*Milinda-pañha*) [no further reference given].

> capacity, he attained the first form absorption and when he died without having fallen from the absorption, he was reborn on the first absorption plane of existence and became a Mahā Brahma with a lifespan of 64 inclusive periods (*antara-kappa*) which is equal to one immeasurable aeon. He was called Brahma Sahampati by the [351] Brahmas of the said plane of existence.[151]

When the mind continuum of the Buddha was such that he was still inclined not to exert himself for teaching the Dhamma, this thought occurred to Brahma Sahampati: *Nassati vata bho loko! Vinassati vata bho loko!* "Friends, the world is going to perish! O friends, the world is going to perish!" Then the Buddha, who is worthy of special veneration by Devas and humans because of his fully and truly penetrating knowledge of all things in the world, is inclined not to exert himself for teaching the Dhamma!" Then, as instantly as a man of great physical and mental strength might stretch out his bent arm or bend his outstretched arm, Brahma Sahampati vanished from the Brahma world along with 10,000 fellow Mahā Brahmas and appeared in front of the Buddha.

At that time, Brahma Sahampati had a scarf placed over his left shoulder and kneeling with his right knee on the ground, sitting in the way of a Brahma, he made obeisance to the Buddha by raising his clasped hands and addressed him: "Exalted Buddha, may the Buddha kindly teach the Dhamma to all sentient beings, humans, Devas and Brahmas. Exalted Gracious One, may the Buddha kindly teach the Dhamma to all sentient beings, humans, Devas and Brahmas. There are many beings who have just a little dust of the defilements in their eyes. If these beings do not get the chance to listen to the Dhamma of the Buddha, they will suffer a great loss by not acquiring the extraordinary Dhamma of the paths and fruitions which they deserve. Venerable Buddha, there will appear those who can comprehend the Dhamma taught by you."

Then again, having addressed the Buddha in plain prose, Brahma Sahampati made the request also in verse:

> "Exalted Buddha, in the past, before your appearance, there existed in the Magadha country the impure, false doctrine sponsored by the six heretical

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[151] The commentary to the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*) and the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpani*) [no further references given].

teachers, such as Purāṇa Kassapa, who were stained by the dirt of the defilements.

Kindly open the great doorway of the path for entry into the deathless Nibbāna, which has remained closed since the disappearance of the Buddha Kassapa's Dispensation (*Sāsana*). Let all sentient beings listen to the Dhamma of the four noble truths as discerned by you, free as you are from the dust of the defilements.

Noble and wise Buddha, the possessor of the eye of wisdom that is capable of seeing all around! As a man of keen eyesight stands on the top of a rocky hill and surveys all the people in the surroundings, so you, venerable Buddha, being already free from sorrows, go up to the bejewelled tower of wisdom and look at all sentient beings, humans, Devas and Brahmas, who have fallen into the abyss of sorrow and are oppressed by birth, old age, sickness, death, etc.

Venerable Buddha of great, noble and courageous diligence, who knows only victory, not defeat, in all battles! Arise! Venerable Buddha, free from the debt of sensual desire, who is wont to set free all sentient beings who are eager to listen and follow the Buddha's teaching, from such difficult journeys as birth, old age, etc. and, like unto a caravan leader, convey them to the safety of Nibbāna! Kindly wander in the world to proclaim the Dhamma. Exalted Buddha, kindly teach the four noble truths to all sentient humans, Devas and Brahmas. Venerable Buddha, there will appear those who can discern and understand the Dhamma to be taught by you."

> The fact that the Brahma came and made the request to teach the Dhamma at the time when the Buddha was reflecting on the profundity of the Dhamma and on the abundance of the defilements in sentient beings and was still mentally inclined not to exert himself to teach the Dhamma is a natural law (*dhammatā*) for every Buddha. See the exposition on the 30 natural things in the commentary to the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*). [352]

The Buddha surveys the World

When Brahma Sahampati thus made the request for teaching the Dhamma; the two conditions for doing so, namely, the external cause and the internal cause

were fulfilled; and so he surveyed the world of sentient beings with the pair of Buddha's eyes (*Buddha-cakkhu*): Knowledge of the latent desire or inclination of beings (*āsayānusaya-ñāṇa*) and knowledge of the maturity or otherwise of the sense faculties (*indriya-paro-pariyatta-ñāṇa*).

On thus surveying, he saw distinctly different types of beings comparable to four kinds of lotuses: there are in the pond blue, red or white lotuses. Of these four kinds of lotuses, there are: 1) The kind of lotuses which come into being in the water, grow and develop in the water but remain submerged; 2) the kind of lotuses which come into being in the water, grow up in the water and stand level with the surface of the water; 3) the kind of lotuses which come into being in the water, grow up in the water and stand aloft, above the water and without the water wetting and adhering to them.

> Of the said three kinds of lotuses, the 3rd lotus which stands aloft above the water would bloom forth that very day; the 2nd lotus which stood level with the surface of the water would bloom forth the next day; and the 1st lotus which developed but remained submerged would bloom forth on the third day.

Apart from the three kinds of lotuses, there is the fourth kind of lotus which will neither appear at all above the water nor bloom forth; the lotuses of this kind are diseased and will eventually become food for fish and tortoises. Like these four kinds of lotuses, there are beings who have little or no dust of the defilements in their eyes of knowledge; beings who have much dust of the defilements in their eyes of knowledge; beings in whom the five faculties of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom are sharp and mature; beings in whom the said five faculties are dull and immature; beings whose disposition, such as faith, energy, etc., are good or are not good; beings who would easily understand the Dhamma taught and beings who would not; beings who view all mundane matters, such as the aggregates, all forms of defilements, wrong deeds, volitions and actions that would cause further existences as a dreadful group of dangers just like an enemy wielding a two-edged sword prepared for an assault; and beings who have no such view.

> When the Buddha surveyed the world of beings with his Buddha's eyes, he saw four groups of individuals thus: 1) The individuals who understood the Dhamma of the four noble truths, even if taught in a brief outline (*mātikā-uddesa*), and became converted, just as the lotuses standing aloft above the

water would bloom forth that very day with the rising of the sun (*ugghāṭitaññū-puggala*); 2) the individuals who could not yet be converted by just hearing the Dhamma in a brief outline but would understand and become converted only when the four noble truths were taught and explained in detail (*vitthāra-niddesa-pada-bhājanī*), just as the lotuses standing level with the surface of the water would bloom forth the next day (*vipañcitaññū-puggala*); 3) the individuals who could not yet be converted by listening to the Dhamma both briefly and in detail at one sitting but would understand the four noble truths and become converted after a day or a month or a year with the help of their friends and by persistently applying themselves to the realisation of the Dhamma, just as the lotuses remaining submerged would bloom forth on the third day (*neyya-puggala*); 4) the individuals who would not realise path and fruit however much they listened to and practised the Dhamma in the present life (*pada-parama-puggala*) but had the benefit of acquiring an inclination (*vāsanā*) for the Dhamma in future existences. They would end their lives by becoming the food for the fishes and tortoises of the defilements, just as the lotuses, which were diseased, neither rose from the water nor bloomed forth, would eventually become the food for fishes and tortoises.

On thus seeing the four kinds of individuals and reflecting on the Dhamma which would be of benefit to them, the Buddha developed an ardent desire to teach the Dhamma. Then he proceeded to separate all beings into two categories: individuals fit for higher truths and liberation called capable people (*bhabba-puggala*) and individuals not fit for higher truths and liberation called incapable people (*abhabba-puggala*). Of these two [353] categories, incapable people were set aside and not taken into consideration, he took only capable people into the fold of his omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) and divided them into six groups, saying: “The beings full of passion (*rāga*) are this many. The beings full of hatred (*dosa*) are this many. The beings full of delusion (*moha*) are this many. The beings who are thoughtful (*vitakka*) are this many. The beings replete with faith (*saddhā*) are this many. The beings replete with wisdom (*paññā*) are this many.” And then he expressed his intention by saying: “I shall indeed teach the Dhamma!”

After thus reflecting and discerning, the Buddha gave his assent to Brahma Sahampati in verse (MN 26):

Apārutā tesaṁ amatassa dvārā,
ye sotavanto pamuñcantu saddhaṁ,

vihiṁsa-saññī paguṇaṁ na bhāsiṁ,
Dhammaṁ paṇītaṁ manujesu Brahme.

O Brahma Sahampati, I do not keep the eight portals of the paths (*magga*), for entering into the deathless Nibbāna, closed to Devas and humans who are fit for emancipation, they are kept permanently open. Let Devas and humans with good hearing (*sota-pasāda*) show faith in me.

O Brahma Sahampati, to humans, Devas and Brahmas I have not in days past taught the noble Dhamma which I have acquired. It was because at that time the two causes (*nidāna*) for teaching the Dhamma had not yet been fulfilled and as such I knew well that, even though the Dhamma was taught, it would be of no benefit to them, but would be merely exhausting for me.

What is meant here is only those with good hearing will be able to listen to the Dhamma taught by the Buddha. Also only if they have faith in him, will they exert themselves to practice the Dhamma with faith, and the door of Nibbāna will be opened. If they have no faith in the Buddha, even though they have good hearing, they will not have faith also in the Dhamma and will not exert themselves and practise it and in that case, the door of Nibbāna will not be opened. So, beings having good hearing should show faith in the Buddha and listen to the Dhamma.

Alternatively we can say that since the time of the disappearance of the Dispensation (*Sāsana*) of Buddha Kassapa up to the present time, a genuine Buddha and his genuine Dhamma could not be found and so there had not been genuine faith in the mind continuum of beings, the gem of faith which should be packed and clutched in their fists. Devotion to heretical teachers in the meantime was not genuine faith. It was only an arising of unwholesome consciousness (*akusala-cittuppāda*) which mistook what was wrong for right (*micchādhimokkha*). Now that a genuine Buddha had appeared, let the Devas and humans who have good hearing open their fists and unpack the gem packets which had been kept close-fisted, as it were, since the time of the disappearance of the Dispensation (*Sāsana*) of Buddha Kassapa.

Thereupon, Brahma Sahampati felt jubilant and exclaimed: “The Buddha has given me the word of assent for teaching the Dhamma!” Then, after paying respect to the Buddha and circumambulating him, he vanished from that very place and reappeared in the Brahma world.

The Buddha proceeds to the Deer Park

After Brahma Sahampati had left, the Buddha reflected: "To whom should I first teach the Dhamma? Who will quickly understand the Dhamma to be taught by me?" Then it occurred to him: "The sect-leader, Āḷāra of the Kālāma clan, is one endowed with the three wisdoms (*paññā*): wisdom about birth (*jāti-paññā*), wisdom about meditation (*bhāvanā-paññā*), and wisdom about preservation (*pārihārika-paññā*). He is also an individual whose eye of wisdom was free from the dust of the defilements (*apparajakkha-puggala*) for a very long time. It would be good if I were to teach him the Dhamma first. He will quickly [354] discern the Dhamma taught by me."

Thereupon, one Deva, without making himself visible, addressed the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, it has now been seven days since the sect-leader Āḷāra of the Kālāma clan died." The Buddha, however, without readily accepting the mere words of the Deva, looked with his omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) and confirmed that Āḷāra had indeed died seven days ago as he had been informed by the Deva, and that he had been reborn since in the sphere of nothingness (*ākiñcaññāyatana*), the third of the four formless planes.

After musing: "It was indeed a great loss for the sect-leader Āḷāra of the Kālāma clan to miss the opportunity of realising path and fruit which he deserved; if he could have listened to the Dhamma to be taught by me, he would have quickly discerned the four noble truths," the Buddha again reflected further: "To whom should I then teach the Dhamma? Who will quickly understand the Dhamma to be taught by me?" Then it occurred to him: "The sect-leader Udaka, the son of Rāma, is one endowed, like Āḷāra, with the three wisdoms. He is also someone with little dust in his eyes, his eye of wisdom having been free from the dust of the defilements for a very long time. It would be good if I were to teach the Dhamma first to him, he will quickly discern the Dhamma to be taught by me."

Thereupon, another Deva, without making himself visible, addressed the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, the sect-leader Udaka, the son of Rāma, has already died at about midnight yesterday." The Buddha, however, without readily accepting the mere words of the Deva, looked by means of his omniscience and confirmed that the sect-leader Udaka had died in the middle of the previous night, as informed by the Deva, and that he had been reborn since in the Sphere

of Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception (*Nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana*) which is the fourth of the four formless planes, which is also called Bhavagga.

Thereupon, musing: "It was indeed a great loss for the sect-leader Udaka, son of Rāma, to miss the opportunity of realising the paths and fruitions which he deserved. If the sect-leader Udaka could have listened to the Dhamma taught by me, he would have quickly discerned the four noble truths."

He again reflected further: "To whom should I teach the Dhamma first? Who will quickly understand the Dhamma to be taught by me?" Then the Buddha thought: "The Group of five ascetics (*pañca-vaggiya*) have been very helpful to me. They stayed with me and attended to my needs when I was practising austere striving (*dukkara-cariyā*) for six long years in the Uruvelā forest. So, it would be good if I were to teach the Dhamma first to the Group-of-Five." On reflecting, "Where are the five ascetics living at present?" with his super knowledge of divine sight (*dibba-cakkhu-abhiññā*), he saw them dwelling in the huge Deer Park also called lsipatana, near Bārāṇasī city.

> In this connection, the Buddha took into consideration and reflected on the services rendered by the Group-of-Five ascetics because he was especially mindful of the gratitude he owed to them. It was not that he did not want to teach the Dhamma to those who had not rendered service to him.

After making the intention: "I will proceed to the Deer Park and deliver the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse," he went round for alms near the Bodhimaṇḍala and stayed there till the fourteenth day of the waxing moon of the month of July (*Āsāḷha*), and then on the full moon day of the month, quite early in the morning, after arranging and carrying his robes and alms bowl and thinking: "I will proceed to Bārāṇasī city," he began the journey of eighteen leagues on foot.

> The distance between the Mahā Bodhi and Gayā (*Buddhagaya*) was three miles. The distance between Mahā Bodhi and Bārāṇasī was eighteen leagues. The Buddhas of the past travelled to the Deer Park, by the power of their absorptions, to deliver the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse. As for our Buddha, he went eighteen leagues on foot, as he foresaw that an ascetic, Upaka, was soon to become a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi*) by virtue of his past meritorious deeds. He knew thus: "Upaka is now travelling the same route. That Upaka will meet me, converse with me and go on his way. Later on, being weary of the world, he will come

back to me to listen to the Dhamma and become a noble Non-returner (*Anāgāmi*) in the present life and also become an Arahat in his second existence after reaching Avihā, the twelfth Brahma realm." [355]

The Buddha meets the Ascetic Upaka

When the Buddha went from the Mahā Bodhi to Bārāṇasī on foot, the ascetic Upaka, who was travelling between the Mahā Bodhi and Buddhagayā, approached the Buddha, and on seeing him, asked: "My friend, your organs of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are so clear; your complexion is also clean and radiant; my friend, under which teacher have you gone forth? Who is your teacher? Whose teaching do you like?" the Buddha thereupon gave the reply to the ascetic Upaka in verse (MN 85 and elsewhere):

Sabbābhibhū sabba-vidūham-asmi,
sabbesu dhammesu anūpalitto,
sabbañjaho taṇhākkhaye vimutto,
sayaṁ abhiññāya kamuddiseyyaṁ.

Upaka, I have mastered all things in the three worlds and possess perfect and complete knowledge of them all; I am one who is free from the stain of the defilements, such as greed, wrong-doing, delusion, etc., with regard to the three forms of existence (*tebhūmaka-dhamma*). I have abandoned all the three forms of existence. I am also one established securely in Nibbāna where craving is extinct. Being one who has penetrated all things by myself, without being taught by others, whom should I point out saying: "This is my teacher?" In fact, there is none.

Na me ācariyo atthi, sadiso me na vijjati,
sadevakasmiṁ lokasmiṁ, natthi me paṭipuggalo.

Upaka, for me, there is no teacher, not to speak of a teacher superior to me, there is no one who is even my peer. There is no one in the world of sentient beings, including Devas, who can compare with me in respect of such qualities as morality, concentration, etc.

Ahañ-hi Arahā loke, ahaṁ Satthā anuttaro,
ekomhi Sammā-sambuddho, sīti-bhūtosmi nibbuto.

Upaka, I am indeed the Arahat in the world, one deserving of special veneration: I am also the incomparable and most excellent teacher of

> Devas and humans in the world. Since I can discern with self-arisen knowledge (*sayambhū-ñāṇa*) all things without perversion, I am the supremely Self-Awakened One. I am also one who has extinguished the fire of the defilements.
>
> *Dhamma-cakkaṁ pavattetuṁ, gacchāmi Kāsinaṁ puraṁ,*
> *andhī-bhūtasmiṁ lokasmiṁ, āhañchaṁ amata-dundubhiṁ.*
>
> Upaka, I will go to the Isipatana Deer Park, near Bārāṇasī, in Kāsi, to set in motion the Dhamma Wheel. I will beat the large deathless drum for all Devas and humans who, without the eye of wisdom, are groping around like the blind.

Thereupon, the ascetic Upaka said: "My friend, if what you claim is true, you must be one who possesses infinite wisdom (*ananta-ñāṇa*) and who has conquered the five kinds of death (*māra*)." [356]

The Buddha replied thus:

> *Mādisā ve Jinā honti, ye pattā āsavakkhayaṁ,*
> *jitā me pāpakā dhammā, tasmāham-Upaka jino.*
>
> Upaka, the Buddhas who are of the same nature like myself are named Conquerors (*Jina*) since they have attained the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*), the extinction of the four pollutants (*āsava*), and have got rid of the unwholesome factors (*akusala-dhamma*). I am also known by the name of Conqueror, for, like these Buddhas, I have attained the knowledge of the extinction of the pollutants (*āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*), and abandoned the unwholesome factors.

Thereupon, the ascetic Upaka saying, "My friend, what you have said may be true!" nodded his head and took another route to go to Vaṅkahāra district. The opportunity of having such a dialogue and discussion with the Buddha proved to be a helpful factor in his renouncing the world later on. True! Upaka was in fact one who possessed extraordinary merit (*adhikāra*). For this very reason, the Buddha had taken the journey on foot to meet him on the way.

> Those who listened to the Buddha's words of the Dhamma before he delivered the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse did not attain the paths and fruitions. They just acquired a tendency (*vāsanā*) for applying themselves to the realisation of the Dhamma. It is a natural law (*dhammatā*); and so Upaka did not attain the paths and fruitions although

he had listened to such profound words of the Dhamma relating to the qualities of the Buddha. He just enjoyed the benefit of having an inclination to become a monastic afterwards.

The Story of Upaka in Brief

The ascetic Upaka lived in a small hermitage in a hamlet of hunters in Vaṅkahāra and was held in high esteem and looked after by the leading hunter of the hamlet. As there were plenty of wild gnats in the said county, Upaka was made to spend his time inside a large pitcher. As the hunter wanted to go to a distant deer-forest, he left word with his daughter Cāpā: "Daughter, look after and serve well our reverend teacher who is an Arahat. Don't fail to do so!"[152] And then he left for the forest in company of his sons and younger brothers.

Cāpā, the daughter of the chief hunter, had pleasant, beautiful looks. She possessed perfect bodily form with features becoming to a woman. The day after her father left, the ascetic Upaka went to the chief hunter's house. On seeing the hunter's daughter Cāpā as she approached close to him to offer alms food which she had prepared, he became overwhelmed by lust. So, without even being able to take the food, he went back to his place carrying the alms food in a dish. Keeping the dish of alms food in a suitable place, and thinking, "I will remain alive only if I can have Cāpā! I will die if I cannot get her!" he lay down without taking food.

On the seventh day, when the chief hunter returned home, he enquired from Cāpā about teacher Upaka. On being told by Cāpā: "Father, your teacher Upaka came to the house only one day and had not come again," he went straight to teacher Upaka without even changing his clothes, in the very guise that he had on from the forest, and asked him: "What ails you, venerable sir?" feeling and massaging his legs at the same time. The ascetic Upaka, without giving an answer, remained lying, rolling to the left and to the right and groaning. When the hunter pressed him for an answer, saying: "Just tell me sir. I will do everything I can possibly do for you." The ascetic Upaka replied: "I can live only if l can have Cāpā. If not, it is better for me to die here."

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[152] Cf. *Cāvā*, the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*) commentary; the Collection of the Middle Length Discourses (*Majjhima-nikāya*) commentary [no further reference given].

When the hunter asked: "Venerable sir, do you possess any skill?" the ascetic Upaka replied: "I possess none." Again, when the hunter said: "Venerable sir, one who is not skilled in anything will not be able to manage domestic affairs," the ascetic Upaka replied: "I am not skilled in anything. Nevertheless, I will carry the carcass obtained by you. I will [357] also sell its meat."

Saying: "We also like the idea of you carrying and selling meat," the hunter gave him an outer garment and let him change into a layman's clothings and, bringing him home, he gave his daughter Cāpā in marriage to Upaka. The son born of the union of Upaka and Cāpā as husband and wife was given the name of Subhadda. When the child cried, Cāpā used to nag, taunt and ridicule Upaka by singing this lullaby[153] to hurt and disparage him indirectly:

> Son of a meat vendor, ascetic and ex-monk! That son of a foolish ex-monk, a hunter's hanger-on, fell in love with me. Mother is coaxing you to sleep, stop crying! I wish you would sleep. In a cradle finished with emerald and diamond, sleep, my son of pure gold. Mother will sing and rock the cradle to lull you to sleep. Stop crying! Gold nugget! I wish you to sleep. Your father, last in the file of men! His way avoid; in future for liberation strive. Mother is advising you, my pretty son, my garland of gold!

Thereupon, Upaka said: "Wife, do you think of me as one who has nobody to turn to for help and refuge? I have a very good friend by the name of Ananta Jina. I will go to that good friend Ananta Jina." Realising "This Upaka is unbearably hurt if I taunt and insult him in this way," Cāpā would sing the lullaby again and again. One day, Upaka departed for the Middle Country (*Majjhima-desa*) without informing Cāpā.

At that time, the Buddha happened to be dwelling in Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī; and he had earlier given word in advance to the monks: "Ascetics, if someone comes and enquires after Ananta Jina, point him out to me." Upaka enquired from every one he met all along the way: "Where is Ananta Jina staying?" and in due course he reached Sāvatthī; and, standing in the centre of Jetavana monastery, he asked the ascetics: "Venerable Sirs! Where is Ananta Jina staying?" The ascetics took him to the presence of the Buddha. On seeing the Buddha, Upaka immediately addressed him: "Exalted Buddha! Do you still

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[153] Lullaby: This was written by Manli Sayadaw who is famous for his works in verse.

remember and know me, your disciple?" When the Buddha said: "Yes, Upaka, I do. Where are you living at present?" Upaka replied: "Exalted Buddha! I am living in Vaṅkahāra." Thereupon, the Buddha asked him: "Upaka, you are advanced in age. Can you enter the order of ascetics?" Upaka replied: "Yes, Exalted Buddha, I will." Thereupon, the Buddha permitted him to enter the order of ascetics and taught a suitable form of meditation. Upaka practised the meditation with great exertion and attained the Non-returner fruition (*Anāgāmī-phala*). When he died, he was reborn in Aviha which is the lowest in the five planes of the Suddhāvāsa Brahma world; and, before long, he became an Arahat (*Arahatta-phala*).

After she was abandoned by the ex-monk Upaka, Cāpā became weary of the world of humans; so, after entrusting her young son Subhadda to his grandfather, she took the same [358] journey taken by Upaka. On reaching Sāvatthī, she became a nun in the presence of other female monastics. There, she practised and developed insight (*vipassanā*) meditation strenuously and becoming an Arahat after going through the four paths in succession, she was known by the name of Ven. Cāpā with the pollutants extinguished.[154]

The Buddha arrives at the Deer Park

The Buddha proceeded on his journey by successive stages until he came upon the Group-of-Five ascetics in Isipatana, and the Migadāya Forest near Bārāṇasī in the cool evening of the full moon day of July (*Āsāḷha*) in the year 528 BCE. Seeing the Buddha approaching from a distance, the five ascetics made an agreement among themselves: "Friends, the monk Gotama is approaching. The monk Gotama is one who has given up meditation practices. He has become one who strives for the acquisition of the four requisites. He is one who has reverted to the acquisition of the four requisites. Let us not make obeisance to the monk Gotama. Let us not greet him. Let us not take the alms bowl from his hands. However, we will prepare a seat for him to sit on if he wants to."

Being aware of the mood of the five ascetics, the Buddha developed loving-kindness specially directed towards them (*odhissaka-mettā*). As the Buddha came nearer and nearer and touched with the splendour and might of the

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[154] [Her verses are recorded in Thig, 292-312, and her story is told in the commentary].

Buddha (*Buddha-tejānubhāva*), as well as the splendour and might of his loving-kindness (*mettā-tejānubhāva*), they found themselves unable to keep the agreement they had made and all five went to welcome the Buddha; one took the alms bowl from his hands, another prepared a seat for him, another set out water, another placed a plank and another took a pot for washing his feet.

The Buddha took his seat and washed his feet as arranged by the ascetics. Although they showed due respect with physical actions regardless of their agreement, they spoke to him as their equal by addressing him by the name Gotama and by calling him, friend (*āvuso*). They entered into a friendly talk with the Buddha, addressing him by the name "Gotama" and as friend as though he were their equal: "Friend Gotama, at the time when you were engaged in meditation practices in Uruveḷā Forest, we carried your alms bowl and robes and went round for alms. We offered you water and tooth cleaner. We swept the precincts of the hermitage. Who looked after you by attending to such duties, big and small, after we had left? Were you not in a state of confusion when we left you?"

Thereupon, the Buddha said: "Group of five (*Pañca-vaggī*)! Do not address me by my name Gotama and by the term "friend" as though I were your equal. Group of five! I have become an Awakened One who, being possessed of completely true, penetrating and clear knowledge of all cognizable truths (*sacca-ñeyya-dhamma*) is deserving of special veneration.

Ascetics, listen attentively, I have realised the deathless Nibbāna (*amata*-Nibbāna). I will instruct you. I will teach you the Dhamma. If you follow and practise in accordance with the instructions given by me, you will soon realise, even in this present life and through direct knowledge the happiness of the Arahat fruition which is aspired to by two kinds of noble men: Men noble by birth (*jāti-kula-putta*) and men made noble by virtue of good conduct (*ācārā-kula-putta*) who renounce the world, abandoning family life, and become recluses in the service of the Dispensation (*Sāsana*)."

But the Group-of-Five ascetics being sceptical replied, albeit in good faith: "Friend Gotama! Even though you practised and attained the absorptions (*appānaka-jhāna*), which are difficult to achieve by ordinary individuals, at the time you practised austere striving (*dukkarā-cariya*) for six long years, you could not realise the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) and

omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) which could make you a noble one (*ariya*). At that time, you started striving for the acquisition of the four requisites, and you gave up the meditation practices, now that you have reverted to the acquisition of the four requisites, how could you have attained and realised the path-knowledge of an Arahat and omniscience which can make one a noble one, and which is superior to the ten modes of virtuous action (*kusalā-kamma-patha*) of ordinary individuals?"

On being spoken to thus, the Buddha addressed the Group-of-Five: "Ascetics, I am not one who [359] strives for the acquisition of the four requisites. I am not one who has given up the practice of meditation. I am not one who has reverted to the acquisition of the four requisites. Ascetics, I have become an Awakened One who, being possessed of complete, genuine, penetrating and clear knowledge of all the cognizable truths (*sacca-ñeyya-dhamma*), am deserving of special veneration, ascetics! Listen attentively. I have realised the deathless Nibbāna. I will instruct you. I will teach you the Dhamma. If you follow and practise in accordance with the instruction given by me, you will soon realise, even in this present life, through direct knowledge, the happiness of the Arahat fruition, which is aspired to by these two kinds of noble men, namely, men noble by birth and men noble by virtue of good conduct, who renounce the world, abandoning family life, and become recluses in the service of the Dispensation (*Sāsana*)." But the five ascetics still remaining sceptical, and replied as before for the second time.

Although the Buddha told them for the third time as before, "I am not one who strives for the acquisition of the four requisites, and so on," the five ascetics still remaining sceptical, and replied as before for the third time.

Thereupon, the Buddha, changing his tactics, addressed them thus: "Ascetics, do you recollect whether, when I was previously engaged in meditation practices in Uruvelā forest, I came and spoke to you, by way of giving encouragement and to keep you from being bored and also in order to make you form a high opinion of myself, thus: 'My friends, do not be confused and think of leaving for another place. I have begun to see lights and signs in meditation (*kammaṭṭhāna-nimitta*).' The five ascetics then reflected: "At the time when this monk Gotama was practising meditation, we would have readily believed him if he had said: 'I have become an Arahat!' But, this Monk Gotama did not brag nor deceive us at that time. At present he is only speaking of the qualities (*guṇa*) truly possessed

by him." With this one single utterance of the Buddha, they were reassured and regained faith and held him in high esteem. And, fully convinced that: "This Monk Gotama has truly become an Awakened One," they replied in acknowledgement: *No hetaṁ Bhante*, "venerable Buddha, we cannot recollect that you have spoken such words."

The Buddha was able to make the five ascetics understand that he had become an Awakened One. Thereupon, the five ascetics listened to the words of the Buddha with respect. They gave rapt attention to him. They directed their minds towards achievement of the Arahat fruition. Having made the Group-of-Five ascetics know perfectly well that he had no doubt he had become genuinely Awakened, the Buddha, for the first time, delivered the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, beginning with the words: *Dve me bhikkhave ante* … "there are these two extremes, monks … " and so on, on the cool evening of Saturday, the full moon day of July (*Āsāḷha*) in the year 528 BCE. At that time, the sun was just setting in the west after dispelling darkness with its light and the moon, and it was in conjunction with the constellation of *Uttarāsāḷha*, was just rising in the east and vanquishing the darkness with its radiance.

> No sooner had the Buddha uttered: *Dveme bhikkhave ante* … than the sound that appeared spread all over the 10,000 world-element, reaching Bhavagga, the highest of the formless worlds above and Avīci, the lowest of the hells below. Even at that time, 180 million Brahmas, who were of mature meritorious roots and who had performed deeds of extraordinary merit (*adhikāra-kusala*) in order to comprehend the four truths, had already assembled there.

When the Buddha thus delivered the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, Ven. Koṇḍañña followed the teaching, concentrating his mind on the discourse through its course and developed his knowledge (*ñāṇa*), so that he became established in Stream-entry fruition (*Sotāpatti-phala*) along with the 180 million Brahmas by the time the delivery of the discourse came to an end.

The 32 awesome and extraordinary great omens appeared when the Buddha delivered the discourse, as on the occasions of his conception, birth and becoming a Buddha.

When Ven. Koṇḍañña was thus established in Stream-entry fruition, the Buddha exclaimed with joy: *Aññāsi vata bho Koṇḍañño! Aññāsi vata bho Koṇḍañño*!

"Ah! [360] Koṇḍañña has penetratingly discerned the four noble truths indeed! Ah! Koṇḍañña has penetratingly discerned the four noble truths indeed!" so that Devas and humans of the 10,000 world-element might hear. Because the Buddha had thus made his joyous utterance beginning with "Koṇḍañña has penetratingly discerned (*aññā*) … " Ven. Koṇḍañña became renowned by the name of "Aññā Koṇḍañña."

On thus becoming a Stream-enterer, Ven. Aññā Koṇḍañña asked the Buddha for ordination, saying: "Exalted Buddha, may I, in your presence, become a novice and then a fully-ordained monastic." Thereupon, the Buddha stretched out his golden right hand from beneath the robe and addressed him in a voice like that of a Brahma: *Ehi bhikkhu svākkhāto Dhammo, cara brahma-cariyaṁ sammā dukkhassa anta-kiriyāya*, "come, monk, receive the ordination you had prayed for; the Dhamma has been well-taught by me; strive for the accomplishment of the noble practice constituting the three upper paths in order to put an end to the round of suffering." The ordination of Ven. Aññā Koṇḍañña as a monastic came to a successful completion just as the first of the three sentences uttered by the Buddha ended.

> As the Buddha summoned Ven. Koṇḍañña with "Come, monk," immediately his original appearance vanished and he was transformed into a monastic, with his head shaved, and his body donned in the robes. He was already equipped with the eight requisites each in its proper place, one robe at the waist, another robe of a single layer (*ekacci*) covering the body, the double robe resting on the shoulder and the alms bowl hung over the left shoulder. The deportment (*iriyā-patha*) he carried was worthy of devotion and was like that of an elder with 60 years of monkhood who was 80 years old; and his posture was that of paying respect to the Buddha, who was his preceptor (*upajjhāya*).
>
> The requisites received by the summoned monastics (*ehi-bhikkhu*) are known as requisites created by supernormal powers (*iddhi-mayā-parikkhāra*). If a certain person gave away in generosity the eight requisites, such as robes, bowl, etc., if he could not afford to give a full set to a noble individual (*ariya-puggala*), such as a Stream-enterer, Once-returner, etc., or to an ordinary but virtuous monastic and aspired earnestly saying: "Let this gift of requisites be the supporting cause (*paccaya*) for becoming a summoned monastic in the future," the said gift, provided it is of extraordinary merit, could be of help to that person to

acquire the requisites created by supernormal powers in the presence of the Buddhas, and become a summoned monastic.[155]

The Buddha took up residence in the Deer Park for the rainy season; and, on the following day, the 1st waning moon of the month of July (*Āsāḷha*) he remained in the monastery without going round for alms and spent time giving instruction to Ven. Vappa. The remaining four monastics went on alms round. Ven. Vappa became a Stream-enterer in the morning of that very day. Similarly, the Buddha remained only in the monastery without going round for alms and spent the time giving instruction to Ven. Bhaddiya on the following day, to Ven. Mahānāmā on the day following that, and to Ven. Assaji on the day following that. These monks also attained Stream-entry fruition, on the day concerned and all became summoned monastics in the presence of the Buddha. [361]

[The following two sections are moved here from the chapter on the Dhamma Jewel to complete the story.]

The Turning of the Dhamma Wheel

Before the advent of the Buddha, there appeared in India some leaders of religious sects who called themselves ascetics (*samaṇa*). Some of them practised and taught a sensuous way of life as the conduct of ascetics while others practised and taught a self-tormenting mode of life as the conduct of ascetics. During the time when the world was thus shrouded with the darkness of the two extreme doctrines of self-indulgence and self-torment, each claiming to be the true good practice. On the full moon of May (*Vesākha*) at dusk in the year 528 BCE, the Buddha delivered the Discourse about the Turning of the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*, SN 56.11).

The Buddha began the discourse with the words: "Monastics these two extremes should not be followed by one who has renounced the world." And as soon as these words were uttered by the Buddha, due to the Buddha's powers, they echoed throughout the 10,000 world-element which constitute the birth sphere of the Buddha, and filled the entire world, from the Avīci realm at the bottom and the Bhavagga Brahma realm at the top. By that time Brahmas numbering 180 million who had a matured root of merit as sufficing condition to perceive

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[155] This is according to the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*).

the four truths had already assembled at the Deer Park, Isipatana, where the discourse was to be delivered. When this first discourse was delivered by the Buddha, the sun was setting in the west and the moon was appearing on the eastern horizon.

The theme of the Discourse about the Turning of the Dhamma Wheel is this: The Buddha exhorted the Group-of-Five ascetics to avoid the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification and pointed out to them the middle way, which consists of eight factors, as the proper course of practice. Then he briefly expounded the four truths. Next, he declared the essential features of Buddhahood which requires three stages of knowledge regarding each of the four truths and proclaimed that he was the Buddha because he has fulfilled those requirements.

As the discourse continues, Koṇḍañña "entered the stream of knowledge" and became the first Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), a disciple established in the first path. Thus, the Wheel of the Dhamma was set rolling and the noble truth became established in the world. The great event was cheered by the terrestrial Devas whose loud applause spread among celestial Devas and Brahmas. The great earth quaked in joyous approval. A wondrous light emanating from the Buddha, caused by his mind and arising from temperature arose, infinitely superior to the personal effulgence of the greatest of the Devas or Brahmas thanks to his all-knowing wisdom.

At the end of the discourse, the delightful satisfaction that had begun to arise at the start of the discourse could not be contained by the Buddha who made the joyous utterance (*udāna*): "Koṇḍañña has seen the truth. Indeed Koṇḍañña has seen the truth." This joyous utterance also spread to the 10,000 world-element. Then Koṇḍañña requested the Buddha to make him a monastic. The Buddha summoned him: "Come monastic," and at that very instant, Ven. Koṇḍañña became a monastic who had the distinction of being ordained by the Buddha himself. [1169]

What is it that is termed the "Dhamma Wheel?" The Dhamma Wheel is a term referring to two kinds of the knowledge of the Buddha: the penetrative knowledge (*paṭivedha-ñāṇa*), of the four path-knowledges (*magga-ñāṇa*), and the exposition-knowledge (*desanā-ñāṇa*).

The four path-knowledges, consisting of the twelve aspects of the four truths, that arose in the Bodhisatta who was about to attain Perfect Awakening is the Dhamma Wheel; and the power of exposition on the self-same twelve aspects of the four truths, which was made clear to the Group-of-Five is also the Dhamma Wheel. They are called the Wheel of Dhamma or Righteousness, because these two kinds of Buddha-knowledge destroy all the defilements just as a powerful missile destroys all enemies.

Both knowledges arose in the heart of the Buddha. By means of them the Buddha caused the wheel of the Dhamma to turn, caused it to happen. This wheel is said to be turning up to the moment when Ven. Koṇḍañña and the 180 million Brahmas attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). That is because the function of the Wheel did not end till that precise moment. From that moment, when the first fully-fledged Stream-enterers (*Sotāpatti-phala*) in Koṇḍañña and the 180 million Brahmas appeared in the world, the Wheel of the Dhamma is said to have been turned, the kingdom of Dhamma became established. This is because since the time when the teaching of Buddha Kassapa became extinct, up to this point under Buddha Gotama, nobody had been able to turn this Wheel through the above-mentioned two Buddha-knowledges.[156]

In the matter of penetration of the four truths, the truth of cessation is penetrated or perceived through having Nibbāna as the object of mind. The remaining three truths are perceived in their respective functions. It means that the four truths are simultaneously revealed at the instant path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*) dispels bewilderment or ignorance that has concealed the four truths.

The Characteristics of Non-Self

After the Buddha had established Koṇḍañña in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*), he taught spiritual development to the Group-of-Five ascetics like they were children. From the first waning day of May (*Vesākha*), he did not go on the alms round but, instead, remained back to teach them his doctrine. On the first waning day, and on the second waning day Ven. Vappa and Ven. Bhaddiya

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[156] This is according to the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*).

attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) respectively, both of them being ordained by the Buddha himself with the summons: "Come, monastic."

Then the Buddha let Ven. Koṇḍañña, Ven. Vappa and Ven. Bhaddiya to go on the alms round, and he taught the doctrine to Ven. Mahānāma and Ven. Assaji. The Buddha and his five disciples sustain themselves on the alms food collected by the three monastics. Then on the third and fourth waning day of *Vesākha* (May) Ven. Mahānāma and Ven. Assaji were established in Stream-entry, both being ordained by the Buddha himself with the summons: "Come, monastic."

After all five ascetics became established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*), the Buddha, on the fifth waning day, decided to expound the doctrine further so as to lead them to Awakening. And accordingly on that day he taught them the Discourse on the Characteristics of Non-Self (*Anatta-lakkhaṇa-sutta*, SN22.59).

The Buddha introduced the discourse with the statement: "Corporeality, monastics, [1170] is not self," and explained this fact with the suffering characteristic (*dukkha*) of corporeality. Then he put questions to the five monastics: "Is corporeality permanent or impermanent?" The monastics, pondering on the question, gave the reply: "Impermanent, venerable sir."

By this similar question and answer method, the Buddha drew out from his hearers the impermanent character of the five aggregates, one by one. Likewise, he drew out the fact of suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anatta*) from the disciples. This method of dialogue in which the disciple comes to his own conclusion of the three characteristics of the five aggregates is technically termed by the commentators as the triple-round discourse (*teparivaṭṭa-dhamma-desanā*). In this matter, what the Buddha wishes to establish is the character of not-self (*anatta*), after first establishing the impermanent character (*anicca*) and the suffering character (*dukkha*) of the five aggregates.

We shall explain this further: In some of the discourses the Buddha expounded on the impermanent nature of the five aggregates with regard to their impermanent character.[157] In some discourses, he makes the not-self character clear through the fact of its suffering (*dukkha*) character. The earlier part of the present discourse is a case in point. In some discourses, he makes the not-self

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[157] See e.g. the Discourse on Six by Six (*Cha-chakka-sutta*, MN 148).

character evident after having first established the fact of the impermanent and suffering character. In this present discourse, the latter part makes this clear.[158] The Buddha takes this approach because the impermanent and suffering nature of things is evident to all whereas the not-self nature is not so evident.

To explain this further: When somebody, by accident breaks some utensil, he or she would remark: "Ah, it's impermanent!" but not: "Ah, it is unsubstantial, or not-self." When a sore afflicts one, or one is pricked by a thorn, one would remark: "Ah, it's suffering," but not: "Ah, it is not-self." Non-self (*anatta*) is not uttered in these cases because the nature of not-self is somewhat remote to one's thinking. Therefore, the Buddha teaches not-self through impermanence or through suffering, or through a combination of impermanence and suffering. This latter method is employed in the latter part, the triple-round discourse, of the present discourse.

Next, the Buddha explains: "Therefore, monastics, whatever corporeality there is, whether in the past, future or present, whether internal or external, whether gross or subtle, lowly or lofty, far or near, all corporeality should be regarded as it really is, by right insight and wisdom of path-knowledge: "This is not mine," "This is not I," "This is not myself." Thus the Buddha points out the falsity of the ego when one gains insight into the five aggregates and when one decides for oneself on gaining path-knowledge.

> In meditating for insight, if one concentrates on the impermanence of phenomena, one can dispel the illusion of conceit. If one concentrates on suffering, one can give up craving. If one concentrates on unsubstantiality, one can dispel the illusion of wrong view.
>
> In the present case, considering the five aggregates as: "This is not mine," leads to the destruction of craving, and is the same as concentrating on suffering in insight meditation. Considering the five aggregates as: "This is not I," leads to the destruction of conceit and is the same as concentrating on impermanence. Considering the five aggregates as: "This is not myself," leads to the destruction of wrong view, and is the same as concentrating on unsubstantiality (*anatta*).

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[158] See also the Discourse about Arahats (*Arahanta-sutta*, SN 22.110).

At the conclusion of the discourse, the Buddha sums up the result that is achieved by a person of right view, culminating in the Arahat fruition. "On gaining this right view, the well informed becomes a noble disciple (*ariya*)." In a logical sequence of events following the correct perception as detailed above, he attains sufficient insight into the five aggregates to attain path-knowledge and its fruition, and the reviewing-knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*). [1171] The discourse then ends with a short description about the attainment of Awakening by the five monastics in the course of the exposition.

From this discourse, it is clear that the Group-of-Five ascetics gained Awakening through meditating on the impermanence, suffering and unsubstantiality of the five aggregates. Therefore, all followers of the Buddha would do well to reflect on the following verses rendered in English prose on the five aggregates:

The aggregates of corporeality do not last long:

> It arises and perishes in no time. Woeful, dreary, painful it is to be subjected to risings and failings, continuously on and on. Unsubstantial is corporeality, with nothing of real essence. To the discerning eye, it is impermanent by nature, and hence is just suffering and not-self.

The aggregates of sensation, perception, volitions and consciousness, too, do not last long.

> It arises and perishes in no time. Woeful, dreary, painful it is to be subjected to risings and failings, continuously on and on. Unsubstantial is consciousness, with nothing of real essence. To the discerning eye, it is impermanent by nature, and hence is just suffering and not-self.

10: The Story of Sātāgiri and Hemavata

The Buddha delivered the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse just before sunset on the full moon day of the month of July (*Āsāḷha*), in the year 528 BCE. At midnight, he taught the Discourse concerning Hemavata (*Hemavata-sutta*), sometimes called the Discourse concerning Sātāgiri (*Sātāgiri-sutta*, Snp 1.9).

The reason, in detail, for teaching the said discourse was as follows: In this Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*) with the human lifespan running upto 20,000 years, Buddha Kassapa appeared, and he entered Parinibbāna after living for 16,000 years, which was four-fifths of the life-span (*āyu-kappa*). The cremation of his remains was carried out with great reverence. The corporeal relics of the Buddha did not break up into pieces but remained as a big solid mass of gold. This was a natural law (*dhammatā*) with all long-lived Buddhas.

As for short-lived Buddhas, they attain Parinibbāna even before many people had the opportunity of seeing them. And so, being considerate and merciful, and being desirous that: "The many people living in such and such towns and villages should gain merit by worshipping the relics, even after I attain Parinibbāna," they made a resolution thus: "Let my relics break up to pieces and be scattered." This being the case, the relics of the short-lived Buddhas, like those of our Buddha, broke into pieces and were scattered like gold dust.

The people built a large relic shrine (*stūpa*), one league in height and also one league in circumference, and enshrined the one and only relic of Buddha Kassapa in it. Each side in one direction measuring one mile in length, and each side had a large entry gate so that the intervening distance between one gate and the next was one mile.

King Kiki of Bārāṇasī donated one gate; his son, Prince Pathavindhara, donated another; the officials, led by the army general, donated the third; and the public, led by a rich man, donated the last. The bricks used for building the large shrine were only of gold and precious stones; and each brick was worth 100,000 pieces of money. In building the shrine, realgar was used for cement and fragrant butter oil was used for water. After the large shrine had thus been built, two friends of good families renounced the world and entered the monkhood in the presence of senior disciples who had followed the Buddha during his lifetime.

It is to be noted especially that in the Dispensation of long-lived Buddhas, only such senior disciples were qualified to perform ordination of novices and of monastics and to give guidance to them. Those who became disciples only after the Parinibbāna of the Buddha were not qualified to undertake such tasks.

Then the said two monk-friends of good family asked the senior disciples: "Sir, what are the tasks of monks to be undertaken in the Dispensation of the Buddha?" Thereupon the senior disciples (*sāvaka*) addressed them in reply: "Monks, there are two duties for monks to fulfill in the Dispensation of the Buddha: 1) The practice of insight meditation (*vāsa-dhura*) and 2) the learning or teaching of the scriptures (*pariyatti-dhura*). Of these two a monk of good family stays with his preceptors for five years, attending to their needs, learning and mastering the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) and two or three sections (*bhāṇavāra*) of the discourses (*sutta*) and taking proper training in insight (*vipassanā*) meditation and also cutting off attachment to his company of fellow monks, as well as to his male and female supporters. And, after entering a big forest, away from people, he practises meditation for the realization of Awakening. This is the monastic duty, the practice of insight meditation (*vāsa-dhura*). Or he should, according to his ability, learn and become skilled in one collection (*nikāya*) of the baskets (*piṭaka*), or two, three, four or five collection of the baskets and should strive for the development of the correct and pure learning (*pariyatti-sāsana*) in the letter and the spirit. This is the duty of the monk, to learn or teach (*pariyatti-dhura*)." [362]

Saying: "Of the two duties that monks should fulfil, the practice of insight meditation (*vāsa-dhura*) is superior and more praiseworthy," the two monk friends nevertheless agreed: "We are still young. We should fulfil the practice of insight meditation only when we grow older. Before we become old, we shall practise for the fulfilment and completion of the duty of learning or teaching of the scriptures (*pariyatti-dhura*)." Intelligent by nature, they became well-versed in all three baskets (*piṭaka*) within a short period of time and were also very skilled in making decisions on questions of the Discipline (*Vinaya*). By virtue of their knowledge of the scriptures, the two monk-friends became renowned in the Dispensation (*Sāsana*) and they came to always have a large retinue and plenty of gifts and offerings. Each of them had as many as 500 monk followers. The two elders remained gaving exhortation (*ovāda*) to the four assemblies of

people who came to their presence. This being the case, the Dispensation prospered and shone as if the Buddha had reappeared.

Dhamma and not Dhamma

At that time, there lived two monks, one who taught Dhamma (*Dhamma-vādī*) and one who taught what was against Dhamma (*adhamma-vādī*), in a monastery near a village. Of the two, the monk who taught what was against Dhamma was cruel and harsh in speech. One day, when the monk who taught Dhamma came to know clearly about the other monk's offence against some disciplinary rule (*sikkhāpada*), he rebuked the latter thus: "My friend, your conduct is unbecoming of the Dispensation (*Sāsana*)!" Thereupon the monk who taught what was against Dhamma, in order to disrupt the original trend of speech, retorted by saying: "My friend, what do you see of me? What do you hear of me? Don't make any rash accusation!" The monk who taught Dhamma replied: "My friend, the noble elders who are upholders of the Discipline (*Vinaya-dhāra*) will know best."

The monk who taught what was against Dhamma, thinking: "If the elders who uphold the Discipline are to decide this matter according to the Vinaya, I will certainly have no support to resort to in the Dispensation (*Sāsana*)," and he went instantly to the two elders who uphold the Discipline. He approached them with certain requisites as presents in order to beguile and persuade them to favour him. He respectfully made obeisance and offered what he had brought to them and tried to receive their guidance. He pretended to be one who had due respect for them and was desirous of staying near them at their service.

One day the monk who taught what was against Dhamma went to the meeting place of the elders who uphold the Discipline and after paying respects to them remained standing obstinately even though elders asked him to leave. The elders asked him: "Friend, do you have anything special to tell us?" and he replied: "Yes, sirs, there is. I have had a dispute with another monk over a breach of a precept. If he, the complainant (*codaka*) monk, comes to you and reports this matter, please do not decide according to what is deemed suitable." When the elders replied: "In the matter that has been brought before the Saṅgha, it is not fit and proper not to give a decision according to what is deemed right," he begged them, saying: "Venerable sirs, if such a decision is made, there will be no support for me to resort to in the Dispensation (*Sāsana*). Let this misdeed be my

own. I shall bear its consequences in Saṁsāra. Just do not come to a decision in that matter, please!"

Being persistently and unavoidably pressed by the monk who taught what was against Dhamma, the elders who uphold the Discipline finally gave in and said: "All right, monk!" After obtaining the consent of the elders who uphold the Discipline, the monk who taught what was against Dhamma went back to the village monastery; and, thinking: "I have done everything I wanted to do with the elders who uphold the Discipline," and he became more domineering, repressive, contemptuous, harsh and adamant in dealing with the monk who taught Dhamma.

The monk who taught Dhamma, thinking: "This monk who taught what was against Dhamma has in fact no fear indeed!" instantly departed from the monastery and went to the thousand monks who were the followers of the elders who uphold the Discipline and addressed them: "Brethren, should not the matter coming up to the Saṅgha be decided in accordance with the Discipline? Or, without allowing the matter to come up to the Saṅgha, should not the complainant (*codaka*) monk and the accused (*cuditaka*) monk be made to admit their own faults and have their dispute amicably settled? But now, these elders who uphold the Discipline neither decide the matter by themselves nor allow it to be amicably settled by us through compromise. What does [363] this mean?" On hearing the words of the monk who taught Dhamma and thinking: "There must have been some irregular thing already known to the elders who uphold the Discipline," the thousand monastic disciples of the elders who uphold the Discipline did not give any reply but remained silent.

Taking advantage of this, the monk who taught what was against Dhamma said in repressive terms: "My friend, you have said previously that the elders who uphold the Discipline would know. Well, you had better report that matter now to them." He then departed after saying harshly: "From now on, you are totally ruined! Don't come back to the village monastery where we dwell!"

Thereafter the monk who taught Dhamma went to the elders who uphold the Discipline and bewailed loudly: "Venerable sirs, thinking: "This monk who taught what was against Dhamma attends to our needs and pleases us," you have no consideration for the Dispensation (*Sāsana*) of the Buddha but have consideration only for an individual; you give no protection to the Dispensation

(*Sāsana*) but only give protection to a shameless immoral individual (*alajjī-dussīla-puggala*). Sirs, from today onwards you ought not to decide any matter coming under the Vinaya. On this day does Buddha Kassapa attain Parinibbāna indeed!" he then departed from the elders who uphold the Discipline, and wept grumbling: "The Dispensation (*Sāsana*) of Buddha Kassapa has in fact been irreparably ruined!"

Thereupon the two elders who uphold the Discipline were deeply agitated and became remorseful (*kukkucca*), saying: "Showing regard and giving protection only to that shameless immoral individual, we happen to have thrown away the solid jewel of the Dispensation (*Sāsana*) into the deep waters of a chasm." Injured and oppressed in mind and heart by remorse, they were not reborn in any higher realm upon their death.

Of the two elders, one was reborn as a Yakkha by the name of Hemavata on Mount Hemavata of the Himavanta, and the other was reborn also as a Yakkha by the name of Sātāgiri on Mount Sāta in the Middle Country (*Majjhima-desa*). The thousand monk followers of these two elders were not reborn in any higher celestial abode either. Since they had followed the same practice as that of the two elders, they were reborn as followers, 500 to each of the two Yakkhas. The supporters of the four requisites of the elders who uphold the Discipline, however, took rebirth on some higher planes of Deva existence.

Both Hemavata and Sātāgiri were Devas of great power and glory and included in the list of 28 Deva generals. It was the custom of the Devas to hold meetings to make decisions in judicial proceedings eight times each month at the pavilion called Nāgavatī,[159] on the flat realgar rock-surface in the Himavanta forests. These two Yakkhas usually participated in the meetings.

Sātāgiri and Hemavata, seeing each other in the said meetings of Devas and remembering their past lives in the human world, asked each other regarding the place of their present existence thus: "Friend, in which place have you been reborn? As for you, friend, what is your place of rebirth?" And they were afflicted with great anguish when recounting their fate: "Friend, we have in fact been irreparably ruined! Even though we had practised the Dhamma for the whole period of 20,000 years during the Dispensation (*Sāsana*) of Buddha

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[159] Or, Bhagalavatī, according to the Ceylonese traditions.

Kassapa in the past, we were reborn as Yakkhas because of our shameless, immoral and wicked friend. Our supporters of the four requisites have, however, been reborn in the higher realms of sensual pleasures."

The Mutual Promises

Thereafter, Sātāgiri told Hemavata: "My friend Hemavata, the Himavanta where you are living is said to be a marvellous and extraordinary place. So, in case you see and hear anything strange and irregular, kindly come and let me know." Hemavata also told Sātāgiri: "My friend Sātāgiri, the Middle Country, where you are living, is a region where noble personages appear or live, and is said to be a marvellous and extraordinary country. In case you see and hear anything strange and irregular, please come and inform me." In this manner the two friends, Sātāgiri and Hemavata had made a mutual promise, and lived on without being able to discard their lives as Yakkhas; even one immeasurable period between the appearance of one Buddha and that of another (*Buddhantara-kappa*) had passed in the meantime. During this period the [364] great earth had also risen as much as one league and three miles.

At that time, our Bodhisatta had been practising and developing the ten perfections (*pāramī*) during the whole period of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, from the time he received the definite prophecy from Buddha Dīpaṅkara about his becoming a Buddha to the time of his life as King Vessantara. He was then reborn in Tusita realm and lived through the full lifespan of a Deva. At the request made by the Devas who had come from the 10,000 world-element, after making the five great investigations, he gave his assent to them to become a Buddha. He next took conception in the lotus-like womb of Queen Mahā Māyā in this human world, causing the 10,000 world-element to tremble while the 32 great omens were appearing.

These two friends, Sātāgiri and Hemavata, were aware of the appearance of the 32 great omens at the time when the Bodhisatta took conception; but it so happened that they did not take notice of them. They failed to reflect: "These great omens appear on account of the Bodhisatta being conceived." The 32 great omens distinctly appeared also on the occasion of the Bodhisatta's birth, on the occasion of his renunciation of the world and on the occasion of his becoming a Buddha. Although they were aware of the appearance of these great omens, they

did not ponder and realize: "These great omens appear on account of these events."

When the Buddha summoned the Group-of-Five monks and taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, which is of three phases and twelve aspects, there was the distinct occurrence of a severe earthquake as well as that of the marvellous and extraordinary 32 great omens. This was first taken notice of only by Sātāgiri of the two Devas, and, knowing that the Buddha was then teaching the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, the primary cause of the omens, he went into the presence of the Buddha together with his retinue of 500 Yakkhas and listened to the teaching of the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*). But he was unable to attain any significant path and fruition.

The reason was that Sātāgiri, while listening to the Dhamma Wheel discourse, remembered his friend, Hemavata, and surveyed the audience, wondering: "Has my friend Hemavata come to this Dhamma assembly? Or, has he not come?" Not finding Hemavata, his mind became distracted: "How could my friend Hemavata be so late! He might not be able to listen to the Buddha's teaching of the Dhamma Wheel, which is so wonderful and splendid in letter and in spirit!" For this very reason, he was unable to realise any important path and fruition.

The Buddha had not yet concluded the teaching of the Dhamma Wheel discourse even by sunset. Thereupon, thinking: "I will go and bring my friend Hemavata to listen to the Dhamma Wheel discourse," Sātāgiri created vehicles of elephants, horses, Garuḷas, etc. and travelled through the air in the direction where Hemavata and his retinue of 500 Yakkhas were.

The Meeting of Sātāgiri and Hemavata in the Sky

Even though the 32 great omens appeared on the occasions of the Bodhisatta's conception, birth, renunciation, becoming a Buddha and Parinibbāna, they did not last long but disappeared in a moment. At the time when the Buddha taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, however, not only were the 32 great omens of awesome, marvellous and extraordinary nature but they did not disappear in a moment. In fact, they remained for quite a long time before disappearing. Seeing the marvellous and extraordinary appearance of the 32 great omens while inside the Himavanta forests, Hemavata also thought thus: "Ever since my birth in this forest, this great mountain has never been so

marvellously and extraordinarily delightful and perfect. It has so happened now. Therefore, in accordance with our promise I will go and bring my friend, Sātāgiri, right away, to luxuriate in these marvellous flowers of the Himavanta forests." And, as in the case of Sātāgiri, he also created vehicles of elephants, horses, Garuḷas, etc. and made an aerial journey in the direction of the Middle Country, accompanied by his retinue of 500 Yakkhas.

The two Yakkhas met each other in the sky above Rājagaha city. When asked by the other [365] as to the reason for his visit, Hemavata said: "My friend, Sātāgiri, ever since I became a Yakkha in the Himavanta forests, this great Hemavata mountain has never had such a delightful appearance with trees blossoming unseasonally. So, I have come to call on you, with the intention of enjoying these marvelous flowers of the Himavanta forests together with you."

When Sātāgiri asked Hemavata: "My friend, Hemavata, do you know why these flowers blossom unseasonally and so marvellously?" The latter replied: "I do not know, my friend, Sātāgiri." Sātāgiri then told Hemavata: "My friend, Hemavata, this marvellous and extraordinary feature has happened not only in this Himavanta. In fact, the same has happened everywhere in the 10,000 world-element. My friend, Hemavata, a Buddha has appeared in the three worlds of humans, Devas and Brahmas. The Buddha is at present teaching the Dhamma Wheel discourse in the Deer Park called Isipatana, near Bārāṇasī city. Because of the teaching of the Dhamma Wheel discourse by the Buddha, the 32 marvellous, unprecedented and extraordinary great omens have distinctly appeared all over the world."

Lady Kāḷī becomes a Stream-enterer

It was the day in which the grand festival of the month of July (*Āsāḷha*) was being celebrated. At that time, like a divine damsel enjoying divine luxury in the divine city of Tāvatiṁsa, which was adorned with ornaments everywhere, a lady, by the name of Kāḷī who was pregnant, residing in Rājagaha city which she had returned to to have her baby in her parent's home, having gone up to the upper terrace of her parents' mansion and having opened the lion-adorned window, was standing and getting some air, to ease the pains of her impending labour.

> Lady Kāḷī hailed from Rājagaha city. On coming of age, she was married in [371] Kuraraghara in Avantī. When she was close to giving birth, she had gone back to her parents' home for confinement. She went up to the

terrace of the mansion and while taking air to alleviate her suffering from the coming childbirth, she overheard the attributes of the Buddha being spoken of by the two Yakkhas.

Overhearing the whole conversation between the two Yakkhas generals, relating to the attributes of the Buddha, Lady Kāḷī became attentive to them and thought: "The Buddhas are indeed thus endowed with marvellous and extraordinary qualities!" and so thinking, she was overwhelmed with joy and delight. Even while standing at that very place in the state of joy, and removing the hindrances by means of that joy, she practised insight meditation and thereby realised the fruition of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*). Lady Kāḷī, being the first Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) and noble female disciple (*ariya-sāvika*) established amongst women was, as it were, the eldest sister of womankind. On that very night, she gave birth to a son who later on became Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa. After staying in her parents' house for as long as she liked, she returned to her Kuraraghara home.

Thus, without even encountering and beholding the Buddha in the past and just by overhearing, she came to have absolute faith in the attributes of the Buddha and was established in the Stream-entry fruition (*Sotāpatti-phala*), like one who effortlessly takes a meal already prepared and laid out for someone else. On this very account, when the Buddha was later sitting in the midst of the Saṅgha, holding a convocation to confer titles of pre-eminence to the female devotees (*upāsikā*), he declared: "Dear monks, Lady Kāḷī of Kuraraghara is the most noble and excellent of all the laywomen (*upāsikā*) who had absolute faith in the Three Treasures just by hearing!" and designated her foremost among those having faith through hearing (*anussava-pasāda*).

The Discourse about Hemavata

Praising the Buddha

Sātāgiri told his friend, Hemavata, that the Buddha had definitely appeared and, being desirous of taking him to the Buddha, he addressed him thus (Snp 1.9, *Hemavata-sutta*):

Ajja pannaraso uposatho, dibbā ratti upaṭṭhitā,
anomanāmaṁ Satthāraṁ, handa passāma Gotamaṁ.

> My friend, Hemavata, today is in fact the full moon Observance Day (*Uposatha*) of the fifteenth lunar day! Tonight is a very pleasant night in which the whole of Jambudīpa appears as if it were most beautifully decorated by the bodily light of the Devas and Brahmas who have come from the 10,000 world-element to listen to the discourse, for it is the day the Buddha teaches the Dhamma Wheel discourse, by the shining colours of their attire and celestial mansions, by the light of the moon, the stars and the lunar mansions and also by the bodily light of Visuddhi Deva and the Buddha himself. My friend Hemavata, do not be confused with doubt whether he is the Buddha or not. Come! Let us even now go and worship the Buddha Gotama, who is endowed with undiminished qualities, who possesses such special epithets as Buddha, Fortunate One, etc., and who is the teacher of humans, Devas and Brahmas.

On hearing the words of Sātāgiri, Hemavata pondered and thought thus: "This Sātāgiri boldly asserts that the personage, whom he has met and seen, is a genuine omniscient Buddha, saying: "Let us even now go and worship the Buddha Gotama, who is endowed with undiminishing qualities, who possesses such special epithets as Buddha, Fortunate One, etc." Omniscient Buddhas are in fact rare and hardly accessible in the world. Such persons as Pūraṇa Kassapa and others, who claimed to be omniscient Buddhas ruined many people by imparting wrong knowledge to them. If the monk Gotama, whom Sātāgiri has seen, is a genuine omniscient Buddha, he ought to be one genuinely endowed with the quality of being undisturbed or unshaken by the favourable and unfavourable conditions of the world (*tādi-guṇa*). Therefore, I will first find out whether he is or is not one endowed with unshakability which is possessed only by Buddhas." And, desiring to question about the signs of unshakability (*tādi-lakkhaṇa*), he recited this verse:

> *Kacci mano supaṇihito, sabba-bhūtesu tādino,*
> *kacci iṭṭhe aniṭṭhe ca, saṅkappassa vasī-katā? [366]*

> My friend Sātāgiri, what is he like? Is the mind of the Buddha, whom you have seen, naturally and entirely free from love and hate for all beings and steady as befitting one endowed with unshakability? What is he like? Is Buddha Gotama, whom you have seen, capable of freeing himself from or overcoming sensual thoughts (*kāma-vitakka*), malevolent thoughts (*vyāpāda-vitakka*), and violent thoughts (*vihiṁsā-vitakka*) which are apt

to generate love and hate for desirable objects and undesirable objects respectively?

Thereupon Sātāgiri, having been absolutely convinced that the Buddha was certainly an omniscient Buddha and being desirous of replying to the questions put by Hemavata regarding the entire set of attributes of the omniscient Buddha, answered by reciting this verse:

Mano cassa supaṇihito, sabba-bhūtesu tādino,
atho iṭṭhe aniṭṭhe ca, saṅkappassa vasī-katā.

My friend Hemavata, the mind of the Buddha, whom I have seen, is naturally and entirely free from love and hate for all beings, as befitting one endowed with unshakability.

Even at the time when the perfections were being practised and developed for his becoming a Buddha, the Bodhisatta was endowed with unshakability, not to speak of his unshakability at present when he has become a Buddha!

In his life as the Chaddanta elephant king, he entertained no animosity towards the hunter Soṇuttara who deliberately killed him, but, instead, he cut off his tusks himself and gave them to Soṇuttara in generosity.

In his life as the monkey king also, he had no hatred even for the hostile Brahmin who struck his head with a stone in order to kill him, but, instead, he showed the Brahmin the way out from the forest without anger.

In his life as Vidhura the wise also, he had no hatred for the Yakkha Puṇṇaka who dragged him by the two legs and very cruelly threw him upside down or headlong into the ravine at the foot of Mount Kāḷa which measured 60 leagues; he even taught the Dhamma to him."

That was why Sātāgiri boldly gave the answer: "The mind of the Buddha whom I have seen is naturally and entirely free from love and hate for all beings, as befitting one endowed with unshakability."

My friend Hemavata, the Buddha whom I have seen is capable of freeing himself from or overcoming sensual thoughts (*kāma-vitakka*), malevolent thoughts (*vyāpāda-vitakka*), and violent thoughts (*vihiṁsā-vitakka*) which are apt to generate love and hate for desirable objects and undesirable objects respectively.

Thus, when Hemavata put the question, first with regard to the mind-door or thought (*manodvāra*), whether or not the Buddha was fully endowed with unshakability, he got the affirmative reply from Sātāgiri. Being desirous of questioning again, in order to be more certain whether or not there was, in the Buddha, purity of the three doors (*dvāra*) of actions at present, or in other words, after hearing the affirmative reply given by Sātāgiri to the question, first put briefly, whether or not the Buddha was endowed with unshakability with regard to the three doors, and being desirous of questioning again in detail in order to make the answer firmer, Hemavata asked again by reciting this verse:

> *Kacci adinnaṁ nādiyati, kacci pāṇesu saññato,*
> *kacci ārā pamādamhā, kacci jhānaṁ na riñcati?*

My friend Sātāgiri, what is the Buddha, whom you have seen like? Is he one who is free from taking another's property without being given by the owner physically or verbally? Is he one who completely abstains from the evil act of killing beings? Is he free from [367] attachment to the five objects of sensual pleasures and far from unmindfulness which consists of sexual conduct, and unchastity? Is he one who has discarded the five hindrances but who has not allowed attainment of the absorptions (*jhāna*) to become extinct?

The Buddha abstains from taking what is not given (*adinnādāna*) and other forms of wrongdoing not only in his last life as a Buddha but also during the whole long period in the past he abstained from these evils. By virtue of his meritorious act of abstinence from such evils is he endowed with the marks of a Great Man (*Mahā-purisa-lakkhaṇa*).

The whole world also spoke in praise of the Buddha thus: "Gotama abstains from the crime of theft, and so on," hence Sātāgiri, being desirous of replying in clear and bold terms, recited this verse:

> *Na so adinnaṁ ādiyati, atho pāṇesu saññato,*
> *atho ārā pamādamhā, Buddho jhānaṁ na riñcati.*

My friend Hemavata, the Buddha, whom I have seen, is one who is free from taking another's property without being given by the owner physically or verbally. He is one who completely abstains from the evil act of killing beings. He is free from attachment to the five objects of sensual pleasures and far from unmindfulness such as acts of sexual misconduct

and unchastity. He is also one who has discarded the five hindrances and who has not allowed the attainment of the absorptions (*jhāna*) to become extinct.

After thus hearing the affirmative reply as regards the purity of deeds (*kāya-dvāra*) and being desirous of questioning whether or nor there was purity of speech (*vacī-dvāra*), Hemavata asked by reciting this verse:

Kacci musā na bhaṇati, kacci na khīṇa-byappatho,
kacci vebhūtiyaṁ nāha, kacci samphaṁ na bhāsati?

My friend Sātāgiri, what is he like? Is the Buddha you have seen, one who does not speak lies? Is he one who does not speak harsh words that tend to make beings upset and depressed? Is he one who does not speak words that mischievously destroy friendship between two persons? Is he one who does not indulge in frivolous talks which are unsubstantial and worthless like undeveloped paddy?

The Buddha abstained from verbal misconduct not only in his last life as a Buddha but also during the whole long period in the past he abstained from telling lies and from other verbal misdeeds. By virtue of his meritorious deeds of abstinence from misbehaviour in words, he is endowed with such signs of a Great Man as a single hair growing in each pore, the hair between the two eyebrows (*uṇṇa-loma*) and others. The whole world also spoke in praise of the Buddha: "Gotama abstains from misconduct such as telling lies," and so on.

Hence, Sātāgiri, being desirous of replying in clear and bold terms recited this verse:

Musā ca so na bhaṇati, atho na khīṇa-byappatho,
atho vebhūtiyaṁ nāha, mantā atthaṁ ca bhāsati.

My friend Hemavata, it is true that the Buddha, whom I have seen, is one who does not tell lies. It is also true that he is one who does not speak harsh and nasty words. It is also true that he does not speak mischievous words. He speaks only words which are discreet and beneficial. [368]

Hemavata, after hearing the positive reply as regards the purity of speech and being desirous of questioning whether or not the Buddha had, at present, purity of consciousness; had overcome ignorance and was endowed with the five eyes, asked by reciting this verse:

Kacci na rajjati kāmesu, kacci cittaṁ anāvilaṁ,
kacci mohaṁ atikkanto, kacci dhammesu cakkhumā?

My friend Sāgāri, what is he like? Is the Buddha, whom you have seen, truly one free from covetousness (*abhijjhā*) for the five material objects of sensual pleasures? Is the mind of the Buddha, whom you have seen, free from the unhealthy mental condition agitated by hate (*vyāpāda*)? Is the Buddha, whom you have seen, truly one who has overcome the fourfold delusion (*moha*), which is the basic cause of wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*)? Is he truly one who is endowed with the eye of wisdom penetrating all things without hindrance?

Bearing in mind that: "One is not yet a Buddha merely on account of the purity of the three sense spheres, but one becomes a Buddha only if he is endowed with omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*), or the five eyes," he asked: Is he truly one who is endowed with the eye of wisdom, penetrating all the things without hindrance?

Even before realising the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) and while still at the moment of his attainment of the Non-returning path (*Anāgāmī-magga*), the Buddha became free from the defilement of craving for sensual objects and also free from the defilement of ill-will, an unhealthy mental state, since he had already discarded the defilement of sensual pleasure (*kāma-rāga-kilesa*) and the defilements of ill-will (*vyāpāda-kilesa*). Even at the moment of his attainment of Stream-entry, he was already one who had overcome ignorance since he had already discarded delusion which conceals the four truths (*sacca-paṭicchādaka-moha*), which is the cause of wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*).

He had already earned the title Buddha, and realised insight knowledge as well, since he had discerned the four truths unaided and with self-born knowledge (*sayambhū-ñāṇa*). Hence, Sātāgiri, being desirous of boldly proclaiming the fact that the Buddha possessed purity in respect of his consciousness and having attained omniscience, was a genuine Buddha, replied by reciting this verse:

Na so rajjati kāmesu, atho cittaṁ anāvilaṁ,
sabba-mohaṁ atikkanto, Buddho dhammesu cakkhumā.

My friend Hemavata, the Buddha, whom I have seen, is truly one free from covetousness for material objects or sensual pleasures. The mind of the Buddha, whom I have seen, is also free from ill-will. The Buddha,

whom I have seen, is truly one who has overcome the entire fourfold delusion, which is the basic cause of wrong view. Since he has penetratingly discerned all things with self-born knowledge, he has earned the title Buddha and has also been endowed with the five eyes.

In this manner Hemavata was greatly delighted and rejoiced in hearing and knowing that the Buddha possessed purity in respect of the three sense spheres and was a genuine omniscient Buddha. Being himself one endowed with the auspiciousness of great learning (*bāhu-sacca-maṅgala*) in his past life during Buddha Kassapa's Dispensation, and being therefore a fluent, learned and effective speaker with very pure knowledge and wisdom, and desiring again to hear the further marvellous and extraordinary qualities of the Buddha, he asked by reciting this verse: [369]

Kacci vijjāya sampanno, kacci saṁsuddha-cāraṇo,
kaccissa āsavā khīṇā, kacci natthi punabbhavo?

My friend Sātāgiri, is the Buddha, whom you have seen, truly one endowed with the eye of understanding (*vijjā*) which all the Buddhas should be endowed with? Is he truly one who possesses the fifteenfold pure conduct, resembling good legs used for walking up to Nibbāna? Is the Buddha, whom you have seen, already devoid of the four pollutants (*āsava*)? Is the Buddha, whom you have seen, free from the possibility of appearing in a new existence, or being reborn?

Thereupon, Sātāgiri, since he had profound and decided faith in the Buddha's genuine omniscient Buddhahood and a desire to affirm that the Buddha was fully endowed with all the qualities asked about by Hemavata, answered by reciting this verse:

Vijjāya ceva sampanno, atho saṁsuddha-cāraṇo,
sabbassa āsavā khīṇā, natthi tassa punabbhavo.

My friend Hemavata, the Buddha, whom I have seen, is truly one endowed with the eye of understanding which all the Buddhas should be endowed with. He is also truly one who possessed the fifteenfold pure conduct, resembling good legs used for walking to Nibbāna. The Buddha, whom I have seen, is already devoid of the four pollutants. The Buddha, whom I have seen, is free from the possibility of appearing in a new existence.

Hemavata then became free from doubt about the Buddha, thinking thus: "The Buddha, whom Sātāgiri has now seen, is a genuine Buddha, Perfectly Self-Awakened (*Sammā-sambuddha*) and supreme in the three worlds." Even while still remaining in the sky, therefore, he recited this verse in order to praise the Buddha and delight Sātāgiri:

> *Sampannaṁ Munino cittaṁ, kammunā byappathena ca,*
> *vijjā-caraṇa-sampannaṁ, dhammato naṁ pasaṁsati.*
>
> My friend Sātāgiri, the mind of the Buddha, whom you have seen, is endowed with unshakability. He is endowed with purity of deeds, words and thoughts. My friend Sātāgiri, you have rightfully spoken in praise of the Buddha who is endowed with the three understandings (*vijjā*), the eight understandings and the fifteen ways of good conduct (*caraṇa*).

Thereupon, Sātāgiri, with the intention of gladdening Hemavata once again, recited this verse meaning: My friend Hemavata, what you have said is perfectly true. Now you, my friend, know the qualities of the Buddha fully well and are greatly delighted:

> *Sampannaṁ Munino cittaṁ, kammunā byappathena ca,*
> *vijjā-caraṇa-sampannaṁ, dhammato anumodasi.*
>
> My friend Hemavata, the mind of the Buddha whom I have seen is endowed with unshakability. He is endowed with purity of deeds, words and thoughts. My friend Hemavata, you have rightfully rejoiced in the Buddha who is endowed with the three understandings, the eight understandings and the fifteen ways of good conduct.

And so saying and intending to urge Hemavata to go along with him to the Buddha, [370] Sātāgiri asked with this verse:

> *Sampannaṁ Munino cittaṁ, kammunā byappathena ca,*
> *vijjā-caraṇa-sampannaṁ, handa passāma Gotamaṁ.*
>
> My friend Hemavata, the mind of the Buddha, whom I have seen, is endowed with unshakability. He is endowed with purity of deeds, words and thoughts. Let us even now go and respectfully behold the Buddha, who is endowed with the three understandings, the eight understandings and the fifteen ways of good conduct.

Thereupon, Hemavata, as one who had acquired the power of great learning since his previous existence, wished to speak in praise of the qualities of the Buddha which appealed to him and to invite Sātāgiri to go along with him and behold the Buddha. Thus, he recited the following verses:

Eṇi-jaṅghaṁ kisaṁ vīraṁ, appāhāraṁ alolupaṁ,
muniṁ vanasmiṁ jhāyantaṁ, ehi passāma Gotamaṁ.

Come, Sātāgiri, let us go. Let us behold the Buddha of the Gotama lineage whose calves are round and graceful like those of an antelope (*eṇī*) living in the upper reaches of the forest; whose limbs and other parts of the body, big and small, are appropriately long in five features, short in four, small in four, tall in six, and round where they should be round; who is diligent and capable of resisting and fighting the dangers from within and without the body; who takes only one meal a day just to sustain his body; who has done away with excessive craving (*loluppa-taṇhā*) with regard to food; who is in full possession of the knowledge of the four paths; and who usually dwells in the absorptions in a secluded forest.

Sīhaṁveka-caraṁ nāgaṁ, kāmesu anapekkhinaṁ,
upasaṅkamma pucchāma, maccupāsappa-mocanaṁ.

My friend Sātāgiri, let us go into the presence of the Buddha, who, like the Kesara lion king, cannot be easily approached by ordinary persons; who can forbear the vicissitudes of the world; who is fearless; who is the one and only Buddha appearing in a universe; who, like the Chaddanta elephant king, is endowed with great physical and intellectual power; and who is free from any desire and passion for all the material objects of sensual pleasures. Let us ask him about Nibbāna, which will surely deliver us from the round of suffering in the three planes of existence, the snare of the King of Death.

In this way Hemavata urged Sātāgiri and the retinue of 1,000 Yakkhas to go along with him and worship the Buddha and listen to the discourse.

The Two Yakkhas go to the Buddha

Sātāgiri and Hemavata, accompanied by their 1,000 Yakkha followers, reached the Deer Park at Isipatana in Bārāṇasī city at midnight. And, after approaching and paying respects to the Buddha, who had not changed his posture but who was still sitting cross-legged as he did at the time when he taught the Dhamma

Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, they recited this verse to extol the Buddha and to request permission to question him:

> *Akkhā-tāraṁ pavattāraṁ, sabba-dhammāna' pāraguṁ,*
> *Buddhaṁ vera-bhayātītaṁ, mayaṁ pucchāma Gotamaṁ.*
>
> To the Buddha Gotama, who preaches the four noble truths, both briefly and in detail; who is fully endowed with the knowledge of all things (*dhamma*) in six ways: via super knowledge (*abhiññā*), analysis (*pariññā*), abandoning (*pahāna*), meditation (*bhāvanā*), realisation of Nibbāna (*sacchikiriya*), and attainment of the absorptions (*jhāna-samāpatti*); who has awakened from the slumber of delusion (*moha*); and who has freed himself from the five wrong ways, such as taking life (*pāṇātipātā*), etc., may we have your permission to question you on what we do not know?

After asking for permission, Hemavata, who had the greater power and wisdom between the two, questioned him on things that were unknown to themselves, by reciting the following verse:

> *Kismiṁ loko samuppanno, kismiṁ kubbati santhavaṁ,*
> *kissa loko upādāya, kismiṁ loko vihaññati?*
>
> Exalted Buddha, when what clearly comes into existence, do the two worlds: [372] the world of sentient beings (*satta-loka*) and the world of conditioned things (*saṅkhāra-loka*) come into existence? In what do all beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, intimately associate themselves with craving and wrong view (*taṇhā-diṭṭhi*), thinking 'I' and 'mine.' After what are the world of sentient beings and the world of conditioned things so-called? When what clearly appears do all beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, become miserable?

Thereupon the Buddha, intending to answer the question put by Hemavata on the strength of the six internal organs of sense: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind (*ajjhattikāyatana*) and of the six external objects of sense: form, sound, smell, taste, touch and ideas formed in the mind (*bāhirāyatana*), replied by reciting this verse:

> *Chasu loko samuppanno, chasu kubbati santhavaṁ,*
> *channam-eva upādāya, chasu loko vihaññati.*

Hemavata, when the six internal organs and the six external objects come into existence, the two worlds, the world of sentient beings and the world of conditioned things, come into existence.

In terms of absolute reality (*paramattha-dhamma*), the world of sentient beings, meaning the aggregate of beings, i.e., humans, Devas and Brahmas, is just a compound of these twelve bases, namely, the six internal: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind; and the six external: form, sound, smell, taste, contact and idea formed in the mind. Without these twelve bases, there can be no such thing as a being, whether human, Deva and Brahma. In terms of absolute reality, the world of conditioned things, meaning such things as farms, land, gold, silver, paddy, etc., only consists of six external bases. Without these six, there can be no the world of inanimate conditioned things. Hence the Buddha's answer: *Chasu loko samuppanno* …, "when the six internal and six external bases come into existence, the two worlds, the world of sentient beings and the world of inanimate conditioned things, come into existence."

Hemavata, in the six internal and the six external bases do all beings, i.e., humans, Devas and Brahmas, intimately associate themselves with craving and wrong view through the notion of 'I' and 'mine.'

All beings, i.e., humans, Devas and Brahmas, who, in close friendship with craving and wrong view, take "I," "another," "man," "woman," "farm," "land," etc. to be "I" and "mine," are a composition of the same six internal and six external bases in terms of absolute reality. This is true. Taking the eye to be "I" and "mine," beings make friends with craving and wrong view; taking the ear to be "I" and "mine," they make friends with craving and wrong view; likewise they do so with regard to the nose, the tongue, the body, the mind and also with regard to forms, sounds, smells, tastes, touches, such as hardness or softness, heat or cold, etc., and the ideas conceived in the mind. Hence the Buddha's answer: *Chasu kubbati santhavaṁ* … "In the six internal and the six external bases do all beings, humans, Devas and Brahmas, intimately associate themselves with craving and wrong view through the notion of 'I' and 'mine.' "

Hemavata, the six internal and the six external bases are the so-called world of sentient beings and the world of conditioned things.

With reference to the aforesaid twelve bases, the names, such as: "Humans," "Devas," "Brahmas," that is, the world of sentient beings and the names,

such as “farm,” “land,” “rice,” “paddy,” etc., the world of inanimate conditioned things came into existence.

Hemavata, when the six internal and the six external bases clearly appear all sentient beings, i.e., humans, Devas, and [373] Brahmas, become miserable.

According to the Instruction about Burning (*Āditta-pariyāya-sutta*, SN 35.28), the twelve bases are ablaze with the eleven fires of lust, hate, and delusion (*rāga-dosa-moha*), etc. From the point of view of the highest truth, the world of sentient beings, consisting of humans, Devas and Brahmas, is also just these twelve bases, six internal and six external. The bases are also perpetually and severally ablaze with the eleven fires. Because there are bases, there is burning; because there is burning, there is misery. If there were no bases, there would have been no burning; if there were no burning, there would have been no misery. That is why the Buddha answered thus: *Chasu loko vihaññati* … “when the six internal and the six external bases clearly appear all beings, i.e., humans, Devas and Brahmas, become miserable.”[160]

Thereafter Hemavata, being unable to remember clearly the answer given in brief by the Buddha to the question put by him on the round of suffering, and being desirous of knowing the enumeration of the bases as well as their opposites, as contained in the Buddha’s answer, recited the following verse in order to ask about the round of suffering (*vaṭṭa*) and the cessation of the round of suffering (*vivaṭṭa*), respectively:

Katamaṁ taṁ upādānaṁ, yattha loko vihaññati,
niyyānaṁ pucchito brūhi, kathaṁ dukkhā pamuccati?

Exalted Buddha, if, according to the answer: *Chasu loko vihaññati* … ‘sentient beings i.e., humans, Devas and Brahmas, become miserable from the existence of the six bases,’ how are these six the cause of misery for beings?

By this the truth of suffering (*dukkha-sacca*) is directly asked; by asking about the truth of suffering, the truth of the cause of suffering (*samudaya-sacca*) is also asked.

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[160] This is the end of the questions and answers on the round of suffering (*vaṭṭa*).

What is the factor that brings about release from the round of suffering (*Saṁsāra-vaṭṭa*)? In what manner can release from the round of suffering be realised? May the Buddha, who has thus been asked about release from the round of suffering, favour us with the answer.

By the latter half of this verse is the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering (*magga-sacca*) is directly asked; and by asking the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering, the truth of the cessation of suffering i.e. Nibbāna (*nirodha-sacca*), is also asked.

When Hemavata asked about the four noble truths, mentioning the truth of suffering and the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering explicitly, and the truth about the arising of suffering and the truth about the cessation of suffering implicitly, the Buddha delivered the following verse in order to answer the questions asked by Hemavata:

Pañca kāma-guṇā loke, mano-chaṭṭhā paveditā,
ettha chandaṁ virājetvā, evaṁ dukkhā pamuccati.

Hemavata, I have clearly shown the five sensual pleasures of form, sound, smell, taste and contact with mind as the sixth in the world (*kāma-guṇa*).

By the word "mind" in the first half of this verse the mental-sphere (*manāyatana*) is directly taught; and by teaching the mental-sphere, the mind-object (*dhammāyatana*) is also taught. By the five sensual pleasures (*kāma-guṇa*) of form, sound, smell, taste and contact are the five objects (*āyatana*) [374] directly taught: form-object, sound-object, smell-object, taste-object and contact-object; and by teaching these five sense objects, their five recipients are also taught about eye, ear, nose, tongue and body. Therefore, by the first half of this verse, the six internal bases (*ajjhittikāyatana*) and the six external bases (*bāhirāyatana*), totalling twelve in all, are taught; these bases may be referred to as graspings (*upādāna*), which form the suffering of the world of sentient beings.

Hemavata, craving and desire (*taṇhā-chanda*) for the aggregate of these twelve bases, the round of suffering and the truth of suffering, must be completely eliminated and destroyed.

For their elimination and destruction, they should first be distinguished either as aggregates, or as bases, or as elements, or briefly, as mind and matter. They should be meditated on to gain insight (*vipassanā*) by putting them to the test of the three characteristics. Their elimination and

destruction eventually comes by means of insight which culminates in the path of the Arahat fruition. By eliminating and destroying them, one becomes free from the round of suffering.

By the second half of the verse, the question on cessation (*vivaṭṭa*) is answered, and the truth of the path (*magga-sacca*) is also shown. The truth of arising (*samudaya-sacca*) and cessation (*nirodha-sacca*) are deemed as answered as they have been briefly stated in the previous answer in verse.

In other words, by the first half of the verse is shown the truth of suffering: by the term desire and passion (*chanda-rāga*) in the second half of the verse is shown the arising of suffering. From the word "having removed" (*virājetvā*) is derived dispassion (*virāga*) which is Nibbāna, the cessation of craving, as well as the truth of cessation (*nirodha-sacca*). By the word "thus" (*evaṁ*) is shown the truth of the path (*magga-sacca*), for it means the course of practice in the eightfold path leading to freedom from the suffering of Saṁsāra. In this way, the four truths are proclaimed by the Buddha in this verse.

The Buddha thus showed the excellent way out (*niyyāna*), which is the eightfold path as a means of escape from the round of births and deaths (*Saṁsāra-vaṭṭa*). And again, as he desired to conclude his answer on the way out (*niyyāna-dhamma*) in natural language, he recited the following verse:

Etaṁ lokassa niyyānaṁ, akkhātaṁ vo yathā-tathaṁ,
etaṁ vo aham-akkhāmi, evaṁ dukkhā pamuccati.

Hemavata, I have truthfully taught you this means of the eightfold path, which can bring about escape from the conditioned world of the three elements (*tedhātuka-saṅkhāra-loka*), such as the element of sensual pleasures (*kāma-dhātu*), the element of materiality (*rūpa-dhātu*), and the element of immateriality (*arūpa-dhātu*). Since there can be no escape from suffering in the round of births and deaths (*Saṁsāra-vaṭṭa-dukkha*), except by way of this eightfold path and since there is no other way of escape even though you might ask 1,000 times, I will only say to you, that this eightfold path is the only excellent Dhamma for escape from the round of births and deaths (*Saṁsāra-vaṭṭa*). Or, since there can be emancipation from the suffering in the round of births and deaths except through the eightfold path and since there is no other way of emancipation, I will only speak of the eightfold path as the only excellent

Dhamma which leads to emancipation from the round of births and deaths to enable you, who have already realised the lower path and fruition, to realise the higher ones.

The Yakkhas became Stream-enterers

In this manner, the Buddha concluded the Dhamma discourse perfectly well that had built up to the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) at its pinnacle. At the end of this discourse, the two Devas, Sātāgiri and Hemavata, were established in Stream-entry fruition (*Sotāpatti-phala*) along with their retinue of [375] 1,000 Yakkhas.[161]

Thereafter Hemavata, being one who had, by nature, due respect and devotion for the Dhamma and who was now established as a noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), was not content with the Buddha's wonderful Dhamma which was perfect in letter and in spirit. Therefore, desirous of knowing the two causes: the cause of becoming lower noble ones (*sekkha-bhūmi-dhamma*) and the cause of becoming Arahats (*asekkha-bhūmi-dhamma*), he addressed the Buddha by reciting the following verse:

Ko sūdha tarati oghaṁ, kodha tarati aṇṇavaṁ,
appatiṭṭhe anālambe, ko gambhīre na sīdati?

Exalted Buddha, who is endowed with virtuous conduct in the world, who is able to cross over the rough expanse of waters of the four floods? Who, being endowed with virtuous conduct in this world, is able to cross over the wide and deep ocean of Saṁsāra? Who can remain safe and sound without being drowned in the fathomless ocean of Saṁsāra with nothing below to stand on and nothing above to hang on to?

The cause of becoming lower noble ones was asked about in the first half of this verse, and the cause of becoming Arahats in the latter half.

Thereupon the Buddha recited the following verse as he desired to answer about the cause of becoming lower noble ones:

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[161] This is the end of the questions and answers on the round of suffering (*vaṭṭa*) and the cessation of round of suffering (*vivaṭṭa*).

Sabbadā sīla-sampanno, paññavā susamāhito,
ajjhatta-cintī satimā, oghaṁ tarati duttaraṁ.

Hemavata, a monk who is endowed with morality at all times, without breach of precepts, but with care to observe them even at the risk of his life; who is also endowed with mundane and supermundane knowledge; who is also steadfast with neighbourhood concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) and full concentration (*appanā-samādhi*); who by means of insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) repeatedly meditates on the mental and physical aggregates known internally as one's own (*niyakajjhatta*), by applying the three characteristics; who also possesses mindfulness (*sati*) which enables him to take up incessantly the threefold training (*sikkhā*), i.e. virtue, concentration and wisdom (*sīla-samādhi-paññā*); he, who is thus endowed with these threefold trainings is able to cross over the rough expanse of the four floods, which is hard for ordinary persons to do.

After the Buddha had thus given the answer concerning the cause of becoming lower noble ones, he now recited the following verse in order to give an answer about the cause of becoming Arahats:

Virato kāma-saññāya, sabba-saṁyojanātigo,
nandī-bhava-parikkhīṇo, so gambhīre na sīdati.

Hemavata, a monk, who has accomplished complete abstinence from all the perceptions accompanied by the craving for material objects of sensual pleasures; who has also broken and discarded the long thong of the ten attachments by means of the four paths; in whom the three [376] types of craving and the three states of existence, all collectively called rejoicings (*nandī*), have completely dried up; who is the Arahat, fully endowed with these qualities, is one not drowned in the vast and fathomless ocean of Saṁsāra with nothing below to stand on and nothing above to hang on to.

He has now reached, with utmost ease, the highland of Nibbāna with a residue remaining (*sa-upādisesa-nibbāna*) as his craving is exhausted and he is on the edge of Nibbāna without residue remaining (*anupādisesa-nibbāna*) on account of the cessation of existence. Thus his landing is of utmost ease and comfort, and he is one who is not drowned.

The Two Yakkhas sing Eulogies

Thereafter Hemavata eyed his friend Sātāgiri as well as the retinue of 1,000 Yakkhas with delight and satisfaction, and spoke the following five verses eulogizing the Buddha. Along with his friend Sātāgiri and the retinue of the thousand Yakkhas, he make obeisance to the Buddha with due respect and devotion and returned home. The five verses of eulogy and veneration were:

Gambhīra-paññaṁ nipuṇattha-dassiṁ,
akiñcanaṁ kāma-bhave asattaṁ,
taṁ passatha sabbadhi vippamuttaṁ,
dibbe pathe kamamānaṁ Mahesiṁ.

O honourable fellow Devas, behold with your own clear eyes the Buddha Gotama, who is endowed with analytical wisdom with regard to such deep things as the aggregates (*khandha*), the sense-spheres (*āyatana*), etc.; who thoroughly sees the significance of the questions presented by those of subtle intelligence; who is devoid of the most minute particle of the sevenfold evil of greed, hate, delusion, conceit, wrong view, bad conduct and defilements; who has no attachment for the twofold sensuality and threefold existence; who has full deliverance from the bonds of desire and passion for all sense objects such as the aggregates, the sense-spheres, etc.; who is able to walk up and down on the divine road of the eight attainments; and who has sought such noble qualities as the observance of the code of moral precepts (*sīlakkhandha*).

Anoma-nāmaṁ nipuṇattha-dassiṁ,
paññā-dadaṁ kāmālaye asattaṁ,
taṁ passatha sabba-viduṁ sumedhaṁ,
ariye pathe kamamānaṁ Mahesiṁ.

O honourable fellow Devas, behold with your own clear eyes the Buddha Gotama, who has extraordinary epithets through undiminished attributes, such as being a Perfectly Self-Awakened One (*Sammā-sambuddha*); who thoroughly sees the significance of the questions presented by those of subtle intelligence; who disseminates extraordinary knowledge by giving instruction in a sweet and pleasant voice so that others may be moral and knowledgeable; who has no clinging with passion and wrong view such as 'I' and 'mine,' to the various sensual objects craved for through passion

and wrong view; who analytically knows all; who is endowed with knowledge of the perfections that forms the foundation of omniscience; who is able to walk up and down on the divine road of the eight attainments; and who has sought noble qualities such as the observance of the code of moral precepts.

Sudiṭṭhaṁ vata no ajja, [377] suppabhātaṁ suhuṭṭhitaṁ,
yaṁ addasāma Sambuddhaṁ, ogha-tiṇṇam-anāsavaṁ.

O honourable fellow Devas, as we have had the good fortune of beholding the Buddha with our eyes that has culminated in the attainment of the paths and fruitions; the Buddha who has crossed over the rough waters of the fourfold flood and who has eliminated the fourfold pollutants (*āsava*). Our sight of the Buddha, our opportune beholding of his person, has happened today indeed! Such an arrival of the dawn, such a daybreak leaving behind all gloom and blemishes has taken place indeed! Getting up from deep slumber, being wide awake from a sleep without greed, hatred and delusion, has indeed now occured!

Ime dasa-satā Yakkhā, iddhimanto yasassino,
sabbe taṁ saraṇaṁ yanti, tvaṁ no Satthā anuttaro.

Venerable Buddha of sun-bright glory, all these divine Yakkhas, who are endowed with supernormal powers, derived from their past meritorious deeds; who possess plenty of excellent gains and retinue; whose number is 1,000, with their bodies infused with the spirit of the great supermundane refuge, approach together with us to seek protection, believing you to be a shelter. You are our supreme teacher beyond compare, who helps and advises us, giving instruction so that we are able to build the first exquisitely decorated palace of the noble ones.

Te mayaṁ vicarissāma, gāmā gāmaṁ nagā nagaṁ,
namassamānā Sambuddhaṁ, Dhammassa ca Sudhammataṁ.

Venerable Buddha of sun-bright glory, from today onwards we will move from one divine village to another, from one divine mountain to another, to proclaim like town-criers, exhorting people to walk the path to Nibbāna and singing in praise of the respective glories of the Three Treasures; we shall proclaim, paying respects to the state of the Buddha, with our clasped hands placed on our heads and our joyous devotion meant for the genuine Buddha, the Lord of the Three Worlds, and full of immeasurable

attributes and also to the state of the Dhamma, the way out from the round of suffering, of the teaching which is tenfold, its constituents being the four paths, the four fruitions, Nibbāna and the mass of Dhamma parts. [378]

11: The Discourse about Nālaka

Every time a Buddha appears, there emerges a monk who cultivates the practice of moral perfection (*moneyya*).[162] At the time when our infinite and supreme Buddha, the Lord of the Three Worlds appeared, the monk who asked the Buddha about the practice of moral perfection and who cultivated it was the monk Nālaka, the nephew of the recluse Kāḷadevila. The account of the young man, Nālaka, having become an ascetic monk even before the appearance of Buddha has been given above.

[I include the relevant part of that chapter first here as a reminder: When the courtiers saw Kāḷadevila laughing and weeping, it occurred to them thus: "Our venerable recluse laughed first, and later he wept, which is strange indeed." So they enquired: "Venerable sir, is there any danger that might befall our master's son?" – "There is no danger for the prince. In fact, he will become a Buddha." – "Then why do you lament?" the people asked again. "Because I shall not get an opportunity to see the attainment of Awakening by an extraordinary man who is endowed with such wonderful qualities, and this will be a great loss to me. So thinking, I lament," he replied.

Having answered thus, the recluse Kāḷadevila pondered: "Though I will miss the prince's becoming a Buddha, I wonder whether somebody among my relations will have an opportunity of witnessing it." Then he foresaw that his nephew, Nālaka, would. So he visited his sister and summoned his nephew and urged him, saying: "My dear nephew, Nālaka, the birth of a son has taken place in the palace of King Suddhodana. He is a Bodhisatta. He will attain Buddhahood at the age of 35. You, my nephew, are somebody deserving of meeting the Buddha. Therefore, you had better become a recluse immediately."

Though born to the parents who had 870 millions worth of wealth, the young Nālaka had confidence in his uncle, and thought: "My uncle would not have urged me to do what is not beneficial. He did so because it is of benefit indeed." With this conclusion, he had the robes and the alms bowl bought and brought immediately from the market, thinking: "I have

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[162] [The following is based on the Discourse to Nālaka (*Nālaka-sutta*, Snp 3.11) and its commentary.]

become a recluse with dedication to the Buddha, the noblest personage in the world."

Having said this, he faced the direction of Kapilavatthu where the prince was and made obeisance by raising his clasped hands in veneration. Thereafter, he put his bowl in a bag, slung it on his shoulder and entered the Himālayas. Waiting for the Buddha there in the forest, he devoted himself to asceticism.]

The Buddha taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse on the full moon day of July (*Āsāḷha*) and caused the 180 million Brahmas along with Ven. Koṇḍañña to enter the path of emancipation. On the fifth waxing moon of the said month, he taught the Group-of-Five the Discourse about the Characteristics of Non-Self (*Anatta-lakkhaṇa-sutta*, SN 22.59) whereupon they realised the Arahat fruition. On the seventh waxing moon of the month of July (*Āsāḷha*), the Devas, who had been in the audience listening and who wished for the welfare of Ven. Nālaka, reported to him that the Buddha had appeared and had delivered the discourse on the Dhamma Wheel, by saying: "Ven. Nālaka, the Buddha has already delivered the first discourse of Dhamma Wheel at the Deer Park in Isipatana! The Buddha has, in fact, visibly appeared among humans, Devas and Brahmas!"

Ever since he became a recluse 35 years previously, Ven. Nālaka had been waiting for the appearance of the Buddha. He had even abandoned the hereditary practice of immersion in water, bearing in mind: "If there is too much of immersion in water, the ears will get damaged. If the ears are damaged, the words of the Dhamma cannot be heard, thereby depriving me of the chance of hearing the Dhamma."

On hearing the news given by the Devas, he was delighted and said to himself: "The time has indeed arrived that my uncle Kāḷadevila advised me about." Then on the seventh waxing moon of the month of July (*Āsāḷha*), he left Himavanta and proceeded to the Deer Park in Isipatana. On arrival there, he saw the Buddha sitting cross-legged on the eminent Buddha-seat, awaiting and expecting him: "Nālaka will arrive today. I will teach him the path to moral perfection (*moneyya*)." Nālaka was very much overwhelmed with faith and devotion, so he respectfully made obeisance to the Buddha and questioned him, reciting these two verses:

Aññātam-etaṁ vacanaṁ, Asitassa yathā-tathaṁ,
taṁ taṁ Gotama pucchāmi, sabba-dhammāna' pāraguṁ.

Exalted Buddha of the Gotama lineage! Now that I can see the Buddha in person, with my own eyes, I have personally found that the words spoken to me 35 years ago by my uncle Asita Kāḷadevila are perfectly true. And so, in order to learn and practise please allow me to question you, as Buddha, who has crossed to the other side, and is accomplished in all things [379] in six ways.

According to the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) commentary the six ways are: 1) The super knowledges (*abhiññā*); 2) knowing with full comprehension (*pariññā*); 3) abandoning (*pahāna*); 4) development (*bhāvanā*); 5) realization (*sacchikiriyā*); 6) attainment (*samāpatti*).

Anagāriyupetassa, bhikkhācariyaṁ jigīsato,
Muni pabrūhi me puṭṭho, moneyyaṁ uttamaṁ padaṁ.

Venerable Buddha, Great Sage (*Mahā-muni*), you are many times superior in attributes to the six sages (*muni*)! Please be kind enough to teach the noble path leading to the realisation of the four path-knowledges (*magga-ñāṇas*) by the recluse who has renounced worldly life and maintains himself on alms food.

Six kinds of sages (*muni*): 1) lay people having faith in the teaching of the Buddha (*agāra-muni*); 2) monastics (*anāgāra-muni*); 3) seven kinds of noble disciples who have realised one of the stages of the four supermundane paths and the three lower fruitions (*sekha-muni*); 4) Arahats (*asekha-muni*); 5) Independent Buddhas (*Pacceka-muni*); 6) Buddhas (*Muni-muni*). See also the Further Explanations.

Thereupon, the Buddha taught Ven. Nālaka the path to moral perfection in detail, by means of 23 verses beginning with: *Moneyyaṁ te upaññissaṁ*, "I will teach and make you understand clearly the path to moral perfection."

Here, moral perfection (*moneyya*) means the four path-knowledges (*magga-ñāṇa*). Especially, the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) is called moral perfection (*moneyya*). So, it should be noted carefully that the noble and genuine practice leading to the realisation of the four path-knowledges is called the path to moral perfection (*moneyya-paṭipadā*).

The 23 verses of the path to moral perfection thus taught are given below with the Pāḷi verses and an English paraphrase.

Moneyyaṁ te upaññissaṁ, dukkaraṁ durabhisambhavaṁ,
handa te naṁ pavakkhāmi, santhambhassu daḷho bhava.

My dear son Nālaka, I will teach and make you understand clearly the path to moral perfection which is not only difficult to put into practice even with great effort, but also difficult of plunging into.

My dear son Nālaka, I, will teach you the path to moral perfection in detail. So you, my son, exert and practise with steadfastness and unrelenting zeal, keeping yourself firm by means of diligence (*viriya*) to do what is difficult to do.

What is meant is this: Nālaka, my dear son! The path to moral perfection, which you asked about, is the kind of practice which is difficult to practise and to accomplish, since it has to be practised without the arising of the defilements (*kilesa*) in one's mind and with steadfast zeal, starting from the time when one is still an ordinary worldling (*puthujjana*).

Samāna-bhāgaṁ kubbetha, gāme akkuṭṭha-vanditaṁ,
mano-padosaṁ rakkheyya, santo anuṇṇato care.

My dear son Nālaka, you should endeavour to treat all people in towns, [380] villages and rural areas impartially, with no dislike or hatred and with no love, whether they hurt you by abusing you in anger, or whether they make obeisance to you with due respect and devotion. One who is virtuous should guard against bearing ill-will because of being hurt and abused. You should endeavour not to become conceited, in the least, because of being treated with due respect and devotion.

What is meant is this: You should check your anger, when the people of towns, villages and rural areas offend and abuse you. You should not become elated with pride, even when a king bows before you respectfully. In this manner, you should treat them all evenly without dislike and without love, whether they abuse you or treat you with respect. With this verse, the Buddha taught the abandoning of the defilements which arise in relation to towns and villages.

Uccāvacā niccharanti, dāye aggi-sikhūpamā,
nāriyo muniṁ palobhenti, tāsu taṁ mā palobhayuṁ.

My dear son Nālaka, in the forest various objects of sense burning like flames are apt to appear.[163] Likewise, there are, in a forest, sense objects: some fearful, some pleasant, some detestable and some perplexing, such as humans, Yakkhas, lions, leopards, tigers, various kinds of birds, various sounds or noises produced by them, fruits, flowers and buds.

Of these various kinds of sense objects which appear, women who have come for merry-making in the parks and forests, women collecting firewood, plucking flowers, plucking vegetables and gathering fruits, are likely to allure the solitary monk with smiles, taunts, tears and by wearing their garments in disorder. Do not let such women tempt you, my son.

> What is meant is this: Endeavour to conduct yourself so that such women cannot entice you. With this verse, the Buddha taught the abandoning of defilements which arise in relation to the forest:
>
> *Virato methunā dhammā, hitvā kāme paropare,*
> *aviruddho asāratto, pāṇesu tasa-thāvare.*
> *Yathā ahaṁ tathā ete, yathā ete tathā ahaṁ,*
> *attānaṁ upamaṁ katvā, na haneyya na ghātaye.*

My dear son Nālaka, besides discarding all kinds of sensual objects (*kāma-ārammaṇa*), good or bad, you, dear son, should also be one who avoids and stays away from sexual intercourse. You should not entertain the least ill-will towards those belonging to another faction and you should not have the least liking and attachment to those belonging to your own faction; and, make yourself an example by having fellow-feeling thus: "Like myself, these beings desire to live long, not to die; they desire happiness, not suffering. Like them, I also desire to live long, not to die; desire happiness, not suffering." You should not, by yourself, kill or hurt worldlings (*puthujjana*), Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*), Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmin*) and Non-returners (*Anāgāmi*) who are not yet free [381] from craving who are known as frightened beings (*tasa-sattas*) and Arahats who are already free from craving and greed, who are known as

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[163] Or, a forest fire spreads out flames of varied forms, such as flames with and without smoke, flames of blue, yellow and red colours, big or small, etc.

beings who are not frightened (*thāvara-satta*). Neither should you employ others to kill or hurt.

In these verses, the Buddha taught the moral practice of restraint (*indriya-saṁvara-sīla*) by means of the phrase: *Hitvā kāme paropare …* "discarding all kinds of sensual objects, good or bad." The Buddha taught the restraint according to the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara-sīla*) laid down for monks, by means of the remaining words beginning with abstinence from sexual intercourse and abstinence from taking life.

Hitvā icchañ-ca lobhañ-ca, yattha satto puthujjano,
cakkhumā paṭipajjeyya, tareyya Narakaṁ imaṁ.

My dear son Nālaka, the worldly remain attached to the four requisites of robes, alms food, lodgings and medicines which are the objects of sensual pleasure for ascetics. You, dear son, should abandon the desire (*icchā*) for the four requisites of robes, alms food, lodgings and medicines which are the objects of sensual pleasure for ascetics before they are obtained. If they are already acquired, you should do away with greed (*lobha*) which hinders the wish to give them away in generosity. Being one possessing the eye of wisdom, you should endeavour to cultivate the noble practice of moral perfection (*moneyya-paṭipadā*), which has already been taught, is being taught and is to be taught. If you thus endeavour to practise, you can overcome the craving for the four requisites which leads to wrong livelihood (*micchā-ājīva*) which is named after the Naraka abyss because of the difficulty in filling it in.

With this verse, the Buddha taught the moral practice of living a life of purity (*ājīva-pārisuddhi-sīlā*) with special reference to the removal of attachments and craving for the four requisites.

Ūnūdaro mitāhāro, appicchassa alolupo,
sadā icchāya nicchāto, anicco hoti nibbuto.

My dear son Nālaka, an ascetic desirous of cultivating the path to moral perfection should have a lean stomach by eating four or five morsels less of the alms food received (*dhamma-laddha*). It is not enough merely eating four or five morsels less, but you should also be one who eats the food only after due reflection on the advantages and disadvantages of the food eaten (*paccavekkhaṇa*).

Still it is not enough, you should also be one who is endowed with the four kinds of contentment, which is desiring little or nothing (*appiccha*): 1) Having little or no greed concerning the four requisites (*paccaya-appiccha*); 2) having little or no desire to let others know that you are engaged in the acetic practices (*dhutaṅga-appiccha*); 3) having little or no desire to let others know that you possess wide knowledge and learning of the teaching (*pariyatti-appiccha*); 4) having little or no desire to let others know that you have realised the extraordinary paths and fruitions (*adhigama-appiccha*).

Still it is not enough: By means of the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*) you should strive for the total removal of craving (*taṇhā*). When you have become one who is thus free from greed and craving (*loluppa-taṇhā*) you will become one with no desire and [382] excessive craving (*icchā-lobha-taṇhā*) for the four requisites, unlike one who is perpetually afflicted with extreme hunger you are then devoid of the defilements of hunger (*kilesa*). With no such affliction, you emerge as an individual in whom all the heat of the defilements has been extinguished.

> With this verse the Buddha taught the precepts regarding dependence on requisites (*paccaya-sannissita-sīla*) or, precepts regarding the use of requisites (*paccaya-paribhoga-sīla*) beginning with moderation regarding food (*bhojane mattaññutā*).

Sa piṇḍa-cāraṁ caritvā, vanantam-abhihāraye,
upaṭṭhito rukkha-mūlasmiṁ, āsanūpagato muni.

My dear son Nālaka, the ascetic, who practises the path to moral perfection (*moneyya-paṭipadā*), should go only to his place in the forest after going round for alms and after eating his meal, without staying long to talk to the people and so on. The monk, who practises the path to moral perfection, should remain sitting at the foot of a tree or in his own place on reaching the forest.

> Here, by means of the words: "After going round for alms," the ascetic practice (*dhutaṅga*) of taking only alms food is indicated. The monk who practises the special ascetic practice of taking only alms food has also to practise the other ascetic practices also, such as going systematically from house to house, eating only in one sitting, eating only from the bowl, not taking late offerings, wearing only the three robes, and wearing only robes

made from cemetery rags, so these six ascetic practices are also being indicated thereby.

By means of the words: "Should go only to his place in the forest," the ascetic practice (*dhutaṅga*) of living alone in the forest is indicated. By means of the words: "Should remain sitting at the foot of a tree or in his own place," the practice of living at the root of a tree, and being one who never lies down is indicated. Since these ten ascetic practices are taught in regular order, the three other ascetic practices, namely the ascetic practice of living in an open space, sleeping in any bed, and living in a charnel ground, are also indicated. This being so, the Buddha taught Ven. Nālaka the thirteen ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*)[164] by means of this verse.

Sa jhāna-pasuto dhīro, vanante ramito siyā,
jhāyetha rukkha-mūlasmiṁ, attānam-abhitosayaṁ.

My dear son Nālaka, the monastic who is engaged in the thirteen ascetic practices and practises the noble the path to moral perfection strives hard to realise the mundane absorption (*jhāna*) which is not yet realised and to exercise control, with the fivefold mastery (*vasi-bhāva*), over the mundane absorption that he has already acquired. Attaining thereby absorption concentration (*appanā-samādhi*), he should take delight in the quietude of the forest, away from human noise. It will not do to merely cultivate the mundane absorptions only. He should dwell at the foot of a tree in the forest also, delighting himself with absorption in the supermundane absorptions associated with Stream-entry, etc.

By means of this verse, the Buddha taught the joy of living in the forest, dwelling and strenuously cultivating mundane and supermundane absorption (*jhāna*) as well as the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*).

Ven. Nālaka, on hearing this discourse became exceedingly enthusiastic to enter the forest and practise the path (*paṭipadā*) even without taking food. It is not, however, possible to devote oneself to the practice of the Dhamma without taking food, for he who practises the Dhamma without taking food cannot live long. Rather, one should search for food without causing defilements to develop. Thus, searching for food without developing [383] the defilements is a proper

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[164] For more about the thirteen ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*), see the Further Explanations.

act in the Dispensation (*Sāsana*). So, being desirous of teaching Ven. Nālaka the practice of going round for alms food and with a view to assure him: "In the days to follow, you can enter towns and villages and go round for alms; but you should not let defilements develop," the Buddha recited the following six verses, which would finally enable him to realise the Arahat fruition.

Tato ratyā vivasāne, gāmantam-abhihāraye,
avhānaṁ nābhinandeyya, abhihārañ-ca gāmato.

My dear son Nālaka, when the practice of the path to moral perfection (*moneyya-paṭipadā*) by going only to the forest after collecting food is over, in the days that follow too, the ascetic should proceed to the village for collecting alms food. After nighttime has passed and day time sets in, prior to going on alms round, he should attend to duties such as those to be performed in his dwelling place or concerned with the shrine precincts, etc., and observing physical (*kāya*) and mental (*citta*) seclusion (*viveka*),[165] he should cultivate meditation on the way to and from the village on his alms round.

On arrival in the village, he should not delight in and accept the meal offered by invitation: "Venerable sir! Kindly come and have alms food in our house."[166] If, in case the supporters offer alms food by snatching the alms bowl and filling it to the full, you may take such alms food to sustain your practice of the Dhamma. It will not affect the ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*). But you should not enter the village with the expectation of receiving such alms food.

The alms food, with a variety of dishes brought by supporters and offered to the ascetic practising for moral perfection, without inviting him to their houses after he enters the village, and even before he goes round for alms from house to house, is called food that is offered (*abhihāra*).

Not a single particle of such alms food should be accepted even though it is offered with many hundreds of dishes. What is meant is that the alms food should be obtained only by going round from house to house.

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[165] For the three kinds of seclusion (*viveka*), see the Further Explanations.

[166] I.e. the alms-food received while thinking and doubting: "Will this house offer or not offer alms-food to me? Will good food or bad food be offered?"

Na munī gāmam-āgamma, kulesu sahasā care,
ghāsesanaṁ chinna-katho, na vācaṁ payutaṁ bhaṇe.

My dear son Nālaka, when the ascetic practising the path to moral perfection has entered the village, he should not mix in weal or woe with the male and female supporters as that is not compatible with the Dispensation (*Sāsana*). He should behave like a dumb person and should not give hints, or speak indirectly with signs and tricks in order to gain alms food.

Alatthaṁ yad-idaṁ sādhu, nālatthaṁ kusalaṁ iti,
ubhayeneva so tādī, rukkhaṁ vupanivattati.

My dear son Nālaka, when the ascetic practising the path to moral perfection enters the village and goes round for alms, he should consider: "It is good," if he receives even a small quantity of food, and that: "It is not bad," if no food is received; he should not be affected by receiving or not receiving [384] alms. Being possessed of unshakability (*tādi-guṇa*), or the quality of being like the earth, namely, having endurance or forbearance and the quality of being like a mountain, namely, steadiness or fortitude, he should depart from the supporter's house with equanimity and entertain neither hatred nor love for receiving or not receiving alms, in the same way as a man, looking for fruit, approaches a tree and departs from it without liking or disliking it for getting or not getting fruit.

Sa patta-pāṇi vicaranto, amūgo mūga-sammato,
appaṁ dānaṁ na hīḷeyya, dātāraṁ nāvajāniyā.

My dear son Nālaka, the ascetic practising the path to moral perfection going round for alms, holding the alms bowl, should behave in such a way that the people will think he is dumb although he is not and should not make random talk. When only a little is given in generosity, it should not be despised and the supporter should not be condemned for giving merely a little.

Uccāvacā hi paṭipadā, samaṇena pakāsitā,
na pāraṁ diguṇaṁ yanti, nayidaṁ eka-guṇaṁ mutaṁ.

My dear son Nālaka, when the ascetic practising the path to moral perfection becomes fully accomplished in the mode of conduct of receiving alms he should not be content with this much, but he should

endeavour and become accomplished in the practice which is exceedingly noble. The Buddha has taught the noble practice leading to the path (*magga*) in two ways, superior and inferior.

The Dispensation (*Sāsana*) has, as its essence, practice. What is meant is: The path of practice (*paṭipadā*) is the essence of the Dispensation (*Sāsana*). Only when the path is practised can the essence of the Dispensation (*Sāsana*) be attained.

To elucidate: the period, from the moment the ascetic Dhamma is first developed and practised, up to the moment the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) are removed, is called the domain of the path of practice (*paṭipadā-khetta*). If, in this period, the five hindrances are removed with ease and without trouble, it is called an easy path of practice (*sukha-paṭipadā*). If the hindrances have to be removed after practising strenuously and with difficulty, it is called a difficult path of practice (*dukkha-paṭipadā*).

The period from when the five hindrances have been removed to the moment path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*) is realised, is called the domain of supernormal power (*abhiññā-khetta,*) or, wisdom and knowledge arising from insight (*vipassanā-ñāṇa-paññā*). The knowledge arising from insight which realises the path-knowledges quickly after the five hindrances have been removed is called the super knowledges gained quickly (*khippābhiññā*). If path-knowledge is realised rather slowly or tardily, the said path-knowledges are called the super knowledges gained slowly (*dandhābhiññā*).

1) Some individuals practise the ascetic Dhamma, and realise path-knowledge quickly, after having removed the five hindrances without trouble and with ease. The path of practice of such individuals is called the super knowledges gained quickly and with an easy path (*sukha-paṭipadā-khippābhiññā*); 2) some, however, realise path-knowledge tardily, after having removed the five hindrances with ease. The path of practice of such individuals is called the super knowledges gained slowly and with an easy path (*sukha-paṭipadā-dandhābhiññā*); 3) some realise path-knowledge quickly, after having been able to remove the five hindrances by practising strenuously and with difficulty. Their path of practice is called the super knowledges gained quickly and with a difficult path (*dukkha-paṭipadā-khippābhiññā*); 4) some realize path-knowledge tardily, after removing the hindrances by practising strenuously and with difficulty. Their path of

practice is called the super knowledges gained slowly and with a difficult path (*dukkha-paṭipadā-dandhābhiññā*).[167]

My dear son Nālaka, in reaching the other shore, which is Nibbāna, by [385] means of these two superior and inferior types of path-knowledges, it is not that Nibbāna is achieved twice through a single path-knowledge.

Just by realising path-knowledge once, the defilements which it should eradicate are completely removed; and therefore those defilements will not again occur in the continuum of the aggregates (*khanda-santāna*), hence the Buddha's teaching: "It is not that Nibbāna is achieved twice through a single path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*). Nor is Nibbāna the kind of Dhamma which can be completely realised only once by means of a single path-knowledge.

All the defilements (*kilesa*) cannot be totally removed by means of a single path-knowledge; they can be removed separately and respectively only by means of the four path-knowledges, each annihilating its own share of defilements, leaving nothing unannihilated. Hence the Buddha means to say: "Nibbāna, together with the realization of the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*), cannot be attained once and for all, by means of one single stroke of the path-knowledge. This can be accomplished only by means of the fourfold path-knowledges.

Yassa ca visatā natthi, chinna-sotassa bhikkhuno,
kiccākiccappahīnassa, pariḷāho na vijjati.

My dear son Nālaka, a certain ascetic practising the path to moral perfection, who has practised the path which is appropriate for him out of the two types already stated, up to the attainment of the Arahat fruition, is free from 108 kinds of expansive, wide ranging cravings (*taṇhā*) having completely removed them by means of the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*). In the mind continuum of the ascetic practising the path to moral perfection, who has thus completely cut off the current of the defilements through the Arahat path and who has also done away with all deeds of merit and demerit, there is not the slightest heat generated by lust (*rāga*) or by hatred (*dosa*).[168]

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[167] [See Vibhaṅga 801, PTS 331].

[168] By this verse, the benefit of the path of practice is indicated.

On hearing these verses, Ven. Nālaka thought thus: "If the path to moral perfection (*moneyya-paṭipadā*) is only this much, it is quite easy and not difficult. I might perhaps be able to fulfill it without difficulty, without discomfort but with ease." Therefore, the Buddha, who was desirous of letting Ven. Nālaka know that it is otherwise, said: "My dear son Nālaka, the practice to moral perfection is not as easy as you have thought. It is a practice which is really difficult," and recited this verse:

Moneyyaṁ te upaññissaṁ, khura-dhārūpamo bhave,
jivhāya tālum-āhacca, udare saññato siyā.

My dear son Nālaka, I will let you know more about the path to moral perfection. The ascetic, practising the path to moral perfection, should be one comparable to the blade of a razor.

The meaning is: As a person licking the honey smeared on the blade of a razor has to be careful and guard himself against the risk of his tongue being cut, the ascetic practising the path to moral perfection, who makes use of the four requisites righteously acquired by him, should guard his mind against the danger of being overcome by defilements. True! It is difficult to acquire the four requisites by pure means. Having acquired them, it is also difficult to make use of them in a blameless manner. So, the Buddha repeatedly taught the precepts regarding dependence on requisites (*paccaya-sannissita-sīla*).

My dear son Nālaka, the ascetic, practising the path to moral perfection, should restrain his stomach by pressing his tongue against his palate, making a clicking sound with his tongue, doing away with the desire for taste (*rasa-taṇhā*) and not using the four requisites obtained by any wrongful mode of [386] livelihood (*micchā-ājīva*).

It means to say that if alms food that is to be acquired righteously (*dhamma-laddha*) is not available for the stomach, he should forbear by avoiding the desire for taste by grinding his teeth and making a clicking sound with the tongue. But by no means should he make use of requisites that were obtained in a wrong way.

Alīna-citto ca siyā, na cāpi bahu cintaye,
nirāmagandho asito, Brahma-cariya-parāyaṇo.

My dear son Nālaka, the ascetic practising the path to moral perfection should be one who is diligent, engaging himself incessantly in deeds of

merit. He should not trouble his mind with diverse problems relating to friends and relatives and towns and villages. Without the foul odour of the defilements (*kilesa*) and without being attached to various existences through craving and wrong view, he should be one who leans and relies on the noble path of practice which consist of the three trainings (*sikkha*)[169] in morality, concentration and wisdom taught by the Buddha.

Ekāsanassa sikkhetha, samaṇūpāsanassa ca,
ekattaṁ monam-akkhātaṁ, eko ce abhiramissasi,
atha bhāhisi dasa-disā.

My dear son Nālaka, the ascetic practising the path to moral perfection should endeavour and practise to live quietly in solitude, without any companion, and to contemplate repeatedly and strenuously the objects for meditation (*kammaṭṭhāna-ārammaṇa*) of the ascetics.

Here, the Buddha taught physical seclusion by staying alone (*kāya-viveka*), and mental seclusion by contemplating the meditation objects (*citta-viveka*).

The subjects of meditation are given as 40 in the Baskets (*Piṭaka*) namely: 10 meditation devices (*kasiṇa*), 10 on unattractiveness (*asubha*), 10 recollections (*anussati*), 4 sublime states (*brahma-vihāra*), 4 formless spheres (*arūpāyatana*), the perception of the disgusting nature of food (*aharepaṭikūlasaññā*), and the delimiting of the four elements (*catu-dhātu-vavatthāna*).

Thus I teach that staying alone by maintaining physical seclusion and mental seclusion is the true path to moral perfection. My dear son Nālaka, if you can take delight in staying alone, without any companion, maintaining physical seclusion and mental seclusion, you will become renowned in all ten directions.

Sutvā dhīrānaṁ nigghosaṁ, jhāyīnaṁ kāma-cāginaṁ,
tato hiriñ-ca saddhañ-ca, bhiyyo kubbetha māmako.

My dear son Nālaka, if and when you hear the cheers and praises of the wise and noble people, who have done away with the material objects of sensual pleasure (*vatthu-kāma*) and the defilements of sensual pleasure

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[169] For more about the three trainings (*sikkha*) read the Further Explanations.

(*kilesa-kāma*) by repeated contemplation of objects (*arammaṇūpanijjhāna*) and close observation of their characteristics (*lakkhaṇūpanijjhāna*), you, dear son, should not be distracted by these cheers and praises but should, more strenuously than before, develop a moral sense of conscience (*hiri*) and should also have absolute faith (*saddhā*) in this path of practice to moral perfection as the noble practice for complete freedom from Saṁsāra and develop the practice leading to final emancipation (*niyyānika*). If you do so, you will become a genuine son of mine. [387]

Taṁ nadīhi vijānātha, sobbhesu padaresu ca,
saṇantā yanti kusobbhā, tuṇhī-yanti mahodadhī.

My dear son Nālaka, you should know that the subject matter of the exhortation that: "You should not be distracted by the cheers … " as already taught by me, must be understood by the examples of large rivers and by small creeks and streams. The water in small creeks and stream flows noisily. The water in such large rivers as the Ganges, however, flows silently without making any noise.

What is meant is that one who is not a genuine son of the Buddha, like small creeks and streams is agitated and excited: "I am one who practises the path of practice to moral perfection." One who is a genuine son of the Buddha, however, cultivates these two: conscience (*hiri*) and faith (*saddhā*), and like large rivers, remains silent, humble in mind.

Yad-ūnakaṁ taṁ saṇati, yaṁ pūraṁ santam-eva taṁ,
aḍḍha-kumbhūpamo bālo, rahado pūro va paṇḍito.

My dear son Nālaka, I should like to give one more example and point this out in another way: A jar, which is not full with water and is deficient, makes noise with the water splashing from side to side. That which is full with water is quiet without making noise. A foolish person is like the jar making noise with half-filled water. A wise man is like a large jar full of water.

Here, there is the likelihood of the question being raised thus: "If a foolish person is not quiet and makes a lot of noise like a jar not full with water and if a wise man does not make noise and is quiet like a large jar full of water, why is it that the Buddha talks so much in his endeavour to teach the Dhamma?" and so, the Buddha delivers these last two verses:

Yaṁ samaṇo bahuṁ bhāsati, upetaṁ attha-sañhitaṁ,
jānaṁ so Dhammaṁ deseti, jānaṁ so bahu bhāsati.

My dear son Nālaka, I, noble ascetics as I am, speak mostly words which are full of sense and meaning and that are beneficial. It is not that these words are spoken with a fickle mind which is distracted (*uddhacca*). In fact, I, a noble ascetic, discerning through knowledge and wisdom what is profitable and what is not, teach only the profitable Dhamma.[170] In teaching the Dhamma, it is done only by knowing distinctly: "This Dhamma is for the benefit and welfare of this person. That Dhamma is for the benefit and welfare of that person."[171] [388]

Yo ca jānaṁ saṁyatatto, jānaṁ na bahu bhāsati,
sa munī monam-arahati, sa munī monam-ajjhagā.

My dear son Nalaka, the ascetic practising the path of practice to moral perfection, is deserving of the practice only if, understanding the Dhamma analytically, discerned and taught by me as the means of knowledge and wisdom capable of breaking up the defilements (*nibbedha-bhāgiya-ñāṇa-paññā*) and taking care to keep it well guarded, he does not talk too much speaking words which he knows cannot be of benefit to beings. In fact, the ascetic practising the path of practice to moral perfection can surely realise the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*).

In this manner, the Buddha concluded the delivery of the noble Dhamma teaching concerning the path of practice leading to moral perfection (*moneyya-paṭipadā*) which has the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) as its ultimate achievement.

Upon hearing the Buddha's discourses on the path to moral perfection (*moneyya-paṭipadā*) which has the Arahat fruition as the ultimate achievement, Ven. Nalaka became one who had but little desire to engage in three matters: 1)

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[170] Even though the Dhamma is sometimes taught all day long, it is not done so just to pass the time.

[171] What is meant is: It is not that the Buddha utters unsubstantial words just because he is by nature talkative.

Seeing the Buddha; 2) hearing the Dhamma; and 3) asking questions concerning the path to moral perfection. To elaborate:

1. At the end of his hearing of the Dhamma teaching concerning the path to moral perfection, Ven. Nālaka was very much pleased and delighted and, after paying respects to the Buddha to his heart's content, he entered the forest. After entering the forest, such a wish as: "It will be good if I can once again see the Buddha!" did not occur in his mind continuum even once. This is the instance of him having little desire to see the Buddha.

2. In the same way, such a wish as: "It will be good if I can once again listen to the Dhamma!" did not occur in the mind continuum of Ven. Nālaka even once. This is the instance of him having little desire to listen to the Dhamma.

3. Likewise, such a wish as: "It will be good if I can once again address and question the Buddha on the path to moral perfection!" did not occur in the mind continuum of Ven. Nālaka even once more. This is the instance of him having little desire to question on the path to moral perfection.

Being the one and only individual of distinction (*puggala-visesa*) and disciple of distinction (*sāvaka-visesa*) who emerges with the appearance of each Buddha, he was content and his wish was fulfilled even with seeing the Buddha just once, with hearing the Dhamma just once and with asking about the path to moral perfection also just once; and so he had no more wish to see the Buddha, to listen to the Dhamma and to ask questions again. It is not for want of faith that he had no more wish to see the Buddha, to listen to the Dhamma or to ask questions.

Ven. Nālaka becomes an Arahat

In this manner, Ven. Nālaka, being endowed with the three instances of having little desire, entered the forest at the foot of the mountain and stayed in one grove only for one day, not remaining there for two days; stayed at the foot of a tree also only for one day, not for two days; and went round for alms in a village only for one day, not repeating the round the next day. In this way he wandered about from one forest to another forest, from the foot of one tree to the foot of another tree; and from one village to another village and practised the path to moral perfection, suitable and appropriate for him; and before long he attained the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*).

There are three kinds of individuals practising the path to moral perfection, namely: 1) The prominent person (*ukkaṭṭha-puggala*) practising the path (*paṭipadā*) with the greatest effort; 2) the middling person (*majjhima-puggala*) practising it with medium effort; and 3) the mild person (*mudu-puggala*) practising it with only little effort.

Of these three kinds: 1) The prominent person (*ukkaṭṭha-puggala*) practising the path with the greatest effort lives only for seven months; 2) the middling person (*majjhima-puggala*) practising it with medium effort lives only for seven years; and 3) the mild person (*mudu-puggala*) practising it with only little effort lives for sixteen years. [389]

Of the said three kinds of person, Ven. Nālaka was a prominent person who practised the path with the greatest effort. Reflecting and knowing that he would live only for seven months and that his will to live (*āyu-saṅkhāra*) and the continuum of the life vitality (*jivitindriya*) would soon come to an end he took a bath to keep his body clean.

Then wearing the lower robe correctly and neatly and girdling it with the waist-belt and then putting on the upper robe together with the double robe, he faced the direction of Rājagaha where the Buddha was dwelling and made obeisance to him with the two hands, the two knees and the forehead touching the ground. And then raising his joined hands in adoration, standing erect and leaning against the mountain by the name of Hiṅgulaka, he attained Parinibbāna which was the cessation and the end of his existence.

Thereupon, the Buddha, knowing of Ven. Nālaka's attainment of Parinibbāna, proceeded to Hiṅgulaka in a company of monastics and had the remains cremated under his personal supervision. And then, after supervising the collection of the relics and the construction of a shrine over them, the Buddha returned to Rājagaha. [390]

12: Yasa, his Family and Friends

When the Buddha took up his residence at the Deer Park at Isipatana near Bārāṇasī for his Rains Retreat observance, he taught the Discourse about the Turning of the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*, SN 56.11) and the Discourse about the Characteristics of Non-Self (*Anatta-lakkhaṇa-sutta*, SN 22.59) to the Group-of-Five (*pañca-vaggiya*) monks; and the Discourse to Nālaka (*Nālaka-sutta*, Snp 3.11) to Ven. Nālaka and brought about their emancipation.

In Bārāṇasī there lived one Yasa of high birth, son of Sujātā of Senānigama, who had given the thick milk rice to the Bodhisatta, the wife of a rich merchant of Bārāṇasī. Besides being gentle and tender in deed, speech and thought, Yasa possessed a large amount of wealth and a great number of followers.

The rich merchant's son, Yasa, owned three mansions: One residence for the winter, another for the summer and the third for the rainy season. As it was then the rainy season when the Buddha was staying in the Deer Park, Yasa was residing in the mansion suitable for that period. During the whole of the four rainy months, he was surrounded by dancers skilled in music, dancing and singing. There was not a single male person in the whole mansion! All the inmates, the door-keepers and entertainers included, being women, he indulged in the exceedingly grand luxury of sensual pleasures inside the mansion, without even going downstairs.

> His wealthy father thinking: "My son who is enjoying the luxury of this much grandeur should not become afraid and frightened by the sight of a male person," appointed and assigned only women to attend to the many and diverse duties inside that huge mansion.

One day, while thus indulging with relish the grand luxury of sensual pleasures, only with womenfolk who were playing the five kinds of musical instruments, singing and dancing, Yasa fell asleep. Since there was no need for them to entertain and comfort him while he was asleep, the dancers themselves also went to sleep, some embracing or hugging their respective instruments and others using them as pillows. The inside of the main theatrical hall was illuminated brilliantly with the light from the oil-lamps which were kept ablaze throughout the night.

When Yasa woke up from his sleep before others, he saw his retinue of dancers fast asleep most abominably, as if in a graveyard, some hugging the harps, some with drums slung over their shoulders, some embracing the drums, some with their hair dishevelled, some with saliva trickling out from their mouths and the rest mumbling deliriously. On seeing them, the dangerous nature (*ādīnava*) of sensual pleasures (*kāma-guṇa*) became apparent to him. Thus, he felt increasingly repulsed by such pleasures.

Thereupon, being very much overcome with a feeling of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*), he breathed forth all by himself the exalted utterance (*udāna*) thus: *Upaddutaṁ vata bho! Upassatthaṁ vata bho!* "All kinds of defilements (*kilesa*) are hurting and oppressing the wretched body, this large source of suffering (*dukkha*) for all, including myself. All kinds of defilements are tormenting and oppressing the wretched body, this large source of suffering for all, including myself!"

Yasa, being tired of his own experience with sensual objects, rose from his sleeping couch without letting anyone know, put on his golden footwear and left his residence. On reaching the door of the house, he quite easily took his departure from the house as Devas had kept the door open in advance, thinking: "Let no one obstruct Yasa's way to monkhood." In the same manner, the guardian Devas of the town had kept the town-gate open, so that Yasa could quite easily leave the town without any trouble or hindrance and proceed on his journey and eventually arrive early at the Deer Park near Bārāṇasī. Yasa, approaching from a distance, left the walk and sat in the place suitably prepared for the Buddha. Thereupon, on getting close to the Buddha, Yasa again breathed forth the very words of the urgent and exalted utterance (*saṁvega-udāna*) he had uttered before.

Thereupon, the Buddha addressed him with words of welcome and of encouragement [391] thus: "My dear son Yasa, this Dhamma concerning Nibbāna, which I already know is the Dhamma which is not tormented and oppressed by any kind of defilements (*kilesa*). My dear son Yasa, come! Sit here. I will teach you the Good Dhamma leading to Nibbāna." Thereupon, Yasa was pleased and delighted that: "This Dhamma of Nibbāna, realised by the Buddha, is the Dhamma free of torment and oppression from any kind of defilements (*kilesa*)." So, taking off his golden footwear from his feet, he approached the Buddha respectfully, made obeisance and took his seat at an appropriate place.

The Gradual Path

Thereupon, the Buddha taught Yasa, the course of moral practices leading to the paths and fruitions: 1) The Dhamma relating to generosity (*dāna-kathā*); 2) the Dhamma relating to morality (*sīla-kathā*); 3) the Dhamma relating to a happy destination such as a celestial abode (*sagga-kathā*); and 4) the Dhamma relating to the good path and line of conduct for the realization of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna (*magga-kathā*).

1. The Dhamma concerning generosity (*dāna-kathā*): A good deed of generosity is the cause of happiness in the present existence, in the next existence and of the bliss of Nibbāna. It is the primary cause of all kinds of pleasures of Devas and humans. It is also the source of material sense objects (*ārammaṇa-vatthu*) and the well-being resulting from the use of these objects. For beings endangered by misfortune, it is also a good guardian, a place of safety, a resort and refuge. In the present existence, as well as in the next, there is nothing like generosity to lean on, stand on, cling to, as a good guardian, a place of safety, a resort and refuge. Truly, this deed of generosity is like the gem-studded lion throne, for it is to lean on; like the great earth, for it is to stand on; like the rope for the blind to hold on as a support, for it is to cling to.

This meritorious act of generosity is like the ship for crossing over the bad destiny of the lower worlds (*apāya-bhūmi-duggati*). It is like an army commander of valour in the battle-field since it can ward off or give relief from the danger of the enemies such as greed (*lobha*) and stinginess (*macchariya*), etc. It is like a well-guarded city since it can give protection from the danger of poverty. It is like a lotus-flower (*paduma*) since it is not smeared with the dirt of unwholesomeness (*akusala*) such as jealousy and stinginess. It is like fire since it can burn the rubbish of unwholesomeness such as jealousy and stinginess. It is like a poisonous snake since it is of difficult access to the unwholesome enemies.

It is like a lion king since it can free one from fear, and the supporter has no need to be afraid of any enemy in the present existence, much less so in the next. Being of enormous strength, it is like a large elephant, and the supporter is blessed with good friends and associates in the present existence. He is also one who will have great physical and mental strength in the next existence. It is like a bull (*usabha*) of pure white colour since it is considered by learned persons as a sign of auspiciousness auguring extreme and particular prosperity both here

and hereafter, it is also like a king of aerial horses (*valāhaka-sindhava*) since it can transport one from the evil ground of the four misfortunes (*vipatti*) to the danger-free good ground of four good fortunes (*sampatti*).

"This generosity is also the good and true path which I have walked on. It is also the one, with which I have been related to. I have performed great deeds of generosity, such as those of Velāma, Mahā Govinda, Mahā Sudassana and Vessantara, when I was practising and fulfilling the perfections (*pāramī*). In my existence as the virtuous hare I had completely won the hearts of the recipients by giving away in generosity my own body in the blazing heap of fire."

> Here, Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, in the guise of a begging Brahmin, had his mind fixed continually on the courage shown by the wise hare, the Bodhisatta, in his performance of a generous act without any distraction. Hence the Buddha's words: "I had completely won the hearts of the recipients," is a rhetorical way of saying indirectly (*vaṅka-vutti*) that politely implies Sakka's contemplation of the Bodhisatta's boldness in generosity. Here, by means of the words: "By giving away in generosity my own body," the Buddha gave the advice thus: "The Bodhisattas, knowing too well about the merit of generosity, even gave away their lives in generosity. In view of this, should the wise have attachment to an external object (*bāhira-vatthu*)? Certainly they [392] should not."

"Furthermore, the merit of generosity (*dāna*) is capable of bringing the luxury of a Sakka, Māra, Brahma and of a Universal Monarch (*Cakka-vatti*) in the mundane world. It is also capable of bringing the Awakened knowledge (*Bodhi-ñāṇa*) of a disciple (*sāvaka*), a Paccekabuddha and the Supreme Buddha in a supermundane world."

In this manner, the Buddha taught the rich merchant's son, Yasa, the Dhamma concerning generosity (*dāna*).

> Since only those who are generous can observe morality, the Buddha taught morality (*sīla-kathā*) immediately after talk about generosity (*dāna-kathā*). Generosity is the giving away of one's own property for the welfare of the recipients or in order to honour them. This being so, he who practises generosity is a noble individual who really desires the welfare of beings and there can be no reason at all for him to kill another or to steal another's property. And so, since only he who practises generosity can, in fact, observe morality, the Buddha's teaching of morality immediately follows the talk about generosity.

2. Dhamma words concerning morality (*sīla-kathā*): "The good deed of morality is for beings to lean on, stand on, cling to, to be well guarded by, shielded by, to approach, and to take refuge in. This good deed of morality (*sīla*) is the one, with which I have been concerned with. I have observed and guarded it without any breach and interruption in the endless and infinite number of existences, such as the existence as Saṅkhapāla the Nāga King (Ja 524), Bhuridatta the Nāga King (Ja 543), Campeyya the Nāga King (Ja 506), King Sīlava (Ja 51), Mātuposaka the elephant king (Ja 455), Chaddanta the elephant king (Ja 514), and others."

Truly, for the welfare in this present existence and in the next, there is nothing like morality for leaning on, standing on, clinging to, for being guarded by, shielded by, and for taking refuge in. There is no ornament like the ornament of morality, no flower like the flower of morality, and no perfume like the perfume of morality. Furthermore, all humans, together with Devas, are never tired of seeing one bedecked with the flowers of morality, scented with the perfume of morality and adorned with the ornaments of morality.

In this manner, the Buddha taught the rich merchant's son, Yasa, the Dhamma concerning morality (*sīla*).

> In order to show that the happiness in the abode of the Devas is the result of the good deeds of morality, the Buddha taught the Dhamma concerning heaven (*sagga-kathā*) immediately after the talk about morality (*sīla-kathā*).

3. Dhamma words concerning heaven (*sagga-kathā*): The abodes of Devas are desired by everybody. It heartens and exhilarates all. In the abode of Devas, one can have constant joy and bliss. The Cātumahārājika Devas enjoy divine bliss for nine million years, calculated in human terms and Tāvatiṁsa Devas enjoy it for 36 million years.

In this manner, the Buddha taught Yasa, the rich merchant's son, the Dhamma concerning the bliss of the abode of Devas. In fact, divine bliss is so enormous that Buddhas could not do full justice to it when describing it.

4. After teaching the bliss of the divine abodes, the Buddha immediately taught the Dhamma concerning the noble path (*ariya-magga*), in order to show that even divine bliss is perpetually oppressed by the defilements (*kilesa*) such as lust (*rāga*), and to show that since the noble path (*ariya-magga*) is entirely free from

the defilments (*kilesa*), it cannot be oppressed by it. So, for teaching the noble path, the Buddha taught initially the Dhamma, describing the defects of sensual pleasures (*kāmānaṁ ādīnava-kathā*) together with the Dhamma describing the advantages of renunciation (*nekkhamme ānisaṁsa-kathā*), beginning with monkhood that leads to freedom from sensuality (*kāma-guṇa*) and ending with Nibbāna, as both the defects of sensual pleasures and [393] the advantages of renunciation form the means of realisation of the paths (*magga*).

The Buddha, after having enchanted the rich merchant's son, Yasa, with the Dhamma relating to divine bliss, taught him like a man who decorates a large elephant to make it most beautiful and then cuts off its trunk abruptly as follows: "This so-called bliss of the abode of Devas also has the nature of impermanence (*anicca*). It has the nature of instability (*addhuva*). One should not have desire and attachment for such bliss. The material objects of sensual pleasure are, in fact, more of misery than of pleasure. These material objects of sensual pleasure are made up of pleasure, which is the size of a small seed, but they are full of defects which is similar to the size of Mount Meru."

As already reflected upon and realized by him at the time of his renunciation of the world, the Buddha elaborated thus on the defects of sensual pleasure, on the vulgar state of things adhered to by ignoble persons but avoided by noble ones, and on the way beings were oppressed and made miserable by sensual pleasure.

And then, inasmuch as there was an abundance of defects in sensual pleasure, the Buddha also elaborated on the merit of the absence of defects and the paucity of suffering in renunciation (*nekkhamma*) beginning with monkhood and ending in Nibbāna.

Yasa becomes a Stream-enterer

Having taught the Dhamma on generosity and other virtues, the Buddha knew that Yasa's mind had become firm, adaptable, soft, free from hindrances, elated, gladdened, and pellucid, so he taught the Dhamma distinctive to him (*sāmukkaṁsikā Dhamma*) of the four truths: the truth of suffering (*dukkha-sacca*), the truth of the origin of suffering (*samudaya-sacca*), the truth of the cessation of suffering (*nirodha-sacca*) and the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering (*magga-sacca*).

> It means to say that after the Buddha had taught Yasa the teachings in series beginning with generosity, and the mind continuum of Yasa became free from the mental blemishes such as lack of faith, indolence, unawareness, restlessness and doubt, and that he was therefore in a frame of mind receptive to the profound Dhamma of the four truths. Being free from the defilements of views (*diṭṭhi*), conceit (*māna*), etc., his mind became soft and pliable like pure gold. It was devoid of the five hindrances. It was accompanied by great joy and gladness (*pīti-pāmojja*) in the excellent path to Nibbāna. Being endowed with faith (*saddhā*) his mind was very clear. Only then did the Buddha teach him the profound Dhamma of the four truths of suffering, arising, cessation and the path by the method of approach employed only by Buddhas in accordance with the desires and dispositions of beings, and it enabled him to realize the paths and fruitions.

On being thus taught, to cite a worldly example, as the cloth washed and thoroughly cleansed of dirt would well absorb the laundryman's dye in yellow, red, etc., and turn bright, so the understanding of the Dhamma (*Dhamma-cakkhu-vijjā*), which is the insight knowledge of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*), arose instantly and clearly in the mind continuum of Yasa, for he had paid attention presently to the truth of cessation (*nirodha-sacca*), Nibbāna, and eradicated the dust of the defilements, such as lust (*rāga*) and so on; for he had completely eliminated the defilement of views (*diṭṭhi*), doubt (*vicikicchā*) and the defilements (*kilesa*) that lead to suffering states; for he had understood with strong conviction, which could not be reversed by others, that all conditioned things are subject to destruction and disappearance, and because he was endowed with quick insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*), sharp intelligence, easy practice and ability to have rapid realization (*sukha-paṭipadā-khippabhiññā*). All this means that Yasa was established as a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*).

> Herein, if the laundryman dyed the soiled and dirty cloth in yellow, red, etc., there would be no effect because the dye would not remain fast on such cloth. In the same way, though the minds of beings stained with the dirt of the hindrances, such as sensual desire, malice, etc., were dyed with the dye of the four noble truths, there could not be the desired effect, or lasting result.
>
> If the laundryman, only after cleaning the dirty cloth, by placing it [394] on the surface of a stone slab, dousing it with water, and applying soap,

cowdung and ash to the stains and rubbing and washing, can he give it any colour he wants, and the result will be the bright colour of the cloth newly dyed.

In the same way, the Buddha, the laundry-master of the four truths (*sacca*), so to say, also made the mind continuum of Yasa which had been soiled like the cloth with the dirt of the defilments, clean and free from the hindrances (*nīvaraṇa-kilesa*) by placing it on the surface of the stone slab of successive Dhamma discourses (*anupubbi-kathā*) and by dousing it with the pure water of his faith (*saddhā*) and rubbing and washing it with his mindfulness, concentration and wisdom (*sati-samādhi-paññā*).

Thereafter, when the cloth of his mind continuum was given the colour of the Dhamma of the four noble truths, that is, when the Dhamma of the four noble truths was taught, the knowledge of the path to Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga-ñāṇa*) arose in Yasa's mind. That is to say, the dye of the Dhamma of the four noble truths became so fast in Yasa's mind that nobody could undo it.

Yasa's Father becomes a Stream-enterer

Sujātā, Yasa's mother and the wife of the rich merchant, rose from her bed early in the morning and went to Yasa's mansion, and looked around. Not seeing her son, she became worried and reported to Yasa's father: "Sir, l do not see your son Yasa!" Thereupon, his father hurriedly sent out skilful horse-men in the four directions, as for himself, he set out in the direction of Isipatana Deer Park and, finding, on the way, the prints of the golden footwear worn by his son, he followed the trail of these prints.

The Buddha saw Yasa's father from a distance, and thinking: "It would be good to have Yasa hidden by my supernatural power so that the father cannot see him," he kept Yasa out of his father's sight.

The rich merchant came to the presence of the Buddha and addressed him: "Exalted Buddha, have you seen Yasa the young man of good family?" Thereupon, the Buddha replied: "Rich merchant, if you want to see your son, you just sit here. Even while sitting here, you will be able to see your son seated close by." Thereupon, the rich merchant was delighted with the thought: "I am going to see my son Yasa seated close by, even while I am sitting here!" After

paying respects to the Buddha with due respect and devotion, he sat down in an appropriate place.

When he was thus sitting, the Buddha taught him progressively in the same way as aforesaid: 1) the Dhamma relating to generosity (*dāna-kathā*); 2) the Dhamma relating to morality (*sīla-kathā*); 3) the Dhamma relating to heaven (*sagga-kathā*); and 4) the Dhamma relating to the good path and line of conduct for realization of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna (*magga-kathā*). When the Buddha knew that the merchant's mind had become adaptable, soft, hindrance-free, elated, gladdened, and pellucid, he taught the Dhamma of the four truths originally discovered by him, and the rich merchant became a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*).

Then Yasa's father addressed the Buddha thus: "So delightful is it, exalted Buddha! So delightful is it, exalted Buddha! As though what is placed downward has been turned over, so goes a worldly simile, as what is covered has been disclosed, as a man losing his way has been guided in the right direction; as a lamp that has been lighted in the dark with the thought: 'Those who have eyes may see the various shapes of things,' so the Buddha has clearly taught me the Dhamma in manifold ways. Exalted Buddha, I recognize and approach the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha for refuge and shelter. May you, exalted Buddha, take me as a devotee with the threefold refuge from today onwards till the end of my life!" Thereafter, he took supermundane refuge.

> Yasa's father, the wealthy man, was the first layman to become a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), a noble disciple, in the Dispensation of the Buddha, and he was the first Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) among lay noble devotees with the full set of the three-worded refuge (*te-vācika-saraṇa-gamana*) in the world.

Yasa becomes an Arahat

Even while the Buddha was teaching the Dhamma to his father, Yasa realised the three higher paths and became an Arahat by reflecting on the four noble truths in accordance with the course of practice that had already been known to him since his attainment of Stream-entry. Thus Yasa became entirely free from attachment for anything through [395] craving and wrong view (*taṇhā-diṭṭhi*) as "I," or "mine" and became completely emancipated from the pollutants (*āsava*) which ceased by way of non-arising.

Thereupon, the Buddha put an end to what he had created by his supernatural power by not letting the son and the father see each other, thinking: "With the pollutants (*āsava*) extinct, the man of good family Yasa has indeed become an Arahat. He will not slip back to the world of householders or in any way indulge in sensual pleasures as formerly. This being so, it would be good if I withdraw the miracle that has prevented the son and the father seeing each other!" and he made the resolve that they should now see each other.

Suddenly, seeing his son sitting near him, the father was very much delighted and told him thus: "My dear son Yasa! Your mother has fallen into a state of anxiety and grief and is crying from not seeing you. Save your mother's life!"

Thereupon, without replying to his father, Yasa looked up at the Buddha who questioned the rich merchant thus: "Rich supporter, how will you consider the question I am going to ask you now? He who has embraced the four truths with the intelligence of a learner (*sekkha-ñāṇa*), as you have done yourself, attains the Stream-entry path (*Sotāpatti-magga*); and after reflecting upon and realizing the four truths through the course of practice that has been known to him since his attainment of Stream-entry reaches the three higher paths successively and becomes an Arahat with his pollutants destroyed. Will he, having become an Arahat, ever slip back to the household-life and indulge in sensual pleasures as he had done before?" The rich merchant replied: "He will not, Venerable Buddha."

Again, in order to make his words even more explicit the Buddha addressed the rich merchant: "Rich supporter, your son Yasa, who has understood the four truths with the intelligence of a learner (*sekkha-ñāṇa*), as you have done yourself, attained the path of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*) even before you came here; and after reflecting upon and realizing the four truths through the course of practice that has been known to him since his attainment of the Stream-entry path, he has reached the three higher paths successively and became an Arahat with his pollutants gone. Rich supporter, the man of good family Yasa will never slip back to the household-life and indulge in sensual pleasures as he had done before."

Thereupon, the rich merchant said: "Exalted Buddha! Since the mind of Yasa has been entirely freed from attachment for anything through craving and wrong view as 'I,' or 'mine' and is emancipated from the pollutants, he has well

availed himself of happiness and gain; and he has also had the full benefit of his existence as a human. Exalted Buddha! In order that I may gain merit and have delight, may you kindly accept my offering of a meal with the man of good family Yasa as a companion following behind you." On thus being invited, the Buddha remained silent, signifying his acceptance of the rich merchant's invitation to the morning meal.

Thereupon, knowing very well that the Buddha had accepted his invitation the rich merchant rose from his seat and returned to his house, after paying respects to the Buddha with due respect and circumambulation.

Yasa becomes a Monk

Then, soon after the rich merchant had left, Yasa made obeisance to the Buddha respectfully and requested ordination: "Exalted Buddha! May I receive the going forth (*pabbajjā*) and higher ordination (*upasampadā*) in your presence." And, the Buddha stretched out his golden hand and called out: *Ehi bhikkhu! Svākkhāto Dhammo, cara brahma-cariyaṁ sammā dukkhassa, anta-kiriyāyā*, "come, monk! receive the admission and ordination you have asked for. The Dhamma has been well-taught by me. Strive to take up the noble practices which form the moral training in my Dispensation, till you reach your last thought moment and dying consciousness in total emancipation (*Parinibbāna-cuti-citta*)." No sooner had the Buddha uttered this than Yasa was transformed into a full-fledged monk, like a monk of 60 years' standing, readily dressed and equipped with the eight requisites created by supernatural power (*iddhi-maya-parikkhāra*), each in its proper place; he was then in a posture of respectfully paying homage to the Buddha.

> The utterance by the [396] Buddha: *Ehi bhikkhu*, served as ordination for Ven. Yasa. There was no need to undergo the now normal ordination procedure involving a boundary hall (*sīma*).
>
> At the time when Ven. Yasa became a monk, there were seven venerable Arahats in the world, namely: the Buddha, the Group-of-Five monks and Ven. Yasa himself.

Yasa's Mother and Ex-wife become Sream-Enterers

After he had ordained the rich merchant's son, Yasa, as a summoned monastic, the Buddha proceeded in the following morning to the house of his father, the

rich merchant. After adjusting his robe and carrying his alms bowl, and with Ven. Yasa as a follower-monk, and upon arrival the Buddha sat cross-legged in the place already prepared. Thereupon, the rich merchant's wife Sujātā, who was the mother of Ven. Yasa, together with Yasa's ex-wife, approached the Buddha and, after paying respects to him with due respect and devotion, took their seats in the appropriate places.

While they were seated there, the Buddha taught Yasa's mother and his ex-wife the gradual course of practice leading to the paths and fruitions: 1) The Dhamma relating to generosity (*dāna-kathā*); 2) the Dhamma relating to morality (*sīla-kathā*); 3) the Dhamma relating to a happy destination (*sagga-kathā*); and 4) the Dhamma relating to the good path, and the line of conduct for the realization of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna (*magga-kathā*). Then he showed the demerits of sensual pleasures and the merits of renouncing the household life. Thereafter, when the Buddha knew that the mind of both of them had become adaptable, soft and free from hindrances, eager, gladdened, purified and pellucid, he taught the Dhamma that was which was originally discovered by him (*sāmukkaṁsikā Dhamma-desanā*) of the four truths. Then Yasa's mother and his ex-wife became established in the fruit of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

Thereupon, Yasa's mother, Sujātā, and his ex-wife received the supermundane refuges (*lokuttara-saraṇa-gamana*), by addressing the Buddha thus: "So delightful is it, exalted Buddha! So delightful is it, exalted Buddha! As though what was placed downward has been turned over, so goes a worldly simile, as what is covered has been disclosed, as a man losing his way has been guided in the right direction, as a lamp that has been lighted in the dark with the thought, "Those who have eyes may see the various shapes of things," so the Buddha has clearly taught us the Dhamma in manifold ways. Exalted Buddha, the two of us approach the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha for refuge and shelter. May you, exalted Buddha, take us as female lay-disciples from now on till the end of our lives."

> The rich merchant's wife, Sujātā, and Yasa's ex-wife were the noble disciples (*ariya-sāvaka*) who were the first female lay-devotees to be established in the three-worded refuge (*te-vācika-saraṇa-gamana*) in the world.

Then the mother, the father and the ex-wife of Ven. Yasa served the Buddha and Ven. Yasa with hard and soft food of excellent quality with their own hands (*sāhatthika*) and, on knowing that the Buddha had finished the meal, they took their appropriate seats, which were free from the six faults. Thereupon, the Buddha rose from his seat after teaching the Dhamma to the mother, the father and Yasa's ex-wife, and left for the Deer Park at Isipatana.

> Here, according to the sub-commentary Diamond Intelligence (*Vajira-buddhi*), it should be noted that the Buddha first taught the Dhamma to the mother and the ex-wife of Ven. Yasa before taking the alms food because otherwise they would not have been able to perform the alms giving (*dāna*) joyfully, with the spite of sorrow piercing their bodies caused by Yasa's joining the monkhood: and also because this would have caused their displeasure with the Buddha to the point of being unable to gain the paths and fruitions. The Buddha accordingly took the alms food after first teaching them the Dhamma in order to allay their sorrow.

Yasa's 54 Friends enter the Monkhood

In Bārāṇasī, there were four rich merchants' sons, by the names of Vimala, Subāhu, Punnaji and Gavampati, who were descendants of rich ancestors and were old friends of [397] Ven. Yasa while he was a layman. On hearing that their friend Yasa had become a monk after relinquishing his enormous wealth and property, these four rich merchants' sons reflected and considered thus: "Our friend Yasa has given up family life and the world and entered the monkhood by shaving his head and beard and putting on robes. Therefore, the Doctrine and Discipline (*Dhamma-Vinaya*) of the Buddha cannot be inferior, it will certainly be superior. Nor can the state of monkhood be inferior, it will certainly be superior." And so, they went and approached Ven. Yasa and, after paying respects to him with due respect and devotion, they remained standing at an appropriate distance.

Thereupon, Ven. Yasa took his old friends to the Buddha and after paying respects to him with due respect and devotion and taking a seat at an appropriate place, he requested the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha! These four rich merchants' sons, by the names of Vimala, Subāhu, Punnaji, and Gavampati, are of high birth and are descendants of rich ancestors in Bārāṇasī. They are also my old friends from when I was a layman. Exalted Buddha! May you kindly instruct and exhort these four old friends of mine."

Then the Buddha taught them in the way aforesaid, the course of moral practice leading to the paths and fruitions: 1) The Dhamma relating to generosity (*dāna-kathā*); 2) the Dhamma relating to morality (*sīla-kathā*); 3) the Dhamma relating to a happy destination (*sagga-kathā*); and 4) the Dhamma relating to the good path and the line of conduct for the realization of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna (*magga-kathā*). Thereafter, when the Buddha knew that the minds of all four of them had become adaptable, soft and free from hindrances, eager, gladdened, purified and pellucid, he delivered the Dhamma which was originally discovered by him (*sāmukkaṁsikā Dhamma-desanā*) of the four truths; and the four rich merchants' sons, who were the old companions of Ven. Yasa, became established in the fruition of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

After the four rich merchants' sons had been established in the fruition of Stream-entry, they requested the Buddha that they may be ordained as monks thus: "Exalted Buddha! May we receive the going forth (*pabbajjā*) and the higher ordination (*upasampadā*) in your presence." And, the Buddha stretched out his golden hand and called out thus: *Etha bhikkhave*, etc., "come, monks! Receive the admission and ordination you have asked for, my dear sons! The Dhamma has been well taught by me. Strive to practise for the three higher paths in order to bring about the end of the round of suffering." No sooner had the Buddha uttered this, than the four rich merchant's sons turned into fully fledged monks, like senior monks of 60 years standing, readily dressed up and equipped with the eight supernaturally-made requisites (*iddhi-maya-parikkhāra*), each in its proper place, paying homage to the Buddha with due respect. The signs of being laymen disappeared miraculously and they were transformed into the forms of monks.

> Just the utterance by the Buddha of the words: *Etha bhikkhave* … served as the ordination for the four of them. There was no need to be ordained in a boundary hall (*sīma*).

After they had been ordained as summoned monastics, the Buddha instructed and exhorted them with words of Dhamma. On being thus instructed and exhorted with words of Dhamma, the four monks, before long, became Arahats with their pollutants being destroyed. At the time when the four rich merchants' sons had became Arahats, there were altogether eleven Arahats among men in the human world, namely, the Buddha, the Group-of-Five monks, Ven. Yasa, Ven. Vimala, Ven. Subāhu, Ven. Punnaji and Ven. Gavampati.

Yasa's Fifty Friends become Monks

Then the 50 companions of Ven. Yasa, while he was a layman, who were descendants of noble ancestors and who were living in rural areas, on hearing that their friend Yasa had become a monk after relinquishing his enormous wealth and property, reflected and considered thus: "Our companion Yasa has given up family life and the world and become a monk by shaving his head and beard and putting on the robes. It cannot [398] therefore be that the Doctrine and Discipline (*Dhamma-Vinaya*) of the Buddha will be inferior or ignoble, it will certainly be superior and noble. It cannot be that the state of monkhood will also be inferior and ignoble, it will certainly be superior and noble." And so, the 50 companions approached Ven. Yasa and, after paying respects to him with due respect and devotion, they remained standing at an appropriate distance.

Thereupon, Ven. Yasa took the 50 men of the countryside and of high birth, who were his old companions while he was a layman, to the Buddha and, after paying respects to him with due respect and devotion and taking his seat at an appropriate distance, he addressed the Buddha thus: "Exalted Buddha! These 50 residents of the countryside are descendants of rich ancestors. They were also my old companions while I was a layman. Exalted Buddha! May you kindly instruct and discipline these 50 sons of high birth who are my old companions."

The Buddha taught them in the way as aforesaid, the course of moral practice leading to the paths and fruitions: 1) The Dhamma relating to generosity (*dāna-kathā*); 2) the Dhamma relating to morality (*sīla-kathā*); 3) the Dhamma relating to a happy destination (*sagga-kathā*); and 4) the Dhamma relating to the good path and line of conduct for realization of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna (*magga-kathā*) as well as the dangers of sensuality (*kāmānaṁ ādīnava*) together with the advantages of renunciation (*nekkhamma-ānisaṁsa*) in a progressive manner. Thereafter, when the Buddha knew that the minds of the 50 sons of high birth had become adaptable, soft and free from the hindrances, eager, gladdened, purified and pellucid, he delivered the Dhamma which was originally discovered by him (*sāmukkaṁsikā Dhamma-desanā*) of the four truths; and the 50 sons of noble birth, who were the old companions of Ven. Yasa, became established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

After they were established in Stream-entry, they requested the Buddha that they may be ordained as monks thus: "Exalted Buddha! May we receive the

going forth (*pabbajjā*) and the higher ordination (*upasampadā*) in your presence." And, the Buddha stretched out his golden hand and called out in the same way as before: *Etha bhikkhave*, etc., "come, monks! Receive the admission and ordination you have asked for. My dear sons! The Dhamma has been well taught by me. Strive to practise for the three higher paths in order to bring about the end of the round of suffering." No sooner had the Buddha uttered this than the 50 men of noble birth instantly turned into full-fledged monks, like senior monks (*thera*) of 60 years standing, readily dressed and equipped with the eight supernaturally-made requisites (*iddhi-maya-parikkhāra*), each in its proper place, paying homage to the Buddha with due respect. The signs of being laymen disappeared miraculously and they were transformed into the forms of monks.

> Just the utterance by the Buddha of the words: *Etha bhikkhave* … served as ordination for the 50 clansmen. There was no need to be ordained in a boundary hall (*sīma*).

After they had been ordained as summoned monastics (*ehi-bhikkhu*), the Buddha instructed and exhorted them with words of Dhamma. On being thus instructed and exhorted with words of Dhamma, the 50 monks of noble birth, before long, became Arahats with their pollutants (*āsava*) destroyed. At the time, when the 50 sons of high birth became Arahats, there were altogether 61 venerable Arahats, including the previous eleven in the human world.

Meditation on Impurity in the Past

Once upon a time in the distant past, 55 companions formed an association of volunteers for performing deeds of merit. They carried out the work of cremating, free of charge, the dead bodies of those who died in destitution. One day, finding the dead body of a pregnant woman who had died in destitution, they took her to the cemetery for cremation. Out of the 55 volunteer companions, 50 of them went back to the village after asking the other five companions to take up the duty, saying: "You do the cremation."

Thereupon, as the young man, the future wealthy son Yasa, who was the leader of the remaining five, carried out the cremation by piercing and rending the corpse with a pointed bamboo pole and causing it to turn over. In so doing, he gained the perception of the impure and loathsome nature of the body (*asubha-saññā*). The young man, the future Yasa, advised the remaining four companions thus: "Friends, look at this unclean, and disgusting [399] corpse."

The four companions also gained the perception of the impure from the corpse (*chava*) by following Yasa's advice.

When the five companions returned to the village after having finished the work of cremation and related what they had found and had understood of the loathsome nature (*asubha*) to the 50 associates who had returned to the village, the latter also gained the perception of the impure and loathsome nature of the body (*asubha-saññā*).

Besides relating the matter to the companions, the young and leading man, the future Yasa, recounted the facts regarding the loathsome nature also to his parents and his wife on reaching home; and so his benefactors, his parents and his wife, also gained the perception of the impure and loathsome nature of the body (*asubha-saññā*).

These 58 persons, headed by the future wealthy son Yasa, continued to practise and develop meditation on the impurity and loathsomeness of the body (*asubha-bhāvanā*) based on the perception they had gained. These, in fact, were the past deeds of merit of these 58 persons.

By virtue of the past deeds of merit, in the present existence as the son of the rich merchant of Bānārasī, there appeared to Ven. Yasa the perception of the impure and loathsome nature of the body (*asubha-saññā*), and the impression of a cemetery on seeing the conditions of the dancers. The realisation of the paths and fruitions by the 58 persons was due to their possession of the supporting (*upanissaya*) merit resulting from developing the perception of the loathsome (*asubha-bhāvanā*) and having practised and developed it in a previous existence. [400]

13: The Buddha sends out the 60 Arahats

The Buddha observed the first rains-residence after his becoming a Buddha at the Deer Park at Isipatana. While staying there till the full moon of the month of October (*Assayuja*), the Buddha, one day, sent for the 60 venerables and asked them to go on missionary work thus: "Monastics I have achieved complete freedom from all the snares of impurities such as craving (*taṇhā*) and greed (*lobha*), namely, the snare of craving and greed for the sensual pleasure of Devas and the snare of craving and greed for the sensual pleasure of humans. Monastics, you also have achieved complete freedom from all the snares of impurities such as craving and greed, namely, the snare of craving and greed for the sensual pleasure of Devas and the snare of craving and greed for the sensual pleasure of humans.

Monastics, go out in all eight directions for the mundane and supermundane welfare, prosperity and happiness of many beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas covering a distance of one league a day at the most. Let not two of you travel together on each journey, for if two take the same route, while one is teaching, the other will remain idle, just sitting in silence.

Monastics, teach the Dhamma that is full of virtuous qualities in all its three phases: the beginning, the middle and the end; and endowed with the spirit and the letter. Give the Devas and humans, the threefold training of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*), which is perfect in all aspects and free from the stain of wrong conduct (*duccarita*).

Monastics, there are many beings, such as humans, Devas and Brahmas, who have but a little dust of impurity in their wisdom-eyes. Through not hearing the Dhamma, they will suffer a great loss of the extraordinary Dhamma which gains the paths and the fruitions. There will appear clearly some Devas and humans who will realize the nature and meaning of the Dhamma perfectly and thoroughly.

Monastics I too will not remain in this Deer Park, which has excellent dwellings built for me, and receiving the treatment and comfort with the four requisites given by my attending supporters, but will proceed to Uruvelā forest of Senānigama to teach the Dhamma and to convert the reclusive brothers and their 1,000 ascetics."

In the above paragraph of the Buddha's speech, the words: "The Dhamma that is full of virtuous qualities in all its three phases: the beginning, the middle and the end," refers to two good qualities (*kalyāṇa*), the good quality of the Dispensation (*Sāsana*) and the good quality of the teaching (*desanā*).

Of the two categories of good qualities, morality (*sīla*) forms the quality at the beginning of the Dispensation (*Sāsana*); concentration (*samatha*), insight (*vipassanā*) and fourfold path (*magga*) form the quality at the middle of the Dispensation (*Sāsana*); the fourfold fruition and Nibbāna form the quality at the end of the Dispensation (*Sāsana*).

Alternately, we can take morality and concentration as the beginning, insight-knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) and path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*) as the middle and fruition (*phala*) and Nibbāna as the end qualities.

Another alternative is morality, concentration and the path-knowledges are the beginning, the fourfold paths are the middle and the fourfold fruitions and Nibbāna are the end qualities.

As regards the good qualities of the teaching (*desanā*), in a four line verse, the first foot is the beginning, the second and the third feet are the middle and the fourth foot at the end are the qualities. If a verse has five or six feet, the first foot as the beginning, the second, third and fourth foot are the middle and the final fifth or the sixth feet are the end. [401]

In a discourse with only one contextual connective (*anusandhi*), the introduction (*nidāna*) of the discourse is the beginning, the group of words, *Idaṁ avoca*… and so on, are the end and the remaining group of words are the middle qualities.

In a discourse with many contextual connectives, the introduction is the beginning, the group of words, *Idaṁ avoca*… and so on are the end, and the group of words with many contextual connectives are the middle. By discourse (*sutta*) is meant that which shows one or two or three of the good qualities of the teaching.

Māra's Visit and Deterrence

When the Buddha was thus addressing and sending out the 60 Arahats as missionaries, Māra thought to himself: "As if planning to wage a big war, this monk Gotama is sending out 60 Arahats, the military commanders of the Dispensation (*Sāsana*), by saying: "Do not travel in twos on each journey.

Disseminate the Dhamma." I feel uneasy even if anyone of these 60 messengers preaches the Dhamma. How will I be if all 60 Arahats preach the Dhamma as planned by the monk Gotama? I shall now deter the monk Gotama from doing so!" So he approached the Buddha and tried to discourage him by saying thus:

Baddhosi sabba-pāsehi, ye dibbā ye ca mānusā,
mahā-bandhana-baddhosi, na me samaṇa mokkhasi.

O Monk Gotama! You are bound and caught in all the snares of impurities such as craving (*taṇhā*) and greed (*lobha*), namely, the snare of craving and greed for the sensual pleasure of Devas and the snare of craving and greed for the sensual pleasure of humans. You are tied down in the bondage of defilements (*kilesa*) in the prison of the three existences. O Monk Gotama! For that reason you will not be able to escape, in any way, from my domain in the three existences.

Māra said this with the hope: "On my speaking thus, the great monk will not endeavour to emancipate other beings from Saṁsāra."

Thereupon, the Buddha, in order to show that what Māra had spoken and the actual reality were far apart, as is the sky and the earth and that they were directly opposed to each other as fire and water, addressed Māra in these bold words:

Muttāhaṁ sabba-pāsehi, ye dibbā ye ca mānusā,
mahā-bandhana-muttomhi, nihato tvam-asi antaka.

You evil Māra, heretic and murderer! I am one who has been completely freed from all the snares of such impurities as craving (*taṇhā*) and greed (*lobha*), namely, the snare of craving and greed for the sensual pleasure of Devas and the snare of craving and greed for the sensual pleasure of humans. I am also truly one who has escaped, once and for all, from the bondage of the defilements (*kilesa*) in the prison of the three existences. I have totally vanquished you in this battle with the defilements. You have, in fact, suffered total defeat.

Thereupon, Māra again repeated prohibitory words thus:

Antalikkha-caro pāso, yvāyaṁ carati mānaso,
tena taṁ bādhayissāmi, na me samaṇa mokkhasi.

> O monk Gotama! Such a snare as passion (*rāga*) is generated in the minds of beings and is capable of inescapably binding down even the individuals [402] who possess the supernormal powers (*abhiññā*) and can fly through the air. I shall bind you and kill you by means of that snare of passion. O monk Gotama! In no way will you escape from my domain in the three existences."

Thereupon, the Buddha addressed Māra in these bold words:

> *Rūpā saddā rasā gandhā, phoṭṭhabbā ca manoramā;*
> *ettha me vigato chando, nihato tvam-asi antaka.*
>
> You, evil Māra, heretic and murderer! In this world, there are clearly evident the five objects of sensual pleasure: various sights, sounds, tastes, odours and contacts, which can delight and give pleasure to Devas and humans. Your snare of passion will be able to bind down only those who are not free from craving and greed for attachment and enjoyment of the said five objects of sensual pleasure. I am entirely free from craving, greed, desire and passion for attachment and enjoyment of these five objects of sensual pleasure. In this battle of the defilements therefore, I have totally vanquished you. You have, in fact, suffered total defeat.

Māra was at first trying to dissuade the Buddha and hoping: "Maybe he will give up thinking that a powerful Deva has come and dissuaded him," but since the Buddha had addressed him saying: "Māra! I have totally vanquished you." He became sad and dejected, and saying: "The exalted Buddha has known me for what I am! The Gracious One has known me for what I am," and he disappeared from that very place.

The Buddha's Permission to Ordain

> At the time of the first rainy season (*Vassa*) when the Buddha sent the monks on missionary work, he had not yet enjoined the monks to observe the Rains Retreat. And so the monks brought to his presence persons who were eager to be admitted as novices and ordained as monks from various places and various districts with the thought that: "These prospective persons will be admitted as novices and ordained as monks by the Buddha himself," when they were brought, the monks as well as these prospective candidates suffered much trouble and fatigue.

When the missionary monastics taught the Dhamma, not only those who were endowed with past meritorious deeds to become summoned monastics (*ehi-bhikkhu*) but also those who were not so endowed with such deeds, would aspire after admission and ordination. The Buddhas usually did not confer monkhood on those of the latter kind. But when there were mixed crowds of aspirants, both deserving or not deserving the summoned monastic proclamation, the Buddha, being desirous of laying down the procedure for ordination of those persons not deserving of the summoned monastic ordination, considered thus: "At the present moment, the monks are bringing to my presence prospective persons wishing for admission, wishing for ordination, from various places and various districts as they are under the impression that these candidates will be admitted and ordained by the Buddha himself and thereby the monks, as well as the prospective persons, suffer much trouble and fatigue." It would be good if I give permission to the monastics thus: "Monks! You yourselves may now admit, may now ordain prospective persons at any place and in any district."

Thereafter, the Buddha emerged from seclusion and gave the monks a Dhamma talk, introductory to his consideration. He related fully what had occurred to him while he was remaining alone in the day time: "Monastics! You yourselves may now admit, may now ordain prospective persons willing to become novices and monastics at any place and in any district. I allow admission and ordination yourselves, my dear sons, at any place and in any district.

Monastics! You should admit, and ordain a candidate in this manner: First his hair and beard should be shaved. Then he should don the monk's robe. And then let him cover one [403] shoulder with the robe and make obeisance at the senior monk's feet; let him squat down and raise his hands joined together, and ask him to repeat after you the three refuges:

Buddhaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi,
Dhammaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi,
Saṅghaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi.
Dutiyam-pi Buddhaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi,
Dutiyam-pi Dhammaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi,
Dutiyam-pi Saṅghaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchcāmi.
Tatiyam-pi Buddhaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi,
Tatiyam-pi Dhammaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi,
Tatiyam-pi Saṅghaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi.

I go for refuge to the Buddha,
I go for refuge to the Dhamma,
I go for refuge to the Saṅgha.

For a second time …

For a third time …

Monastics! I, allow you to confer admission and ordination by the three refuges."

> Here, conferment of admission and ordination consists in these three: 1) The shaving of the candidate's hair and beard (*kesacchedana*); 2) the donning of the monk's robe on him (*kāsāyacchādana*); and 3) the taking of the three refuges.

Māra's Second Visit

After the Buddha had taken residence for four months of the rainy season until the full moon of the month of November (*Kattikā*), in the Deer Park at Isipatana, he assembled the monks and addressed them thus: "Monastics, my dear sons! I have attained the incomparable and supreme Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) through right and proper mindfulness, as well as through right and proper effort. I have been absorbed in the attainment of the Arahat fruition without interruption. Monastics! You also endeavour to gain and achieve the incomparable and supreme Arahat fruition through right and proper mindfulness, as well as through right and proper effort. Realise the incomparable and supreme Arahat fruition. Be absorbed in the attainment of the Arahat fruition without interruption."

> The Buddha gave this advice with these objects in view: Not to let them falter on account of the underlying tendency (*vāsanā*) which had taken root ever since the time of their existence as worldlings (*puthujjana-bhāva*) thinking: "We are now Arahats with the pollutants dried up. What benefit will accrue to us by the practice of meditation? There will be none!" And to make them spend their time developing the attainment of fruition (*phala-samāpatti*) in forest-dwellings on the outskirts of towns and villages; and thus to make other monastics see and follow their example (*diṭṭhānugati*) of being absorbed in the attainment of fruition.

Thereupon, Māra came to where the Buddha was and spoke to deter him:

Baddhosi Māra-pāsehi, ye dibbā ye ca mānusā,
mahā-bandhana-baddhosi, na me samaṇa mokkhasi.

Monk Gotama! You are bound and caught in all the snares of impurities such as craving (*taṇhā*) and greed (*lobha*), namely, the snare of craving and greed for the sensual pleasure of Devas and the snare of craving and greed for the sensual pleasure of humans. You are tied down in the bondage of the defilements (*kilesa*) in the prison of the three existences. Monk Gotama! You will not for that reason be able to escape in any way from my domain in the three existences.

Thereupon, the Buddha, in order to show that what he had spoken and the actual reality [404] were quite far apart, as the sky and the earth and that they were directly opposed to each other, as fire and water, addressed Māra in these defiant words:

Muttāhaṁ Māra-pāsehi, ye dibbā ye ca mānusā,
mahā-bandhana-muttomhi, nihato tvam-asi antaka.

You, Wicked Māra! I am one who is completely freed from all the snares of impurities such as craving (*taṇhā*) and greed (*lobha*), namely, the snare of craving and greed for the sensual pleasure of Devas and the snare of craving and greed for the sensual pleasure of humans. I am also truly one who has escaped once and for all from the bondage of the defilements (*kilesa*) in the prison of the three existences. I have totally vanquished you in this battle with the defilements. You have, in fact, suffered total defeat.

Whereupon, Māra became sad and dejected, saying: "The Exalted Buddha knows me for what I am. The Fortunate One knows me for what I am," and he disappeared from that very place.

The Auspicious Group-of-Thirty

Buddhas dwelling in any one place never felt uneasy and unhappy because of it being devoid of shady spots and water, of its miserable living conditions, and of the people there having little or no virtues such as faith and so on. When they have stayed in a place for a long time, it was not because there were enough shelters and water and the inhabitants had faith, so that they found joy and comfort there, thinking: "We can live in this place happily!"

13: The Buddha sends out the Sixty Arahats – 526

> The Buddhas stay at a certain place because they would like to have beings established in the welfare and prosperity of the refuges, morality, the monastic life and the paths and fruitions, provided they were prepared to take the refuges, to observe the eight and ten precepts, to enter the monastic life, and provided they had past acts of special merit to serve as supporting conditions (*upanissaya-paccaya*) for their realization of the paths and fruitions. It was the usual way of Buddhas to emancipate beings worthy of emancipation and, if there were no more to emancipate, they make the departure for another place.

The Buddha remained at the Deer Park at Isipatana, near Bārāṇasī, until his desire to emancipate the Group-of-Five monks and others had been fulfilled, he then set out all alone, carrying his alms bowl, to Uruvelā forest. On the way he entered a wood by the name of Kappāsika and remained seated at the foot of a certain tree.

At that time, the 30 princely brothers known as the Auspicious Group (*Bhadda-vaggiya*), who were so-called because they possessed grace and beauty, and good temperament, and habitually went on tours in a group, happened to be indulging in love-making in the Kappāsika woodland, accompanied by their respective spouses. One of the princes, however, brought a prostitute as he had no wife. While the princes were carelessly enjoying themselves with drinks, etc., the prostitute stole their belongings and ran away.

Then the princes, in order to help their companion, wandered about the woodland in search of the prostitute and came upon the Buddha sitting under a tree. They went up to him and without being yet able to make obeisance to the Buddha, addressed him thus: “Exalted Buddha! Has the blessed Buddha seen a woman?”

The Buddha asked them: “Princes! What do you want with this woman?” They replied: “Exalted Buddha! We, the 30 princely companions, happen to be amusing ourselves inside this Kappāsika woodland in company with our respective spouses. One of our companions has no wife and so he has brought a prostitute. But while we were carelessly enjoying ourselves, the prostitute stole our belongings and ran away. In order to help him out, we are going about this Kappāsika woodland looking for this woman.” [405]

Thereupon, the Buddha asked: “Princes! What, in your opinion, is better for you, seeking a missing woman or seeking your own self?” They replied: “Exalted

Buddha! It is better for us that we seek ourselves." The Buddha then said: "Princes! Then sit down. I will teach you the Dhamma," and the princes replied: "Yes, exalted Buddha!" And then, after paying respects to the Buddha with due respect and devotion, the Auspicious Group-of-Thirty companions remained seated at an appropriate distance which was free from the six faults.

The Buddha taught them the course of moral practice leading to the paths and fruitions: 1) Generosity (*dāna-kathā*); 2) morality (*sīla-kathā*); 3) the way to heaven (*sagga-kathā*); and 4) the path (*magga-kathā*), as well as the dangers of sensuality and the advantages of renunication in succession. Thereafter, knowing that the 30 princes' minds had become adaptable, soft and free from hindrances, eager, gladdened, purified and pellucid, the Buddha taught the Dhamma which was originally discovered by him (*sāmukkaṁsikā Dhamma-desanā*) of the four truths, and, as a result, the Auspicious Group-of-Thirty princely companions became established, some in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*), some in Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmi-phala*) and others in Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-phala*). Not a single one of them remained worldlings (*puthujjana*).

After the Auspicious Group-of-Thirty princely companions had been established severally in Stream-entry, Once-returning and in Non-returning they requested the Buddha that they be ordained as monastics: "Exalted Buddha! May we receive the going forth (*pabbajjā*) and higher ordination (*upasampadā*) in your presence?" And the Buddha stretched out his golden hand and called out in the same way as before thus: *Etha bhikkhave*, and so on, meaning: "Come, monks! Receive the admission and ordination you have asked for. The Dhamma has been well taught by me. You must strive to engage in the practice of the higher paths in order to bring about the end of the round of suffering."

Instantly the Auspicious Group-of-Thirty princes turned into fully fledged monastics like senior monks of 60 years' standing, readily dressed and equipped with the eight supernaturally created requisites each in its proper place, paying homage to the Buddha with due respect. Their signs of being laymen disappeared miraculously, and they were transformed into monastics.

> The very utterance by the Buddha: *Etha bhikkhave*, meant a process for the 30 princes to become accomplished summoned monastics. There was no need to be ordained in an ordination hall (*sīma*).

Here, the 30 princes had been the 30 drunkards in the *Tuṇḍila-jātaka* (Ja 388). At that time, they properly observed the five precepts after hearing the words of admonition given by Mahā Tuṇḍila the Boar King, who was the Bodhisatta. Their observance of the five precepts was the cause in the past of their simultaneous discernment of the four noble truths in the present existence.

Besides, having observed the five precepts together in unison, they had obviously done many meritorious deeds with a view to be free from dependence on the round of rebirths (*vivaṭṭa-nissita*) by listening to the Good Dhamma, taking the three refuges, performing deeds of generosity, observing the precepts and practising concentration and insight meditation severally during the Dispensations of the former Buddhas. For these reasons, they had such good fortune as the realization of the lower paths and the lower fruitions and of becoming summoned monastics on the very day they met the Buddha.

The Auspicious Group-of-Thirty monastics were the half brothers of King Kosala, having the same father but different mothers. As they usually lived in Pāveyya city, in the western part of Kosala country, they were known by the name of the Pāveyyaka monks in the texts. It is in connection with these monks that the Buddha, at a future date, permitted the making and offering of the Cloth (*Kaṭhina*). The 30 Pāveyyaka monks became established in the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) after hearing the Discourse on the Round of Existences which have no Beginning while the Buddha was dwelling in Veḷuvana monastery in Rājagaha (see SN 15.13, *Anamatagga-saṁyutta*). [407]

14: Conversion of the Kassapa Brothers

The Miracles

After having established the Auspicious Group-of-Thirty princes in the three lower paths and fruitions (*magga-phala*) and ordaining them, the Buddha continued on his journey and arrived at Uruvelā.

At that time, there were three recluse brothers: 1) Uruvelā Kassapa, who was the eldest brother and leader and teacher of 500 recluse disciples; 2) Nadī Kassapa, who was the middle brother and leader and teacher of 300 recluse disciples; and 3) Gayā Kassapa, the youngest brother, the leader and teacher of 200 recluse disciples.

The First Miracle

The Buddha went to the hermitage of Uruvelā Kassapa and made a request thus: "If it is not too much of a burden to you, O Kassapa, I would like to stay in your fire-house for one night." – "It is no burden for me," replied Uruvelā Kassapa, "but what I want to tell you is that, at this fire-house, there is a very savage and powerful Nāga (serpent), having highly poisonous and instantly harmful venom. I do not like it that the Nāga King may harm you, monk." The Buddha made the request for the second time, and also for the third time, and Uruvelā Kassapa gave the same reply. When the Buddha requested for the fourth time saying: "The Nāga King, O Kassapa, cannot do any harm to me, the Buddha. I am only asking you to let me stay at the fire-house." Uruvelā Kassapa finally gave his assent by saying: "Stay happily, O monk, as long as you desire!"

When permission had been given by Uruvelā Kassapa, the Buddha entered the fire-house, spread the small grass mat and sat cross-legged on it, keeping his body upright and directing his mind intently on the object of meditation. When the Nāga saw the Buddha entering the fire-house, he was very angry and blew forth fumes incessantly towards the Buddha with intent to destroy him and turn him to ashes.

Then the Buddha thought: "What if I overwhelm the Nāga's power with mine, without injuring his skin or hide, flesh or sinews, bones or marrow!" and then he blew forth fumes which were far more violent than the fumes of the Nāga by exerting his supernatural power, but not to harm or hurt any part of its body.

Being unable to contain his anger, the Nāga sent out blazing flames again. By developing the absorption (*jhāna*) of the fire meditation device (*tejo-kasiṇa*), the Buddha produced more violent flames. The whole fire-house appeared to be blazing because of the enormous flames of the Buddha and the Nāga.

Then the recluses, led by their teacher Uruvelā Kassapa, gathered round the fire-house and in fear Uruvelā Kassapa said: "Friends! The immensely handsome great monk has been harmed by the Nāga!" When the night had passed and the morning came, the Buddha, having overwhelmed the Nāga by his power without touching or hurting any part of its body, placed him inside his alms bowl and showed him to Uruvelā Kassapa, saying: "Kassapa! Is this the Nāga you spoke of? I have overwhelmed him with my power."

Thereupon, Uruvelā Kassapa thought: "The monk is indeed very mighty and powerful since he is able to overwhelm the savage and powerful Nāga King who has highly poisonous and instantly harmful venom. But, even though he is so mighty and powerful, he is not yet an Arahat like me, whose pollutants (*āsava*) have been destroyed."

Being very much impressed by this first performance of a miracle (*pāṭihāriya*) by taming the Nāga, Uruvelā Kassapa extended his invitation to the Buddha, saying: "Do take up residence just here O, great monk, I will offer you a constant supply of food." [408]

The Second Miracle

Thereafter, the Buddha lived in a wood near the hermitage of Uruvelā Kassapa. When the first watch of the night was over and midnight came, the Four Great Kings of the four regions (*Cātu-mahā-rājika*), in their very pleasing splendour, illuminating the whole forest with their bodily radiance, went into the presence of the Buddha, made obeisance to him with due respect and devotion, and stood at a proper distance like four big bonfires in the four quarters.

When the night had passed and at daybreak, on the following morning, Uruvelā Kassapa came and asked the Buddha: "It is meal time, O, great monk! The meal is ready. Please come and have it. O, great monk! Who were they, with very pleasing splendour, who came into your presence, illuminating the whole forest with their bodily radiance after the night had well advanced up to midnight, and after paying respects with due respect and devotion, stood like four big bonfires

in the four quarters?" When the Buddha replied: "They were the Four Great Kings of the four regions, O, Kassapa! They came to me to listen to the Dhamma." Uruvelā Kassapa thought: "Even the Four Great Kings of the four regions come to this monk to listen to the Dhamma. This monk is indeed very mighty and powerful. But, even though he is so mighty and powerful, he is not yet an Arahat like me, whose pollutants have been destroyed."

At that time, although the Buddha was aware of what was in the mind of Uruvelā Kassapa, he restrained himself and remained patient, waiting for the maturing of the ascetic's sense faculties, and he stayed on in the wood, accepting and taking the food offered by Uruvelā Kassapa.

The Third Miracle

On the next night when the first watch of the night was over and midnight came, Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, with very pleasing splendour, illuminating the whole forest with his bodily radiance that was more pleasing and even greater in brightness than those of the previous Four Great Kings of the four regions, came into the presence of the Buddha, made obeisance to him with due respect and devotion, and stood at a proper distance like a big bonfire.

When the night was over, on the following morning, Uruvelā Kassapa went and asked the Buddha; "It is meal time, O, great monk! The meal is ready. Please come and have it. O great monk! Who was he, in very pleasing splendour, who came into your presence after the night had well-advanced up to midnight, illuminating the whole forest with his bodily radiance that was more pleasing and even greater in brightness than those of the previous Four Great Kings of the four regions, and who, after paying respects to you with due respect and devotion, stood at a proper distance like a big bonfire?"

When the Buddha replied: "That was Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, O, Kassapa; he came to me to listen to the Dhamma," Uruvelā Kassapa thought: "Even Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, has to come to this monk to listen to the Dhamma. This monk is indeed very mighty and powerful. But, even though he is so mighty and powerful, he is not yet an Arahat like me, whose pollutants have been destroyed."

At that time, although the Buddha was aware of what was in the mind of Uruvelā Kassapa, he restrained himself and remained patient, waiting for the

maturing of the ascetic's sense faculties, and he stayed on in the wood, accepting and taking the food offered by Uruvelā Kassapa.

The Fourth Miracle

Again the next night, when the first watch of the night was over and midnight came, Brahma Sahampati, with very pleasing splendour, illuminating the whole forest with his bodily radiance, that was more pleasing and even greater in brightness than those of the Four Great Kings and Sakka, came into the presence of the Buddha, made obeisance to [409] him with due respect and devotion, stood at a proper distance like a big bonfire.

Then when the night had passed, at daybreak, on the following morning, Uruvelā Kassapa went and asked the Buddha: "It is meal time, O, great monk! The meal is ready. Please come and have it. O great monk! Who was he, in very pleasing splendour, who came into your presence after the night had well-advanced up to midnight, illuminating the whole forest with his bodily radiance that was more pleasing and even greater in brightness than those of the Four Great Kings and Sakka, and who, after paying respects to you with due respect and devotion, stood at a proper distance like a big bonfire."

When the Buddha replied: "That was Brahma Sahampati, Kassapa! He came to me to listen to the Dhamma," again Uruvelā Kassapa thought thus: "Even Brahma Sahampati has to come to this monk to listen to the Dhamma. This monk is indeed very mighty and powerful. But, even though he is so mighty and powerful, he is not yet an Arahat like me, whose pollutants have been destroyed."

At that time, although the Buddha was aware of what was in the mind of Uruvelā Kassapa, he restrained himself and remained patient, waiting for the maturing of the ascetic's sense faculties, and he stayed on in the wood, accepting and taking the food offered by Uruvelā Kassapa.

The Fifth Miracle

It was the custom of the people of the Aṅga and Magadha countries to pay homage to Uruvelā Kassapa in a monthly alms giving festival, which was held on a grand scale. While the Buddha was staying in Uruvelā forest, the day for holding the festival approached. On the festive eve, people were making arrangements to prepare food and dishes and to go to Uruvelā Kassapa the following morning for making their obeisance. Then Uruvelā Kassapa thought:

"The great festival of paying homage to me is now underway. The entire populace of Aṅga and Magadha will come to my hermitage at daybreak, bringing with them large quantities of food, hard and soft. When they arrive and assemble, if the great monk, possessing great psychic power displays miracles in the midst of those people, they will show much devotion to him. Then his gains would increase day by day. As for myself since their faith in me would become less, gifts and offerings will decline day after day. It will be good if the great monk obligingly refrains from coming to my hermitage for his meal the next day."

The Buddha, knowing the thought of Uruvelā Kassapa by his super knowledge of reading others' minds (*ceto-pariyāya-abhiññā*), proceeded to the northern continent, Uttarakuru, and, after gathering alms food there he ate it near Lake Anotatta in the Himālayas and passed the day in the sandalwood grove by the lake. Then on the following day, even before dawn, he returned to Uruvelā forest and stayed there.

> According to the Mahāvaṁsa, at this time the Buddha proceeded to Laṅkādīpa (Ceylon) all alone in the evening knowing that this would be the place where the Dispensation (*Sāsana*) would flourish in the future, and after the Yakkhas had been subdued and tamed, he gave a handful of his hairs to Sumana Deva to be worshipped forever.

On the next day, when it was time for his meal, Uruvelā Kassapa went into the presence of the Buddha and spoke to him courteously: "It is meal time, O, great monk! The meal is ready, please come and have it. O, great monk! Why did you not come yesterday? We were wondering why you did not show up. A portion of food had been kept aside for you."

The Buddha said: "Yesterday, Kassapa! Did it not occur to you, thus: 'The great festival of paying homage to me is now underway. The entire populace of Aṅga and Magadha will come to my hermitage at daybreak, bringing with them large quantities of food, [410] hard and soft. When they arrive and assemble, if the great monk possessing great psychic power displays miracles in the midst of those people, they will show much devotion to him. Then his gains would increase day by day. As for myself since their faith in me would become less, gifts and offerings will decline day after day. It will be good if the great monk obligingly refrains from coming to my hermitage for his meal the next day.' O, Kassapa! Knowing your thought by the power of reading others' minds (*ceto-*

pariyāya-abhiññā), I proceeded yesterday morning to the northern continent, Uttarakuru, and, after gathering alms food there I ate it near Lake Anotatta in the Himālayas and passed the day in the sandalwood grove by the lake."

Again Uruvelā Kassapa thought thus: "The great monk can indeed read my mind. This monk is indeed very mighty and powerful. But, even though he is so mighty and powerful, he is not yet an Arahat like me, whose pollutants have been destroyed."

At that time, although the Buddha was aware of what was in the mind of Uruvelā Kassapa, he restrained himself and remained patient, waiting for the maturing of the ascetic's sense faculties, and he stayed on in the wood, accepting and taking the food offered by Uruvelā Kassapa.

The Sixth Miracle

One day, when a merchant's slave girl of Senānigama, by the name of Puññā, died, her corpse (*utuja-rūpa*) was wrapped in a hemp fibre cloth and abandoned in the graveyard. After gently getting rid of a great load of maggots, the Buddha picked up the hemp fibre cloth to be worn by him as robe made of rags taken from a rubbish heap (*paṁsukūla*).[172]

The great earth then shook violently with a roaring sound by way of acclamation. The whole sky also roared with thundering sounds and all the Devas and Brahmas applauded by calling out: Well done! The Buddha went back to his dwelling in Uruvelā forest thinking: "Where should I wash these rags?" Sakka, being aware of what the Buddha was thinking, created by means of his supernormal power a four-sided pond by just touching the earth with his hand and addressed him: "Exalted Buddha! May you wash the rags in this pond."

The Buddha washed the rags in the pond created by the Sakka. At that time also the earth shook, the entire sky roared and all the Devas and Brahmas applauded by calling out: Well done! After the Buddha had washed the rags, he considered: "Where should I dye these rags?" Sakka, being aware of what the Buddha had in mind, addressed him thus: "Exalted Buddha! May you dye the cloth on this stone

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[172] Rags from a rubbish heap *(paṁsukūla)*. Wearing rag robes (*paṁsukulikaṅga*) is one of the thirteen ascetic practices. See the Further Explanations for more details.

slab," and he created a large stone slab by his supernatural power and placed it near the pond.

After the Buddha had dyed the cloth on the stone slab created by the Sakka, he considered: "Where shall I hang up this cloth to dry?" Then a deity living on an Indian laurel (*Kakudha*)[173] tree near the hermitage, being aware of what the Buddha had in mind, addressed him: "Exalted Buddha! May you hang the rags to dry on this Indian laurel tree," and he caused the branch of the tree to bend down.

After the Buddha had hung up the cloth to dry on the Indian laurel branch, he considered: "Where should I spread it out to make it flat and even?" Sakka, being aware of what the Buddha had in mind, addressed him: "Exalted Buddha! May you spread out the cloth on this stone slab to make it flat and even," and he placed a large stone slab there.

When the morning came, Uruvelā Kassapa approached the Buddha and asked him: "It is [411] meal time, O, great monk. The meal is ready. Please come and have it. How is it, great monk? This four-sided pond was not here before. But now, here lies this pond! These two large stone slabs were not placed here by us. Who has placed them? This Indian laurel branch was not bent before, why is it now bending?"

Thereupon, the Buddha related all that had happened beginning with his picking up the rags. Uruvelā Kassapa thought thus: "Even Sakka, the ruler of Devas, has to come and do all the sundry tasks for this monk. This monk is indeed very mighty and powerful. But, even though he is so mighty and powerful, he is not yet an Arahat like me, whose pollutants have been destroyed."

At that time, although the Buddha was aware of what was in the mind of Uruvelā Kassapa, he restrained himself and remained patient, waiting for the maturing of the ascetic's sense faculties, and he stayed on in the wood, accepting and taking the food offered by Uruvelā Kassapa.

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[173] PED: Kakudha = *Terminalia Arjuna*.

The Seventh Miracle

When the morrow came, Uruvelā Kassapa approached the Buddha and invited him, saying: "It is meal time, O, great monk! The meal is ready. Please come and have it!" Then the Buddha sent him away by saying: "You go ahead, O, Kassapa I will follow." The Buddha went thereafter to the rose-apple (*Jambu*) tree at the tip of Jambudīpa and, bringing with him a rose-apple fruit, came back ahead of Uruvelā Kassapa and sat down in Uruvelā Kassapa's fire-house.

Uruvelā Kassapa, on seeing the Buddha, who had come after him but who had arrived at the fire-house before him sitting there, he asked the Buddha thus: "Monk! Even though I have come ahead of you and you have come after me, you have arrived at the fire-house before me and are sitting here. By what route did you come, monk?" the Buddha replied: "Kassapa, after I told you to go ahead, I went to the rose-apple tree at the tip of Jambudīpa and, bringing with me a rose-apple fruit, I came back ahead of you and sat down in the fire-house. This rose-apple fruit O, Kassapa has good colour, smell and taste. Eat it, if you so desire." Uruvelā Kassapa then replied: "Great monk! Enough! You are the one who deserves the fruit. You should eat it."

Again, Uruvelā Kassapa thought thus: "After telling me to go ahead, this monk went to the rose-apple tree at the tip of Jambudīpa and, bringing with him a rose-apple fruit, came back ahead of me and sat down in the fire-house. This monk is indeed very mighty and powerful. But, even though he is so mighty and powerful, he is not yet an Arahat like me, whose pollutants have been destroyed."

At that time, although the Buddha was aware of what was in the mind of Uruvelā Kassapa, he restrained himself and remained patient as before, waiting for the maturing of the ascetic's sense faculties, and he stayed on in the wood accepting and taking the food offered by Uruvelā Kassapa.

The Eighth, Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Miracles

The following morning, when Uruvelā Kassapa went into the presence of the Buddha and invited him saying: "It is meal time, O, great monk! The meal is ready. Please come and have it!" the Buddha sent him away saying: "Kassapa! Go ahead. I will follow," and then:

1. Going to the mango tree which was near the rose-apple tree, at the tip of Jambudīpa and bringing with him a mango fruit the Buddha came back ahead of Uruvelā Kassapa and sat down in Uruvelā Kassapa's fire-house …

2. Going to the emblic myrobalan[174] tree which was near the rose-apple tree, at the tip of Jambudīpa and bringing with him an emblic myrobalan fruit the Buddha came back ahead of Uruvelā Kassapa and sat down in Uruvelā Kassapa's fire-house …

3. Going to the yellow myrobalan[175] tree which was near the rose-apple tree, at the tip of Jambudīpa and bringing with him a yellow myrobalan fruit the Buddha came back ahead of Uruvelā Kassapa and sat down in Uruvelā Kassapa's fire-house …

4. Going to the Tāvatiṁsa Deva realm and bringing with him a coral flower, the Buddha came back ahead of Uruvelā Kassapa and sat down in Uruvelā Kassapa's fire-house.

On seeing the Buddha, who had followed him but who had arrived at the fire-house ahead of him and was sitting there, Uruvelā Kassapa asked the Buddha thus: "Even though I came ahead of you, monk, you who came after me arrived at the fire-house ahead of me and are sitting here. By what route have you come, monk?"

The Buddha replied: "After I told you to go ahead, O, Kassapa, I went to the mango tree … the emblic myrobalan tree … the yellow myrobalan tree … Tāvatiṁsa and, bringing with me a coral flower, came back ahead of you and sat down in the fire-house. This coral flower, O, Kassapa has good colour and scent. Take it if you so desire," and Uruvelā Kassapa replied: "Enough! O, great monk! You are the one who deserves the coral flower. You should take it."

Again, Uruvelā Kassapa thought thus: "After telling me to go ahead, this monk went to the Tāvatiṁsa Deva realm and, bringing with him the coral flower, came back ahead of me and sat down in the fire-house. This monk is indeed very mighty and powerful. But, even though he is so mighty and powerful, he is not yet an Arahat like me, whose pollutants have been destroyed."

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[174] Emblic myrobalan: *amataka*: *phyllanthus emblica*.

[175] Yellow myrobalan: *haritakī*: *Terminalia citrina*.

The Twelfth Miracle

On one occasion, the 500 recluses, being desirous of performing fire-worship, made efforts to split firewood into pieces but were unable to do so. Thereupon they thought: "Our inability to split firewood must certainly be due to the supernormal power of the monk."

When Uruvelā Kassapa reported the matter to the Buddha, the Buddha asked: "Do you want O, Kassapa to have the logs split?" and Uruvelā Kassapa replied: "We want, O, great monk, to have them split." By means of the supernormal power of the Buddha, the 500 logs of firewood were at once split into pieces making cracking sounds simultaneously.

Again Uruvelā Kassapa thought thus: "This monk is capable of splitting at once the logs which my disciples could not do. This monk is indeed mighty and powerful. But, even though he is so mighty and powerful, he is not yet an Arahat like me, whose pollutants have been destroyed."

The Thirteenth Miracle

On another occasion, the 500 recluses were unable to make fire burn for the performance of fire-worship despite their attempts. Thereupon, they thought: "Our inability to make fire burn must certainly be due to the supernormal power of the monk."

When Uruvelā Kassapa reported the matter to the Buddha, he asked: "Do you want, Kassapa, to have the fires blazing?" and Uruvelā Kassapa replied: "We want, great monk, to have the fires blazing!" By means of the supernormal power of the Buddha, 500 big bonfires marvellously blazed forth all at once.

Again Uruvelā Kassapa thought thus: "This monk makes the 500 bonfires to blaze forth simultaneously, which my disciples could not do. This monk is indeed mighty and powerful. But, even though he is so mighty and powerful, he is not yet an Arahat like me, whose pollutants have been destroyed." [413]

The Fourteenth Miracle

Again on another occasion, the 500 recluses were unable to put out the blazing fires after the performance of the fire-worship. Thereupon they thought: "Our inability to put out the blazing fires must certainly be due to the supernormal power of the monk."

When Uruvelā Kassapa reported the matter to the Buddha, he asked: "Do you want, Kassapa, to have the flames extinguished?" and Uruvelā Kassapa replied: "We want, O great monk, to have them extinguished." By means of the supernormal power of the Buddha, the 500 big bonfires marvellously became extinguished all at once.

Again Uruvelā Kassapa thought thus: "This monk can simultaneously put out the 500 big bonfires which could not be extinguished by my disciples. This monk is indeed mighty and powerful. But, even though he is so mighty and powerful, he is not yet an Arahat like me, whose pollutants have been destroyed."

The Fifteenth Miracle

Still on another occasion, the 500 recluses went down into the river Nerañjarā during the winter nights called the eight-in-between (*antaraṭṭhaka*),[176] when there was very heavy snowfall and when it was terribly cold. Some of the recluses wrongly believing that: "By emerging from the water once, evil deeds can be cleansed," climbed up the bank after submerging their whole bodies and emerging from water only once. Many were those who entertained such a belief. They submerged themselves just because there could be no emergence without submergence. Some of the recluses wrongly believing that: "By submerging once, evil deeds can be cleansed," plunged but once with their heads under water and came up on the bank as soon as they rose from the water, but only a few entertained such belief.

Some of the recluses wrongly believing that: "If a bath is taken by repeatedly immersing and emerging evil deeds can be cleansed," bathed in the river, constantly immersing and emerging from it. There were many of them who held such a belief.

Thereupon, the Buddha created 500 braziers. The recluses warmed themselves at the 500 braziers when they came out of the water. Thereupon, the 500 recluses

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[176] *Antaraṭṭhaka*: here it means the eight days which fall between the end of one month and the beginning of the following month. At the end of this fifteenth miracle the author had a long discussion, on which of two months should be considered in this context, quoting numerous authorities including Sanskrit texts, Pāli commentaries and sub-commentaries. We have left out this portion from our translation.

thought: “The creation of these 500 braziers must certainly be due to the supernormal power of the monk.”

And Uruvelā Kassapa thought thus: “This great monk can indeed create these braziers which number 500. This monk is indeed mighty and powerful. But even though he is so mighty and powerful, he is not yet an Arahat like me, whose pollutants have been destroyed.”

The Sixteenth Miracle

One day, there was a great downpour of unseasonal rain in Uruvelā forest, where the Buddha was residing; a torrential stream of water flowed incessantly. The place where the Buddha was staying was low-lying and therefore liable to be inundated. Thereupon, it occurred to the Buddha thus: “It would be good if I ward off the flow of water all around and walk to and fro on the bare ground encircled by water and thickly covered with dust.” Accordingly, he warded off the flow of water all around and walked to and fro on the bare ground encircled by water and thickly covered with dust.

At that time, Uruvelā Kassapa, thinking: “Let not the monk be hit by the torrent and [414] carried away,” went rowing in a boat with many of the recluses to the place where the Buddha was staying. Much to his astonishment, he saw that the flow of water all around had been warded off and that the Buddha was walking to and fro on the bare ground encircled by the water and thickly covered with dust. Not believing what he saw, he asked: “Great monk! Is it indeed you walking to and fro on the bare ground encircled by water and thickly covered with dust?” The Buddha replied: “Yes, Kassapa, it is I.” and he rose into the sky even while the recluses were looking on and came to rest on their boat.

Again, Uruvelā Kassapa thought: “Even the torrential stream rushing down with great force cannot carry away the monk. This monk is indeed mighty and powerful. But, even though he is so mighty and powerful, he is not yet an Arahat like me, whose pollutants have been destroyed.”

Uruvelā Kassapa and his Disciples become Monastics

In the former days as the recluses’ faculties were still immature, the Buddha had been patiently bearing their disdain and waiting the time when their faculties would reach maturity. Nearly three months had passed since then. Now that

their faculties had matured, the Buddha would address them candidly and instruct them in a way leading to their liberation.

Although the Buddha had thus shown the miracle of not being overwhelmed by the flood, the great recluse thought wrongly as before that only he himself was an Arahat without pollutants and that the Buddha was not yet an Arahat whose pollutants were completely destroyed.

While he was so thinking, it occurred to the Buddha thus: "Should I continue to keep on disregarding him, this vain man, Uruvelā Kassapa, who is too remote from the paths and fruitions, will continue thinking wrongly for a long time: 'This monk is indeed mighty and powerful! But, even though he is so mighty and powerful, he is not yet an Arahat like me, whose pollutants have been destroyed.' What if I should instill in him a sense of spiritual urgency?"

Having thought thus, the Buddha candidly spoke to Uruvelā Kassapa these three sets of words: "Kassapa, 1) you are not an Arahat with the pollutants destroyed; 2) you are not one who has attained the Arahat path; 3) not to speak of such an attainment, you have not even the least practice of the right path for the attainment of the Arahat paths and fruitions."

Thereupon, Uruvelā Kassapa, feeling a strong sense of spiritual urgency, prostrated himself with his head on the feet of the Buddha and made the request: "Exalted Buddha, may I receive the going forth to the order and ordination as a monastic in your presence."

The Fortunate One, knowing the maturity of their faculties, said to him: "Kassapa, you are the leader, chief, and principal of 500 recluses, it would not be proper if you do not inform them. You should first seek their permission, then these 500 disciples of yours may do whatever they think fit."

So Uruvelā Kassapa went to his 500 disciples and told them: "I want to lead the holy life, O recluses, under the great monk. You may do whatever you think fit." – "Great teacher, we have long had faith in the great monk, since the taming of the Nāga," replied the recluses. "If you lead the holy life under him, all of us 500 disciples will do likewise."

Then Uruvelā Kassapa and the 500 recluses took their hair, their matted locks, their requisites, and the paraphernalia of the fire sacrifice such as shoulder yokes and fire-stirrers and set them adrift in the current of the river Nerañjarā.

Then they went to the Buddha and prostrated themselves with their heads at the feet of the Buddha, and made the request: "Exalted Buddha, may we receive the going forth and higher ordination as monastics in your presence." [415]

Thereupon, the Fortunate One said: *Etha bhikkhave*, etc. meaning: "Come, monks. Receive the going-forth and higher ordination you have asked for. The Dhamma has been well taught by me. Strive to undergo the noble trainings in its three higher aspects so as to bring about the end of the round of suffering." Instantly, when: *Etha bhikkhave* … was spoken by the Buddha, who stretched out his golden right hand, Uruvelā Kassapa and his 500 recluses turned into fully fledged monastics, like senior monks of 60 years' standing, readily dressed up and equipped with the eight supernaturally created requisites, each in its proper place, paying homage to the Buddha with due respect. Their signs of being recluses disappeared miraculously, and they were transformed into monastics.

> The very utterance by the Buddha: "Come, monks …" meant those recluses became accomplished monastics. There was no need to be ordained with the procedure in an ordination hall.

Nadī Kassapa and his Disciples became Monastics

When Nadī Kassapa, who lived downstream, saw the requisites of the recluses set adrift by Uruvelā Kassapa and his 500 disciples, he thought: "I hope no harm has befallen my older brother." He sent ahead with one or two of his disciples, saying: "Go and find out about my brother," and he went himself with the rest of his 300 disciples to where Uruvelā Kassapa was dwelling. Approaching his eldest brother, he asked: "Brother Kassapa, is this state of a monastic noble and praiseworthy?"

Upon being replied to by Uruvelā Kassapa: "Indeed, brother, this state of a monastic is noble and praiseworthy," Nadī Kassapa and his 300 disciples, as previously Uruvelā Kassapa and his followers had done, took their recluses' requisites and paraphernalia of fire sacrifice, and set them adrift in the current of the river Nerañjarā. Then they went to the Buddha and prostrated themselves with their heads at the feet of the Buddha, and made the request: "Exalted Buddha, may we receive the going forth and the higher ordination as monastics in your presence."

Thereupon, the Buddha said: *Etha bhikkhave*, etc. meaning: "Come, monks. Receive the going forth and the higher ordination you have asked for. The Dhamma has been well taught by me. Strive to undergo the noble training in its three higher aspects so as to bring about the end of the round of suffering." Instantly, when: *Etha bhikkhave* … was spoken by the Buddha, who stretched out his golden right hand, Nadī Kassapa and his 300 recluses turned into fully fledged monastics, like senior monks of 60 years' standing, readily dressed and equipped with the eight supernaturally created requisites, each in its proper place, paying homage to the Buddha with due respect. The signs of being recluses disappeared miraculously as they were transformed into monastics.

Gayā Kassapa and his Disciples became Monastics

When Gayā Kassapa, who lived downstream, saw the requisites of the recluses set adrift by Uruvelā Kassapa and his 500 disciples and those by Nadī Kassapa and his 300 disciples, he thought: "I hope no harm has befallen my older brothers, Uruvelā Kassapa and Nadī Kassapa." He sent ahead two or three of his disciples, saying: "Go and find out about my two brothers, and he went himself with his 200 disciples to where Uruvelā Kassapa was dwelling. Approaching his eldest brother, he asked: "Brother Kassapa, is this state of a monastic noble and praiseworthy?"

On Uruvelā Kassapa replying: "Indeed, brother, this state of a monastic is noble and praiseworthy," Gayā Kassapa and his 200 disciples, as previously Uruvelā Kassapa and his followers had done, took their recluse's requisites and paraphernalia of the fire sacrifice, and set them adrift in the current of the river Nerañjarā. Then they went to the Buddha and prostrating themselves with their heads at the feet of the Buddha, made the request: "Exalted Buddha, may we receive the going forth to the order and higher ordination as monastics in your presence." [416]

Thereupon, the Buddha said: *Etha bhikkhave* … etc. meaning: "Come, monks. Receive the going forth and the higher ordination you have asked for. The Dhamma has been well taught by me. Strive to undergo the noble training in its three higher aspects, so as to bring about the end of the round of suffering." Instantly, when: *Etha bhikkhave* … was spoken by the Buddha, who stretched out his golden right hand, Gayā Kassapa and his 200 recluses turned into fully fledged monastics, like senior monks of 60 years' standing, readily dressed and

equipped with the eight supernaturally created requisites, each in its proper place, paying homage to the Buddha with due respect. The signs of being recluses disappeared miraculously as they were transformed into monastics.

> In this account of the display of miracles, such as the recluses inability to split the logs, the simultaneous and marvellous splitting of logs, their inability to make the fires, the simultaneous and marvellous blazing of fire; their inability to put out fires, the simultaneous and marvellous extinction of fires; the creation of 500 braziers; all these unusual events were due to the Buddha's resolve.
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> The number of miracles, performed by the Buddha in this manner in order to liberate the Kassapa brothers and their 1,000 recluses, mentioned directly in the Pāḷi Canon is sixteen and those not mentioned directly is 3,500, thus totalling 3,516.

The Fire Discourse

After staying at Uruvelā for as long as he wished, and having liberated the brothers and their 1,000 followers, the Buddha set out for Gayāsīsa, where there was a stone slab looking like an elephant's forehead near Gayā village, together with 1,000 monastics who were formerly recluses. The Buddha took his seat on the stone slab together with the thousand monastics.

Having taken his seat, the Buddha considered: "What kind of discourse will be appropriate for these 1,000 monastics?" and decided thus: "These people worshipped fires every day and every night, if I were to teach them the Instruction about Burning (*Āditta-pariyāya-sutta*, SN 35.235) describing the continuous burning of the twelve sense spheres (*āyatana*), by the eleven fires, they could attain the Arahat fruition."

Having so decided, the Buddha taught the Instruction about Burning which describes in a detailed manner how the six sense doors, the six sense objects, the six forms of consciousness, the six forms of contact, the eighteen kinds of feeling, arising through contact (*phassa-paccaya-vedanā*), are burning with the fire of lust (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*), the fires of birth, ageing and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair.

While the discourse was thus taught by the Buddha, the 1,000 monastics attained the knowledge of the four paths in successive order and became Arahats in whom the pollutants (*āsava*) were extinguished. Therefore, the minds of the

1,000 monastics were completely released from the pollutants that had become extinguished with no chance of reappearance as they had absolutely eradicated grasping through craving (*taṇhā*) and wrong view (*diṭṭhi*) of anything such as: "This I am, this is mine." They were completely emancipated from the pollutants (*āsava*), attaining cessation through not arising. [417]

15: The Buddha's Visit to Rājagaha

When the Buddha had stayed at Gayāsīsa for as long as he desired, in order to liberate the 1,000 former recluses by making them attain Arahat fruition, he set out for Rājagaha, accompanied by those Arahats. The visit to Rājagaha was to comply with the request made by King Bimbisāra, whom he met as he started his going forth, saying: "Venerable Sir, may I make this request? When you have gained Awakening, let my country be the first you bless with a visit."[177] Eventually, he arrived at the large Palmyra Sapling Grove near Rājagaha. He stayed at the foot of the Suppatiṭṭha Banyan tree which offered an expansive shade and which was regarded as a shrine by people who made their worship there.

> After his Awakening, the Buddha spent his first Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at the Deer Park at Isipatana; at the end of the Rains Retreat, after conducting the Invitation ceremony, in which monastics invite criticism from their brethren in respect of what has been seen, heard or suspected about their conduct, he went to Uruvelā forest. While he stayed there for fully three months, he instructed and taught the brothers and their 1,000 followers till they attained the Arahat fruition. Then on the full moon of January (*Phussa*), the Fortunate One, accompanied by the 1,000 Arahats, went to Rājagaha where he stayed for full two months.[178]

At that time, King Bimbisāra heard from the royal gardener the good news of the arrival of the Buddha at Rājagaha: "Friends, the Buddha Gotama, the prince of the uninterrupted Sakyan descendants, who went forth into homelessness from his Sakyan clan, has come to Rājagaha and is living at the foot of the Suppatiṭṭha banyan tree, in the Palmyra Sapling Grove.

The fame and good name of the Buddha Gotama has spread and arisen as far as the Highest Realm (*Bhavagga*): the Fortunate One is endowed with nine attributes beginning with that of being an Arahat and ending with that of possessing the six great glories (*Gracious One*); he makes known to the world of

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[177] [See Chapter 4, section on The Bodhisatta's Visit to Rājagaha.]

[178] See the commentaries to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) and Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*).

sentient beings with its Devas and Brahmas, the Dhamma which he has himself realised through his super knowledges (*abhiññā*).

The Buddha Gotama teaches the Dhamma which is good in the beginning, good in the middle and good in the end, complete with the spirit and the letter. He explains to Devas and humans the noble practice of morality, concentration and wisdom (*sīla-samādhi-paññā*) which is perfect and pure, being free from the defilement of wrong deeds. It is extremely good and beneficial to go and see such an accomplished one who is worthy of veneration."

Then accompanied by 120,000 Magadhan Brahmin householders, King Bimbisāra went to the Fortunate One, and after paying homage to him, sat at a place which is free from the six faults of location, viz., not too far, not too near, not at the front, not at the back, not at a high site and not on the leeward side. Of the 120,000 householders who had accompanied the king:

1. Some paid homage to the Fortunate One and sat at a site free from the six faults.

2. Some exchanged greetings with him, entered into courteous and memorable talk with him and sat down at a site free from the six faults. [418]

> These two categories of Brahmins belonged to the group which held right view.

3. Some raised their palms together inclining them towards the Fortunate One and sat down at a faultless site.

> They were sitting on the fence, not committing themselves to the side holding wrong views, nor with those holding right views. Their thinking was: Should those holding wrong view blame us for paying homage to the monk Gotama, we would say: "How could mere raising of hands with palms together amount to paying homage?" and should those holding right view find fault with us saying: "Why did you not pay homage to the Fortunate One?" we would reply: "How is that? Is worshipping made only when the head touches the ground? As a matter of fact raising of the palms joined together also constitutes formal worship." With this thought of sitting on the fence, they took their respective seats.

4. Some pronounced their names in the Fortunate One's presence: "Friend Gotama, I am Datta, son of so and so; I am Mitta, son of so and so," and took their seats at a faultless place. Some pronounced their clan in the Fortunate

One's presence: "Friend Gotama, I am of the Vāseṭṭha clan; I am of the Kaccāyana clan," etc. and sat down at a place which was free from the six faults.

> These Brahmins were poor and undistinguished people. By announcing their names and clan amidst the assembly, they had hoped that they would become known and recognised.

5. Some wealthy Brahmins just sat down without a word. These Brahmins were the crafty and the fools. Their crafty thought: "A word or two with them will lead to friendliness, when one becomes friendly one will have to to feed them once or twice." Fear of friendliness with them and of having to feed them caused their silent, quiet sitting. Just because they were ignorant and foolish, they sat down where they were like big lumps of earth dumped on the ground.

The Brahmins' Doubt

When thus seated, these 120,000 wealthy Brahmins felt uncertain and wondered: "Does the great monk lead the noble life under the great teacher Uruvelā Kassapa as a disciple; or does Uruvelā Kassapa lead the noble life under the great monk?" Knowing what was in the mind of these Brahmins, the Buddha questioned Ven. Uruvelā Kassapa in verse:

> *Kim-eva disvā Uruvela-vāsī,*
> *pahāsi aggiṁ kisako vadāno,*
> *pucchāmi taṁ Kassapa, etam-atthaṁ,*
> *kathaṁ pahīnaṁ tava aggi-huttaṁ?*

> O dear son, Kassapa, a resident of Uruvelā forest, being a great teacher yourself, instructing the lean recluses,[179] seeing what fault did you give up fire-worship? I ask you, Kassapa, what made you abandon fire-worship?

Ven. Uruvelā Kassapa replied to the Buddha in verse also:

> *Rūpe ca sadde ca atho rase ca,*
> *kāmitthiyo cābhivadanti yaññā.*
> *"Etaṁ malan"-ti upadhīsu ñatvā,*
> *tasmā na yiṭṭhe na hute arañjiṁ.*

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[179] They were lean because of their austere practices.

Exalted Buddha, it is said by the teachers of the sacrifice that through sacrifice one can enjoy the five sense-pleasures: sight, sound, smell, taste and touch, as well as womenfolk, especially the kind of women who resemble the tiger preying and devouring by means of its sensuality-like claws. Seeing and knowing well that the sense-pleasures and women serve only as defilements of the five aggregates, I no longer enjoy offering sacrifices. I no longer take delight in the daily practice of fire-worship.

The Buddha then asked him again in verse: [419]

Ettheva te mano na ramittha,
rūpesu saddesu atho rasesu,
atha ko carahi Deva-manussa-loke,
rato mano Kassapa, brūhi metaṁ.

Dear son Kassapa, if your heart finds no delight in the five sense pleasures of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch and in women, what sense object in this world of Devas and humans delights you? Answer me that, Kassapa.

Ven. Uruvelā Kassapa replied in verse:

Disvā padaṁ santam-anūpadhīkaṁ,
akiñcanaṁ kāma-bhave asattaṁ,
anaññathā-bhāvim-anañña-neyyaṁ,
tasmā na yiṭṭhe na hute arañjiṁ.

Exalted Buddha, because I have distinctly perceived Nibbāna which has the characteristic of peace, which is free from the four attachments (*upadhi*),[180] which cannot be made known by others and which can be achieved only through the path (*magga*) developed by oneself, which is not subject to change, being free from birth, old age, and death, and which is forever free from lust of life and attachment to existence. I no longer enjoy offering sacrifices. I no longer take delight in the daily practice of fire-worship.

Having given this reply, in order to make it known that he himself was a disciple of the Buddha, Ven. Uruvelā Kassapa rose from his seat, arranged his robe on the shoulder, prostrated himself with his head at the feet of the Buddha, saying:

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[180] *Upadhi:* wife and children, flocks and herds, silver and gold.

"Exalted Buddha, you, the exalted Buddha, are my teacher. I am but a disciple of yours." Then he rose into the sky, first up to the height of a palm tree. Descending from it, he made obeisance to the Buddha. Then he rose up to a height of two palm trees in his second display, and subsequently, to a height of three palm trees in his third attempt, and so on. In this way, he rose up, in his seventh display, to a height of seven palm trees. Then, descending from there, he made obeisance to the Buddha and sat at a place free from the six faults.

Having observed these miracles, many of the wealthy Brahmins acclaimed, speaking in praise of the qualities of the Buddha: "Oh, how mighty and powerful the Buddha is. Even the recluse teacher, Uruvelā Kassapa, whose wrong view was so strong and firm and who believed himself to be an Arahat, has been tamed by the Buddha, by destroying the net of his wrong views."

Hearing the words of praise being spoken by the Brahmins, the Buddha addressed them: "Brahmins, taming this Uruvelā Kassapa when I have achieved omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) is really not so wonderful. In a former existence as a Bodhisatta, not yet free from passion (*rāga*), when I was a Brahma named Nārada, I destroyed the net of wrong views of King Aṅgati, who later became Uruvelā Kassapa in the present time." At the request of the Brahmins, the Buddha recounted to them the story of Mahā Nārada Kassapa (Ja 544).

Through the personal acknowledgement of Ven. Uruvelā Kassapa, the 120,000 Brahmins became convinced that: "It is the great teacher, Uruvelā Kassapa, who, having become a disciple, lives the holy life under the great monk Gotama!" When the Buddha became aware, through his knowedge of others' minds (*ceto-pariyāya-abhiññā*), that their minds had now become free from doubt, he taught the audience of 120,000 monks and Brahmins, headed by King Bimbisāra, the course of moral practice leading to the realization the paths and fruitions: 1) The discourse on generosity (*dāna-kathā*); 2) the discourse on morality (*sīla-kathā*); 3) the discourse on a happy destination (*sagga-kathā*); and the discourse on the good path and the line of conduct for the [420] realization of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna, as well as the dangers of sensuality (*kāmānaṁ ādīnava-kathā*) together with the advantages of renunication (*nekkhamma-ānisaṁsa-kathā*) in a progressive manner. Thereafter, when the Buddha knew that the minds of King Bimbisāra and the 120,000 Brahmins had become firm and imperturbable, soft and malleable, free from hindrances, eager, gladdened, purified and pellucid, he taught the Dhamma which was originally discovered

by him (*sāmukkaṁsikā Dhamma-desanā*), the four truths. The 110,000 Brahmins, headed by King Bimbisāra, became established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*); the remaining 10,000 Brahmins became lay devotees and were established in the threefold refuge.

King Bimbisāra's Five Aspirations

Bimbisāra, King of Magadha, who had now become a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), addressed the Buddha: "Lord, formerly when I was a young prince, I had five aspirations. Now they are fulfilled.

Lord, when I was a young prince, I wished: 'If only the people of Magadha anointed me as king.' Exalted Buddha, this was my first aspiration and it has now been fulfilled.

Lord, when I was a young prince, I wished: 'If only the Arahat Buddha would come to this kingdom when I became king.' Exalted Buddha, this was my second aspiration and it has now been fulfilled also.

Lord, when I was a young prince, I wished: 'If only I could pay homage and do honour to that Buddha, when he visited my kingdom.' Exalted Buddha, this was my third aspiration and it has now been fulfilled also.

Lord, when I was a young prince, I wished: 'If only the Buddha, who visited my kingdom, taught me the Dhamma which would lead to Nibbāna.' Exalted Buddha, this was my fourth aspiration and it has now been fulfilled also.

Lord, when I was a young prince, I wished: 'If only I might thoroughly understand the Dhamma taught by the Buddha.' Exalted Buddha, this was my fifth aspiration and that too has now been fulfilled also.

Exalted Buddha! It is indeed very wonderful! Exalted Buddha! It is indeed very wonderful! To cite worldly examples, just as one turns up what lies upside down, just as one holds up a lamp in the darkness for those with eyes to see various visible objects, even so has the Buddha revealed the Dhamma to me in many ways. Exalted Buddha! I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. Exalted Buddha! May you take me as a lay disciple established in the threefold refuge from now on till the end of my life. Exalted Buddha! In order that I may gain merit, may you kindly accept my invitation to a meal, together with the community of monks." On thus being invited, the Buddha remained silent,

signifying his acceptance of King Bimbisāra's invitation to the morning meal. Thereupon, knowing quite well that the Buddha had accepted his invitation, King Bimbisāra rose from his seat and returned to his golden palace after paying respects to him with due respect and circumambulating him.

It is to be noted here that King Bimbisāra took the threefold refuge only after becoming established in the Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*) path and fruit. Although taking refuge in the Three Treasures was accomplished on realizing Stream-entry, at that time he was only making up his mind that the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha are truly the refuge, shelter and support. Now he took the refuges by actually uttering the words accordingly by devoting himself to the refuges (*atta-sanniyyātana-saraṇa-gamana*).

There are various kinds of refuges: 1) The refuge taken by worldlings (*puthujjana*) by contemplating the attributes of the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha, the Three Treasures (*lokiya-saraṇa-gamana*). It is insecure, impermanent and perishable; 2) the refuge in which the noble ones (*ariya*) are established simultaneously with their realisation of the path with Nibbāna as their object (*lokuttara-saraṇa-gamana*); 3) taking two refuges, like that taken by Tapussa and Bhallika uttering *Buddhaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi, Dhammaṁ saranaṁ gacchāmi*, at the time when there was not yet the community of monastics (*dve-vācika saraṇa-gamana*); 4) taking three refuges, like that taken by Yasa's father, mother, ex-wife, and others uttering: *Buddhaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi, Dhammaṁ saranaṁ gacchāmi, Saṅghaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāmi* after the formation of the order (*te-vācika saraṇa-gamana*).

There are four formulae for taking refuge. 1) Devoting oneself to the refuges (*atta-sanniyyātana-saraṇa-gamana*): in order to escape from the round of Saṁsāra, I entrust myself to the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha and take refuge in them, starting from today (*ajjādiṁ katvā ahaṁ attānaṁ Buddhassa niyyātemi*); 2) relying on that as refuge (*tapparayāṇa-saraṇa-gamana*): starting from today, I have only the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha to rely on, to depend on (*ajjādiṁ katvā ahaṁ, Buddhassa parayāṇo … Dhammassa parayāṇo … Saṅghassa parayāṇo*); 3) the disciple for life refuge (*sissa-bhāvūpagamana-saraṇa-gamana*): starting from today, I am a disciple of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha (*ajjādiṁ katvā ahaṁ Budhassa antevāsiko … Dhammassa antevāsiko … Saṅghassa antevāsiko*); 4) The prostration refuge (*paṇipāta-saraṇa-gamana*): starting from today, kindly regard me as one who pays homage, who stands up in welcoming, who reveres the Buddha, the Dhamma and

the Saṅgha (*ajjādiṁ katvā ahaṁ, Buddhassa abhivadānaṁ paccuppaṭṭhānaṁ añjalī kammaṁ, samici-kammaṁ karomi … Dhammassa … Saṅghassa … karomi*). [421]

Through realisation of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*) King Bimbisāra became one who was established in the fixed refuge (*niyata-saraṇa-gamana*). It was because he wanted to declare to others his establishment in the fixed refuge by word of mouth and also because he wanted to take upon himself the prostration refuge (*paṇipāta-saraṇa-gamana*) that he addressed the Buddha by actually uttering the words of refuge.

The Buddha enters Rājagaha for the Meal

After the night had passed and the new day dawned, having sumptuous meals of hard and soft food prepared ready in his palace, King Bimbisāra sent messengers to inform the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, it is time for the meal. The alms food is ready."

As the time drew near for the Buddha to enter Rājagaha for alms food, the citizens of Rājagaha, those who had seen and those who had not seen the Buddha, numbering 180 million, left the city very early in the morning. Wishing to see the Buddha they made their way, in groups, to the grove of young palms. The road leading to it, which was three miles in length, was choked with people. The whole of the palm grove also was so densely crowded with people that there was hardly any space among them. People did not feel satisfied with watching and admiring the personality of the Buddha rendered so graceful by the 32 major marks, 80 minor characteristics and six-coloured radiance emanating from his body.

The entire Palm Grove and the whole length of the road were so jammed with people that even a single monastic would find it impossible to find a way out of the Palm Grove and it appeared as if the Buddha would miss his meal for the day. As if to intimate that this should not happen, the orange-coloured ornamented stone (*paṇḍu-kambala*) which served as Sakka's throne, became warm. Pondering upon the cause of this manifestation, Sakka came to realise the difficult situation in the Palm Grove. Assuming the guise of a youth, Sakka instantly appeared in the presence of the Buddha, singing the praises of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. Through his supernormal powers, he carved a way for the monastics headed by the Buddha and acted as usher for

them, announcing the entry of the Buddha into the city in the following verses: [422]

Danto dantehi saha purāṇa-jaṭilehi, vippamutto vippamuttehi,
siṅgī-nikkhasa-vaṇṇo, Rājagahaṁ pāvisi Bhagavā.

Countrymen, the exalted Buddha, possessing the yellow colour of the best refined gold, at the request of the King of Magadha, with his two feet moving like the sun and the moon has entered the city of Rājagaha together with 1,000 Arahats, former recluses whom the Buddha himself has tamed by giving the deathless elixir: whom the Buddha, the leading bull – himself released from the three states of existences and the three cycles of sufferings – has released from these states of existences and cycles of suffering by teaching the essence of Dhamma.

The three cycles of suffering (*tivaṭṭa*): 1) The cycle (round) of defilements comprising ignorance (*avijjā*), craving (*taṇhā*) and clinging (*upadāna*) (*kilesa-vaṭṭa*); 2) the productive deeds or rebirth producing volitions (*saṅkhāra*) and mental phcnomena associated therewith (*kamma-vaṭṭa*); 3) the resultant rebirth-process comprising consciousness (*viññāṇa*), mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*), the sense spheres (*āyatana*), contact (*phassa*) and feeling (*vedanā*) (*vipāka-vaṭṭa*).

Mutto muttehi saha purāṇa-jaṭilehi, vippamutto vippamuttehi,
siṅgī-nikkhasa-vaṇṇo, Rājagahaṁ pāvisi Bhagavā.

The three states of existence (*tibhava*): 1) The sense world (*kāma-bhava*); 2) the form worlds (*rūpa-bhava*); and 3) the formless worlds (*arūpa-bhava*).

The three rounds of suffering (*tivaṭṭa*) are: 1) The rounds of defilements comprising ignorance, craving and clinging (*kilesa-vaṭṭa*); 2) comprising rebirth producing volitions and mental phenomena associated therewith (*kamma-vaṭṭa*); and 3) the resultant rebirth-process comprising consciousness), mind and matter, the sense spheres, contact and feeling (*vipāka-vaṭṭa*).

Countrymen, the exalted Buddha, possessing the yellow colour of the best refined gold, at the request of the King of Magadha, with his two feet moving like the sun and the moon, has entered the city of Rājagaha together with the 1,000 Arahats, former recluses whom the Buddha himself emancipated from Māra's snare in the cycle of 1,500 defilements, has emancipated them from that snare of Māra by showing them the way-

out; whom the Buddha, the leading bull – himself released from the three states of existences and the three cycles of suffering – has released from those states of existences and cycles of suffering by teaching the essence of Dhamma.

Tiṇṇo tiṇṇehi saha purāṇa-jaṭilehi, vippamutto vippamuttehi,
siṅgī-nikkhasu-vaṇṇo, Rājagahaṁ pāvisi Bhagavā.

Countrymen, the exalted Buddha, possessing the yellow colour of the best refined gold, at the request of the King of Magadha, with his two feet moving like the sun and the moon, has entered the city of Rājagaha together with the 1,000 Arahats, former recluses whom the Buddha, having himself crossed over the four violent floods and reached the other shore, has conveyed them also over the four violent floods to the other shore by giving them the beautiful eightfold mechanized vehicle; whom the Buddha, the leading bull – himself released from the three states of existences and the three cycles of suffering – has released from those states of existences and cycles of suffering by teaching the essence of Dhamma.

Santo santehi saha purāṇa-jaṭilehi, vippamutto vippamuttehi,
siṅgī-nikkhasa-vaṇṇo, Rājagahaṁ pāvisi Bhagavā. *[423]*

Countrymen, the exalted Buddha, possessing the yellow colour of the best refined gold, at the request of the King of Magadha, with his two feet moving like the sun and the moon, has entered the city of Rājagaha together with the 1,000 Arahats, former recluses whom the Buddha himself calmed, are who are devoid of the heat of the defilements, calmed with the entire heat of defilements removed by sharing with them the waters of deathlessness; whom the Buddha, the leading bull – himself released from the three states of existences and the three cycles of suffering – has released from those states of existences and cycles of suffering by teaching the essence of Dhamma.

Dasa-vāso dasa-balo, dasa-dhamma-vidū dasabhi cupeto,
so dasa-sata-parivāro Rājagahaṁ pāvisi Bhagavā.

Countrymen, the exalted Buddha, who is endowed with the ten deportments of the noble ones, the tenfold physical strength, and the tenfold cognitive strength, who perfectly comprehends the ten ways of accomplishing deeds (*kamma-patha*), who is possessed of the ten

characteristics of Arahats, at the request of the Magadha King, with his two feet moving like the sun and the moon, has entered the city of Rājagaha, being accompanied by the 1,000 Arahats, former recluses.

Singing these verses of praise melodiously, Sakka walked ahead of the monastics, led by the Buddha, announcing their approach to the crowd. The citizens of Rājagaha, on seeing Sakka in the guise of a youth, discussed among themselves: "Friends, this youthful person is extremely handsome; this youthful person is so good looking; this youthful person inspires deference," and they wondered: "Whose personal attendant he happens to be?"

Overhearing their remarks about him, Sakka replied to them:

Yo dhīro sabbadhi danto, suddho appaṭipuggalo;
Arahaṁ Sugato loke, tassāhaṁ paricārako.

Countrymen, under the disguise of a youth, I am simply a servant and supporter to him, who is richly endowed with marvellous virtue; he is the one who in this world is a great wise personality having omniscience, who concerning the six sense-faculties and the six sense spheres has tamed himself so that he may be free of the blemishes of wrongdoings; who is pure and untainted by the dust of the 1,500 defilements; who is peerless throughout the entire three existences of the universe; who is worthy of unique homage and offering from humans, Devas and Brahmas; who speaks only two kinds of words whether people like them or not; words which are beneficial and lead one to the paths and fruitions, and words which are truthful and subject to no change at all.

King Bimbisāra's Dedication of the Veḷuvana

The Buddha, accompanied by 1,000 monastics, entered the city of Rājagaha along the route cleared by Sakka, the Lord of the Devas. King Bimbisāra conducted the monastics, headed by the Buddha, to his palace, and served them hard and soft food of excellent quality with his own hands. After which, he sat down in an appropriate place, free from the six faults, and then this thought occurred to him: "At which place would the Buddha take up his residence? It should have the following five characteristics: 1) Being not too far from the city; 2) being not too near the city; 3) having roads for going to and coming from; 4) having easy access to it for everybody at any required time; 5) being devoid of

the noise of the city, village and people clamouring for the five sense [424] objects."

The King's Veḷuvana monastery was complete with these five characteristics. Having considered that it would be excellent to donate it to the community of monastics headed by the Buddha, the King addressed the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, I cannot keep away from the Three Treasures, as I wish to come into the presence of the Buddha on all occasions, appropriate or not. The Palm Grove where you at present residing is too far from the city, our Veḷuvana is neither too far, nor too near the city. There are also great roads leading to and coming from it. It is an accommodation worthy of the blessed Buddha. May you therefore kindly accept my offering of this Veḷuvana."

Having thus addressed the Buddha, and wishing to make a gift of the Veḷuvana, King Bimbisāra poured flower-scented clear water onto the hand of the Buddha from a golden pitcher while saying these words of presentation: "Exalted Buddha, I offer this Veḷuvana to the community of monastics headed by the Buddha" (*etāhaṁ, bhante, Veḷuvanaṁ uyyānaṁ Buddhappamukhassa Bhikkhusaṅghassa dammī*). When the Buddha accepted the Veḷuvana, the great earth quaked, swaying from side to side, and rocking to and fro, like a damsel who, being carried away by joyous emotions, breaks out into dancing.

> According to the commentary to the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and others, in the whole of Jambudīpa there was no Park the acceptance of which by the Buddha occasioned a tremor of the earth except for the acceptance of the Veḷuvana.

The Ten Verses of Appreciation

Having accepted the gift of the Veḷuvana, the Buddha delivered a discourse to King Bimbisāra, King of Magadha, in appreciation of the gift of a dwelling as follows:

> *Āvāsa-dānassa panānisaṁsaṁ,*
> *ko nāma vattuṁ, puriso samattho,*
> *aññatra Buddhā pana loka-nāthā,*
> *yutto mukhānaṁ nahutena cāpi.*

> Great King! Apart from the omniscient Buddha, lord of the world, what man, even if he is strangely equipped with 10,000 mouths, could fully

reveal and explain completely the advantages that would accrue from giving a dwelling-place in generosity?[181]

Āyuñ-ca vaṇṇañ-ca sukhaṁ balañ-ca,
varaṁ pasatthaṁ paṭibhānam-eva,
dadāti nāmāti pavuccate so,
yo deti Saṅghassa naro vihāraṁ.

Great King! A person, who builds and generously offers a monastery to the community of monastics as a dwelling place for them, may be said to have bestowed on them in joyous faith, the boon of longevity, beauty, happiness, strength and admirable higher intelligence.

Dātā nivāsassa nivāraṇassa,
sītādino jīvitupaddavassa,
pāleti āyuṁ pana tassa yasmā,
āyuppado hoti tam-āhu santo.

Great King! A person, who builds and generously offers a monastery as a dwelling place which wards off dangers, such as heat and cold, etc., that may cause harm to life, may be said to have given protection to the life of the [425] community of monastics residing there. All good, virtuous people, headed by the Buddha, speak in praise of such a monastery supporter as one who makes a gift of life.

Accuṇha-sīte vasato nivāse,
balañ-ca vaṇṇo paṭibhāna hoti,
tasmā hi so deti vihāra-dātā,
balañ-ca vaṇṇaṁ paṭibhānam-eva.

Great King! A monastic, living in a place of extreme cold or extreme heat such as an open space, etc., is oppressed by the severity of the climate due to a lack of supporting conditions (*upanissaya-paccaya*), his strength, beauty, high intelligence cannot steadfastly exist. Such existence is possible only in a secure dwelling place. That supporter of monastic buildings may be said to be one who makes a gift, in joyous faith, of strength, beauty and intelligence.

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[181] Excepting the Buddha himself, no ordinary people of the world can in any way do so.

Dukkhassa sītuṇha-sarīsapā ca,
vātātapādippabhavassa loke,
nivāraṇā nekavidhassa niccaṁ,
sukhappado hoti vihāra-dātā.

Great King! A person, who donates a dwelling place, may be said to be a giver of happiness and well-being, because the dwelling place wards off all the suffering in the world which are caused by the hostile elements of heat, cold, reptiles, scorpions, fleas and various kinds of troubles due to wild winds and extreme intensity of heat.

Sītuṇha-vātā-tapa-ḍaṁsa-vuṭṭhi,
sarīsapāvāḷa-migādi-dukkhaṁ,
yasmā nivāreti vihāra-dātā,
tasmā sukhaṁ vindati so parattha.

Great King! A person, who donates a dwelling place, wards off, through his dwelling place, the suffering caused by cold, heat, wind, sun, gnats, mosquitoes, unseasonal rain, poisonous snakes, scorpions, fleas, wild beasts, etc. Therefore, that residence supporter can, without any vestige of doubt, acquire happiness of both mind and body in his future existence.

Pasanna-citto bhava-bhoga-hetuṁ,
manobhirāmaṁ mudito vihāraṁ,
yo deti sīlādi-guṇoditānaṁ,
sabbaṁ dado nāma pavuccate so.

Great King! A person, having pious devotion caused by faith and with joy in his heart, builds and gives away, in generosity, a pleasant, delightful dwelling-place, which would cause the attainment of a happy existence and prosperity, to be used as a monastery by noble monastics who are possessed of the five virtuous qualities, such as morality (*sīla*), and so on. All the former Buddhas had successively spoken in praise of such a supporter as one who makes a gift of these four things: strength, beauty, happiness and intelligence. As it said: *So ca sabba-dado hoti, yo dadāti upassayaṁ*, "one who gives all of these is one who gives a residence." (SN 1.42)

Pahāya macchera-malaṁ salobhaṁ,
guṇālayānaṁ nilayaṁ dadāti,
khitto va so tattha parehi sagge, [426]

yathābhataṁ jāyati vīta-soko.

Great King! A person, having abandoned the defilements of stinginess together with greed which is craving and attachment, builds and gives away, in generosity, a monastery as a residence to noble monastics who are possessed of virtuous qualities, such as morality (*sīla*), etc. Just as labourers who transport and deliver goods to the desired destination, so the carrier of the volitions, convey that faithful supporter to a happy destination; consequently he is reborn in the realms of Devas where pleasant objects having five sensual pleasures abound and where no trouble arises for one's food or shelter.

Vare cāru-rūpe vihāre uḷāre,
naro kāraye vāsaye tattha bhikkhū,
dadeyyanna-pānañ-ca vatthañ-ca nesaṁ,
pasannena cittena sakkacca niccaṁ.

Great King! A wise man, therefore, who cares for his own interest, should have a splendid monastery built which is praiseworthy, delightful and commodious. He should then request monastics who possess much knowledge and experience to take up residence in his monastery. He should always have devotional faith, regarding the resident monastics and deference and make joyous offerings to them of various kinds of food, drinks and robes.

Tasmā Mahā-rāja bhavesu bhoge,
manorame paccanubhuyya bhiyyo,
vihāra-dānassa phalena santaṁ,
sukhaṁ asokaṁ adhigaccha pacchā.

Great King! As a result of this donation of the monastery in pious faith, you will, therefore, repeatedly enjoy in various happy existences more and more delightful wealth. After which, you will, through realisation of the four paths and fruitions, attain the bliss and peace of Nibbāna and be entirely free of sorrow.

Having thus blessed King Bimbisāra with the discourse appreciating the dedication of the monastery, the Buddha rose from his seat and, accompanied by 1,000 monastics moved to the Veḷuvana monastery to take up residence.

This narrative of King Bimbisāra's donation of the Veḷuvana to the community of monastics, headed by the Buddha, mentions his offering by way of naming what is most essential and what is most important, which, in this case, was the Park. As a matter of fact, the king's donation included dwellings with tiers and other buildings for the monastics to dwell in. The Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary describes the Veḷuvana as a site adorned with pleasant spired buildings (*pasāda*), flat-roofed buildings (*hammiya*), mansions (*vimāna*), abodes with roofs on four sides (*vihāra*), those with roofs on two sides (*aḍḍha-yoga*), pandals (*maṇḍapa*) and the like.

Having given the Dhamma talk on the offer of the Veḷuvana by King Bimbisāra, the Buddha addressed the monastics thus: *Anujānāmi bhikkhave ārāmaṁ*, "I allow you, monastics, to accept an offer of a Park."

The Beyond the Walls Discourse

The day after accepting the Veḷuvana, the Buddha delivered the Beyond the Walls Discourse (Khp 7, *Tiro-kuṭṭa-sutta*). The following is the detailed account of it from the commentary.

Counting back from this world, 92 aeons ago, King Jayasena ruled over the [427] country of Kāsi.[182] King Jayasena's Chief Queen, Sirimā, gave birth to a Bodhisatta named Phussa. In due course, the Bodhisatta Phussa gained Awakening and became a Buddha.

King Jayasena, saying: "My elder son has become a Buddha after renouncing the world and leading an ascetic life," developed adoration and became obsessed with such an idea, as: "My Buddha," "My Dhamma," "My Saṅgha," so much so that he made attendance upon the community of monastics, headed by the Buddha, his exclusive privilege and denied all others any opportunity to serve. He had bamboo walls set up on both sides of the road, all the way from the gate of the monastery to his golden palace; canopied ceilings fixed overhead and adorned with stars of gold; and festoons of flowers hung from them; underneath,

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[182] In the Story about Sāriputta (*Sāriputta-vatthu*) of the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) commentary [DhpA 1.8, PTS 1.83] and in the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) commentary [PTS 1.297], it is mentioned that the King was named Mahinda.

silvery white sand was spread out and all kinds of flowers were scattered over so that the Buddha might come along this route.

Buddha Phussa re-arranged his robe at the monastery and accompanied by his community of monastics had to take this walled and covered way to the palace. After finishing the meal, they had to take the same screened-off route back to the monastery. Not a single inhabitant of the city was given an opportunity to offer alms food.

Many of the citizens expressed their reproach saying: "Although a Buddha has appeared in the world, we get no opportunity to gain merit by honouring him. As the moon and the sun make their appearance to confer light on all people; so, Buddhas emerge for the happiness, and well-being of all sentient beings. But this king has monopolized for himself the great field of merit meant for all."

Then three princes who were Buddha Phussa's half-brothers, also thought: "Buddhas appear for the well-being of all sentient beings, not for the benefit of any individual alone. Our royal father has denied others the right to attend upon the Buddha and honour him. How could we gain an opportunity to do so?"

The citizens who had the same thought as the princes discussed the situation with them and they agreed to adopt a ruse. They decided therefore to arrange the arising of a sham insurgency in the border areas of the kingdom. Hearing that administration had broken down in the remote provinces, the king despatched his three sons to subdue the rebellion. On their return from the disturbed regions, after a successful campaign against the insurgents, their royal father, King Jayasena, was so pleased with them that he offered to reward them, saying: "Dear sons, you may ask for any reward you wish." Thereupon, the princes replied: "Royal father, we wish no other reward. We want only royal permission to attend upon the Buddha and honour him."

"Dear sons," said the king, "you may ask any reward other than this." The princes replied: "Royal father, we do not wish to get any other reward." – "In that case you may do so for a certain portion of time."

Thereupon, the princes requested permission for a period of seven years. The king refused to grant it, saying it was too long a time. In this way, the princes made their request reducing the duration to six years, five, four, three, two years, one year and to seven months, six, five and four months. When the king turned down all these requests, the princes finally asked for three months' permission to

attend upon the Buddha. To this the king assented, saying: "All right, you may have it."

When they received the king's approval to attend upon the Buddha and pay homage to him for three months, they joyously approached Buddha Phussa and after paying respects to him, addressed him: "Exalted Buddha, we wish to wait on and serve you for the whole three months of the Rains Retreat. May you accept our invitation to stay in our rural district for the whole three months of the Rains Retreat." By remaining silent, the Buddha signified his acceptance.

When they knew that the Buddha had accepted their request, the three princes sent a [428] message to their chief minister, commanding: "Chief minister, for the whole three months of the Rains Retreat, we wish to support the 90,000 monastics headed by our elder brother Buddha Phussa, with four requisites and wait on them, making our obeisance. You must immediately make arrangements to build and finish the construction of monasteries, etc., for the Buddha and his community of monastics to reside in."

The chief minister, having accomplished the construction of monasteries as commanded by the princes, reported the matter, saying: "The construction of the required monasteries, etc., has been completed as requested."

Then the three princes, together with 1,000 soldiers, wearing bark-dyed clothes, conveyed the community of monastics, headed by the Buddha, to their rural district. 2,500 attendants were organised to serve the Saṅgha with the four requisites and to render service for their comfort and convenience. Then the princes presented the Buddha and his monastics with monastic buildings to take up their residence in.

The Treasurer and his Wife endowed with Faith

The princes' wealthy treasurer and his wife had profound faith in the Three Treasures. On behalf of the princes he took out things for the monastics, headed by the Buddha, from the princely storehouses in turn and faithfully handed them to the minister. The minister took them and with 11,000 people, residents of the district, managed to turn them into choice food which they offered daily to the Buddha and his Saṅgha.

The three princes and their 1,000 soldiers, all in bark-dyed garments, stayed at the monastery, observing the precepts, listening to the sermons and fulfilling their major duties to the Saṅgha led by the Buddha.

Out of the 11,000 people doing sundry jobs at the minister's command, some of his relatives were wicked and ill-natured. So they created various disturbances to the alms giving; they personally plundered and devoured the food prepared for the Buddha and his Saṅgha and fed it to their children; they also set fire to the alms distribution pavilions.

When the rains-residence was over and the monastics had attended the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*) ceremony, the three princes held a huge ceremony in honour of the Buddha. And, in fulfilment of the original agreement made with their royal father, they conveyed the Buddha in a procession headed by him to the king's country. Soon after the arrival in the capital city of Kāsi where King Jayasena resided, Buddha Phussa passed into Parinibbāna.[183]

The royal father, Jayasena, as well as the three princes, their chief minister, and the royal treasurer passed away one after another. They were reborn together with their respective attendants in the Deva realms. The wicked and ill-natured relatives of the chief minister were reborn in the Niraya realms of intense suffering.

At the time of Buddha Kassapa

For the duration of 92 aeons, the first group which reached the Deva realm passed on from one Deva realm to another in the cycle of rebirths, whereas the second group was reborn in one realm of misery after another. Then in the present Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda*), when Buddha Kassapa made his appearance in the world, the wicked and ill-natured relatives of the chief minister were reborn in the Peta realm. At that time, people shared their merits after performing deeds of generosity, with their old relatives who happened to be reborn in the Peta realm, saying: *Idaṁ amhākaṁ ñātinaṁ hotu*, "let this deed of merit be for the benefit of our relatives." Thereby the Petas who were their former relatives attained happiness and well-being.

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[183] According to the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*) commentary, Buddha Phussa passed away while he was still staying with the princes.

Seeing other Petas having happiness and well-being, they approached Buddha Kassapa and enquired of him: "Exalted Buddha, is it likely that we will ever enjoy such prosperity?" – "Petas," said Buddha Kassapa, "it is not yet time for you to enjoy such prosperity. After [429] a lapse of one inclusive period (*antara-kappa*), Buddha Gotama will make his appearance in the world. At that time there will be a king named Bimbisāra. Ninety-two aeons ago, counting from this Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*), the King named Bimbisāra was the chief minister, and a close relative of yours. That old relative of yours, King Bimbisāra, after making a great offering to Buddha Gotama, will share his merit with you. At that time, you will all enjoy such prosperity."

The hopeful words of Buddha Kassapa filled the Petas with intense joy as if he had told them: "You will gain happiness tomorrow."

At the time of Buddha Gotama

Then, when the long duration of time between the appearance of one Buddha and another had elapsed, our Buddha Gotama appeared in the world. The three princes, together with their 1,000 attendants, passed away from the Deva realm and took rebirth in a Brahmin clan of Magadha country. In due time, they renounced the household life and became the three recluse brothers at Gayāsīsa with their 1,000 recluse disciples.

The former chief minister of the three princes had now become King Bimbisāra, ruler of Magadha. The treasurer of the three princes had become now the rich man Visākha, his wife then had now become Dhammadinnā, the daughter of another rich man. The rest of the former assemblage formed now the royal attendants of King Bimbisāra.

As has been stated above, when our Buddha Gotama of unimaginable majesty (*acinteyya*), Lord of the Three Worlds, arrived at Rājagaha, he caused King Bimbisāra and his retinue of 110,000 rich Brahmins to be established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). On the next day, with Sakka acting as his usher, he went to the golden palace to accept the great generosity made by King Bimbisāra.

All the Petas who were the old relatives of King Bimbisāra went too and stood surrounding him, hoping: "Our former relative, King Bimbisāra will share his merits with us. He will presently make the announcement of his merit-sharing." But, having performed the great meritorious deed, King Bimbisāra was only

thinking: "Where would the blessed Buddha reside?" and failed to share the merits. They expressed their indignation by making a terrible outcry of groans in the king's palace at the dead of night.

Thoroughly shaken, frightened and alarmed by the uproar, King Bimbisāra went to the Buddha in the morning and paying respectful homage to him asked: "Exalted Buddha, last night I heard such a frightful noise. What would be their effect upon me?" – "Have no fear, your majesty," replied the Buddha, "those noises will have no ill effects upon you at all. As a matter of fact, your former relatives have been reborn in the realm of Petas and are roaming about and waiting for you, your majesty, throughout the innumerable aeons that intervened between the appearance of one Buddha and another with the hope of receiving the fruits of merits shared by you. You failed to share your merits with your former relatives after your meritorious deeds yesterday. Deprived of any hope of receiving a share of your merits, they caused that frightful din."

On hearing the Buddha's reply, the king addressed the Buddha again: "Exalted Buddha, if I perform a deed of generosity again and share my merits gained thereby, will they be able to receive them?" – "Yes, your majesty, they will be able to receive them." – "This being so," the king requested the Buddha, "may you accept the great alms meal (*dāna*) to be performed by me today? I will announce my sharing of my merits with my old relatives." The Buddha signified his acceptance by remaining silent.

The king went back to the palace and caused arrangements to be made for the performance of a magnificent alms meal and when all the arrangements had been made, he had information sent to the Buddha that it was time for him to come and accept the king's offering. The Buddha went to the palace and sat down at the prepared seat together with his community of monastics. All the Petas, who were the king's former relatives, also went to the palace, saying: "Today, we are surely going to receive the share of merits," and stood waiting from outside the walls.

The Buddha exercised his supernormal powers in such a way that the king saw all the Petas who were his former relatives. The king, pouring water on the hands of the Buddha, said: *Idaṁ me ñātinaṁ hotu*, "may this alms meal given by a pouring of clear water be for the [430] well-being of my relatives."

At that very moment, his former relatives received their share of merits and there appeared suddenly ponds with five kinds of lotus for their enjoyment. All his relatives drank the water of the ponds, and took a bath in them; freed from miseries, worries, weariness and thirst; they acquired a golden complexion.

Again, the king offered various edibles in succession such as rice gruel, hard food and soft food, to the community of monastics headed by the Buddha, and announced a distribution of merits to his old relatives. At that very moment, various kinds of celestial food appeared for their consumption. Partaking of these divine meals voraciously, which more than made up for the ravenous hunger they felt before, they assumed a fresh, healthy physical appearance, complete with all the sense faculties of eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body.

Then the king proceeded to offer robes, sleeping and dwelling places to the community of monastics headed by the Buddha and as before made known the distribution of his merits; and at that moment too, there appeared for use by the Petas, divine garments, divine carriages and celestial mansions complete with beds, beddings, bed spreads and various kinds of ornamental clothing. The Buddha made the resolution wishing that King Bimbisāra could see the happiness and prosperity being enjoyed by his old relatives. On seeing them thus enjoying King Bimbisāra was overjoyed.

> According to the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) commentary on the story of Ven. Sāriputta, those Peta relatives of the king abandoned their Peta appearance and assumed divine appearances.

Having finished his meal, the Buddha, in order to bless the king with an appreciation of all his good deeds, gave the discourse entitled Beyond the Walls (Khp 7, Pv 1.5, *Tiro-kuṭṭa-sutta*) made up of twelve verses:

> [The original translation had only the first verse in Pāḷi, here I give the whole discourse in my own translation.]

Tiro-kuḍḍesu tiṭṭhanti, sandhi-siṅghāṭakesu ca,
dvāra-bāhāsu tiṭṭhanti, āgantvāna sakaṁ gharaṁ.

They stand beyond the walls, and at the junctions and crossroads, they stand at the door-posts, having come to their former homes.

Pahūte anna-pānamhi, khajja-bhojje upaṭṭhite,
na tesaṁ koci sarati sattānaṁ kamma-paccayā.

But when abundant food and drink, both staple and non-staple, is prepared, no one remembers these beings, because of their past unwholesome deeds,

Evaṁ dadanti ñātīnaṁ ye honti anukampakā,
suciṁ paṇītaṁ kālena, kappiyaṁ pāna-bhojanaṁ.
"Idaṁ vo ñātinaṁ hotu, sukhitā hontu ñātayo!"

Thus those who are compassionate give to their departed relatives, at the right time, pure, excellent, suitable drink and food, thinking: "May this go to our relatives, may our relatives be happy!"

Te ca tattha samāgantvā, ñāti-petā samāgatā
pahute anna-pānamhi, sakkaccaṁ anumodare:

Those who have gathered, the departed relatives who have assembled around the food and drink, respectfully offer their thanks, saying:

"Ciraṁ jīvantu no ñātī! Yesaṁ hetu labhāmase,
amhākañ-ca katā pūjā, dāyakā ca anipphalā!"

"May our relatives live long! Those to whom we owe this gain, for we have been honoured, those who give are not without reward!"

Na hi tattha kasī atthi, gorakkh' ettha na vijjati,
vaṇijjā tādisī natthi, hiraññena kayakkayaṁ.

For in that place there is no ploughing, and cattle-rearing is not found there, similarly there is no trading, or buying and selling of gold.

Ito dinnena yāpenti, petā kālakatā tahiṁ.
Unname udakaṁ vaṭṭaṁ, yathā ninnaṁ pavattati,
evam-eva ito dinnaṁ, petānaṁ upakappati.

The departed in that place, who have died, have to subsist on gifts. Just as water that rains on the highlands, flows down to the lowlands, so too what has been given here is of benefit to the departed.

Yathā vāri-vahā pūrā paripūrenti sāgaraṁ,
evam-eva ito dinnaṁ, petānaṁ upakappati.

Just as rivers that are full flow and fill up the ocean, so too what has been given here is of benefit to the departed, thinking:

"Adāsi me, akāsi me, ñāti-mittā sakhā ca me,"
petānaṁ dakkhiṇaṁ dajjā, pubbe katam-anussaraṁ.

"He gave to me, he worked for me, he was my relative, my friend, my companion," he should give gifts for the departed, remembering what they have done before.

Na hi ruṇṇaṁ va, soko vā, yā caññā paridevanā,
na taṁ petānam-atthāya, evaṁ tiṭṭhanti ñātayo.

For no tears, or grief, or any other lamentations, are of any use to the departed, as long as their relatives continue grieving in this way.

Ayaṁ kho dakkhiṇā dinnā, Saṅghamhi suppatiṭṭhitā,
dīgha-rattaṁ hitāyassa, ṭhānaso upakappati.

But that gift that has been given, and well placed in the Sangha, is of benefit to them for a long time, immediately it is of benefit.

So ñāti-dhammo ca ayaṁ nidassito -
petāna' pūjā ca katā uḷārā,
balañ-ca bhikkhūnam-anuppadinnaṁ,
tumhehi puññaṁ pasutaṁ anappakaṁ!

This then is the definition of a relative's duties - and by this great honour has been done to the departed, strength has also been given to the monks, and no little merit has been produced by you!

At the end of this Beyond the Walls discourse, 84,000 sentient beings became aware of the frightful disadvantages of rebirth in the Peta realm through the vivid descriptions by the Buddha, which generated in them a sense of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*). Thereupon they readily practised the Dhamma and, perceiving the noble truths, achieved emancipation.

On the second day also, the Buddha repeated the same discourse to Devas and humans. He continued to give the same discourse for seven days and on each occasion, 84,000 beings perceived the four noble truths and achieved emancipation. [431]

16: The Arrival of Upatissa and Kolita

The Two Friends

The time was about the first waxing moon of February (*Māgha*) when the Buddha had been in Rājagaha for about half a month. At that time, the great teacher of the wandering ascetics, Sañjaya, was residing at Rājagaha with 250 followers. During this period, the wandering ascetic Upatissa, the future chief disciple Ven. Sāriputta, and wandering ascetic Kolita, the future chief disciple Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, happened to be undergoing training in the ascetic practices under this great teacher Sañjaya.

The two ascetics, Upatissa and Kolita, who were childhood friends, found out on completion of the course of training within two or three days that the ascetic teacher's doctrine did not contain any elements of the deathless Nibbāna. "My friend, this ascetic teacher's doctrine is fruitless, it is without essence. We will make a solemn vow that, from now on, the one who realises first the deathless Nibbāna should speak about it to the one who is still seeking it."

On that day of about the first waxing moon of March (*Phagguṇa*), Ven. Assaji, one of the Group-of-Five (*pañca-vaggiya*) monks, after rearranging his robe and taking his alms bowl and upper robe, set out for Rājagaha to receive alms food. His deportment was dignified and inspired confidence, whether in going forward or back, looking forward or sideways, with eyes cast down confining the range of vision to a radius of four hands' lengths.

When ascetic Upatissa, the future Sāriputta, saw Ven. Assaji entering Rājagaha, deporting himself with such dignity and grace, he thought to himself: "I am certain this monastic must be one of those in the world who has attained the Arahat path and fruit. It might be well to approach him and ask: "Friend, under whom have you gone forth? Who is your teacher? Whose teaching have you accepted?"

But then he considered thus: "This is not the proper time to ask this monastic; he is on his alms round in the city. We two friends have so desired the deathless state of Nibbāna after having deduced that: 'If there is death, there must also be the state of deathlessness.' For me, who has been seeking to realize this inferred objective of Nibbāna, it would be well to follow in the footsteps of this monk." Accordingly he followed closely behind Ven. Assaji.

When Ven. Assaji had finished his alms round, Upatissa sensed his desire to take a seat for his meal. He therefore laid out a short-legged stool, which he had carried all along the way, and offered some water from his jug when the monk had finished his meal.

Having thus fulfilled the duties that a pupil would do to a teacher, he entered into courteous, cordial conversation with the monk and said: "Friend, your faculties are fully clear and serene; your complexion is clear, [432] bright and unblemished. Friend, under whom have you gone forth? Who is your teacher? Whose teaching have you accepted?"

Ven. Assaji replied: "Friend, I have gone forth under the Perfectly-Self Awakened Buddha, a scion of the unbroken Sakya dynasty, who renounced the world and became a recluse. He is my teacher and I am one who has accepted his teaching." Upatissa then asked: "Friend, what does your teacher Buddha profess? What does he teach?"

Ven. Assaji contemplated: "These wandering ascetics hold views which are antagonistic to the Dispensation (*Sāsana*); and I must show this wandering ascetic Upatissa clearly the deep and subtle nature of the teaching," and so gave this reply: "Friend, I am but a junior member of the Saṅgha, having come into the Dispensation (*Sāsana*) quite recently. I will not be able to explain the Dhamma extensively. I will be able to tell you in brief its essential meaning only."

The wandering ascetic Upatissa, the future Sāriputta, thought of informing Ven. Assaji: "I am Upatissa, a wandering ascetic and an intellectual, please teach me to the best of your ability either little or in extension. It is my responsibility to try and understand your discourse by extending it in 100 or 1,000 ways," but he only said: "So, be it, friend. Please teach me a little or much; and in doing so please teach me only the essential meaning. I wish to listen only to the essential meaning for what avails it to me, if you teach many matters concerning letters, versification, and other such things?"

Thereupon, Ven. Assaji, taught the Dhamma which is complete with the essential meaning of the four noble truths:

> *Ye dhammā hetuppabhavā, tesaṁ hetuṁ Tathāgato āha,*
> *tesañ-ca yo nirodho, evaṁ-vādī Mahā-samaṇo.*

> Our teacher, the Awakened One has told the truth of suffering (*dukkha-sacca*) and the truth of the origin of suffering (*samudaya-sacca*). He has also taught the truth of the cessation of suffering (*nirodha-sacca*) and the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering (*magga-sacca*). Such is the pure doctrine held by the Great Samaṇa, our master, who expounds these four noble truths in analytical detail.

After hearing the first half of the above discourse, the wanderer Upatissa attained the path stage of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*), when he had heard the remaining half of the discourse he had already become a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*). The future Sāriputta then said:

> *Eseva dhammo yadi tāvad-eva, paccabyattha padam-asokaṁ,*
> *adiṭṭhaṁ abbhatītaṁ, bahukehi kappanahutehi.*
>
> This is the very teaching, the truth we two friends have been searching for, even though it has enabled me to attain personally and realise only the fruition of the first path (*Sotāpatti-phala*). You, venerable sir, have attained and realised the state where there is no sorrow, Nibbāna. Because we have not seen this truth, Nibbāna, we have suffered a great loss, wasting our lives in innumerable aeons.

After saying thus, it occurred to Upatissa that there should be some things more special in this supermundane matter, even before he had achieved the higher stages of it. He therefore requested Ven. Assaji: "Let things stand where they are for the time being; do not continue to teach the higher stages of the doctrine. Let me beseech you to tell [433] me where our teacher, the Awakened One, is now residing." – "Friend, the Realised One is residing at the Veḷuvana monastery," replied Ven. Assaji. Thereupon, Upatissa said: "If so, venerable sir, please go ahead, I have a friend to whom I have the bounden duty to share the knowledge of the deathless, which I have acquired before him. After fulfilling my promise to him, I shall follow with my friend in your wake to the presence of the Fortunate One." He then respectfully made obeisance to the monk, circumambulated him three times as a gesture of gratitude and made his way towards the wanderers' residence.

When Kolita saw Upatissa coming, even from a distance, it occurred to him: "My friend's face looks entirely different from previous days. It seems certain that he has realised the deathless Nibbāna." So he asked Upatissa: "Friend, your

sense faculties are fully clear and serene; your complexion is clear, bright and unblemished. How is that, my friend? Have you acquired knowledge of the deathless Nibbāna?" – "Yes, friend, I have indeed realized the deathless Nibbāna." On being asked by Kolita under what circumstances he had attained the deathless Nibbāna, Upatissa told him in detail what had transpired during his meeting with Ven. Assaji and repeated the verse: *Ye Dhammā hetuppabbhavā,* etc. After hearing the verse in full length, Kolita also attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) and asked: "Friend, Upatissa, where is our master, the Fully Awakened One now residing?" Upatissa replied: "Our master, the Realised One, is residing at the Veḷuvana monastery, according to Ven. Assaji." Upon this, Kolita, being an impulsive person said: "If so, friend, let us go to the Realised One right away; the exalted Buddha, the Awakened One is our master, our benefactor."

Sañjaya and his Disciples

Upatissa, the future Sāriputta, who, with a kindly disposition, had regard for the feelings of their followers, suggested patiently and with foresight: "Friend, those 250 wandering ascetics have been depending on us, have always looked up to us, and have lived in the hermitage, always watching our behaviour and disposition. Let us also inform these 250 wanderers. If we inform them, they can act as they wish!"

As one who always had profound respect for teachers, he went on to point out: "Let us also acquaint our teacher Sañjaya what we have learnt about the deathless Nibbāna. If he is intelligent and wise, he will believe us and surely come along with us to meet the Realised One. On hearing the teaching by the Realised One, he might also realise the paths and fruitions through penetrative knowledge." So saying, the two friends first went to the 250 followers and told them: "We are going to the Realised One, the exalted Buddha, the Awakened One, who is our master, our benefactor."

All 250 disciples responded: "All of us have been living here depending solely upon you and watching your behaviour and disposition. Should you decide to go to the Realised One and practise the holy life in the presence of the Fortunate One, all of us will also do so."

Then the two friends went to the great teacher Sañjaya and made three unsuccessful attempts to persuade him to go to the Realised One with them. Finally the great teacher asked: “Young men, in this world, are there many who are unwise, or many who are wise?” When they replied: “Master, in this world there are many who are unwise and few who are wise,” the great teacher Sañjaya made this final remark: “Young men, if that be the case, wise men will go to the ascetic Gotama, the wise; and those who are unwise will come to me, the unwise. You may go ahead, I cannot, in any case, accompany you.” So the two friends, accompanied by their 250 followers, made their way to the Veḷuvana monastery where the Fortunate One was residing.

As Upatissa and Kolita led away the 250 wandering ascetics to the Veḷuvana monastery, the entire precincts of the great teacher Sañjaya became absolutely lifeless and silent. His followers had dispersed, and looking upon the silent and deserted scene, the lonely teacher Sañjaya felt so desolate that under pressure at the raging flame of [434] grief within, boiling blood bubbled forth from his mouth.

At that time the Buddha was sitting in a stately manner amidst an audience of the Saṅgha and was delivering a discourse. When he saw from a distance the two ascetic friends and their 250 followers coming towards the Veḷuvana monastery, he drew the attention of the monastics who were listening to his discourse, saying: “Monastics, yonder come Kolita and Upatissa, the two boyhood friends. These two are destined to become the pair of chief disciples on my left and right.” The two friends and their 250 followers approached the Fortunate One, bowing their heads at his feet in profound respect.

Kolita, Upatissa and their Followers Ordained

Having made their obeisance to the Fortunate One, they requested the Buddha that they be ordained as monks, saying: “Exalted Buddha! May we have the lower and higher ordinations in your presence.” The Buddha stretched out his golden hand and called out in the same way as before thus: *Etha bhikkhave*, etc., “come, monks. Receive the lower and higher ordinations you have asked for, my dear sons. The Dhamma has been well taught by me; strive to undergo the noble training in its three aspects so as to bring about the end of the round of suffering.”

No sooner had the Buddha uttered thus, than the two friends, together with their 250 disciples, were instantly transformed into fully fledged monastics, like senior monks (*thera*) of 60 years' standing, readily robed and equipped with eight supernaturally created requisites, each in its proper place, paying homage to the Buddha with due respect. The appearance of laymen vanished miraculously as they were transformed into monastics.

After they had thus become summoned monastics (*ehi-bhikkhu*), the Buddha proceeded to expound an appropriate discourse, in harmony with the intellectual level and disposition of the 250 followers of the two friends. With the exception of the two chief disciples (*agga-sāvaka*), these 250 monastics became Arahats at that sitting.

As regards the two chief disciples, they had not yet become accomplished in the three higher paths, because, of the three types of disciple, the conditions for the attainment of chief disciples (*agga-sāvaka-pāramī-ñāṇa*) surpass those of great disciples (*mahā-sāvaka*) and ordinary disciples (*pakati-sāvaka*) and are more extensive.

Ven. Moggallāna and Ven. Sāriputta Attain Arahantship

After his ordination, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna started to practise earnestly the holy life in a forest, depending for his sustenance on a small village, called Kallavālamutta, in the country of Magadha. Making a strenuous effort in his practice, walking up and down the path for full seven days, he felt tired and weak on the seventh day and sat down at the end of the path dozing, being overcome by torpor. The Buddha roused him from the fit of torpidity with teaching and instruction and he eventually overcame it. On hearing the Buddha's instruction on the meditation on the elements (*dhātu-kammaṭṭhāna*) he became perfected in the three higher paths and achieved the height of knowledge of a disciple (*sāvaka-pāramī-ñāṇa*).[184]

Half a month from the date of his ordination, on the full moon day of February (*Māgha*), Ven. Sāriputta, while staying with the Buddha in the Sūkarakhatā cave, which was dug by pigs on mount Gijjhakūṭa in Rājagaha, heard the Buddha's

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[184] For more particulars, reference may be made to Discourse about Drowziness (*Pacalāyamana-sutta*, An 7.61, PTS 4.85), and the relevant commentaries.

Discourse concerning Dīghanakha (*Dīgha-nakha-sutta*, MN 74) [435] given to Ven. Sāriputta's own nephew, the wanderer Dīghanakha. While following the discourse intently, Ven. Sāriputta practised the meditation on feeling (*vedanā-kamaṭṭhāna*) thereby developing penetrating insight. As a result, he became an Arahat, achieving the height of knowledge of a disciple (*sāvaka-pāramī-ñāṇa*). He may be likened to one who enjoys the food laid in readiness for another person. He also penetratingly discerned the sixteen states of knowledge.

> Herein, a question might arise: Why did Ven. Sāriputta, who was possessed of great wisdom, become an Arahat after Ven. Mahā Moggallāna? The answer in brief is: The preliminary steps taken by Ven. Sāriputta, in the matter of meditation practices, were wider or greater than those of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna. Here is an example: When ordinary common people contemplate travelling, they can do so quickly because they have a limited amount of kit or paraphernalia to carry, whereas kings cannot set out so quickly because arrangements have to be made for regiments of elephants, horse-men, charioteers, infantry, etc., to accompany them on a grand scale, so, as the saying goes: "It takes the cooking time of a boat load of white beans for a king to appear before his audience."

Further explanation: future Buddhas or Bodhisattas (*Sammā-sambodhisatta*), future Independent Buddhas (*Pacceka-bodhisatta*), and future disciples of a Buddha (*sāvaka-bodhisatta*) all have, as their object of insight meditation, the aggregate of conditioned formations or mental and physical phenomena. This aggregate which forms the object of insight meditation is known as the practising ground (*samma-sanacāra*) for the development of the knowledge of impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anatta*). It is also called the ground of insight (*vipassanā-bhūmi*) meaning the aggregate of mental and physical phenomena which form the basis of developing insight (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*).

Of these Bodhisattas,

1. Bodhisattas who will become Sammā-sambuddhas (*Sammā-sambodhisatta*) contemplate the impermanence, suffering and non-self characteristics of the internal aggregate of conditioned existence, that is to say, mental and physical phenomena occurring continuously in sentient beings, as well as of external inanimate objects that have no power of sense-perception, that exist within the compass of one billion universes.

2. Bodhisattas who will become Paccekabuddhas (*Pacceka-bodhisatta*) contemplate the impermanence, suffering and non-self characteristics of conditioned mental and physical phenomena occurring in themselves, of those in the continuum of sentient beings in the middle region as well as of external inanimate objects that have no power of sense-perception.

3. Bodhisattas who will become future chief, great and ordinary disciples (*sāvaka-bodhisatta*) contemplate the impermanence, suffering and non-self characteristics of conditioned mental and physical phenomena without distinguishing, as occurring in the continuum of themselves or in those of others, taking them as one whole external phenomena.

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna did not contemplate to the fullest extent the impermanent, unsatisfactory, insubstantial characteristics of each and every conditioned phenomenon occurring in his own continuum and in those of others; he selected only some of the conditioned phenomena for his contemplation. Ven. Sāriputta, however, in contemplating the three characteristics of conditioned phenomena developed insight by being more thorough than Ven. Moggallāna, attending individually to each of the phenomenon.

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna may be likened to a person who touches the earth only with the tip of his walking stick as he walks along. He has only touched a negligibly small area of ground leaving a greater portion untouched. This implies that the time he utilized in contemplating the object of insight meditation and attaining the Arahat fruition after seven days, he had meditated on only a portion of the aggregates of conditioned phenomena.

Ven. Sāriputta, on the other hand, during the fifteen days before he attained the [436] Arahat fruition, took the complete course of mastering (*sammasana*) the practice reserved for the disciples not giving attention to those reserved for the Sammāsambodhisattas and Paccekabodhisattas so that there was nothing left untouched in the matter of contemplating the salient features of conditioned phenomena. Having realized the Arahat fruition, he perceived with dauntless confidence that, excepting the Fully Awakened Buddhas and Paccekabuddhas, there was no one who could rise to the intellectual level that he had systematically attained. He found none his equal.

Here is an analogy: There were two men who wanted bamboo staffs. The first man, having found a cluster of bamboos, thought it would take time to clear the

bushes to get a good staff. So he cut a length of bamboo within reach of his hand, by thrusting his hand to his arm's length into the cluster of bamboos. Although this man acquired the bamboo staff first, he did not get a good, straight, strong one.

The second person, who also found the cluster of bamboos thought he would not get a staff of his choice unless the binding clusters and creepers were removed. He then girded his loins and with a sharp knife removed the tangled growth and then cut a straight, strong staff of his choice for himself and went off. Although this person acquired a bamboo staff later, he got a good, strong straight one.

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna may be likened to the first person who cut and acquired a bamboo staff first, but not a good, straight strong one; Ven. Moggallāna also became an Arahat first, but not the highest stage of the knowledge of a disciple (*sāvaka-pāramī-ñāṇa*).

Ven. Sāriputta may be likened to the second person who patiently took pains to get a staff that was straight and strong. Ven. Sāriputta attended patiently to his meditation for fifteen days to attain the Arahat fruition later but he reached the pinnacle of the knowledge of a disciple (*sāvaka-pāramī-ñāṇa*).

Ven. Moggallāna's practice (*paṭipadā*) for the three lower paths was of the easy practice but slow in super knowledge (*sukha-paṭipadā-dandha-abhiññā*) type – after having removed the hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) easily, the insight knowledges (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) were tardily developed to attain the three lower stages (*magga-ñāṇa*).

His practice (*paṭipadā*) for the attainment of the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*) was of the difficult in practice and quick in super knowledge (*dukkha-paṭipadā-khippa-abhiññā*) type – after having been able to remove the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) by practising strenuously and with difficulty, the insight knowledges (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) were developed sharply and quickly to attain the Arahat path.

The practice (*paṭipadā*) of Ven. Sāriputta, the general of the Dhamma, for the three lower paths was of the easy in practice, but slow in super knowledge (*sukha-paṭipadā-dandha-abhiññā*) type, which is the same as that of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna.

But his practice (*paṭipadā*) for the attainment of the Arahat path was of the easy in practice and quick in super knowledge type (*sukha-paṭipadā-khippa-abhiññā*)

– after having removed the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) without trouble and with ease, the insight knowledges (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) were developed sharply and quickly to attain he Arahat path. This is the difference between the practice (*paṭipadā*) of the two disciples.[185]

The Single Occasion of the Disciples' Meeting

After delivering the discourse entitled the Discourse concerning Dīghanakha (*Dīgha-nakha-sutta*, MN 74), the Buddha descended from mount Gijjhakūṭa before dusk and went to the Veḷuvana monastery. There occurred then the great event of the Disciples' meeting (*sannipāta*), which was characterised by four features:

1. It was the full moon of the month of February (*Māgha*).
2. The Congregation took place without an invitation, as a natural course of events, with the coming together of 1,250 monastics made up of 1,000 monastics headed by the Kassapa brothers and 250 belonging to the two chief disciples' group.
3. All the 1,250 participants were summoned monastics (*ehi-bhikkhu*).
4. All these participants had achieved the sixfold super knowledges (*chaḷ-abhiññā*).

It was in this congregation of the disciples (*sāvaka-sannipāta*), that the Buddha named the two chief disciples, Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, as chief disciples (*agga-sāvaka*). On the [437] same day, the Buddha gave the instructions known as the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*), which no Buddha fails to offer.

Three Occasions of the Buddha's Teaching

As described in chapter IX, on the 24 Buddhas, the three great occasions in which Buddhas of the past delivered great sermons, also took place in the time of our supremely Awakened Buddha Gotama. These memorable occasions are:

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[185] [See AN 4.167 & 168, and their commentaries].

1. The Buddha, after his attainment of Awakening, taught, for the first time, the Discourse about the Turning of the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*, SN 56.11) in the Deer Park where Ven. Koṇḍañña and 180 million Brahmas became established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

   This is the first occasion (*Dhammābhisamaya*), at which the four noble truths were made known to humans, Devas and Brahmas.

2. Then on the great auspicious (*mahā-maṅgala*) day, the Buddha taught the Discourse on the Blessings (*Maṅgala-sutta*, Khp 5, Snp 2.4) amidst the assembly of Devas and humans from the 10,000 world-element; innumerable Devas and humans discerned the four noble truths and attained emancipation.

   This is the second occasion (*Dhammābhisamaya*) at which the four noble truths were made known to humans, Devas and Brahmas.

3. Again, when the Realised One taught the Shorter Discourse to Rāhula (*Cūḷa-Rāhulovada-sutta*, MN 147) to Ven. Rāhula, thousands of Devas together with Ven. Rāhula, came to understand the four noble truths and attained emancipation.

   This is the third occasion (*Dhammābhisamaya*) at which the four noble truths were made known to humans, Devas and Brahmas.

The Two Forms of the Rules

The brief exhortation and code of discipline laid down by the Buddhas is the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*), those who observe and follow them stay away from the danger of falling into states of woe. The Rules are in two forms: 1) The Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*) and 2) the Monastic Rules (*Āṇā-Pātimokkha*).

Of those two forms, the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*) is taught by fully Self-Awakened Buddhas exclusively. The Advisory Rules consists of three verses beginning with: *Khantī paramaṁ tapo titikkhā*, “forbearing patience is the most excellent moral practice.”

Every Buddha gave this exhortation only with these three verses; there has been no deviation among them. However, as regards the occasions and time intervals

when they were delivered, there had been differences as is explained below: Buddha Vipassī taught the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*) once every seven years; the exhortation held good for seven years. Buddhas Sikhī and Vessabhū taught it every six years, Buddhas Kakusandha and Koṇāgamana, every year and Buddha Kassapa every six months, as his exhortation lasted for six months. This is as mentioned in the Introduction to the Story of Ānanda's Questions (*Ānandatthera-pañhā-vatthu*) of the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) commentary (DhpA IV.9).

We will describe here also what is mentioned in the Introduction to the Section on Verañjā, in the first volume of the Vinaya commentary regarding these Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*):[186] All the Buddhas of the past taught the Advisory Rules only, but they [438] were not taught every half month. To explain further, Buddha Vipassī taught the Advisory Rules once every six years and he recited it himself. The male monastic disciples did not recite the Monastic Rules (*Pāṭimokkha*) within the precincts of their own monastery. All the monastics within the entire region of Jambudīpa gathered together to hold the Observance Day (*Uposatha*) service only in the precinct of the monastery where Buddha Vipassī resided. The monastery was situated in Khemā's garden, a sanctuary for animals near the capital Bandhumatī.

During the days of Buddha Vipassī, there used to be 84,000 monasteries, and within each monastery there dwelt 10,000 to 20,000 monastics who were keeping themselves pure by staying away from individuals with whom they have nothing in common (*visabhāga-puggala*). They also observe more austere practices. Devas, who had taken up the duty of announcing the Observance (*Uposatha*) days, went round the monasteries where monastics resided once every year to address them: "Your reverences, who have a peaceful life, a year is past, two years, three years, four years, five years have past. This is the sixth year and the coming full moon day is the day when you should all approach the Buddha to pay homage and to hold the Observance (*Uposatha*) day. It is now time for you all to assemble in the presence of the Buddha."

Monastics, who were possessed of supernormal powers, found their own way to the monastery in the Khemā Sanctuary where the Buddha Vipassī was residing.

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[186] [PTS 1.186 ff].

Monastics who possessed no supernatural power went to that monastery with the assistance of the Devas in this manner: The powerless monastics were then living in monasteries situated near the shores of the east, west, north and south oceans. Before they proceeded to the assembly, they performed the bounden duties of setting beds and dwelling places in order, then taking their bowls and robes, they willed: "Let us be off," and instantaneously they found themselves, with the aid of the Devas, sitting in the presence of Buddha Vipassī, in the Observance Hall, and paying respects to him.

When the full assembly of monastics had congregated, Buddha Vipassī, recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*) as follows (Dhp 184-183-185):

> *Khantī paramaṁ tapo titikkhā,*
> *Nibbānaṁ paramaṁ vadanti Buddhā,*
> *na hi pabbajito parūpaghātī,*
> *na samaṇo hoti paraṁ viheṭhayanto.*

Forbearing patience (*adhivāsana-khanti*) is the most excellent moral practice. Buddhas proclaim: "Nibbāna, which is freedom from craving, is supreme." He who injures or kills others is not one who has gone forth. One who harms others is not a noble monastic who has extinguished all the defilements.

> Patience (*khanti*) means exertion or putting forth energy to bear patiently the blames and accusations made by others, forbearance to withstand cold and heat without the slightest sign of discomfort (*adhivasana-khantī*).

> *Sabba-pāpassa akaraṇaṁ, kusalassa upasampadā,*
> *sacitta-pariyodapanaṁ, etaṁ Buddhānasāsanaṁ.*

Not to do anything evil, to cultivate faultless meritorious deeds pertaining to the four realms, to purify ones mind by discarding the fivefold hindrances which defile it – these are the instructions, exhortations, advice given by each and every Buddha.

> One should endeavour to refrain from demeritorious deeds by observing moral precepts; to perform meritorious deeds pertaining to the four realms through practice of concentration and insight meditations of both mundane and supermundane levels; and bring about complete purification of one's mind [439] through attainment of the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-*

phala). This is the express exhortation, instruction laid down by all the Buddhas.

Anūpavādo anūpaghāto, Pātimokkhe ca saṁvaro,
mattaññutā ca bhattasmiṁ, pantañ-ca sayanāsanaṁ,
adhicitte ca āyogo, etaṁ Buddhānasāsanaṁ.

Not to accuse others or cause others to accuse, meaning vocal restraint; not to ill-treat others or cause others to kill or ill treat others, meaning bodily restraint, to observe the chief moral precepts and guard them from being stained or blemished meaning observance of the restraint according to the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara-sīla*) and restraint of the senses (*indriya-saṁvara-sīla*). Knowing the right measure in the matter of food referring to purity of livelihood (*ājīva-pārisuddhi-sīla*) and the dependence on requisites (*paccaya-sannissita-sīla*), dwelling in places of seclusion (*sappāya-senāsana*), constant application to develop the eight attainments (*samāpatti*) which serve as the basis of insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) – this set of six precepts constitute the exhortation, instruction and advice of all the Buddhas.

This verse gives an abridged exposition of the three trainings, namely, higher norality (*adhisīla*), concentration (*adhicitta*) and wisdom (*adhipaññā*).

In this manner only, Buddha Sikhī and all other Buddhas taught and recited the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*); there are no differences, such as a special teaching in the verses recited by them. As stated above, the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) commentary mentions only differences in the time factor.

Only these three verses form the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*) which were recited by all the Buddhas. Buddhas with longer lifespans recited them throughout their lifetime; Buddhas of shorter lifespan recited them in the earlier portion after their Awakening (*paṭhama-bodhi*), from the time they started laying down the training rules till they stopped teaching. Only their disciples recited the Vinaya disciplinary rules, also called the Monastic Rules (*Āṇā-Pātimokkha*), once every fortnight.[187]

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[187] Buddhas never recited the Monastic Rules (*āṇā-pātimokkha*).

Therefore, our own Buddha Gotama, the Awakened One, taught the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*) only in the first 20 years of his Buddhahood, known as the first period after Awakening (*Paṭhama-bodhi*).

17a: Buddha's Journey to Kapilavatthu

King Suddhodana invites the Buddha

[The first two sections of this chapter were attached to the end of the previous chapter, but better belong with the story that follows.]

It was during the waning moon of January (*Phussa*), in the year 528 BCE, the Buddha was then residing at the Veḷuvana monastery in Rājagaha administering the deathless elixir of Dhamma to humans, Devas and Brahmas who were in his presence. He had helped some sentient beings become established as firm believers in the Three Treasures; others were able to gain the paths and fruitions in accordance with their aspirations and resolve; while some people of good families from Aṅga and Magadha countries were granted ordination and gained attainment of the paths and fruitions. While this great festival of emancipation was being held daily, King Suddhodana heard the news that his son was now the most exalted Buddha, after undergoing a strenuous course of practice for six years and that, having taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, he was residing in great and noble glory at Veḷuvana monastery, Rājagaha, like the moon amidst the stars in the sky.

Hearing this news, the king sent for a minister and said to him: "Minister! Go now with 1,000 attendants to the city of Rājagaha and address my son, the [440] Awakened One, in these words: 'Exalted Buddha, your father, King Suddhodana, is desirous of paying homage to you,' and invite him to come here."

"Very well, your majesty," replied the minister and he set off without delay, carrying the royal message and in the company of 1,000 attendants to Rājagaha which was 60 leagues from Kapilavatthu. He arrived there at a time when the Buddha was teaching Dhamma in the midst of an audience at the Veḷuvana monastery.

The minister thought to himself: "I may as well listen to the discourse before delivering the king's message." While standing and listening to the discourse from the far end of the audience, he and his 1,000 attendants, as a consequence, became Arahats. They therefore approached the Buddha and made the request: "Exalted Buddha, may we receive the going forth to the Saṅgha and higher ordination as monastics in your presence." Thereupon, the Fortunate One stretched out his hand as before and said: *Etha bhikkhu*, etc. Instantly, the

minister and the 1,000 royal attendants transformed into fully fledged monastics like senior monks (*thera*) of 60 year's standing, readily robed and equipped with the eight supernaturally created requisites, each in its place, paying homage to the Buddha with due respect. Their state of minister and royal attendants miraculously disappeared as they were transformed into monastics.

From the moment of attainment of the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*), noble persons, as a matter of course, become indifferent to mundane affairs, as such, and so the minister did not convey the king's message to the Buddha but simply passed his time enjoying the bliss of the Arahat fruition.

Finding that the minister whom he sent did not return in due time and no news was even heard from him, the king was anxious to know the reason for their silence. So he sent again another minister on the same mission and in the same manner. This minister, too, having gone to Veḷuvana monastery in Rājagaha with his attendants, became an Arahat after hearing the discourse given by the Buddha and they all became summoned monastics (*ehi-bhikkhu*). They neither conveyed to the Buddha the royal message nor did they send back any report to the king. They remained there enjoying the Arahat fruition.

King Suddhodana sent altogether nine ministers, each with 1,000 royal attendants on the same mission. All the nine ministers, with their attendants, became Arahats after hearing the discourse given by the Buddha and became summoned monastics. They neither conveyed to the Buddha the royal message nor did they send back any report to the king. They remained there enjoying the fruits of the Arahat fruition.

Sending Kāḷudāyī to the Buddha

When King Suddhodana understood that none of the ministers and attendants had returned or come into his presence to tell him anything, he thought: "So many, 9,009 persons, have not come back to my presence even to give a report, because they have no close affection and regard for me at all." He wondered: "Who will carry out my orders with due speed and without delay." His searching mind began to work and after scrutinising carefully, at last he saw his minister Kāḷudāyī. As an administrative official, he was charged with managing general affairs at the court and he was also one near and dear to the royal family. Thus, as a trustworthy confidant, the king picked out Kāḷudāyī, who was also his son's

birth-mate, as he was born on the same day. They were playmates since their infancy and had been intimate friends.

Therefore, the king told Kāḷudāyī: "My son, Kāḷudāyī, being desirous of paying homage to my son, the Buddha, I have sent nine ministers each accompanied by 1,000 attendants but not even one of them has returned with any news. One cannot know with certainty what danger there is to one's life. I wish to see and pay homage to my son while I am still living. Dear son Kāḷudāyī, will you be able to strive your utmost to undertake this task so that I may see my son?" Kāḷudāyī replied: "Your majesty, it would be possible for me to do so if I am granted permission to become a monk afterwards."

Then the king replied: "Dear son Kāḷudāyī, whether you enter monkhood or not, do try your utmost to undertake the task so that I may see my son." – "Very well," promised [441] Kāḷudāyī, who then set out for Rājagaha accompanied by 1,000 attendants, carrying the king's message for the Buddha. They arrived there while the Buddha was teaching a discourse, and stood listening to it from the far end of the audience. As a consequence, Kāḷudāyī and his 1,000 attendants became Arahats and became summoned monastics too.

> After his Awakening, the Buddha spent his first Rains Retreat at the Deer Park at Isipatana. At the end of the retreat and having performed the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*) ceremony, he set out for the Uruvelā forest where he stayed for the whole of three months teaching and instructing the three recluse brothers and their 1,000 followers till they became Arahats. Then, accompanied by the 1,000 Arahats who were former recluses, the Buddha made his way to Rājagaha where he arrived on the full moon day of January (*Phussa*) and resided there for the entire two months. The Buddha taught and instructed more than 10,000 young men of good families from Aṅga and Magadha countries until they became Arahats and ordained as monastics. Thus five months had passed since the Buddha departed from Bārāṇasī; the cold winter months were over and it was spring, the full moon day of March (*Phagguṇa*). And it was a week after Kāḷudāyī had arrived into the presence of the Buddha.

On that full moon day, Ven. Kāḷudāyī thought to himself: "The cold season is over and spring has arrived. Cultivators and farmers have finished gathering their harvests and they have opened up pathways leading to all destinations. The great earth is verdant, covered with the luxurious growth of green grass. In the surrounding woods, forest trees have shed their old leaves and look resplendent

in their new leaves, bearing flowers and fruits. Neither too cold nor too hot, it is a good time for travelling, it is time now for the Buddha to visit his royal relatives and give them his blessings." Having thought thus, he approached the Buddha and addressed him with the following 64 verses, supplicating him to make a visit to the royal city of Kapilavatthu.

1. Aṅgārino dāni dumā Bhadante,
phalesino chadanaṁ vippahāya,
te accimanto va pabhāsayanti,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, winter has gone and spring has set in, all the trees have shed their decayed leaves and as if to acquire fresh fruits, have sprouted tender leaves and flower buds of glowing ember-red. Stimulated by the changing weather, these colourful trees are shining bright.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

2. Dumā vicittā suvirājamānā,
rattaṅkureheva ca pallavehi,
ratanujjala-maṇḍapa-sannibhāsā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, all the trees, wearing their coral-red sprouts and tender emerald-green leaves, are wondrously and delightfully beautiful, resembling pavilions shining with jewel-like brilliancy.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

3. Supupphitaggā kusumehi bhūsitā,
manuññā-bhūtā suci-sādhu-gandhā,
rukkhā virocanti ubhosu passesu,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ. [442]

Lord and great benefactor, on either side of the roadway, all kinds of trees and seasonal plants are crowded with blossoms to the very top. Adorned with flowers in full bloom, every tree stands lovely; the clear air is filled with fragrant odour and the environs are amazingly beautiful to behold.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

4. Phalehinekehi samiddhi-bhūtā,
vicitta-rukkhā ubhatovakāse,
khuddaṁ pipāsam-pi vinodayanti,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, on either side of the roadway, all kinds of trees have borne assorted fruits; wayfarers, both monastics and laity alike, can satisfy their hunger and quench their thirst.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

5. Vicitta-mālā suci-pallavehi,
susajjitā mora-kalāpa-sannibhā,
rukkhā virocanti ubhosu passesu,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, now that on either side of the road-way, seasonal shrubs and plants are adorned with the most fascinating sprigs and decoratively set with delicate leaves free from dirt and dust, looking like bouquets of peacock's tails, they make all the environs seem a splendid and wonderful scene.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

6. Virocamānā phala-pallavehi,
susajjitā vāsa-nivāsa-bhūtā,
tosenti addhāna-kilanta-satte,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, seasonal trees and plants are adorned with young fruits and delicate leaves; the whole environs not only present a fascinating sight at every turn, but also, like welcoming home and rest houses they refresh and delight the heart of weary travelling monastics and laymen.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

7. Suphullitaggā vana-gumba-nissitā,
latā anekā suvirājamānā,
tosenti satte maṇi-maṇḍapā va,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, numerous species of creeping plants in full bloom, enveloping the bushy plants, afford a fine and splendid sight. Assuming the form of a big pavilion studded with a variety of precious jewels, it gladdens the heart of travellers, monastics and laity alike. [443]

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

8. Latā anekā dumanissitā va,
Piyehi saddhiṁ sahitā vadhūva,
Palobhayantī hi sugandha-gandhā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, like the daughters and daughters-in-law of good birth embracing their beloved husbands, just so numerous species of beautiful creeping plants cling to the trees and emit sweet odours and seem to be seductively attracting the delight of both monastics and laity.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

9. Vicitta-nīlādi-manuñña-vaṇṇā,
dijā samantā abhikūjamānā,
tosenti mañjussa-ratā ratīhi,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, from all directions, multifarious birds, strangely beautiful with bright darkly bluish plumage, can be seen flying, dancing, singing sweet and loud, mingling among themselves in couples in jubilant celebration, much to the joy and delight of the travelling monastics and laity.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

10. Migā ca nānā suvirājamānā,
uttuṅga-kaṇṇā ca manuñña-nettā,

disā samantā-m-abhidhāvayanti,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, numerous species of beasts, gambolling and running, can be seen trotting joyfully to and fro in groups or pairs with pricked-up ears and lovable wide eyes.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

11. Manuññā-bhūtā ca mahī samantā,
virājamānā haritā va saddalā,
supupphi-rukkhā moḷini-valaṅkatā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

The Burmese word-by-word translation (*nissaya*) translates this as:

Lord and great benefactor, mother earth, on all sides, everywhere covered with lush Bermuda grass, affords a fine and delightful scene. The trees, richly adorned with lovely blossoms, are like a maiden's well-embellished tapering coiled hair.

Alternatively we could translate:

Stretches of land everywhere afford a delightful scene. These stretches of land are covered with green Bermuda grass. The trees, with flowers and full blossom atop them, resemble a charming maiden wearing a well-embellished curled hair. [444]

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

12. Susajjitā mutta-mayā va vālukā,
susaṇṭhitā cāru-suphassa-dātā,
virocayanteva disā samantā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, fine silvery sands, resembling brilliant white pearls of even size, orderly arranged by skilful smiths, lie in stretches for travellers to tread upon with ease and comfort and bind colour and beauty to the environs.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

13. Samaṁ suphassaṁ suci-bhūmi-bhāgaṁ,
manuññā-pupphodaya-gandha-vāsitaṁ,
virājamānaṁ sucimañ-ca sobhaṁ,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, mother earth is free from dirt, the whole stretch of land is void of knoll and trench, unbroken and even, affording a smooth and gentle sense of touch. The air is charged with sweet scents from lovely flowers. The whole spectacle is beautiful, all is clean and pleasant, making travelling most enjoyable and appropriate.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

14. Susajjitaṁ nandana-kānanaṁ va,
vicitta-nānā-duma-saṇḍa-maṇḍitaṁ,
sugandha-bhūtaṁ pavanaṁ surammaṁ,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, beautified by the presence of fascinating trees and an atmosphere laden with sweet and exotic scents of flowers, the woodland passage between Rājagaha and Kapilavatthu has the appearance of Nandana garden as if Devas have transformed it into a stage for a tumultuous celebration of the festival of the Devas.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

15. Sarā vicittā vividhā manoramā,
susajjitā paṅkaja-puṇḍarīkā,
pasanna-sītodaka-cāru-puṇṇā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the ponds along the route are full of clear, clean and cool water, and decorated with the five varieties of lotus thriving from the silt, they are wonderfully beautiful to the view and fill the heart with delight.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth. [445]

16. Suphulla-nānā-vidha-paṅkajehi,
virājamānā suci-gandha-gandhā,

pamodayan-teva narāmarānaṁ,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, fully bloomed lilies, dancing on the surface of the ponds, afford scenes of beauty, they are fragrant with the clean sweet smell of the flowers. The lovely ponds greatly delight the approaching Devas and humans.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

17. Suphulla-paṅkeruha-sannisinnā,
dijā samantā-m-abhinādayantā,
modanti bhariyāhi samaṅgino te,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, birds of varying hue, drunk with nectar from the proudly-blooming fully-bloomed lilies on which they have alighted, sing loud and melodiously from all round. Together with their true and lovely mates, they fly about in joyous delight.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

18. Suphulla-pupphehi rajaṁ gahetvā,
alī vidhāvanti vikūjamānā,
madhumhi gandho vidisaṁ pavāyati,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the bees and bumble bees buzz noisily and ceaselessly as they swarm about sipping the sweet and juicy nectar from the flowers in full bloom. These bees, big and small, fly about the entire area, diffusing the whole region with the sweet scent of nectar.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

19. Abhinna-nādā madavāraṇā ca,
girīhi dhāvanti ca vāri-dhārā,
savanti najjo suvirājitā va,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, huge elephants in must trumpet with voices as clear as those of singing cranes; great volumes of water rushing down

from the hills and majestic rivers flowing swift and strong are beautiful to behold.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

20. Girī samantā va padissamānā,
mayūra-gīvā iva nīla-vaṇṇā,
disā rajindā va virocayanti,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, in all eight directions, everywhere we look, ranges of towering mountains, dark green and distinct as the colourful [446] ring round the neck of a peacock, resembling the grand spectacle of Erāvata, one of the eight species of royal[188] elephants.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

21. Mayūra-saṅghā giri-muddhanasmiṁ,
naccanti nārīhi samaṅgi-bhūtā,
kūjanti nānā-madhurassarehi,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, on all hilltops on either side of the road, many peacocks, each with its own true and dear mate, strut about back and forth, with their tails raised fan-wise gorgeously, wings outstretched, and heads uplifted, dancing in emulation of humankind. With melodious voices and varying notes, in Magadha they joyously crow and sing: "Oway, Oway."

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

22. Suvādikā neka-dijā manuññā,
vicitta-pattehi virājamānā,
girimhi ṭhatvā abhinādayanti,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

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[188] See verse 30 of the Light on the Nouns (*Abhidhānappadīpaka*).

Lord and great benefactor, numerous lovely birds, each with the variegated and exotic plumage of its species, are perching on the hill-tops on either side of the route and singing sweet songs.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

23. Suphulla-pupphākaramābhikiṇṇā,
sugandha-nānā-dala-laṅkatā ca,
girī virocanti disā samantā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, on either side of the route, there are ranges of mountains with flowering trees of rare specimens emitting sweet-scents and presenting a delightful scene.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

24. Jalāsayā neka-sugandha-gandhā,
surinda-uyyāna-jalāsayā va,
savanti najjo suvirājamānā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, all the lakes and ponds, like those in the gardens of Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, are permeated with sweet scents and the rivers flow swiftly with strong currents and make the whole scene fascinating.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth. [447]

25. Vicitta-titthehi alaṅkatā ca,
manuññā-nānā-miga-pakkhi-pāsā,
najjo virocanti susandamānā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, rows of fascinating riverine towns adorn the rivers along their course, and, like traps, these rivers attract various delightful birds of passage. Flowing swiftly and ceaselessly, they are beautiful to behold.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

26. Ubhosu passesu jalāsayesu,
supupphitā cāru-sugandha-rukkhā,
vibhūsitaggā sura-sundarī ca,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the trees on the banks of lakes and ponds, on either side of the route, are in full blossom and the whole region is permeated with sweet scents. With the fresh and decorative sprigs and leaf shoots gorgeously adorning their tops, they look like gracious maidens in the world of celestial beings.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

27. Sugandha-nānā-duma-jāla-kiṇṇaṁ,
vanaṁ vicittaṁ sura-nandanaṁ va,
manobhirāmaṁ satataṁ gatīnaṁ,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the woody section of the road, permeated with the sweet scent from the fragrant trees, is wonderful like the Nandana garden in the celestial world; it is a perpetual source of joy, a locality of peace and tranquillity for the travelling monastics and the laity.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

28. Sampanna-nānā-suci-anna-pānā,
sabyañjanā sādu-rasena yuttā,
pathesu gāme sulabhā manuññā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the section of the road between Rājagaha and Kapilavatthu is lined with villages where varieties of hygienic food-stuff, sweet-meats and delicacies of the season are easily available at this time of harvesting.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

29. Virājitā āsi mahī samantā,
vicitta-vaṇṇā kusumāsanassa,
rattinda-gopehi alaṅkatā va

samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ. [448]

Lord and great benefactor, the land above the flowing woodland is beautiful indeed. In the depths of night, as if with Indra's help, a fantastically splendid scene is created; the land glows with reddish lights reflected from red flying insects, red as drops of betel juice.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

30. Visuddha-saddhā-diguṇehi yuttā,
Sambuddha-rājaṁ abhipatthayantā,
bahūhi tattheva janā samantā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, along the route from Rājagaha to Kapilavatthu, at the intermediate stations, all the virtuous people from the neighbourhood, with pure and holy faith, have been waiting with ardent expectation: "The Lord of the Three Worlds, the omniscient, the King of the Dhamma, will surely come past our place, along this very route."

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

31. Vicitra-ārāma-supokkha-rañño,
vicitra-nānā-padumehi channā,
bhisehi khīraṁ va rasaṁ pavāyati,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the clear, clean ponds within the magnificent gardens are covered to full capacity by lilies of the choicest quality. The delicious juice, from the stalks and projecting roots of the lilies, is as delicious as milk and the whole area is permeated with their fragrance.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

32. Vicitra-nīlacchadanenalaṅkatā,
manuññā-rukkhā ubhatovakāse,
samuggatā satta-samūha-bhūtā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, on either side of the route, all the trees are thickly covered with lush, extraordinary decorative foliage of dark-green,

jutting out splendidly to great heights and they resemble throngs of human beings.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

33. Vicitra-nīlabbham-ivāyataṁ vanaṁ,
surinda-loke iva Nandanaṁ vanaṁ,
sabbotukaṁ sādhu-sugandha-pupphaṁ,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, like a streak of wonderful dark-brown clouds, the long and narrow woodland route between Rājagaha and Kapilavatthu stretches, fresh and green, resembling a covered passage of emerald, like the garden of Nandana in the celestial abode of Sakka. The weather is fair and temperate at all seasons, and groves of various flowers [449] emit sweet scents.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

34. Subhañjasaṁ yojana-yojanesu,
subhikkha-gāmā sulabhā manuññā,
janābhikiṇṇā sulabhanna-pānā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, every league of the route is beautiful and delightful. To please the heart are affluent alms offering villages which are easy of access. These villages, at each stop, are dense with villagers having abundant alms food and drink, ungrudgingly offered, which is available without much effort.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

35. Pahūta-chāyūdaka-ramma-bhūtā,
nivāsinaṁ sabba-sukhappadātā,
visāla-sālā ca sabhā ca bahū,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, all along the route, there are spacious rest houses and assembly halls providing ample shade and water for the

travelling monastics and laity who shelter to take refreshments, gain delight, and give every comfort to body and mind.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

36. Vicitta-nānā-duma-saṇḍa-maṇḍitā,
manuññā-uyyāna-supokkha-rañño,
sumāpitā sādhu-sugandha-gandhā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, all along the route between Rājagaha and Kapilavatthu, virtuous and pious people have constructed ponds and gardens and planted it with trees of exotic varieties and the whole region is filled with sweet scents.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

37. Vāto mudūsītala-sādhu-rūpo,
nabhā ca abbhā vigatā samantā,
disā ca sabbā va virocayanti,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the gently blowing breeze is soft and cool, the sky above is free from dark-brown and black threatening rain clouds and the whole environs in all directions is clear, bright, and beautiful to view.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth. [450]

38. Pathe rajonuggam-anattham-eva,
rattiṁ pavassanti ca manda-vuṭṭhī,
nabhe ca sūro muduko va tāpo,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, along the route between Rājagaha and Kapilavatthu, wafted by gentle breezes, only light showers fall at night, just enough to prevent the dust from rising, and during the day, the sun shines softly with tolerable brightness and heat.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

39. Madappabāhā mada-hatthi-saṅghā,
kareṇu-saṅghehi sukīḷayanti,
disā vidhāvanti ca gajjayantā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, full-grown male elephants in must, strongly intoxicated, run hither and thither in the company of their mates and merrily enjoy themselves trumpeting aloud with voices resembling the crowing of cranes; they run wherever they wish, out of joy and happiness.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

40. Vanaṁ sunīlaṁ abhidassanīyaṁ,
nīlabbha-kūṭaṁ iva ramma-bhūtaṁ,
vilokitānaṁ ativimhanīyaṁ,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the route of lush, dark-green woodland, between Rājagaha and Kapilavatthu, is really a splendid and attractive spectacle, resembling masses of dark-brown clouds in the sky. To the travelling monastics and laity, its charm and great beauty is a source of wonder and delight.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

41. Visuddham-abbhaṁ gaganaṁ surammaṁ,
maṇi-mayehi samalaṅkatā va,
disā ca sabbā atirocayanti,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the sky is filled with masses of clear, silvery clouds, joyful and delightful to view. As though adorned with precious ornaments set with emeralds, the environs are extremely beautiful to behold.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

42. Gandhabba-Vijjādhara-Kinnarā ca,
sugītiyantā madhurassarena,

caranti tasmiṁ pavane suramme,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ. [451]

Lord and great benefactor, this delightful woody part of the route between Rājagaha and Kapilavatthu is the haunt of many heavenly musicians known as Gandhabba, beings possessed of supernormal powers called Vijjādhara and mystical winged beings, Kinnara, having the body of a bird but with a human face who sing with melodious notes as they move and fly about.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

43. Kilesa-saṅghassa bhitāsakehi,
tapassi-saṅghehi nisevitaṁ vanaṁ,
vihāra-ārāma-samiddhi-bhūtaṁ,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the woody route between Rājagaha and Kapilavatthu abounds with abodes that are suitable for permanent residence for the recluses and monks who greatly dread the oppression of the enslaving defilements.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

44. Samiddhi-nānā-phalino vanantā,
anākulā nicca-manobhirammā,
samādhi-pītiṁ abhivaḍḍhayanti,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, groves of fruit trees with various plump fruits are free from disturbance and ever delightful. The resulting tranquillity of the five senses greatly promotes the development of joyful satisfaction (*pīti*) and concentration (*samādhi*) for the travelling monastics and laity.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

45. Nisevitaṁ neka-dijehi niccaṁ,
gāmena gāmaṁ satataṁ vasantā,
pure pure gāma-varā ca santi,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, numerous birds of varying feathers take refuge in the woody tract between Rājagaha and Kapilavatthu. Every town has its own hamlet filled with villagers, shifting from place to place in groups of common interest, at their will and pleasure, where monastics can go for alms.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

46. Vatthanna-pānaṁ sayanāsanañ-ca,
gandhañ-ca mālañ-ca vilepanañ-ca,
tahiṁ samiddhā janatā bahū ca,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, all along that route there are numerous hamlets where commodities or consumable goods such as food and [452] clothing, also lodgings and sweet scents, different specimens of flowers, perfumes of all grades, mild or strong are readily available. The whole region has many rich people of the world.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

47. Puññiddhiyā sabba-yasagga-pattā,
janā ca tasmiṁ sukhitā samiddhā,
pahūta-bhogā vividhā vasanti,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, all along the woody tract, at many villages there are virtuous people enjoying the fruits of their past meritorious deeds at the height of wealth and high reputation, and leading a life of ease and comfort. With ample wealth and numerous accessories for use, they live a luxurious life in diverse ways.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

48. Nabhe ca abbhā suvisuddha-vaṇṇā,
disā ca cando suvirājito va,
rattiñ-ca vāto mudu-sītalo ca,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the clouds in the sky are clean and clear, the moon shines with all its brightness keeping the environs illuminated, at night, a mild breeze, cool and gentle, blows softly in contrast with the biting wind of winter.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

49. Canduggame sabba-janā pahaṭṭhā,
sakaṅgaṇe citra-kathā vadantā,
piyehi saddhiṁ abhimodayanti,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, when the moon rises, the happy, merry people on mother earth sit on the floors of the verandahs of their houses; and enter into conversation. Together with their loved ones, they are full of joy.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

50. Candassa raṁsīhi nabhaṁ viroci,
mahī ca saṁsuddha-manuñña-vaṇṇā,
disā ca sabbā parisuddha-rūpā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the silvery radiance of the moon keeps the sky becomingly bright. The earth also appears delightfully clean, and the environs in all directions are cool and clean.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth. [453]

51. Dūre ca disvā vara-canda-raṁsiṁ,
Pupphiṁsu pupphāni mahītalasmiṁ,
samantato gandha-guṇatthikānaṁ,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, for the benefit of those lovers of sweet scents, various species of flowers all over the earth are in blossom through contact with the beams of the moon shining at a great distance in the sky.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

52. Candassa raṁsīhi vilimpitā va,
mahī samantā kusumenalaṅkatā,
viroci sabbaṅga-sumālinī va,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the entire surface of the earth looks splendid as though it has been besmeared with the cool, clear, silvery beams of the moon, and beautified and adorned with various night-blooming flowers. It resembles a fair maid profusely and becomingly decked with flowers.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

53. Kucanti hatthī pi madena mattā,
vicitta-piñchā ca dijā samantā,
karonti nādaṁ pavane suramme,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, all along the route from Rājagaha to Kapilavatthu, elephants in must trumpet with their voices resembling that of the sweet sounds of cranes. Multifarious birds with strange wonderful plumage sing sweetly and merrily from all directions.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

54. Pathañ-ca sabbaṁ paṭipajjanakkhamaṁ,
iddhañ-ca raṭṭhaṁ sadhanaṁ sabhogaṁ,
sabbatthutaṁ sabba-sukhappadānaṁ,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, winter has gone and the summer has just set in, it is the most opportune time to go on a journey. The countryside is rich and prosperous and replete with the seven characteristics, it is worthy of praise and capable of giving comfort to mind and body.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

55. Vanañ-ca sabbaṁ suvicitta-rūpaṁ,
sumāpitaṁ Nandana-kānanaṁ va,
yatī na pītiṁ satataṁ janeti,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ. *[454]*

Lord and great benefactor, the stretch of road ahead is wonderfully beautiful, resembling the enchanted Nandana garden which is created by the virtue of Devas. To monks travelling through the woodland it is ever a source of innocent delight in the beauty of wood and forest, in contrast to those associated with the five objects of sensual pleasures.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

56. Alaṅkataṁ Deva-puraṁ va rammaṁ,
Kapīlavatthuṁ iti nāma-dheyyaṁ,
kula-nagaraṁ idha sassirikaṁ,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the residential capital of your royal parents, relatives and their descents, Kapilavatthu, so named for being established on the site of the hermitage of Kapila, who was a holy recluse, is as delightful as Tāvatiṁsa, the beautiful abode of the celestials.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

57. Manuññā-aṭṭāla-vicitta-rūpaṁ,
suphulla-paṅkeruha-saṇḍa-maṇḍitaṁ,
vicitta-parikhāhi puraṁ surammaṁ,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the city of Kapilavatthu is majestic with turrets, bastions and tile-roofed structures. Fields of lovely lilies in full bloom adorn it and wonderful moats and make it extremely delightful.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

58. Vicitta-pākārañ-ca toraṇañ-ca,
subhaṅgaṇaṁ Deva-nivāsa-bhūtaṁ,
manuññā-vīthi sura-loka-sannibhaṁ,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the royal capital city of Kapilavatthu has a magnificent wall around it, a strong reinforced gateway, with the surface of the ground is as even as the face of a drum. The seat of the descendents

of the ruling monarchs, with a delightful and clean and broad roadway, it is like the city of Tāvatiṁsa, the abode of the celestials.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

59. Alaṅkatā Sākiya-rāja-puttā,
virājamānā vara-bhūsanehi,
surinda-loke iva Deva-puttā,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, the princes, scions of the unbroken dynasty of the monarchs of Kapilavatthu, being bedecked with the best radiant costumes, are as graceful as their counterparts of the kingdom of Tāvatiṁsa where Sakka rules supreme. [455]

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

60. Suddhodano muni-varaṁ abhidassanāya,
amacca-putte dasadhā apesayi,
balena saddhiṁ mahatā muninda,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Lord and great benefactor, most exalted chief of the sages. Your father, King Suddhodana, being desirous of seeing and paying homage to you, his son, the most exalted of noble sages, in consideration of lengthy separation, and in view of his ripe old age, had sent ten groups of ministers ten times, each group accompanied by 1,000 attendants charged with the responsibility of inviting you to the royal city.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

61. Nevāgataṁ passati neva vācaṁ,
sokābhibhūtaṁ nara-vīra-seṭṭhaṁ,
tosetum-icchāmi narādhipattaṁ,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Most exalted chief of the sages, in spite of his efforts, your old father, King Suddhodana, pathetically, has not seen you come yet, nor has he even heard the news whether you will or will not make the visit. The supreme valorous monarch, your father, is depressed by anxiety and

sorrow. My ardent prayer is that the desire of the gracious king be joyously fulfilled by the vision of your face.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

62. Taṁ-dassanenabbhuta-pīti-rāsi,
udikkhamānaṁ dvipadānam-indaṁ,
tosehi taṁ Muninda guṇa-seṭṭhaṁ,
samayo Mahā-vīra Aṅgīrasānaṁ.

Most exalted chief of the sages, it is certain that your gracious old father, King Suddhodana, will be extraordinarily moved with joy by your presence before him. Let the ardent wish of the gracious ruler, King Suddhodana, the praiseworthy benefactor providing sustenance to all human beings, who has been awaiting your coming, be joyously fulfilled by the vision of your face.

Lord of mighty diligence, Great Hero, of the lineage of Aṅgīrasa, the time is opportune to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

63. Āsāya kassate khettaṁ, bījaṁ āsāya vappati,
āsāya vāṇijā yanti, samuddaṁ dhana-hārakā,
yāya āsāya tiṭṭhāmi, sā me āsā samijjhatu.

Most exalted chief of the sages, a farmer ploughs the field many times with the expectation of securing crops and grains. Having furrowed the field repeatedly, he proceeds to sow the seeds with great effort, with the [456] expectation of procuring a good harvest. People in the world of commerce carrying their goods in big ships across the ocean which is rife with dangerous fish, tortoises, huge crabs, etc., do so at the risk of their lives and with the expectation of securing wealth. So also I, Kāḷudāyī, your birth-mate, have arrived at your feet in the Veḷuvana monastery with the good wish and expectation that you will visit the royal city and grant your gracious permission to the royal family to pay homage to you. May my good and sincere wish be fulfilled without delay.

64. Nāti-sītaṁ nāti-uṇhaṁ, nāti-dubbhikkha-chātakaṁ,
saddalā haritā bhūmi, esa kālo Mahā-muni.

Most exalted chief of the sages, at this transitional period from winter to summer, the weather is neither very cold nor very hot. At this time of

> harvesting and fair weather, food is abundant and there is no problem because of hunger and privation. The whole earth is emerald-tinted and verdant with tender Bermuda grass and this special period of the late winter-early summer is the most opportune time to travel to Kapilavatthu, the city of your birth.

This is how Ven. Kāḷudāyī addressed the Buddha with 60 beautifully composed verses of praise, persuading him to visit the royal city of Kapilavatthu.

> Herein it should be noted especially that, although the actual total number of verses is 64, the commentaries and sub-commentaries count them as 60; thus there is a slight difference of four verses as in the case of the sub-commentary on the first book of the Abhidhamma, the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) where defilements (*kilesa*) are counted in like manner, allowing such negligible numbers to go unheeded on the strength of the saying: *Appakañ-hi ūnam-adhikaṁ vā gaṇanūpagaṁ na hoti*, "such small shortage or excess should be neglected."[189]

On such a presentation being made by Ven. Kāḷudāyī, the Buddha responded: "Friend Kāḷudāyī, why do you urge me to visit Kapilavatthu by presenting such words of praise and in such a sweet tone?" Ven. Kāḷudāyī answered: "Most Fortunate One, your old father, King Suddhodana, wishes so much to pay homage to you and the Saṅgha. I pray that you may do honour to the royal relatives by your visit."

Then the Buddha granted his request in these words: "Your request is granted, son, Kāḷudāyī. You may give intimation to the Saṅgha of my forthcoming visit to Kapilavatthu to do honour to the royal relatives, and they will perform the usual, formal rites as demanded by this occasion." – "Very well, my lord," replied Ven. Kāḷudāyī and he duly informed the monastics as he was bid. [457]

The Buddha left Veḷuvana monastery in Rājagaha for Kapilavatthu accompanied by 20,000 Arahats, which was made up of 10,000 Arahats who came from the good families of Aṅga and Magadha and 10,000 Arahats who came from the good families of Kapilavatthu. They set off on the waning moon of March (*Phagguṇa*), 528 BCE, travelling at the rate of one league per day and

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[189] [See the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*). In other words, the figures are rounded up or down].

hoping to cover the distance of 60 leagues to Kapilavatthu within two months. Such a mode of travel is not too fast (*aturita*), and not too slow.

As the Buddha left for the royal city of Kapilavatthu adopting the not too fast (*aturita*) mode of travelling, Ven. Kāḷudāyī thought to himself: "I might go ahead to inform King Suddhodana of the Buddha's departure for Kapilavatthu," and using his supernormal power (*iddhi-vidhābhiñña*), he instantaneously appeared in the royal palace. King Suddhodana was moved with joy when he saw Ven. Kāḷudāyī and greeted him with words of warm welcome: "Welcome, beloved Kāḷudāyī, take your seat on the royal throne," a seat befitting noble personalities, and he offered Ven. Kāḷudāyī a bowl of especially delicious food prepared for himself, filling the alms bowl to capacity.

When Ven. Kāḷudāyī showed signs of preparing for departure, King Suddhodana said: "Please take your meal on the throne." Ven. Kāḷudāyī replied: "Noble King, I will take this food only in the presence of the Buddha." Then the king inquired: "Beloved Kāḷudāyī, where is the Buddha?" Ven. Kāḷudāyī replied: "The Buddha, accompanied by 20,000 Arahats, is on his way to see you." The king was extremely glad to hear this welcome news and said: "I pray thee then, take your meal which I have just offered in the palace and please do come every day to fetch food for the Buddha until his arrival here." Ven. Kāḷudāyī gave his assent by keeping silent.

Having completed feeding Ven. Kāḷudāyī at the palace, King Suddhodana caused his bowl to be cleaned with scented power before filling it with delicious soft and hard food and handed it to Ven. Kāḷudāyī, saying: "Please offer it to the Buddha." Ven. Kāḷudāyī sent up the bowl into the air ahead of him, and rising up himself, he made his way through the air while the officials and courtiers were looking on. He then made his offering of the alms bowl to the Buddha who partook of the meal brought thus by Kāḷudāyī from his royal father. Throughout the whole journey, Ven. Kāḷudāyī went every day to the king's palace and brought food, offered by the king, for the Buddha.

Ven. Kāḷudāyī announced every day after his meal at the golden palace of Kapilavatthu, saying: "The Buddha has covered this much of the journey today." With this preface, he told the whole royal family about the glorious attributes of the Buddha. He did this with the object of sowing the seed of devoted faith in the hearts of his royal relatives even before they got the chance of seeing him.

> It is this reason that that Buddha, at a subsequent confirmation ceremony, said: *Etad-aggaṁ, bhikkhave, mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ kulappasādakānaṁ yad-idaṁ Kāḷudāyī*, "monastics, Kāḷudāyī excels others in the matter of promoting faith and devotion of the royal relatives towards me." [See chapter 43.32 for more on Ven. Kāḷudāyī.]

This was how the Buddha and 20,000 Arahats arrived at the city of Kapilavatthu, safe and sound, in two months' time, on the first waxing moon of May (*Vesākha*) in the year 528 BCE after covering a distance of 60 leagues by adopting the not too fast (*aturita*) method of travelling one league per day. [458]

Buddha's Display of the Twin Miracle

All the members of the Sakyan clan headed by King Suddhodana gathered together to consider how they should pay respect to the Buddha, their noble blood relative, on his arrival at the city of Kapilavatthu. The first item on the agenda was to consider the question of accommodation for the Buddha, and they eventually came to the unanimous decision that the Park of the Sakyan Prince Nigrodha was delightful and the most suitable place because it was replete with every convenience, such as shady trees, sources of water, proximity to the town, with an adequate and easy means of communication, and above all, it was secluded. These were the five necessary provisions which would please Buddhas. As such, they reserved the Park for the accommodation of the Buddha. When all the preparations had been made, they left in the following order, each holding flowers to welcome the Buddha.

1. Fully dressed boys and girls, sons and daughters of the common town people, took the lead in the procession.
2. They were followed by the princes and princesses in their full ceremonial dresses.
3. The rest of the Sakyan clan came next, holding offerings of flowers and aromatic powder, which they took for the Buddha.

The long procession of welcome headed for the Nigrodha Park. On arrival at the Nigrodha Park accompanied by 20,000 Arahats, the Buddha seated himself on the Dhamma throne, prepared and kept in readiness for him.

Being stern and haughty through pride of birth, the Sakyan family members thought to themselves: "Prince Siddhattha is very junior to us in respect of age,

being our younger brother, nephew, son or grandson," so they told the young princes: "You, young folks, may pay homage. As for us, we will sit behind you."

On seeing this, the Buddha realized the inner feeling and strong pride of birth of the Sakyans and thus considered and decided: "My haughty relatives have grown old in years profitlessly and thus do not make reverence to me. My conceited relatives are totally ignorant of the real nature of a Self-Awakened Buddha; the might and glory of Buddhas. They do not know such is the nature of a Self-Awakened One, and such is the might and glory of the Buddhas."

Now I will let them know the real might and glory of a Buddha by the demonstration of the twin miracle, which involves simultaneous streaming forth of water and fire from various parts of my body, and, at the same time, I will create a walk in the sky, extending to the 10,000 world-element. On which I shall walk to and fro, pouring down the Dhamma rain on those beings who are gathered here according to the varying degrees of their inner disposition." For this decision of the Buddha, all the Devas and Brahmas in the 10,000 world-element proclaimed instantly: Well done! Well done! in praise of the exalted Buddha.

Immediately after the thought and decision, the Buddha attained the fourth absorption which had white colour (*odāta-kasiṇa*) as its object of meditation. And arising therefrom, he willed that: "The 10,000 world-element be illuminated," and the 10,000 world-element became illuminated instantly, much to the delight of humans, Devas and Brahmas. While they were thus exulting, the Buddha went up into the sky through supernormal power which was derived from the fourth absorption attainment and demonstrated the twin miracle of streaming alternately water and fire from twelve different parts of the body: 1) upward and downward; 2) front and back of the body; 3) left and right eyes; 4) ears; 5) nose; 6) shoulders; 7) hands; 8) sides of the body; 9) legs; 10 fingers and toes and spaces in between them; 11) every hair of the body; 12) every pore of hair of his body.

The twin miracle of fire-water, in pairs, springing from those parts or limbs of the body and producing alternately different patterns, was a matter for endless praise and admiration and it looked as if showers of particles from the soles of the Buddha were scattered on the heads of the Sakyan royalty – a strange and wonderful spectacle witnessed by humans, Devas and Brahmas. [459]

Third Obeisance by King Suddhodana

When King Suddhodana saw this strange and awesome spectacle of the twin miracle, he bowed solemnly and addressed the Buddha: "Glorious, exalted son, on the day of your birth, as I tried to raise the clasped hands towards the recluse Kāḷadevila so as to show him respect, I saw your pair of feet being raised up and placed firmly on the head of the recluse. That was the occasion when I made obeisance to you for the first time. And on the day of performing the Ploughing Ceremony, we kept you in an excellent spot under the cool shade of a rose-apple tree which protected you without changing position with the passage of time. That was when I paid homage at your feet for the second time. Now that I have witnessed the never-before seen extraordinarily strange spectacle of the twin miracle, I bow at your feet in homage for the third time."

When his royal father, King Suddhodana, made obeisance to the Buddha, all the members of the royal family without exception could not help but pay homage to him too.

Teaching the Dhamma on the Jewelled Walk

After subduing the pride of the royal relatives with the demonstration of the twin miracle in the sky and after duly considering the workings of their mind, the Buddha desired to teach them the Dhamma according to their mental dispositions, while he walked to and fro, on the Jewelled Walk he had created, which was finished with all kinds of gems, and extended from east to west, even beyond the 10,000 world-element.

The following is a brief description of the magnitude of the walk. With this universe as the centre, 10,000 Meru mountains belonging to the 10,000 world-element formed the mainstay of the entire structure of the walk and the whole file of posts was made to shine golden yellow like golden posts. Above this was created the clean and broad surface of the Jewelled Walk. The eastern perimeter of the walk rested on the eastern edge of the eastern-most universe, and in the same way the western perimeter rested on the edge of the western-most universe.

The bordering surfaces on either side of the walk were golden in colour. The middle portion of the entire walk was filled with earth of rubies, and the rafters, beams, purloins were finished with various kinds of shining gems. The roofing was of gold and the balusters lining the walk were of gold. Ruby and pearl

grains were spread like sand on the entire surface of the structure. The walk resembled sun rising up and lighting all ten directions.

The Buddha, with peerless grace and glory which was the characteristic of Self-Awakened Buddhas, paced slowly up and down the walk. The Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element gathered together bringing Mandārava flowers, Paduma lilies and flowers of the Indian Coral tree (*Erythirina indica*) and scattering them on the walk, made their offerings and homage.

> As regards the Indian Coral tree, it should be mentioned here that while the 33 virtuous youths headed by the youthful Māgha were performing meritorious deeds in the human world, they planted such a tree so that people might take shelter with ease and comfort. As a result of that good deed, an Indian Coral tree appeared in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm where they were reborn. The sweet fragrance of its seasonal flowers permeated the whole of the 10,000 leagues of that celestial world.

As the Buddha walked to and fro on the Jewelled Walk, some celestial beings paid homage from their abodes, while others, out of joy, gathered at various places. All those in the world of humans, Devas and Brahmas, together with Nāgas, Garuḷas and Kinnaras joyously worshipped the Buddha who was walking to and fro on the Jewelled Walk, looking like a moon at full waxing. With the exception of the unconscious (*asaññasatta*) Brahmas and the formless (*ārūpa*) Brahmas, all the Brahmas in the fifteen form realms, in their immaculately white garments, paid homage with clasped hands uttering such words of [460] praise as: "Victor over the five kinds of death (*māra*), promoter of the well-being of all beings, protector of the interests of all beings, one who has compassion for all beings." Flowers of brown, yellow, red, white, and dark-green colour, mixed with powdered sandal wood were thrown into the air in worship. Like pennants flown in the sky, they also briskly waved their scarves as an act of worship.

> There were 20 verses uttered by the Brahmas in praise of the Buddha. For particulars, readers may refer to the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*).

17b: The Chronicles of the Buddhas

The Arrival of Ven. Sāriputta

After the demonstration of the twin miracle and the creation of the Jewelled Walk, while Devas and Brahmas were paying homage to the Buddha as he walked to and fro on the walk, Ven. Sāriputta and his 500 disciples were residing on the slopes of Mount Gijjhakūṭa in Rājagaha. Ven. Sāriputta, saw, through his divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu-abhiññā*) the Buddha taking his walk on the Jewelled Walk in the sky above the city of Kapilavatthu. He thought of approaching the Buddha immediately and supplicating him to reveal in full the life story of a Bodhisatta, his many existences and stages of development before his last birth and Awakening.

He immediately assembled around him the 500 co-resident Arahats and said: "Venerable sirs, the exalted Buddha is performing the twin miracle together with the demonstration of the supernatural power of unveiling the world (*loka-vivaraṇa-abhiññā*) which is to be admired and revered by the whole world. We will go to see the demonstration of these miraculous powers as well so as to pay homage to him. Come, venerable sirs, we will all go to the Buddha and request him to recount the course of practices for Awakening undertaken in the past as a Bodhisatta so as to dispel any doubt we may have regarding this matter."

> With regard to the words of Ven. Sāriputta: "So as to dispel any doubt, (*kaṅkhaṁ vinodayissāma*)," it might be asked: "Why should Ven. Sāriputta say so, as it is a fact that Arahats who have rid themselves of all pollutants (*āsava*) are free from doubts anyway?" The answer is: Sixteen forms of doubt (*vicikicchā*) are completely eradicated at the stage of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*). Therefore Arahats no longer entertain any doubt about the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha or about their own past, present or future lives.
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> The doubt (*kaṅkhā*) mentioned here by Ven. Sāriputta, does not refer to the mental concomitant (*vicikicchā*). He means here the lack of knowledge in full about the previous existences of the Bodhisattas who had become Awakened Buddhas during the past four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, details concerning the aeon in which they made their appearances, their names, clans, families, the order of their appearance, and the duration of their Dispensations, etc. To state further, Ven.

Sāriputta wanted to request the Buddha for an account of the whole lineage, clan, family, tradition, etc., i.e. the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) which could be given only by a Buddha; it is the province of a Buddha only, not of a Paccekabuddha, nor of a disciple. Not being within his province, Ven. Sāriputta said: "Let us dispel the doubt by approaching the Buddha with this request."

On being urged thus by Ven. Sāriputta, the 500 co-resident Arahats quickly gathered round him, carrying robes and alms bowls in readiness. Then Ven. Sāriputta, accompanied by the 500 Arahats, travelled through the air by means of their supernormal psychic powers (*iddhi-vidhābhiñña*) and, upon arrival, paid homage to the Buddha who was still pacing up and down the Jewelled Walk. The 500 Arahats also paid homage in silence without coughing or sneezing but with deep veneration. Along with Ven. Sāriputta were Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, Ven. Mahā Kassapa, etc., who also remained in the sky paying respects to the Buddha. [461]

Buddha's Exposition of his Own Attributes

As the Buddha was aware of the intense enthusiasm and devotional faith springing up in the 500 Arahats headed by Ven. Sāriputta, he proceeded to expound his own attributes and attainments, beginning with the verse:

Cattāro te asaṅkheyyā, koṭi yesaṁ na nāyati,
satta-kāyo ca ākāso, cakka-vāḷā canantakā,
Buddha-ñāṇaṁ appameyyaṁ, na sakkā ete vijānituṁ.

Dear son, Sāriputta, there are four immensities which are innumerable, incalculable; their beginning and the end are unknowable, unfathomable. They are: 1) beings in general; 2) wide open spaces; 3) universes; 4) and the ominscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) of Fully-Awakened Buddhas.

At this time, the minds of Devas and humans were full of wonder of the Buddha's miraculous creation. As if he were urging the Devas and humans: "There are still things that excel the wonderful miracles I have just created. Listen also to the revelation of those exceedingly wonderful miracles," the Buddha went on to elaborate.

Kim-etaṁ acchariyaṁ loke, yaṁ me iddhi-vikubbanaṁ,
aññe bahū acchariyā, abbhutā loma-haṁsanā.

Sāriputta, besides the foregoing miraculous creations, there are many exceedingly wonderful things which have never occurred before, and which, when revealed, will surely cause your hair to stand on end. To recount them briefly:

Yadāhaṁ Tusite kāye, Santusito nāmahaṁ tadā,
dasa-sahassī samāgamma, yācanti pañjalī mamaṁ.

After my death as King Vessantara, having fulfilled the perfections (*pāramī*), charity (*cāga*) and good conduct (*cariyā*), while I was waiting for the time for his becoming a Buddha as a celestial being named Santusita, enjoying the divine bliss in the Tusita Deva realm for 576,000,000 years reckoned in terms of human life, Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element gathered in my presence and made the supplication:

Kālo kho te Mahā-vīra, uppajja mātu-kucchiyaṁ,
sadevakaṁ tārayanto, bujjhassu amataṁ padaṁ.

Great Hero, freed from all suffering, you have already fulfilled the ten perfections extended into 30 categories,[190] the three kinds of practice[191] and the ten kinds of charity,[192] not with the desire to gain the bliss of a Wheel-turning Monarch, or of a Sakka, the ruler of Devas, or of Māras or of Brahmas; you fulfilled these perfections aspiring only to become a Buddha in order to liberate the multitude of sentient beings. Great Hero, freed from all suffering, the propitious time you have longed for to become a Buddha has come! Great Hero, the time is now ripe for you to become an omniscient Buddha. May you take conception in the womb of the royal mother Māyā. Rescue all beings, including Devas, from the dangerous currents of Saṁsāra. May you realize the deathless Nibbāna."

Thus they made their supplication. I did not, however readily give my consent to their supplication. I first made five great investigations as following: 1) The appropriate time for the appearance of a Buddha; 2) the appropriate island continent for the appearance of a Buddha; 3) the appropriate country for the

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[190] *Pāramī*, refer to chapter II, The Rare Appearance of a Buddha.

[191] *Cariya*, refer to chapter II, The Rare Appearance of a Buddha.

[192] *Cāga*, refer to chapter II, The Rare Appearance of a Buddha.

appearance of a Buddha; 4) the clan or family into which the Bodhisatta would be reborn; and 5) the span of life of the Bodhisatta.

Tusitā kāyā cavitvāna, yadā okkami kucchiyaṁ,
dasa-sahassī-loka-dhātu, kampittha dharaṇī tadā.

I gave my consent only after making these five great investigations: "My friends, Devas and Brahmas, the time is indeed ripe for me to become a Buddha as you have said." Having lived the full life-term in the Tusita realm, I entered the womb of my royal mother, Mahā Māyā, a descendant of the unbroken line of the Sakyan rulers.

Yadāhaṁ mātu-kucchito, sampajāno va nikkhamiṁ,
sādhu-kāraṁ pavattenti, dasa-sahassī pakampatha.

As I took conception in the womb of my mother with mindfulness and comprehension, the 10,000 world-element trembled and quaked. [462] Without forsaking mindfulness and comprehension, I came out of my mother's womb, standing erect, with arms and legs stretched straight, like a monastic descending from the Dhamma throne or a man coming down the stairway at the entrance of a relic shrine (*stūpa*), without any trace of unwholesome filth besmearing my body. At that time also, the 10,000 world-element trembled and quaked as if to cheer the occasion.

This was on Friday, the full moon of May (*Vesākha*), in the year 563 BCE.

Okkantiṁ me samo natthi, jātito abhinikkhame,
sambodhiyaṁ ahaṁ seṭṭho, Dhamma-cakkappavattane.

My son, Sāriputta, there is none to equal me as a Bodhisatta, in the manner of taking conception and of emerging from the mother's womb. Therefore, in the matter of attainment of the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*), there is none my equal. As regards teaching-knowledge (*desanā-ñāṇa*) also, I am supreme, from when I set rolling the Dhamma Wheel."

At the moment of descending into the mother's womb, during ten months in the mother's womb, and at the moment of birth, on all the three occasions, he remained mindful with full comprehension; hence he made such an utterance.

Again the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) of certain disciples results in the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala-ñāṇa*) only; that of

some disciples gives rise to the three understandings (*vijjā*) only; and that of some others produces six forms of supernormal power (*abhiññā*); whereas some disciples achieve analytic knowledge (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*) through the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*), others gain only the knowledge of a disciple (*sāvaka-pāramī-ñāṇa*); and Paccekabuddhas attain only Independent Buddha knowledge (*Pacceka-bodhi-ñāṇa*) for their achievement of the Arahat path. The Arahat path of all Buddhas, however, brings the advantage of being instantaneously accomplished in all the attributes of Fully-Awakened Ones.

Thus the Buddha gave an exhaustive exposition of his own attributes. At that time, there occurred a violent earthquake which was similar to that as at the moment of taking conception. The 10,000 world-element trembled and quaked in the following six modes: 1) The earth's surface rose in the east and sank in the west; 2) it rose in the west and sank in the east; 3) it rose in the north and sank in the south; 4) it rose in the south and sank in the north; 5) it rose in the centre and sank along the circumference; and 6) it rose along the circumference and sank in the centre. A great expanse of light, beyond the power of Devas and Brahmas, was shining with unsurpassed brilliance.

Devas and Brahmas, witnessing the awesome phenomena and also coming to know from the Buddha's teaching that these phenomena only occurred on such occasions as the taking conception of the Bodhisatta, recited a verse in praise thereof:

Aho acchariyaṁ loke, Buddhānaṁ guṇa-mahantatā,
dasa-sahassī-loka-dhātu, chappakāraṁ pakampatha,
obhāso ca mahā āsi, accheraṁ loma-haṁsanaṁ.

Friends, Devas and Brahmas, the glories and attributes of Buddhas have caused earth tremors to rock the 10,000 world-element and the surface of the earth rises and falls in alternating directions: east-west, north-south, the centre and at the edges. A broad ray of light surpassing the power of the Devas and Brahmas has also illuminated these worlds. The wonder of this awesome phenomenon has made us snap our fingers in awe and praise and our hairs to stand on end. Oh, the greatness of the many attributes of the Buddha indeed warrants us snapping our fingers in wonder and admiration.

At that time, the Buddha was displaying the twin miracle and walking to and fro on the Jewelled Walk by means of his psychic power. And while he was thus pacing to and fro on the walk, he was expounding the Dhamma like a mighty lion king roaring, seated on a slab of red orpiment, like a thundering sky, like a man swimming across the river of the sky. With a voice of eight features, in various ways and minute details, he taught the discourse of the four noble truths leading to seeing the salient characteristics of impermanence, suffering and non-self.

Although the Jewelled Walk covered the whole length of the 10,000 worlds, the Buddha walked to one end of it quickly and then turned back from it as if he was making [463] the walk on a path measuring only four cubits. He actually walked on the Jewelled Walk from end to end, not turning round without reaching the end.

> Here it might be asked: Did the Buddha, through his power, cause the shortening of such an immensely long walk or did he create his own body to a size corresponding to that of the walk? That is, was it a work of supernormal psychic power (*iddhi-visaya*)? No, it is not a creation by means of supernormal psychic power (*iddhi-visaya*). The power possessed by the omniscient one (*Buddha-visaya*) is inconceivable, beyond human imagination. It being so, the Buddha could walk to and fro on the Jewelled Walk as he would do on a walk measuring four cubits.
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> It was due to this inconceivable power of the Buddhas that the whole spectacle could be witnessed right from the Akaniṭṭha realm to the Avīci plane of miseries without any obstruction whatsoever. All the world-elements involved became as a vast open plain, adjoining one another uninterrupted, so that humans could see Devas and Brahmas and vice versa. They all could see the Buddha walking to and fro on the long walk as they would see him walking on a simple ordinary walk. The Buddha taught as he walked, and having complete mastery over the mind (*cittissariya*), he was absorbed in fruition attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) during the infinitesimal fraction of time intervals while the audience was saying: *Sādhu, Sādhu*.

Ven. Sāriputta's Request

Ven. Sāriputta, after paying homage to the Buddha who was walking to and fro with peerless grace, teaching the discourse of the four noble truths to the

gathering of humans, Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element to his heart's content, thought to himself: "Such a united gathering of humans, Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element is an unprecedented one; it should be an occasion for a great Dhamma exposition. A discourse on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) especially would be greatly beneficial, promoting faith and devotion towards the Buddha. It would be well if I should request the Buddha for an exposition of his life story and the perfections he had fulfilled from the time of receiving the definite prophecy of becoming a Buddha." He then approached the Buddha, and with his robe over the left shoulder and his hands raised, he made this request in three verses beginning with: *Kīdiso te mahā-vira*, etc., reproduced below to expound the full discourse on the Chronicles of the Buddhas together with an account of the practices, which had been cultivated in the past.

Kīdiso te Mahā-vīra, abhinīhāro naruttama,
kamhi kāle tayā dhīra, patthitā Bodhim-uttamā.

Homage to the Great Hero, who has exercised the four great exertions (*sammappadhāna*), one who is nobler than men, superior to Devas and excels the Brahmas, the crown of the three worlds! In what world-cycle and in what aeon, did you aspire for and resolve to attain Perfect Self-Awakening which excels Independent and disciple Awakening?

Dānaṁ sīlañ-ca nekkhammaṁ, paññā-vīriyañ-ca kīdisaṁ,
khanti-saccam-adhiṭṭhānaṁ, mettupekkhā ca kīdisā.

Homage to the exalted, omniscient one, the Lord of the Three Worlds; how should we understand and regard your perfections, such as the perfection of generosity, morality, renunciation, wisdom and energy? How should we understand and regard [464] your perfections of forbearance, truthfulness, resolution, loving-kindness and equanimity?

Dasa pāramī tayā dhīra, kīdisī loka-nāyaka,
kathaṁ upapāramī puṇṇā, paramattha-pāramī kathaṁ.

Homage to the exalted, omniscient one, the Lord of the Three Worlds; may you enlighten us as to how you have fulfilled these perfections, how you have acquired higher and higher stages of these perfections and attained full maturity thereof? Likewise, with the ten higher perfections (*upapāramī*) and the ten supreme perfections (*paramattha-pāramī*) in

what way, in what manner have you cultivated them to acquire their maturity at the higher level of development?

With regard to the perfection of generosity (*dāna-pāramī*), the gift of external property is an ordinary perfection of generosity (*dāna-pāramī*); the gift of one's own limbs, big and small is a higher perfection of generosity (*dāna-upapāramī*); the gift of life is a supreme perfection of generosity (*dāna-paramattha-pāramī*).

The same principle of classification applies to the nine other perfections. Thus, observance of morality at the sacrifice of external property is an ordinary perfection of morality (*sīla-pāramī*); observance of morality regardless of loss of one's limbs is a higher perfection of morality (*sīla-upapāramī*); and observance of morality regardless of losing one's own life is a supreme perfection of morality (*sīla-paramattha-pāramī*). This is how they should be differentiated and noted. [See the Further Explanations for more information on these matters.]

For innumerable existences, the Bodhisatta had fulfilled generosity and other perfections, of which the following are of special interest:

1. When he was born as a wise hare, he mistook Sakka, who was in the guise of a Brahmin, as a genuine Brahmin going round collecting alms. So he caused a blazing bonfire to be made and offered himself by jumping into it. Such generosity is a supreme perfection of generosity (*Vidhura-paṇḍita-jātaka*, Ja 545).

2. When he was born as Nāga King Saṅkhapāla, he endured the agony of wounds, which were caused by a ruthless attack by sixteen hunters with spears at eight places on his body, after being impaled on a stake. Without showing resentment, he offered his life and maintained the observance of his precepts. Such morality comes under the category of a supreme perfection of morality (*Saṅkha-pāla-jātaka*, Ja 524).

3. When he was King Cūḷa Sutasoma, he abdicated the throne of the country of Sudassana, ancient Bārāṇasī, without fear of danger to his life and without attachment to the luxury of kingship and abnegated himself. Such an act of renunciation is called a supreme perfection of renunciation (*Cūḷa-sutasoma-jātaka*, Ja 525).

4. When he was born as a wise man by the name of Senaka, he saved the life of a Brahmin by revealing, as if he had seen with his eyes, the presence of a cobra in the leather bag which contained the Brahmin's food. Such an exhibition of wisdom, which had saved the life of the owner of the leather bag, comes under the category of a supreme perfection of wisdom (*Sattu-bhasta-jātaka*, Ja 402).

5. When he was born as a prince, named Janaka, his undaunted effort to swim across the ocean in the face of odds and without despair, while his fellow travellers were perishing and meeting with destruction, reflects Prince Janaka's great perseverance. Such a remarkable persevering effort belongs to the category of a supreme perfection of energy (*Mahā-janaka-jātaka*, Ja 539).

6. When he was a recluse, named Khantivādī, King Kalābu of the country of Kāsi, cut off his hands and feet with a sharp axe. He was unmoved and bore the suffering as though he were a piece of log that lacked sensation and consciousness. He also showed no resentment to the king. Such an act of forbearance comes under the category of a supreme perfection of forebearance (*Khantivādī-jātaka*, Ja 313). [465].

7. When he was King Mahā Sutasoma, he gave his word of honour: "I will certainly return tomorrow," to the cannibal Porisāda. He stood by his word, regardless of his own life, thereby saving the lives of 101 kings. Such a righteous and truthful vocal deed (*vāci-sacca*) comes under the category of a supreme perfection of truth (*Mahā-suta-soma-jātaka*, Ja 537).

8. When as a Bodhisatta Prince Temiya he pretended to be deaf and mute and persisted with this practice at the risk of his life, up to the time of his renunciation. Such an act of resolution comes under the category of a supreme perfection of resolution (*Mūga-pakkha-jātaka*, Ja 538).

9. When he was a recluse by the name of Suvaṇṇasāma, he cultivated loving-kindness (*mettā*) at the risk of his life. Such an act of loving-kindness comes under the category of a supreme perfection of loving-kindness (*Sāma-jātaka*, Ja 540).

10. When he was an ascetic practicing austerities, he did not allow himself to be swayed either by the perverted, corrupted demeanour of young villagers or by the various deeds of reverence and homage done by the wise, thereby safe-guarding himself entirely from ill-will and greed. Such equanimous attitude of the Bodhisatta exemplifies a supreme perfection of equanimity (*Loma-haṁsa-jātaka*, Ja 94).

    For full particulars of this category of supreme perfection (*paramattha-pāramī*), reference may be made to Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*) commentary and other relevant Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentaries.

On such a supplication being made by Ven. Sāriputta, the Buddha expounded two verses as if he was pouring the elixir of deathlessness to keep the minds of all sentient beings in peace, urging them: First, to listen with reverent attention to the discourse on the Chronicles of the Buddhas which will cause joy and gladness to the audience of Devas and humans, eradicate the pricking sorrow in their disturbed minds and letting them achieve various attainments, and second, to strive earnestly to follow and practice the noble path to becoming a Buddha which will destroy all forms of pride and vanity, which will remove various kinds of grief and sorrow, and which will save beings from the cycle of rebirths and extinguish all suffering.

Then, in order to encourage the assembled Devas and humans to become enthusiastic to aspire after Perfect Self-Awakening, the Buddha gave a discourse on the Chronicles of the Buddhas, adorned with 951 verses beginning with:

> *Kappe ca sata-sahasse, caturo ca asaṅkhiye,*
> *Amaraṁ nāma nagaraṁ, dassaneyyaṁ manoramaṁ.*

The discourse was well received and highly appreciated by the great audience of Devas and humans. By the end of the discourse on the Chronicles of the Buddhas, 100,000 billion humans, Devas and Brahmas became Arahats, having eliminated all traces of the pollutants (*āsava*); and innumerable beings became established in the lower stages of the path.

Here, it should be noted that there are 951 verses which deal wholly with the Chronicles of the Buddhas. In the Introduction (*Nidāna-kathā*), there are 81 verses comprising a mixture of words of the elders who participated in the Council (*Saṅgīti-kāraka*), words of Ven. Sāriputta and those of the Buddha; and 38 verses in the Miscellaneous (*Pakiṇṇaka*) section and the

Distribution of the Relics (*Dhātu-bhājaniya-kathā*), being words of the elders who participated in the Council, thus totalling 1,070 verses in the whole Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*). [466]

The Chronicle of Gotama Buddha in Verse

We have so far described the name, clan, family, etc., of the 24 Buddhas, from Buddha Dīpaṅkara to Buddha Kassapa in chapter IX as mentioned in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and relevant commentaries in chronological order.

For the Chronicle of Gotama Buddha, which we are dealing with presently, also an attempt has been made to compile it as complete as possible on the basis of the Chronicles of the Buddhas and its commentary, as well as relevant extracts from other Pāḷi texts and commentaries.

Concerning this Chronicle of Gotama Buddha, the learned readers may wish to read the chronology that deals exclusively with the Buddha Gotama as he originally delivered it. We will therefore render those 24 verses in plain English.

Buddha Gotama on the request made by Ven. Sāriputta, having expounded exhaustively the part of the Chronicles of the Buddhas concerning the 24 Buddhas from Dīpaṅkara to Kassapa, pouring forth the discourse like the sky river overflowing, proceeded to expound the facts concerning himself, from the Jewelled Walk in the sky, in 24 verses as follows:

The First Great Assembly of the Dhamma Teaching

1. Aham-etarahi Sambuddho, Gotamo Sakya-vaḍḍhano,
padhānaṁ padahitvāna, patto Sambodhim-uttamaṁ.

Dear son, Sāriputta, I, a descendent of the Gotama lineage which has made the Sakya royalty thrive, after six years of energetic effort at meditation (*padhāna*) attained the exalted state of omniscience.

2. Brahmunā yācito santo, Dhamma-cakkaṁ pavattayiṁ,
aṭṭhārasannaṁ koṭīnaṁ, paṭhamābhisamayo ahu.

Dear son, Sāriputta, at the request of Brahma Sahampati in the eighth week after my Awakening, I had delivered the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse in the Deer Park at Isipatana, Bārāṇasī. On that occasion,

for the first time 180 million Brahmas, who were headed by Ven. Koṇḍañña realised the four noble truths and achieved liberation.

The Second Great Assembly of the Dhamma Teaching

3. Tato parañ-ca desente, nara-deva-samāgame,
gaṇanāya na vattabbo, dutiyābhisamayo ahu.

Dear son, Sāriputta, subsequent to my teaching of the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, when I delivered the discourse on the Blessings (*Maṅgala-sutta*, Snp 2.4), at the assembly of Devas and humans who were debating the question on what constitutea a blessing (*maṅgala*), it was the second occasion of innumerable humans, Devas and Brahmas who came to realize the four noble truths and achieved liberation.

This second great occasion of Dhamma teaching will take place subsequent to the discourse on the Chronicles of the Buddhas. This also applies to the verses that follow. [467]

The Third Great Assembly of the Dhamma Teaching

4. Idhevāhaṁ etarahi, ovadiṁ mama atrajaṁ,
gaṇanāya na vattabbo, tatiyābhisamayo ahu.

Thirteen years after my becoming a Buddha, I will exhort my son, the young monastic Rāhula, by delivering the discourse of the Short Discourse to Rāhula (*Cūḷa-rāhulovāda*, MN 147) in the Blindman's Grove (*Andhavana*) at Sāvatthī. At that time also, innumerable humans, Devas and Brahmas will come to realize the four noble truths and achieve liberation.

The First Occasion of the Disciples' Meeting

5. Ekosi sannipāto me, sāvakānaṁ mahesinaṁ,
aḍḍha-teḷasa-satānaṁ, bhikkhūnāsi samāgamo.

Dear son, Sāriputta, a congregation of disciples had been held on the last full moon day of February (*Māgha*) for the first time; it was an assemblage of 1,250 monastic Arahats who had done away with the pollutants (*āsava*).

This refers to the Buddha's teaching of the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*), instructions on the obligation of a monastic at the

congregation of disciples, characterised by the four features.[193] It was the day on which Ven. Sāriputta gained Awakening.

Services rendered by the Buddha

6. Virocamāno vimalo, bhikkhu-saṅghassa majjhago,
dadāmi patthitaṁ sabbaṁ, maṇīva sabba-kāmado.

Dear son, Sāriputta, also like the previous Buddhas, being replete with the infinite grace characteristic of the Buddhas, and free from the taints of the defilements (*kilesa*), stand becomingly in the midst of the Saṅgha and, like the wish-fulflling (*cintāmaṇi*) ruby capable of fulfilling every wish, have been fulfilling the wishes of humans, Devas and Brahmas for special mundane and supermundane happiness.

7. Phalam-ākaṅkhamānānaṁ, bhavacchanda-jahesinaṁ,
catu-saccaṁ pakāsemi, anukampāya pāṇinaṁ.

Dear son, Sāriputta, for the benefit of humans, Devas and Brahmas who wish to attain the four fruition stages of the path and do away with attachment to sensuous existence, I have, out of compassion, expounded the four noble truths to enable them achieve their wish.

This is an instance of how Buddha brings about the benefit of all beings by way of expounding the four noble truths.

8. Dasa-vīsa-sahassānaṁ, dhammābhisamayo ahu,
eka-dvinnaṁ abhisamayo, gaṇanāto asaṅkhiyo. *[468]*

Dear son, Sāriputta, as the result of such expositions of the four noble truths sentient beings, numbering 10,000 after one session; or 20,000 after another, have become emancipated. In other instances of beings gaining freedom in twos or threes, the number is incalculable.

9. Vitthārikaṁ bāhu-jaññaṁ, iddhaṁ phītaṁ suphullitaṁ,
idha mayhaṁ Sakyamunino, Sāsanaṁ suvisodhitaṁ.

Dear son, Sāriputta I am a descendent of Sakyan royal family, I have renounced the world to become a recluse and have taught the Dhamma. This teaching of mine, the Dispensation (*Sāsana*), shall spread in the three

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[193] Four features: see chapter 16: The single occasion of the disciples' meeting (*sannipāta*).

worlds of humans, Devas and Brahmas and many beings discerning it clearly shall thrive exceedingly, pure and radiant.

10. Anāsavā vīta-rāgā, santa-cittā samāhitā,
bhikkhūneka-satā sabbe, parivārenti maṁ sadā.

Dear son, Sāriputta, I am at all times surrounded by a great number of monastics who are free from the pollutants (*āsava*), having given up passion (*rāga*), and who with tranquilised mind possess serene concentration like an oil lamp burning steadily in the still air.

11. Idāni ye etarahi, jahanti mānusaṁ bhavaṁ,
appatta-mānasā sekhā, te bhikkhū viññu-garahitā.

Dear son, Sāriputta, there are certain monastics who, even in my life time, have to depart life as mere trainees (*sekkha*) without having became an Arahat. They are reproached by the wise.

12. Ariyañ-ca santhomayantā, sadā Dhamma-ratā janā,
bujjhissanti satimanto, Saṁsāra-saritaṁ gatā.

Dear son, Sāriputta, those mindful people, who extol the virtues of the noble eightfold path and take delight in the Dhamma day and night, will be able to cross the ocean of Saṁsāra within a limited number of existences and gain emancipation through realisation of the four noble truths.

Particulars of Buddha Gotama

13. Nagaraṁ Kapilavatthu me, rājā Suddhodano pitā,
mayhaṁ janettikā mātā Māyā Devī ti vuccati.

Dear son, Sāriputta, my place of birth is Kapilavatthu, my father is King Suddhodana and my royal mother is Māyā Devi.

14. Ekūna-tiṁsa-vassāni, agāraṁ ajjhahaṁ vasiṁ,
Rammo Surammo Subhako, tayo pāsādam-uttamā. [469]

Dear son, Sāriputta, I had been a ruler of the Kapilavatthu country for fully 29 years, residing in three palaces: Ramma, the winter palace with nine-tiered spire; Suramma, the summer palace with five tiers, and Subha, the seven-tiered palace for the rainy season.

15. Cattārīsa-sahassāni, nāriyo samalaṅkatā,
Bhaddakañcanā nāma nārī, Rāhulo nāma atrajo.

Dear son, Sāriputta, during the period of my reign, there used to be 40,000 well ornamented and beautified female attendants; my Chief Queen was Bhaddā Kañcanā and my son was called Rāhula.

16. Nimitte caturo disvā, assayānena nikkhamiṁ,
chabbassaṁ padhāna-cāraṁ, acariṁ dukkaraṁ ahaṁ.

Dear son, Sāriputta, having seen the four great omens of an old man, a sick man, a dead man and a recluse, I went forth riding my horse Kanthaka. In the remote forest of Uruvelā, I spent six years practising severe austerities (*dukkara-cariyā*) that were beyond the capability of ordinary persons.

17. Bārāṇasiyaṁ Isipatane, Cakkaṁ pavattitaṁ mayā,
ahaṁ Gotama-sambuddho, saraṇaṁ sabba-pāṇinaṁ.

Dear son, Sāriputta, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, near Bārāṇasī, I had turned the Dhamma Wheel; indeed I have become the refuge of all beings, the Perfectly Awakened Buddha with the family name of Gotama.

18. Kolito Upatisso ca, dve bhikkhū agga-sāvakā,
Ānando nāmupaṭṭhāko, santikāvacaro mama,
Khemā Uppalavaṇṇā ca, bhikkhunī agga-sāvikā.

Dear son, Sāriputta, my chief disciples are the pair of monastics, Kolita or Moggallāna and Upatissa or Sāriputta; my permanent monastic attendant, who is always close at hand for more than 20 years to attend to my needs, is Ānanda. The female chief disciples are the pair of female monastics, the edlers Khemā and Uppalavaṇṇā.

19. Citto Hatthāḷavako ca, aggupaṭṭhākupāsakā,
Nandamātā ca Uttarā, aggupaṭṭhikupāsikā.

Dear son, Sāriputta, noble lay devotees rendering me close service are Citta, a wealthy householder residing at Macchikāsaṇḍa in the Kosala country, and Hattha Āḷavaka, the pious son of King Āḷavī of Āḷavī country; female [470] attendants closely attending upon me are the female devotee Nandamātā, a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*) resident of Veḷukaṇḍaka, a town in Dakkhiṇagiri province near Rājagaha and the noble lay devotee Khujjuttarā, a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), and bearer of the Three Baskets (*Piṭaka*), possessor of the title of pre-eminence (*etad-agga*) who was conceived in the womb of a maid servant of a rich man, Ghosaka of

Kosambī, and who became, when she came of age, a female attendant of Queen Sāmāvatī.

20. Ahaṁ Assattha-mūlamhi, patto Sambodhim-uttamaṁ,
byāmappabhā sadā mayhaṁ, soḷasa-hattham-uggatā.

Dear son, Sāriputta, I attained the knowledge of the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) and achieved omniscience, at the foot of the 100 cubits tall Bodhi tree. Light radiance from my body spreading over a radius of 80 hand-lengths shines brilliantly at all times. My height is sixteen hand-lengths.

21. Appaṁ vassa-sataṁ āyu, idānetarahi vijjati,
tāvatā tiṭṭha-mānohaṁ, tāremi janataṁ bahuṁ.

Dear son, Sāriputta, the present lifespan of humans is very short, limited to only 100 years. I will live for four-fifths of this lifespan, for 80 years, and for 45 years I shall be saving sentient beings from the ocean of Saṁsāra and conveying them to the shore of Nibbāna.

22. Ṭhapayitvāna Dhammukkaṁ, pacchimaṁ jana-bodhanaṁ,
aham-pi nacirasseva, saddhiṁ sāvaka-saṅghato,
idheva Parinibbissaṁ, aggī vāhāra-saṅkhayā.

Dear son, Sāriputta, I have lit and set up the torch of Dhamma burning, in order that the coming generations may understand the four noble truths. At no distant date, in the company of my monastic disciples, I will come to the final end, like a torch extinguished with fuel expended, in this very world at Kusinārā, dropping the curtain on the drama of existence.

Two Verses of Spiritual Anxiety

23. Tāni ca atula-tejāni, imāni ca dasa-balāni,
ayañ-ca guṇa-dhāraṇo deho, vattiṁsa-vara-lakkhaṇa-vicitto.
24. Dasa disā pabhāsetvā, sata-raṁsī va chappabhā,
sabbaṁ tam-antarahissanti, nanu rittā sabba-saṅkhārā.

Dear son, Sāriputta, my peerless glory and power, the ten physical strengths and this person of mine, comely and wonderful to behold, embodying, like a golden mountain, the 32 major characteristics of a superior person together with the sixfold unique wisdom (*asādhāraṇa-ñāṇa*) the ten mental strengths (*dasa-bala-ñāṇa*), the six-hued radiance emanating from my body, and illuminating all directions like the radiance

of the sun, all these things just spoken [471] about will all perish and disappear. Are they not conditioned things, life or lifeless, vain and devoid of the essence of permanence, genuine happiness and substance?

This being so, I urge you to cultivate insight meditation (*vipassanā*) by contemplating the three salient characteristics of conditioned phenomena, and strive hard for the attainment of Nibbāna. Such is the usual instruction for you all, given by the fully Self-Awakened Buddhas. With heedfulness, exert yourself to fulfil these instructions.

With this ends the exposition connected with major events as laid down in the (Chronicles of the Buddhas *Buddha-vaṁsa*) and the commentary.

But U Nu, Prime Minister of the Union of Burma, at the time of requesting me to write a chronicle of the Buddhas, said, among other things: “Please supervise the compilation of a treatise on the lives of the Buddhas. In so doing, please include everything about the Buddha, not leaving out even minor details. If one volume is not enough, make it two; if two is not enough, make it four, eight and so on. It is important that the work should be exhaustive.”

In consideration of his earnest request, the treatise on Great Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Mahā-buddha-vaṁsa*) will not end here. Its scope will be extended to include the events that took place after the delivery of the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) by the Buddha and it will be entitled The Great Chronicles of the Buddhas. To this end, an attempt will be made, to the best of my ability, to add a series of chapters on the significant events concerning Buddha Gotama and his disciples. [472]

18: The Buddha and his Immediate Family

The Buddha descended from the Jewelled Walk in the sky, near the city of Kapilavatthu, after subduing the pride and haughtiness of his royal relatives by delivering the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and took his seat on the Dhamma throne which was exclusively set up for him.

All the members of the royal family had by then assembled before the Buddha and seated themselves after becoming calm and collected; then it happened that showers of lotus-leaf rain (*pokkhara-vassa*) fell heavily.

> The lotus-leaf rain means, according to the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*), rain which has the colour of lotus leaves. Other teachers have explained it as rain which falls from the mass of rainclouds which, at the beginning, have the size of a lotus leaf appearing in the middle of the sky, and build up into thousands of layers and then fall down as torrential rain.

As the great rain fell, rushing streams of ruby-coloured rain water were falling on the ground. While the rain water wetted those who wished to be soaked, not a drop of rain fell on those who did not want to get wet.

All the members of the royalty were struck with wonder at the sight of this miraculous scene and uttered: “Oh, a marvellous thing! To be cheered by the snapping of the fingers! This is an unprecedented phenomenon, indeed!” On hearing such utterances, the Buddha made this remark: “This is not the first time that the lotus-rain (*pokkhara-vassa*) had fallen on the assembly of the royal relatives. There was an occasion in the past when such a rain fell in a similar manner.” The Buddha then continued by expounding the Vessantara story (Ja 547) which was composed in 1,000 verses.

> [This is another instance where numbers are being rounded up. The Birth Story about Vessantara (*Vessantara-jātaka*) in the Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana edition is actually 785 verses long.]

After hearing the story of Vessantara, all the members of the royalty departed and not a single person extended the invitation, such as: “Please come and receive the alms food which we shall offer tomorrow,” to the Buddha.

King Suddhodana thought, and took it for granted, that: “There is no place other than my royal palace for my son to visit, he is certain to come to my palace.”

Being convinced thus, he returned to his palace without extending a specific invitation. At the palace, he ordered arrangements for the preparation of rice-gruel, and so on, and temporary accommodation for the 20,000 Arahats headed by the Buddha.

The Buddha goes on Alms-Round

When the Buddha entered the royal city the next day for alms round, in the company of 20,000 Arahats, not a single member of the royal family came forward to greet and welcome him. There was no one to take his alms bowl and carry it for him.

The moment the Buddha had set foot on the gateway of Kapilavatthu, he began to reflect on the way in which previous Buddhas went round for alms food in the capital city of their royal fathers: "Was it characterised by receiving alms exclusively from the selected homes of the rich, the elite, or by going round for alms from door to door, rich or poor alike?" He understood it by way of psychic power which gave the knowledge of past existences (*pubbe-nivasa-abhiññā*). Thus he came to realize that not a single Buddha in the past had received their alms food only from the selected homes of rich; none of them had deviated from the practice of going for alms food from door to door.

So he decided to adopt the time-honoured traditional practice of collecting alms food from door to door. He thought: "Only by setting such an example myself would my disciples emulate my practice and fulfil the duty of a monastic to go for alms round to each and every house without any [473] breach." Having made this decision, he started to go on the alms round beginning with the first house nearest the city gate, stopping at every house one after another.

> The following is a brief description of the magnificent scene of the Buddha's visit to the royal city as mentioned in the Collection of the Middle Length Discourses (*Majjhima-nikāya*) commentary (PTS 3.20 ff):

When the Buddha entered the royal city, the earth quaked with mild intensity. He walked gently, not treading upon even the tiniest insects such as ants and the like. He stepped forth first with the right foot which possessed the major mark of the level soles of feet like golden footwear (*suppatiṭṭhita-lakkhaṇa*); the delicate soles of his feet, being level and smooth, touched the ground evenly, fully and squarely without collecting the tiniest particles of dirt or dust. As he

walked along, the low-lying areas of the earth raised themselves spontaneously to an even level and the mounds lowered to the level of the plain, forming an even surface all over; all the stones and pebbles, stumps and thorns had removed themselves from the route beforehand. He walked at a normal pace, neither too fast nor too slow, his stride neither too long nor too close, without the ankles and knees knocking against each other. Being a person of great concentration, he looked straight forward, limiting the range of vision to within four-hand's length, looking neither up nor down, nor sideways. He walked with the grace of a Chaddanta elephant fully and richly caparisoned.

When the Buddha was on his round of receiving alms food from door to door in the city, those living in two and three-storey buildings came out on the balconies which rested on lion image supports, to pay homage to the Buddha, uttering: "Here comes our good lord, Prince Siddhattha, to receive alms food."

Princess Yasodharā, mother of Rāhula, thought to herself: "In former days, my glorious Lord used to travel in kingly power and luxury, carried on a golden palanquin but now, it is said, he goes about the city for alms food with shorn head and beard, in dyed clothes, with bowl in hand. Would it be seemly or would it appear uncomely?" So thinking, she opened the balcony window which rested on the supports of lion images and saw for herself that the main roads as well as the lanes were brilliantly illuminated by the beams of light from the Buddha's body as he was walking round majestically, and adorned with the 32 major characteristics and 80 minor ones, which were peculiar to the Buddhas and the six-hued aura of light surrounding him. Pointing her fingers towards the Buddha, she drew the attention of Rāhula and uttered the ten Lion of a Man (*Narasīha*) verses in praise of the glorious personality of the Buddha from his forehead to his soles.

Ten Verses in Praise of the Buddha

1. Siniddha-nīla-mudu-kuñcita-keso,
sūriya-nimmala-talābhina-lāṭo,
yutta-tuṅga-mudu-kāyata-nāso,
raṁsi-jāla-vitato nara-sīho.

His hair is jet black and bright like the colour of a bumble bee with a tapering tip curling softly clock-wise; a shining, serene forehead resembling a clear rising sun; a delicate, proportionately prominent

slender nose like a goad; a lustrous radiant body, the lion of a man, and an extraordinary, exalted individual indeed!

2. Cakka-varaṅkita-ratta-supādo,
lakkhaṇa-maṇḍita-āyata-paṇhi,
cāmari-hattha-vibhūsita-paṇho,
esa hi tuyhaṁ pitā nara-sīho.

My eyes' delight, dear Rāhula, there comes the lion of a man, an [474] extraordinary person! The soles of his feet are ruby-red and distinguished by the characteristic marks; noble characteristic marks adorn the slender heels and his pair of feet have impressions of white umbrellas and golden yellow yak-fans, he is a lion of a man. That exalted reverential person receiving alms, surrounded by 20,000 Arahats, like the full moon amidst stars and planets, was your father when he was a layman.

3. Sakya-kumāro varado sukhu-mālo,
lakkhaṇa-vicitta-pasanna-sarīro,
loka-hitāya āgato nara-vīro,
esa hi tuyhaṁ pitā nara-sīho.

My bosom son, Rāhula, he is a gentle noble prince, a descendant of the unbroken, peerless Sakya lineage, one who has a full handsome body with noble major and minor characteristic marks; one who has been born into this world for the welfare of the three spheres of existence, one whose industry excels that of all others, an extraordinary person and a lion of men. That exalted lion of a man, receiving alms in the company of 20,000 Arahats, like the full moon amidst stars and planets, was your father when he was a layman.

4. Āyata-yutta-susaṇṭhita-soto,
gopa-khumo abhinīla-netto,
inda-dhanu-abhinīla-bhamuko,
esa hi tuyhaṁ pitā nara-sīho.

My sweet son, Rāhula, possessing a pair of handsome ears of proportionate size, soft eye-lashes like that of a new-born calf, a pair of eyes dark like the onyx, and dark-brown eyebrows shaped like the curve of Sakka's bow. That exalted lion of a man, receiving alms in the company of 20,000 Arahats, like the full moon amidst stars and planets, was your father when he was a layman.

5. Puṇṇa-canda-nibho mukha-vaṇṇo,
Deva-narānaṁ piyo nara-nāgo,
matta-gajinda-vilāsita-gāmī,
esa hi tuyhaṁ pitā nara-sīho.

My darling Rāhula, the serene face of that exalted monastic resembles a moon in full bloom on the fifteenth day of the month, who is worthy of deep veneration and true affection by all beings in the three worlds of humans, Devas and Brahmas, who may be likened to a great and powerful bull elephant with the elegant gait of an elephant king in must, he is a lion of a man. That exalted reverential person, receiving alms in the company of 20,000 Arahats, like the full moon amidst stars and planets, was your father when he was a layman.

6. Siniddha-sugambhīra-mañjusa-ghoso,
hiṅgula-vaṇṇa-ratta-sujivho,
vīsati-vīsati-seta-sudanto,
esa hi tuyhaṁ pitā nara-sīho.

My darling, dear Rāhula, one with a voice, deep, harmonious and exceedingly sweet, a tongue vermillion-red like the colour of the Chinese Rose (*Rosa sinensis*), two rows of clean white teeth, each consisting of 20 teeth, the lion of a man and an extraordinary person. That exalted reverential person, receiving alms in the company of 20,000 Arahats, like the full [475] moon amidst stars and planets, was your father when he was a layman.

7. Khattiya-sambhava-agga-kulindo,
Deva-manussa-namassita-pādo,
sīla-samādhi-patiṭṭhita-citto,
esa hi tuyhaṁ pitā nara-sīho.

My darling, dear Rāhula, one of truly noble and royal ancestry, before whose feet beings of the three worlds bow in deep reverence, one with firm morality, concentration and tranquil state of mind which is imperturbable, the lion of a man. That exalted reverential person, receiving alms in the company of 20,000 Arahats, like the full moon amidst stars and planets, was your father when he was a layman.

8. Vaṭṭa-suvaṭṭa-susaṇṭhita-gīvo,
sīha-hanu-miga-rāja-sarīro,

kañcana-succhavi-uttama-vaṇṇo,
esa hi tuyhaṁ pitā nara-sīho.

Dear son, Rāhula, one with a full round neck, shapely like a golden mayo drum, a rounded, well-developed jaw resembling the magnificent jaws of a lion king, and as if about to smile, like the twelfth-day waxing moon; a full-chested body like the fore part of a lion, the king of beasts; a radiant skin of the colour of the purest gold, and an unparalleled nobility of appearance; the lion of a man. That exalted reverential person, receiving alms in the company of 20,000 Arahats, like the full moon amidst stars and planets, was your father when he was a layman.

9. Añjana-sama-vaṇṇa-sunīla-keso,
kañcana-paṭṭa-visuddha-nalāṭo,
osadhi-paṇḍara-suddha-su-uṇṇo,
esa hi tuyhaṁ pitā nara-sīho.

My darling, dear Rāhula, having hair of dark shining greenish-black, an even, clear forehead like a plate of gold and like the morning star and a single strand of pure white hair growing, coiled between the eye brows, the lion of a man. That exalted reverential person, receiving alms in the company of 20,000 Arahats, like the full moon amidst stars and planets, was your father when he was a layman.

10. Gacchanto nila-pathe viya cando,
tārā-gaṇa-parivaḍḍhita-rūpo,
sāvaka-majjha-gato samaṇindo,
esa hi tuyhaṁ pitā nara-sīho.

My darling, dear Rāhula, just as the chariot of the moon magnificently travels along the triple route through the air, so too the leader of monks, the King of Dhamma walks majestically amidst Arahat disciples; the lion of a man. That exalted reverential person, receiving alms in the company of 20,000 Arahats, like the full moon amidst stars and planets, was your father when he was a layman.

Having thus intimated the glory, the grace of the person of the Buddha to her son Rāhula, she approached King Suddhodana and said: “Your majesty, O father, your royal son, the Buddha, is reported to be going round for alms food in the company of 20,000 Arahats.” [476]

King Suddhodana attains the First Path

King Suddhodana was shocked and agitated when he heard what Princess Yasodharā had said and with one hand holding up his nether garment, he rushed out of the palace to see the Buddha and stood in front of him and made this remark: "Most Fortunate One, why do you put us to shame by going round for alms food? Do you think that enough food for such a large number as 20,000 Arahats cannot be provided by your royal father?"

The Buddha said in reply: "Royal father, such a practice of receiving alms from door to door (*sapadāna-cārika*) is the precedent set by an unbroken line of Buddhas."

King Suddhodana replied in these words: "My son, are we not descents of a noble (*khattiya*) lineage, great elected rulers in unbroken succession from the beginning of the aeon? And amongst this long line of great noble rulers, there was never anyone who went round begging for alms."

The Buddha then made this reply: "Royal father, the lineage of noble rulers is your lineage; my ancestors are the Buddhas, in successive order of the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) from Dīpaṅkara, Koṇḍañña, Maṅgala down to Kassapa. Beginning with Dīpaṅkara and ending with Kassapa, my preceding elder brethren Buddhas, 24 in number, and with all the thousands of Buddhas, as many as the sands in the Ganges, have always gone to each house successively to receive alms. This very practice of receiving alms from one door to the next had always been our means of livelihood."

And while stopping on the route for a moment, he uttered the following verse (Dhp 168):

> *Uttiṭṭhe nappamajjeyya, Dhammaṁ sucaritaṁ care,*
> *Dhamma-cārī sukhaṁ seti, asmiṁ loke paramhi ca.*
>
> Royal father, a monastic, on receiving alms food after standing with seemly propriety at the door of each supporter, should be mindful of the receipt of the food; he should not receive or seek alms by improper means. He should practice going round for receiving alms in a commendable manner. A monastic, who cultivates this practice unfailingly in such a manner, will live in peace in this life and in the future life as well.

At the conclusion of this verse, King Suddhodana attained the stage of the Stream-entry fruition (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

After his attainment of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*), King Suddhodana himself took the alms bowl from the hands of the Buddha and holding it, invited the Buddha and the 20,000 Arahats to his palace where he offered seats of honour which were especially arranged in anticipation. On arrival at the palace, the Buddha uttered the following verse (Dhp 169):

> *Dhammaṁ care sucaritaṁ, na naṁ duccaritaṁ care,*
> *Dhamma-cārī sukhaṁ seti, asmiṁ loke paramhi ca*
>
> Royal father, an improper or irregular way of seeking alms food should be avoided and a correct mode of receiving alms should be practised. A monastic who cultivates this practice unfailingly in such a manner will live in peace in this life and in the future life as well.
>
> Abodes of old maids, eunuchs, liquor-shops, prostitutes, a divorced or widowed woman, female monastics: these places are regarded as not proper places to receive alms from (*agocara-ṭhāna*), and should be avoided.

At the conclusion of this second verse, King Suddhodana became a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*) and Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī, a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*). [477]

Yasodharā's Loyalty

When the food-offering was over, all the courtiers and maids of honour excepting Rāhula's mother, Princess Yasodharā rallied at the feet of Buddha and paid their reverential respects to him.

Although her female attendants had requested her thus: "Your majesty, please do come out of the royal chamber and pay homage to the Buddha," she gave the maids of honour this reply: "If I had ever rendered any special service worthy of gratitude, his reverence will come to me himself. Then and then only will I give homage to him," and she remained unmoved and sedately stayed in her chamber.

With King Suddhodana carrying his alms bowl and accompanied by his two chief disciples the Buddha went into the parlour of the queen. At that time, 40,000 dancers were waiting upon her, of whom 1,090 were maiden princesses. On being told that the Buddha was on his way to her parlour, she ordered her 40,000 dancers to be dressed in dyed cloth and they did as they were told.

On arrival at Princess Yasodharā's chamber, the Buddha said: "Let no one utter any word to hinder or restrain Princess Yasodharā while she is paying me homage to her heart's content," and then he took his seat at a place specially prepared for him in advance.

Princess Yasodharā came quickly into the presence of the Buddha and seizing his pair of insteps with both hands and with all her strength she held them close and tightly in her arms. She rested her forehead upon them, alternately left and right, and again and again made obeisance to him to her heart's content, with deep, profound esteem and respect.

Whereupon, King Suddhodana addressed the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, noble son, my daughter has worn dyed clothes ever since she heard that you were wearing dyed robes; when she heard that you lived on a single meal a day, she too subsisted on a single meal. Since she heard that you had given up luxurious beds, she slept on a couch of flat matted ropes; since she heard that you had given up flowers and scents, she went without anointing herself with fragrant paste and not wearing flowers. When you renounced the world, kindred princes sent messages proposing their honourable intentions to love and cherish and keep her under their tender care, to none of which did she ever cast a lustful glance. Such wonderful, praiseworthy and extraordinary virtues my daughter is replete with." Thus did King Suddhodana make known to the Buddha the virtues and consistency of Princess Yasodharā's love for him.

Whereupon the Buddha responded: "Royal father, it is not to be wondered that Yasodharā, mother of Rāhula, has maintained her loyalty and dignity now, because apart from the protection given by you, the mother of Rāhula is now ripe in wisdom and capable of protecting herself. More admirable still is the fact that the mother of Rāhula, Princess Yasodharā in a past existence, protected herself, when she was roaming all by herself at the foot of Canda mountain, even while still immature in wisdom and without a protector like your good self."

Then, after relating the events in the past existence with the story of Canda-Kinnarī (Ja 485), the Buddha returned to the Nigrodha monastery accompanied by 20,000 Arahats.

The Ordination of Prince Nanda

Prince Siddhattha's step-mother, [478] Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī, gave birth to Prince Nanda two days after the royal mother, Mahā Māyā, had given birth to Prince Siddhattha. Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī entrusted her own son to the care of nurses and she took the responsibility of nursing and looking after her nephew the Bodhisatta by feeding him with her own milk. Prince Nanda was only two or three days younger, and about four finger breaths shorter than Prince Siddhattha in height.

On the third day after the arrival of the Buddha in the royal city of Kapilavatthu, King Suddhodana made the five auspicious ceremonial rites and rituals to be performed in honour of Prince Nanda:

1. The ceremony of the uncoiling of the youthful coiffure to make way for another, befitting an heir to the throne (*kesa-vissajjana-maṅgala*).
2. The ceremony of placing around the forehead of the prince a gold frontlet bearing the inscription Crown Prince (*paṭṭa-bandha-maṅgala*).
3. The ceremony of bestowing a residential palace on the Crown Prince (*gharappavesana-maṅgala*).
4. The ceremony of his marriage to his cousin Princess Janapadakalyāṇī (*āvāha-maṅgala*).
5. The ceremony of bestowing and erecting the royal white umbrella of the Crown Prince (*chattussāpana-maṅgala*).

On that occasion the Buddha went to the royal palace and after teaching a discourse on the virtues of meritorious deeds, as he wished to have Prince Nanda ordained, he purposely gave his bowl to Nanda and left for the monastery.

Because he had exceedingly great respect for his elder brother, the Buddha, Prince Nanda, dared not say a word about the bowl which was unexpectedly left in his care, though he had in mind to request: "Exalted elder brother, may you take back your bowl." He had but to follow the Buddha up to the top of the stairs, thinking that he would be relieved of the burden there, but the Buddha did not do so.

Holding the bowl, he thus followed the Buddha to the foot of the stairway, but he still did not take back the bowl. He had to follow him, much against his will,

thinking and hoping the bowl would be taken back and he eventually reached the open space outside the palace. The Buddha continued on his way without relieving him of the bowl. Prince Nanda, following unwillingly, wishing to turn back, but his extreme respect kept him silent, and hoping against hope that the bowl would be taken back at one place or another, he had to go along with the Buddha.

At that juncture, the female attendants of the Princess Janapadakalyāṇī brought the matter to her notice, saying: "Your Highness, the Buddha has taken away Prince Nanda to keep him separated from you." When she heard this Janapadakalyāṇī was washing her hair. She hurried to the door of the balcony, her hair dripping wet and only half-combed, and made an earnest appeal: "Your Highness, may you come back quickly," which weighed heavily in the mind of Prince Nanda.

The Buddha went on without taking the bowl from Prince Nanda, and on arrival at the monastery, he asked Nanda: "Would you like to receive ordination and become a monastic? Out of fear and respect, he could not express his unwillingness, saying: 'No, I cannot,' but had to give his assent, saying: 'Very well, exalted brother, I will receive ordination.' " – "If that be the case: Monastics, you should see to it that my younger brother is ordained," said the Buddha and the monastics did as they were told.

> Events leading to the Venerable Nanda's attainment of the Arahat fruition will be related when we come to the chapter 43 on The Sangha Jewel.

Rāhula's Going Forth

Seven days after this event, the Buddha, accompanied by 20,000 Arahats, visited his royal father's palace to partake of a meal. Princess Yasodharā had her 7-year old son, Rāhula, [479] tastefully dressed and confided to him: "My darling son, look at that gracious monastic, attended by 20,000 monastics, with a golden appearance and a body as graceful as that of a Brahma, he is your father. Before his renunciation, and becoming a monastic, there used to be four golden pots, named: Saṅkha, Ela, Uppala, Puṇḍarīka, which disappeared simultaneously with his renunciation. So approach your father and ask for your inheritance, saying: "Father, I am a young prince and I will, in due course, be crowned a Universal Monarch of the four islands and, as such, I am in need of wealth and treasures befitting such a king. I pray that those four golden pots may be given to me as

my inheritance, in keeping with the tradition of a son always inheriting from his father." She then sent the young prince to the Buddha.

When Prince Rāhula came close to the Buddha, he felt the warmth of the affectionate love of a father. Overwhelmed with joyousness, he addressed him: "Exalted father, the sphere of your protection is, indeed, so peaceful, calm and comfortable," and after a moment of sweet childish chatter, he sat close to the Buddha. After finishing the meal, the Buddha gave a discourse on the merits of the provision of alms food and left the palace for the Nigrodha monastery, in the company of 20,000 Arahats.

Prince Rāhula immediately went along behind the Buddha, making the request: "Exalted father, may you give me my inheritance," and repeating it all along the way to the monastery. The Buddha did not say a word to him, such as: "Beloved son, go back home," and none of the king's personnel dared hinder him as it was a matter of a son following his father. In this way, Prince Rāhula arrived at the monastery together with the Buddha, asking for his inheritance all the way.

On arrival at the monastery, the Buddha thought it over: "Prince Rāhula wants to inherit his father's property. Worldly wealth and property simply leads to suffering as they are the cause of suffering in the round of rebirths. I shall give my royal son Rāhula the inheritance of the seven supermundane treasures of the noble ones: faith (*saddhā*), morality (*sīla*), conscience (*hirī*), concern (*ottappa*), learning (*suta*), charity (*cāga*) and wisdom (*paññā*) which I have won by vanquishing the five internal and external enemy forces of Māra. I shall make my royal son, Rāhula, the owner of these supermundane inheritances." So deciding, the Buddha bade Ven. Sāriputta to him and said: "Sāriputta, Prince Rāhula has come to ask for his inheritance from me. Make arrangements for the going forth of Rāhula as a novice."

According to AN 2.398, the seven treasures of the noble persons (*ariya*), as expounded by the Buddha are:

> *Saddhā-dhanaṁ sīla-dhanaṁ, hirī ottappiyaṁ dhanaṁ,*
> *suta-dhanañ-ca cāgo ca, paññā ve sattamaṁ dhanaṁ.*

In his *Kokhan pyo*, sacred verses in nine sections, Ven. Mahā Ratthasāra illustrated these seven supermundane treasures of the nobel ones (*ariya*), side by side with corresponding worldly properties:

1. Conscience (*hirī*) = silver.
2. Concern (*ottappa*) = gold.
3. Learning (*suta*) = coral.
4. Faith (*saddhā*) = emerald.
5. Morality (*sīla*) = pearl.
6. Abandonment (*cāga*) = precious stones.
7. Wisdom (*paññā*) = diamonds.

In compliance with the express instructions of the Buddha, Ven. Sāriputta took the role of the preceptor (*upajjhāya*), whereas Ven. Mahā Moggallāna acted as the [480] instructor (*pabbajjācariyā*) attending to the shaving of the head, the offering of the robes and the administering of the three refuges, while Ven. Mahā Kassapa served as his advisor (*ovādācariyā*). Thus, Prince Rāhula was given the going forth and became a novice. Although the three great monks (*mahā-thera*) took individual roles in the procedure for the admission, the preceptor (*upajjhāya*) is the dominant figure in bringing about the going forth of Prince Rāhula; the functions undertaken by the instructor and the advisor are the bounden duties of the preceptor (*upajjhāya*); they are merely functioning as his deputies. Therefore the text says: *Atha kho Āyasma Sāriputto Rāhulaṁ kumāraṁ pabbājesi,* "then Ven. Sāriputta gave Prince Rāhula the going forth," as if he had attended to all the various tasks necessary for the ceremony.

A Training Rule about Permissions

King Suddhodana was greatly disturbed and suffered intense mental and physical agony when he heard of the news that Prince Rāhula had been given the going forth.

> A note of explanation is required here for clarification: Just as the court astrologers had made confident predictions that: "This prince is destined to become a Universal Monarch," after the birth of Prince Siddhattha, so also they made the identical predictions on subsequent occasions when birthday celebrations were held in honour of Prince Nanda and Prince Rāhula.

While entertaining high hopes of seeing the grace and glory of his son, Prince Siddhattha, as a Universal Monarch, King Suddhodana only witnessed Siddhattha renounce the world and become a monastic, greatly to his

disappointment, and he had suffered great mental and physical distress for the first time.

Again, after he had braced himself thus: "Only when my younger son, Nanda, becomes a Universal Monarch shall I see his grace and glory," Prince Nanda was ordained as a monastic by the Buddha. King Suddhodana had suffered extreme weariness of heart and mind for the second time.

He had, however, observed great patience on these two previous occasions by consoling himself: "My last hope is to witness with full satisfaction the grace and glory of my grandson when he becomes a Universal Monarch." He had set his mind on this. Now that Rāhula had been made a novice by the Buddha, it occurred to him: "Now the continuity of the dynasty of the Sakya monarchy has been severed. Wherefore can there be the glory and grace of a Universal Monarch?" King Suddhodana naturally suffered a misery more intense than ever before.

> This is because the king was still at the stage of a Once-returner (*Sakadāgāmī*) who had yet to eradicate the defilement of anger (*dosa*), hence his extreme sadness.

The pressing mental and physical agony grew beyond his power of endurance, so much so that he went to the Buddha and after paying homage and taking a seat at an appropriate place, he addressed the Buddha: "Most Exalted Buddha, my royal son, I would like to request a favour from you." Whereupon, the Buddha responded: "Royal father of the Gotama clan, Fully Awakened Buddhas are past the stage of granting favours."

> Granting of favours and giving rewards is not the business of recluses who themselves live on food received from generous supporters. As such, if someone makes requests for favours from them, it is not befitting for them to say off-hand: "Ask for any favour you wish." It is also not the practice of the Buddhas.

Whereupon the king said: "I will only make a request which is fit and proper as well as faultless." Only then did the Buddha allow him to make the request, saying: "Royal father of the Gotama clan, you may ask for any favour you wish."

"Most Revered son, when you first renounced the world I suffered infinite sorrow and I suffered with the same intensity when my son, Prince Nanda, received ordination, and lastly, when Rāhula, my grandson, was made a novice,

my misery was immeasurable. Most exalted son, the love of parents and grandparents for their sons and grandchildren penetrates from the delicate film of the outer skin through to the thick inner [481] skin, sinews, nerves and bones and even up to the marrow."

When King Suddhodana left the monastery after hearing a discourse, the Buddha, in consideration of King Suddhodana's request, made a proclamation of a training rule at the assembly of the Saṅgha: *Na, bhikkhave, ananuññāto mātā-pitūhi putto pabbājetabbo. Yo pabbājeyya, āpatti dukkaṭassa,* "monastics, a child who has not the consent of both his parents should not be given the going forth nor higher ordination. For whoever should let such a person receive the going forth or higher ordination, there is an offence of wrong-doing."

King Suddhodana becomes a Non-returner

On a certain day after this incident, when the Buddha went to the royal palace for meals in the company of 20,000 Arahats, King Suddhodana served him and his Arahats with gruel and sweet-meats before the main meal. During the interim period, the king enthusiastically recounted his experience with the Devas thus: "Most glorious son, when you were engaged arduously in austerity practices, certain Devas appeared in the sky and told me: 'Your son, Prince Siddhattha, has died for not having sufficient food.' " Whereupon, the Buddha asked the king: "Royal father, did you believe the words of the Devas then?" The king replied: "No, I did not. I rejected the words of the Devas in the sky by saying: "It is impossible for my son to enter Nibbāna until and unless he attains omniscience on that pleasant plain under the Mahā Bodhi tree."

Then the Buddha said: "My royal father not only in this life, but also in a previous existence, when you were the chieftain of Mahā Dhammapāla village, you have rejected the words of a far-famed teacher, Disāpāmokkha, who told you: "Your son, the young Dhammapāla is dead. These are the bones of your son," exhibiting the bones of a goat as evidence. You had then refuted him by saying: "In our Dhammapāla clan, there is none who dies while still young." You did not believe him at all. Now at the last lap of your transient existence, why should you believe the words of the Devas? You certainly would not." Then at the request of his royal father, the Buddha delivered extensively the discourse telling the story, the Long Birth Story about Dhammapāla (*Mahā-dhammapāla-jātaka*, Ja 447).

After delivering the Birth Story, the Buddha continued to expound the main Dhamma points of the four noble truths (*catu-sacca-dhamma-kathā*). At the conclusion of this exposition, King Suddhodana was firmly established as a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi*).

Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī offers Robes to the Buddha

As stated above, the day after the arrival of the Buddha and his Arahats at Kapilavatthu, King Suddhodana, after having expressed his reasons for his intolerable displeasure and disapproval to the Buddha and his Arahats in the middle of their round for alms food, invited them to the royal palace.

When Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī witnessed the grace and splendour of the physical appearance of the Buddha on the latter's arrival at the royal palace, she could not help thinking: "How exceedingly comely is my son's appearance!" and her mind was filled with the powerful feelings of exceeding joy.

Then again, she continued considering: "For fully 29 years when he was a layman, it was I who was solely responsible for my son's well-being, regarding his food, clothing and residence, even to the extent of peeling off the skin of a banana for him. Now that he has blossomed forth as a Fully Awakened Buddha, it is right and proper that I weave a set of robes to offer him."

She had a weaving house set up in the precincts of the royal palace, and bought fine quality cotton from the market. She undertook the work of ginning and spinning cotton into fine threads. She summoned expert weavers to the palace and asked them to weave a cloth for a set of robes, providing them with delicious soft and hard food from her own table, and paid them handsome rewards. She visited the place of work, in the company of her maids of honour and personally took part in the weaving of the cloth for the robes [482] as and when opportunity presented.

When the fine cloth had been woven and the weavers were given suitable rewards, she placed the cloth in a casket of sweet scents so that it might be infused with the sweet fragrance and when everything was set, she approached the king and said: "Your majesty, I wish to offer this newly woven fine cloth for a set of robes to your exalted son personally in the monastery."

King Suddhodana caused the roadway between the palace and the monastery to be swept clean; every street was swept, pots filled with water were placed along

the road, which was lined with decorative pennants and streamers. From the palace gate to the Nigrodha monastery the whole route was strewn with flowers.

With great pomp and ceremony, Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī, bedecked with ornaments and in full ceremonial dress, proceeded to the monastery in the company of her maids of honour, carrying on her head the fragrant casket containing the piece of cloth for making robes and on arrival addressed the Buddha: "Most exalted glorious son I, your step-mother, intending it for you, have myself ginned and spun and woven a cloth for a set of robes. I pray that you accept this piece of cloth which I have woven and offered to you, out of compassion and sympathetic regard for me."

The detailed story of the royal step-mother weaving the cloth for a set of robes and offering it to the Buddha is provided in the Analysis of Offerings (*Dakkhiṇā-vibaṅga-sutta*, MN 142).

> The commentary to that discourse states: "The Buddha's step-mother had a mind for the offering of robes to the Buddha during his first visit to Kapilavatthu, etc." In the text it is mentioned that the Buddha advised her to offer it to the Saṅgha instead of to an individual so that she may gain exceedingly greater merit. Then Ven. Ānanda supplicated on her behalf for the Buddha to accept the offer of the robes in consideration of the mutually beneficial services rendered.
>
> Here arises a point that deserves to be taken into account. Ven. Ānanda was not yet a monastic during the Buddha's first visit to Kapilavatthu. He was ordained only on arrival at Anupiya Mango Grove, in the Malla country, on the return journey from Kapilavatthu. The Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentaries also only mention the fact that the Buddha returned from Kapilavatthu after establishing King Suddhodana in the three lower fruition stages.
>
> Therefore, in order to reconcile this discrepancy, it would be appropriate to take it that Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī conceived the idea of weaving the cloth for a set of robes for the Buddha and went about translating her idea into action during the Buddha's first visit, and that she made the offering with great pomp and ceremony only on his next visit to Kapilavatthu. [483]

19: The Ordination of 1,000 Sakyan Princes

Having thus established his father, King Suddhodana in the three lower fruition stages of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*), Once-returner (*Sakadāgāmī-phala*) and Non-returner (*Anāgāmī-phala*), the Buddha left Kapilavatthu in the company of 20,000 Arahats and journeyed towards Rājagaha. On arrival at the Anupiya Mango Grove of the country of Malla, the Buddha broke the journey for some rest.

At that time, King Suddhodana summoned an assembly of all the members of the royal Sakyan clan and addressed them: "You members of the royal Sakyan clan, if my son had chosen to remain as a sovereign ruler, seven treasures would have appeared and he would certainly have become a Universal Monarch ruling over the four island continents. And my grandson Rāhula, befitting the eldest son treasure of the seven treasures would have accompanied the Universal Monarch together with all the noble rulers on earth, attending to administrative matters wherever the wheel treasure rolled on.

> When a sovereign ruler observed the moral precepts in fulfilment of the noble duties required of a Universal Monarch, there appeared to him the mighty wheel treasure. At that time he comes to possess seven precious treasures: the wheel treasure, the elephant treasure, the horse treasure, the gem treasure, the queen treasure, the rich-man treasure, and the eldest son treasure.
>
> After being anointed as a Universal Monarch, he held a gold pitcher in his left hand, sprinkled water with his right hand on the wheel treasure, making the resolution: 'May the august wheel treasure turn and roll on! May the august wheel treasure be triumphant.' The wheel treasure rolled on towards the four island continents, in the four directions. The Universal Monarch followed it with his great army commanded by his eldest son treasure. Where the wheel came to rest, the Universal Monarch encamped with his great army. The rival kings of each region came to him, paid him homage and became vassals to the Universal Monarch.

All you Sakyan rulers are well aware of this. Now that my noble son has become a Buddha, the crown of the three worlds, he being a Buddha of royal descent, let only princes of royal blood attend upon him. I would urge you, therefore, that each and every royal household present me a prince. I will arrange for their ordination in the presence of my son the Buddha."

They all readily signified their assent by saying: “Very well, your majesty,” and 1,000 princes of the royal families spontaneously went along with the king to the Anupiya Mango Grove and received ordination from the Buddha.

The Six Princes

At the ceremony of the palm-reading, after the birth of the Bodhisatta, all the members of the 80,000 royal families had made the promise: “Whether he becomes a Universal Monarch or a Buddha, we will see to it that he goes about duly attended on exclusively by the royal princes.” Although quite a number of Sakyan princes had received ordination, six princes: 1) Prince Bhaddiya, the one taking his turn to rule at the time, 2) Prince Anuruddha, 3) Prince Ānanda, 4) Prince Bhagu, 5) Prince Kimila, and 6) Prince Devadatta were discovered by other Sakyan families as not honouring the promise. They censured and expressed their disapproval saying: “We all have had our sons ordained but these six princes have behaved as if they are strangers and not relatives; how dare they remain without receiving ordination?”

Whereupon, Prince Mahānama went to his younger brother, Anuruddha and consulted with him saying: “My dear brother Anuruddha, no member of our family has yet received ordination, and it will be right and proper for either of us to receive ordination.” It is [484] to be stated here that Prince Anuruddha was an extremely gentle person, born and brought up in great wealth and luxury. Anuruddha was a prince who had not heard of the term “have not,” and was ignorant of its meaning, as we see in the following story.

Prince Anuruddha

One day, these six princes played a game of marbles with a stake that the loser should provide cakes. Anuruddha eventually lost the game and as previously promised he was obliged to send an attendant to his mother for a supply of cakes. His mother arranged to provide the cakes as requested.

The six princes happily enjoyed the cakes and went on playing, game after game. Anuruddha was the loser every time and his mother had to fulfil his request three times in succession. But when he sent his attendant for the fourth time, his mother was compelled to give the answer: *Pūvā natthi*, meaning “There are no cakes.”

As Prince Anuruddha did not understand the meaning of the word *natthi*, he thought it to be a cake of some sort, so he sent the attendant back with instructions to bring the *natthi* cakes. His mother, being well aware of the fact that his son was totally ignorant of the term *natthi*, considered that she would teach him the meaning of *natthi*. So, she expediently put one empty gold cup as a cover upon another and sent them to her son.

Whereupon, the guardian Devas of the city remembered the meritorious deeds of Anuruddha in a previous existence: "As Annabhāra, a poor person, he liberally offered his hard earned quota of a meal to a Paccekabuddha named Upariṭṭha, making this wish: 'May I be free from want, not ever hearing the words 'there are none (*natthi*),' not knowing even the source of cooked rice." The Devas were aware that they might not be allowed to attend the assembly of celestial beings should they let Anuruddha see the empty cups; above all their heads were liable to be split into seven pieces for such an act of omission. Therefore, they filled the empty gold cups with celestial cakes.

At the game pitch, as soon as the cup full of celestial sweet-meats was opened, the atmosphere of the whole city became laden with its fragrance; and the flavour of the ambrosia permeated 7,000 palatal nerves of Anuruddha as he placed a bit of it in his mouth.

Anuruddha thought to himself: "For such a long time my mother has not cooked me this *natthi* cake. She does not seem to love me. From now on, I will eat no other kind of cake except this kind." On his arrival at the palace, he asked his mother: "Mother do you really love me or not?" His mother replied: "My dear son, Anuruddha, just as a man who has only one eye values and cherishes it most, so I love you more than anything else; more than my heart." Then Anuruddha asked again: "Mother, why, though loving me so, have you never prepared such a *natthi* cake for me even over such a long period of time?"

When his mother heard this curious question, she summoned the young attendant and asked him: "Young man, was there anything in the cup?" he replied: "Dear mother, the cup was filled to its brim with a sort of sweetmeats which we have never seen before." His mother then realised that her son must be a man of power and glory, who had accumulated much merit from his past good deeds. She rightly considered the truth of the matter that celestial beings must have put celestial sweetmeats in the cup and sent it to the prince.

Then Anuruddha told his mother: “Mother, from now on I shall not eat any edibles except these *natthi* cakes. Just cook only these *natthi* cakes for me.” Since that time, his mother simply sent an empty cup covered with another whenever a request came from her son for a supply of edibles. Before his ordination, all through his layman’s life, it was the celestials who sent the cakes to him. How then could Anuruddha, who did not even [485] understand the term *natthi*, understand the state of monkhood or ordination?

Such being the case, Anuruddha asked his eldest brother, Mahānama: “Brother, what do you mean by ordination, what is it like?” Mahānama replied: “Dear brother, one who receives ordination is required to have his hair and beard clean shaven, wear dyed clothes, sleep on a wooden bedstead, or a couch of cane or bamboo, go on rounds for alms food; this is the life of one who receives ordination.” Anuruddha then made this reply: “Elder brother, I am a gentle and delicate person; I cannot lead the life of one who receives ordination.”

Mahānama said in reply: “My dear Anuruddha, if that is the case you had better learn the business of human affairs and stay back to manage our household because it is imperative that between we two brothers, one must receive ordination.” Anuruddha then enquired: “Elder brother, what is meant by the business of human affairs?” How would a man of high birth like Anuruddha, who had no knowledge of the source of his daily meals, understood the business of human affairs?

This will be clarified: three princes, namely, Kimila, Bhaddiya, and Anuruddha happened to discuss the source of food during a conversation. Prince Kimila had only seen the grains taken out of the king’s granaries; he had never seen the rice fields, and he maintained that a granary is the source of food! Prince Bhaddiya rejected his statement by saying: “You really do not know the actual source of food,” he had only seen food in the process of being cooked in a pot; he had never seen paddy being harvested in the fields or being taken out of the granaries, so he said: “A cooking pot is the actual source.” Prince Anuruddha had never seen paddy being taken out from the granaries, nor rice being cooked in a pot and ladled out from it, he had only seen a gold cup filled with cooked rice which was previously removed from the pot. He had therefore the fixed idea that food spontaneously appears in the cup when he feels like eating, so he took his turn saying: “Both of you are ignorant of the source of food; its source is a gold dish studded with fine jewels.”

These three princes were totally ignorant of the source of food and so Anuruddha asked his brother: “Elder brother, what is this business of human affairs?” in honest simplicity.

Elder brother Mahānama said: “My dear younger brother, Anuruddha, come, I will teach you the work and business of human affairs:

1. One must plough the land at the break of the rains.
2. Ploughing must be followed by sowing seeds.
3. After sowing, the field must be watered having due regard to the appropriate time.
4. Water must be led off or drained at the appropriate time.
5. After draining off the water, there must be a constant removal of weeds.
6. After frequent clearing away of weeds, crops must be harvested as soon as they are matured and ripened.
7. After harvesting, standing sheaves of paddy must be thrashed on the threshing floor.
8. The sheaves of paddy must be spread and piled for threshing.
9. After spreading the sheaves, threshing must be done thoroughly.
10. After threshing, stalks must be removed with thorough shaking.
11. Then the undeveloped grains must be sorted out.
12. Winnowing must be done after removing the undeveloped grains. [486]
13. After winnowing, the paddy must be stored in granaries.
14. When everything is done as described above, the same work must be carried out routinely year after year.

On hearing this, Anuruddha told his brother: “Elder brother, all this business of human affairs is inexhaustible and never ending. When can all these worldly affairs be exhausted, when can we see the end to all these affairs? When shall we be able to enjoy the five sensual pleasures with ease and comfort, without having to encounter the anxieties of worldly life?” He muttered this with dismay and weariness.

His elder brother then told him: “Quite so, dear brother Anuruddha, worldly affairs are inexhaustible and without an end. Our fathers and grandfathers died before these human affairs could be exhausted or ended.” Whereupon Anuruddha said: “Elder brother, if this be so, since you understand the ways of human affairs, you had better remain and take charge of their management. I shall renounce the household life and lead the homeless life of a recluse,” thus he gave his assent to receive ordination.

Anuruddha then approached his mother and asked: “Mother, I wish to receive ordination; kindly grant me your permission to do so.”

Then the Queen Mother replied: “My dear son, Anuruddha, I love both my sons, you two brothers, with an exceedingly great love. Even when death separates us, it will be without my consent. How can I, while still alive, give both you brothers my permission to receive ordination, it is impossible.” Anuruddha made a second attempt to get his mother’s permission, but received the same answer. Again, for the third time, he requested his mother’s permission for his ordination.

At that time, the Sakyan Prince, Bhaddiya, was holding the reins of government over the Sakyan clan. King Suddhodana, who was by then approximately 90, was merely a guide and figure head. The ruling king, Bhaddiya, was Prince Anuruddha’s intimate friend. The Queen Mother thought to herself: “At present, my son Anuruddha’s friend, the Sakyan King, Bhaddiya, is still ruling over the Sakyan royal clan. That King Bhaddiya cannot, by any means, receive ordination, at least for the time being.” So she told Anuruddha: “My dear son, Anuruddha, you have my permission to receive ordination, if your playmate the Sakyan King, Bhaddiya, is also prepared to receive ordination.”

Anuruddha then approached his friend and requested: “My dear friend Bhaddiya, my receiving ordination is connected to you.” Bhaddiya then said in response: “Dear friend Anuruddha, if there is a relationship between your ordination and myself, let it no longer exist. You and I …” Here, what Bhaddiya actually meant to say readily with love for his friend, was: “You and I, both, will receive ordination together,” but being restrained by attachment to the luxury of kingship, he stopped short with: “You and I … ” and said: “You may happily receive ordination as you please.” Nevertheless, Anuruddha made a fresh request: “Come, my dear friend, let us receive ordination together.” Whereupon

Bhaddiya gave his frank answer: “My dear friend, Anuruddha, I cannot receive ordination, but I am prepared to do whatever I can, in matters concerning a friend, other than receiving ordination. As regards ordination, do please receive it by yourself.”

Whereupon, Anuruddha asserted: “My friend, my mother had said: ‘If your friend, King Bhaddiya, is prepared to receive ordination, you may do so.’ Friend Bhaddiya, you said: ‘Friend Anuruddha, if there is a relationship between your ordination and myself, let that relation no longer exist. You and I … you may happily receive ordination as you please.’ Almost at the point of gratifying my wish you prevaricated and you have spoken evasive words to escape commitment. Friend, Bhaddiya, do let us go … let us both receive ordination.” Anuruddha thus persistently made refusal impossible.

> People of that time spoke the truth; they admired the truth. They were noted for being as good as their words; they always stood by their words.

King Bhaddiya said: “My dear Anuruddha, please wait for seven years and we will both receive ordination then.” – “My dear Bhaddiya, seven years is too long; I cannot wait for such a long time,” replied Anuruddha. Bhaddiya said in reply: “Please wait for six years,” and then successively five, four, three, two, one year reducing a year each time. “At the [487] end of one year, we will both receive ordination.” But Anuruddha insisted: “My dear friend, Bhaddiya, one year is too long a time; I cannot wait for that long.”

Bhaddiya then asked Anuruddha to wait for seven months; they would then both receive ordination. Anuruddha again replied that the period of seven months was a long time; he could not wait for such a long time. Bhaddiya eventually reduced the period of grace from seven to six, five, four, three, two, one and lastly half a month, but Anuruddha would not give in and again said fifteen days too was still a very long time and he could not wait that long.

At last King Bhaddiya as a final proposal asked for seven days grace to enable him to relinquish the duties of a king and hand over the affairs of the state to his son, elder and younger brothers. Anuruddha was satisfied and said: “My dear Bhaddiya, seven days is not too long a time; I will wait for seven days,” and they came to a mutual agreement.

Six Sakyan Princes and Upāli the Barber

The Group-of-Six princes comprising: 1) King Bhaddiya, 2) Prince Anuruddha, 3) Prince Ānanda, 4) Prince Bhagu, 5) Prince Kimila, 6) Prince Devadatta, the Buddha's brother-in-law enjoyed earthly pleasures to the fullest, like Devas enjoying celestial luxuries, for full seven days before they went out of the city, as though going out for joyful garden sports, escorted by regiments of elephants, cavalry, chariots and infantry.

On arrival at the border, the four regiments of the army were ordered to return while they went into the neighbouring country of Malla. Once inside the country of Malla, the six princes took off their ornaments, wrapped them up with outer garments and handed the bundle to their barber Upāli, by way of a parting gift, saying: "My dear friend Upāli, you may return home. This should keep you going to an advanced age."

Upāli, the barber, wept, rolling on the ground at the feet of the princes, as he was loath to part from his masters but he dared not disobey their command. So he was obliged to make his way home carrying the bundle of gifts. When Upāli parted from his masters, there was a loud and fearsome noise, as if the large, thick forest wailed and the great earth quaked and trembled in lamentation.

A little while after Upāli had separated from the princes he stopped and thought to himself: "The Sakyan royal families are harsh and ruthless. They might misjudge and wrongly conclude: 'This barber, Upāli, has dispatched the six princes,' and they might order me to be killed. If even these princes could abandon kingly luxuries and splendour to receive ordination, discarding priceless ornaments as they would spittle, why would a lowly, wretched person like me not be able to receive ordination?" So thinking and realising, he took out the precious things he had brought and hanging them on a tree, said: "I have given up these properties through generosity. Anyone who finds them is free to take them as he pleases."

As soon as the six princes saw the barber, Upāli, coming from a distance, they questioned: "Friend Upāli, why have you returned to us?" Then he explained all that had occurred to him and what he had done. Then the princes told him:

"Upāli, not going back to the royal city[194] is very good indeed! As you have thought, members of the royal Sakyan family are harsh and ruthless. Supposing you had returned, they might have had you executed under the false impression that you had done away with the six princes."

The six princes took Upāli along with them to Anupiya Mango Grove where the Buddha was residing. On arrival, they respectfully paid homage to the Buddha, took their seat at places free from the six faults, and addressed him thus: "Most exalted Buddha, we Sakyan royalty, are harsh and stern with pride of birth! This man Upāli has been our servant for the many years past. We beseech you to give him priority in receiving ordination before anyone of us. By ordaining him in this way the rest of us would have to make homage to him, greet him when he approaches, and pay our respects with raised hands. By so doing, our Sakyan pride of birth, so harsh and stern, and our vanity, will be broken." [488]

Then the Buddha had Upāli,[195] the barber, ordained first as requested and that was followed by the six princes.

The Buddha, accompanied by over 20,000 monastics, left the Anupiya Mango Grove, near the village of Anupiya, in Malla country, for Veḷuvana monastery, in Rājagaha, where he observed the second Rains Retreat together with 20,000 monastics.

> Rains Retreat (*Vassa*): variously translated as Monsoon Retreat, Rains Retreat and Rains Residence. The Rains Retreat has to be observed for three out of the four months of the rainy season.

The Attainments of the Six Princes

> [This section is moved here from the beginning of chapter 20, so as to keep the story together.]

The Buddha kept the second Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at Veḷuvana monastery, Rājagaha. It was during this period that Ven. Bhaddiya became established as an Arahat accomplished in the three understandings (*tevijja*): knowledge of previous existences (*pubbe-nivāsa-ñāṇa*), knowledge of divine sight (*dibba-*

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[194] According to Sri Lankan sources, your returning to us.

[195] The story of Upāli and the Sakyan princes who became monks will be dealt with in more detail in chapter 43 on The Sangha Jewel.

cakkhu-ñāṇa) and knowledge of the destruction of the pollutants (*āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*).

Ven. Anuruddha achieved the eight mundane meditation attainments (*jhāna-samāpatti*) during the first Rains Retreat after his ordination. Based on these attainments, he further developed divine sight (*dibba-cakkhu-abhiññā*), the supernatural power that enabled him to see the 1,000 world-elements. One day, he went to Ven. Sāriputta and told him (AN 3.130):

1. "Friend Sāriputta, in this Buddha's Dispensation (*sāsana*), I can see the 1,000 world-elements by means of divine sight (*dibba-cakkhu-abhiññā*).

2. My effort is vigorous and resolute, not flagging. My mindfulness is clear and intent, wholly free from forgetfulness; my body is also calm and collected, completely free from anxiety; my mind is serene, fixed on a single object.

3. In spite of all this, my mind, though void of craving (*taṇhā*) and wrong view (*diṭṭhi*), is still not free from the grip of the pollutants (*āsava*)."

Meaning, he has not yet achieved Awakening. Whereupon, Ven. Sāriputta said: "Friend Anuruddha, 1) when you are preoccupied with the thought as described in your first statement, it is a case of pride (*māna*) arising in your mental continuum; 2) regarding the preoccupation described in your second statement, it is a case of distraction (*uddhacca*) arising in your mental continuum; 3) as regards your third statement, it means that you are being assailed by worrying over past commissions and omissions (*kukucca*). Let me beseech you, friend Anuruddha, to get rid of these three states of pride, distraction and worry, and to occupy your mind only with the thought of Nibbāna, the deathless state (*amata-dhātu*)." He then gave Ven. Anuruddha a discourse on the practice of meditation.

Having learnt the technique of meditation from Ven. Sāriputta, Ven. Anuruddha took leave of the Buddha and left for Ceti country and in the bamboo grove which lay east of where the Buddha was residing, he started practising meditation. He began practising in a walking posture for fifteen successive days without lying down. The strain was so severe that he became tired and weak. He could not help sitting down under a bamboo grove where he continued his meditation, contemplating on the eight thoughts of a great being (*Mahā-purisa-*

vitakka). Having acquired seven of them, he became exhausted through strain at the eighth stage. When the Buddha knew of his distress, he came personally to the bamboo grove and helped him complete the eighth stage, by expounding the Discourse on Anuruddha's Great Thoughts (*Anuruddha-mahā-vitakka-sutta*, AN 8.30) together with the Discourse on the Lineage of the Noble Ones (*Ariya-vaṁsa-sutta*, AN 4.28). Foreseeing that the very same forest would serve as a sufficing condition (*upanissaya-paccaya*) for the attainment of Awakening, the Buddha instructed him: "Anuruddha, carry on with your work during the next Rains Retreat also at this place." After this, the Buddha left by means of psychic power (*iddhi-vidha-abhiññā*), and arrived immediately at the forest of Bhesakalā near the town of Susumāgiri in Bhagga country. On arrival there, the Buddha taught the discourse on the Discourse on Anuruddha's Great Thoughts to the monastics residing in the forest there.

Ven. Anuruddha kept the next two Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in the Bamboo Grove as instructed by the Buddha, and continued to practise meditation and eventually he attained the Arahat fruition stage. [492]

Ven. Ānanda listened to the discourse given by Ven. Puṇṇa, son of a Brahmin woman named Mantāṇī, who explained the arising of the "I-concept" based on the five aggregates (*khandha*) with the illustration of a reflection of one's own face from the clear surface of a mirror or a cup of water. He also taught Ānanda the triple-round discourse (*teparivaṭṭa-dhamma-desanā*) concerning the three characteristics of impermanance (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anatta*) of the five aggregates. As a result of hearing these discourses from Ven. Puṇṇa and reflecting on them, Ven. Ānanda became a Stream-enterer (SN 22.83).

After all the elders (*thera*), as described above, had gained Awakening, the great elders Bhagu and Kimila also practiced insight meditation (*vipassanā*) and eventually they also became Arahats.

Ven. Devadatta also engaged himself in meditation practices but he was able to achieve only the eight mundane absorption (*jhāna*) attainments with the supernormal powers (*iddhi*) which is possible to those who are yet of the world (*puthujjanika-iddhi*). He was not a noble one but only an ordinary monastic with meditational power.

> [A section here on the Rains Retreats observed by the Buddha has been moved to chapter 35a, where it summarises the 20 retreats up to that time,

and the more steady Rains Retreats after that time, which were all spent in Sāvatthī.]

20a: Teaching Ven. Rāhula

[I have removed a fairly large section of text from here, as it was repeated in mostly the same words in chapter 31 below.]

When the Buddha was residing at Veḷuvana monastery in Rājagaha during the second Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), Rāhula, then a young novice, was residing in Ambalaṭṭhika meditation monastery and living a life of solitude (*viveka*). It was so-called because it was built near a mango sapling at the far edge of Veḷuvana monastery.

> Just as a thorn naturally has a sharp point from the beginning of its growth, young Rāhula practiced physical solitude (*kāya-viveka*) and mental solitude (*citta-viveka*) since he was a youthful novice at the age of seven, without having been exhorted by anyone.

At that time, one cool evening, the Buddha, after rising from fruition attainment (*phala-samāpatti*), went to Ambalaṭṭhika meditation monastery and the novice Rāhula. When Rāhula saw him coming from a distance, he arranged the seating place for him and placed in readiness the water for washing his feet. The Buddha sat on the reserved seat after washing his feet, which was merely as a gracious acceptance of service rendered by a dutiful disciple, because his feet were always free from dust. Novice Rāhula seated himself at a spot free from the six kinds of fault, after making respectful homage to him.

1. The Buddha left a small amount of water in the basin after washing his feet and asked Rāhula: "My son Rāhula, do you see the small amount of water I have left in the basin?" – "Yes, my Lord," replied Rāhula. Then he exhorted him: "Just as the water left in the basin is small, so the good and noble ascetic's life, which should be practised to eradicate the defilements, is hopelessly small in the physical and mental continuum of persons who knowingly speak lies without any sense of shame."

This was the first exhortation given by the Buddha.

2. The Buddha then poured away the little water he had left in the basin, and asked: "Son Rāhula, do you see I have thrown away the small amount of water?" – "Yes, my Lord," replied Rāhula. Then he exhorted him: "Just as I have thrown away the little water in the basin, so persons, who

knowingly speak lies without any sense of shame, throw away the good and noble ascetic's life which eradicates defilements."

Thus the Buddha gave the second exhortation.

3. The Buddha then overturned the basin placing it with its opening downwards, and asked Rāhula: "Do you see that I have overturned the basin?" – "Yes, my Lord," replied Rāhula. Then he exhorted him: "Son Rāhula, just as the basin has been overturned, so persons who knowingly speak lies without any sense of shame have already repudiated the good and noble ascetic's life which eradicates defilements."

Thus the third [494] exhortation was given by the Buddha.

4. Then again the Buddha turned up the overturned basin, but by that time there was not a drop of water in the basin, and he said to Rāhula: "Son Rāhula, do you see this basin is without a single drop of water in it and it is altogether purposeless?" – "Yes, my Lord," replied Rāhula. He then exhorted him: "Like this water basin without a drop of water in it which is altogether purposeless, so too within the shameless persons who knowingly tell lies, all is vain, and there is not a drop of the good and noble ascetic's life which eradicates defilements."

The Buddha, thereafter, proceeded to expound the discourse that follows: "My son Rāhula, take the worldly example of the performances of a warring elephant of a king. It worked with its fore legs as well as with its hind legs in a battlefield; it killed and destroyed all enemies coming within its reach by striking with its fore legs or by kicking with its hind legs. It worked with the fore as well as with the hind part of its body; as the opportunity arose, it smashed the enemy's roofed wooden defence barricades with its fore or hind part of its body.

It also worked with its forehead, preparing to charge or stampede in any direction it gauged and took position moving backwards to muster strength and then stared intently. The very sight of the immense warrior elephant glaring thus struck terror into thousands of enemy troops and they fell into disarray. It also made use of its ears; it struck off the enemy arrows with its ears and made them fall to the ground. It also worked with the pair of its tusks; it gored the enemy elephants, horses, elephanteers, cavalry and infantry with its pair of tusks. It used its tail too; it cut and hacked the enemy with knives and maces tied to its

tail with creeping vines. However, it still protected its trunk by coiling it into its mouth.

Reflecting on these performances of the king's warring elephant, the thought occurred in the mind of its rider: "This warrior elephant of the king, on the battlefield, works with both its pair of fore legs and hind legs, and with the fore part of its body as well as with its hind part. It also works with its forehead, its pair of ears, pair of tusks and also with its tail. However it protects its trunk by thrusting it into its mouth. This warrior elephant has no mind yet to sacrifice its life.

Son Rāhula, at another time, the king's great warrior elephant on the battlefield as stated above worked with its fore legs as well as with its hind legs … it fought also with its tail. With its trunk also it worked, holding aloft iron or wooden maces, and striking and demolishing targets eighteen cubits high.

On seeing this behaviour of the warrior elephant, it occurred to the mind of the rider: "The king's great warrior elephant in battle has worked with its fore legs as well as with its hind legs … it has worked with its tail. It has also worked with its trunk. The king's warrior elephant has given up its life. Now there is nothing the mighty warrior elephant would not do." Son Rāhula, I say unto you, in like manner for the shameless person who knowingly tells lies, there is no act of demerit which he dares not do.

Therefore Rāhula, you should resolve: 'I will not speak lies, even jokingly or even for fun,' and strive to observe the three training rules (*sikkhā*)."

The Buddha had thus profoundly stressed the importance of refraining from telling lies. He went on: "Son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am about to ask you? Answer me as you please. What are the benefits of a mirror?" Rāhula replied: "One can benefit from it by improving one's facial appearance when one sees black moles and pimples reflected in it."

"In like manner, son Rāhula, one's physical, verbal and mental activities should be performed after due observation and consideration with one's eye of wisdom." With this brief preface to serve as a table of contents, the Buddha taught the discourse dealing elaborately on how one should do bodily actions, how one should speak, and how one should exercise the mind with great care and only after careful consideration use one's intellectual faculty.

The full elaboration of the discourse should be read in the text or its translation. But a [495] brief account of it is given below.

When an intention arises to perform a physical, verbal or mental act, before doing any of them, one should deliberate first: "Would my intended physical, verbal or mental action prove to be harmful to myself, to another person or to both? Would they become demeritorious deeds which would cause increased suffering?" If, after deliberation, the intended actions would prove harmful to oneself, to another or both; or would become demeritorious deeds which would cause increased suffering, one should strive to avoid performing such physical, verbal and mental deeds. On the other hand, after deliberation, if these intended actions prove not to be harmful to oneself, to another or to both; or would become meritorious deeds which would promote happiness (*sukha*), then such physical, verbal and mental deeds should be performed.

Likewise, while in the process of performing a physical, verbal or mental deed, one should deliberate thus: "Is what I am doing, saying or thinking harmful to myself, to another or to both? Are they demeritorious deeds causing increased suffering?" If, after deliberation, they are found to be so, one should, with moral aversion, cease performing any such deeds without proceeding any further. On the other hand if, after deliberation, they are found to be not harmful to oneself, to another or to both, but are meritorious deeds furthering the cause of happiness and well-being, they should be pursued with vigour, again and again.

When any physical, verbal or mental act has been performed, one should deliberate as in the foregoing manner thus: "Have my physical, verbal or mental actions been harmful to myself, to another or to both? Have they been demeritorious deeds that have caused increased suffering?" If they proved to be so, with regard to demeritorious physical and verbal deeds, admission must be made before the Buddha or a wise and knowledgeable fellow disciple, frankly, clearly and without reservation that such wrong physical and verbal acts have been committed. Then one must discipline oneself that such wrong deeds will not recur in future.

With regard to demeritorious mental activities that have been committed, one should be weary of such mental acts, be ashamed of them and loath them. One must also exercise restraint and discipline oneself so that such misdeeds will not recur in future.

If, after such retrospection and deliberation, one finds that one's physical, verbal or mental deeds have not harmed oneself or another or both but have contributed to promote happiness and well-being, then night and day, one may dwell in the joy and satisfaction associated with such meritorious deeds and one must further strive in the observance of the three trainings (*sikkhā*).

All the Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and noble disciples (*ariya-sāvaka*) of the past, the future and the present had lived, will live and are living in this manner, deliberating and retrospecting on their physical, verbal and mental deeds and they have purified, will purify and are purifying all their physical, verbal and mental actions.

The Buddha concluded the discourse with these words of exhortation: "Dear son Rāhula, you should bear in mind always to strive for the purity of your bodily actions, verbal actions, and mental actions by way of deliberation and reviewing them and develop the observance of the three trainings."

> Herein a question may arise as to when and where such physical, verbal and mental actions may occur and how they should be purified and absolved.
>
> No time should be lost. The physical and verbal actions, which are done in the morning, should be purified and absolved immediately after the meal, as one sits down at the very place where one would spend the day.
>
> A monastic is required to review any offensive physical and verbal act he has done against anyone from dawn to the time of his arrival at the place where he is sitting to spend the day. If he recollects that he has done anything wrong against someone, either by physical or verbal action, he should make a confession to fellow monastics, by way of informing them or making them clear [496] about his offence. In case he is free from such taints of wrong deeds, he will actually feel great personal joy and satisfaction and should remain in that state of ease and happiness.
>
> As regards mental activities, he should seek to be purified and absolved from them while still going on the alms round, by retrospecting thus: "While going on the alms round today, has there arisen in me, because of visual objects, etc., any mild or stronger form of greed, any offensive anger or any kind of delusion?" If he should find that some such thought has indeed arisen in him, he should resolve: "I will not allow such thoughts of greed, anger or delusion to arise again." If no wrong thoughts have

arisen in him he should feel joy and satisfaction for himself and he should continue to dwell in that serene state of mind.

20b: Ven. Nanda's Story

[This story was originally after that of the Wealthy Man Anāthapiṇḍika, but as it continues the story of the Buddha's relatives, has been moved to here.]

While the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery, his younger brother, Ven. Nanda, being unhappy as a member of the Saṅgha, told his associates: "Friends, I am not happy living the life of a monastic in this Dispensation (*Sāsana*), I am practising the three training rules reluctantly. I am unable to continue observing these noble precepts. I intend to give up the practice and return to a layman's life."

When the Buddha heard the news, he sent for Ven. Nanda and asked: "Have you told your monastic companions: 'Friends, I am not happy living the life of a monastic in this Dispensation (*Sāsana*), I am practising the three training rules reluctantly. I am unable to continue observing these precepts. I intend to give up the practice and return to a layman's life.' " Whereupon, Ven. Nanda admitted: "It is true, my Lord."

The Buddha then asked him again: "Dear younger brother Nanda, why have you been observing the three noble precepts against your will? Why can you not continue to observe these training rules? Why do you want to give up the life of a monastic and revert to that of a layman?"

Ven. Nanda said: "Most exalted elder brother, when I left the royal palace carrying your alms bowl on my shoulder, my sister and betrothed, the Sakyan Princess Janapadakalyāṇī came dashing to the window with her hair half-dressed, and said to me: "Your highness, please come back quickly." I keep thinking of these words of my betrothed ever since I left the palace, and that is the reason why I have to practise the three training rules against my will and pleasure, and I am no longer capable of observing the precepts. I shall now give up the life of a monastic and revert to a layman's life." Nanda gave this simple and honest answer.

The Buddha then, taking along Ven. Nanda, went to the Tāvatiṁsa Realm by his supernormal powers as though lifting him by the arms. On the way, he showed Ven. Nanda an aged female monkey sitting on a burnt stump of a tree, with her ears, nose, tail and other parts of the body, big and small, burnt and tattered. On

arrival at Tāvatiṁsa, he drew Ven. Nanda's notice to 500 celestial maids whose feet were as tender-red as pigeons' feet, who had come to wait upon Sakka and who were standing and worshipping him. He said: "Dear younger brother Nanda, what do you think of this question? Who looks prettier and lovelier when your sister, your fiancee, the Sakyan Princess Janapadakalyāṇī is judged in comparison with the 500 celestial maids whose feet are as tender-red as pigeons' feet?"

> The beautiful delicate feet of these maids, with the colour of pigeons' feet, was the result of their offering of emollient oil for the feet of monastics who were disciples of the Buddha Kassapa.
>
> A question might arise here as to why the Buddha had aroused the sensual passion of Ven. Nanda by showing him the celestial maids when his mind was already affected with lust.
>
> The answer is: "The Buddha had done so with the object of easily removing the defilements from Ven. Nanda's mind." To explain further, a wise and experienced physician, in an attempt to cure a patient suffering from a disease caused by excessive phlegm, bile and wind, usually gives doses of oily medicine to enhance the existing symptoms; that is followed by an emetic to remove the phlegm with ease and speed, through the mouth or by purging with doses of purgative.
>
> In the same way, the greatest of all the physicians, who has no equal [511] to match his skill, in admonishing worthy beings, showed the fair celestial maids to Ven. Nanda, who was affected by the defilements (*kilesa*), in order to let his mental defilements grow and reach the climax preparatory to eradicating it by means of the noble path (*ariya-magga*) which serves as an emetic to throw out the defilements, as a purgative to purge the defilements.

Whereupon, Ven. Nanda gave this reply: "Most exalted elder brother, the old female monkey which you have shown me on the way, with her ears, nose, tail tattered through being burnt, can in no way be considered as lovely and pretty. And likewise, my sister and fiancee, the Sakyan Princess Janapadakalyāṇī, too, when compared to the 500 fair maids of the celestial world, can no longer be regarded as a model of beauty; indeed the 500 celestial maids are far more pretty and lovely then the princess."

Then the Buddha gave him this assurance: "Dear younger brother, Nanda, take delight in the practice of the three training rules; take delight in the holy practice of the precepts which are my instructions. If you actually take delight in the noble practice, I assure you of acquiring the 500 celestial maids whose dainty feet are as tender-red as pigeons' feet."

When the Buddha gave such an assurance, Ven. Nanda responded: "Most exalted elder brother, if you assure me of the 500 fair maids whose feet are as tender-red as pigeons' feet, I shall undertake to observe the three noble training rules of the Dispensation (*Sāsana*) with delight."

> It might be asked here why the Buddha had assured Nanda of the 500 fair maids for the gratification of sensual pleasure, which is a mode of ignoble living (*abrahma-cariya-vāsa*) while he wanted Nanda to observe the three noble practices.
>
> The answer is: Ven. Nanda's carnal attachment to Princess Janapadakalyāṇī was intense; and the Buddha had therefore diverted his attention to the fair celestial maids as a measure of temporary relief before he could relieve him totally of the prime trouble by means of the noble path (*ariya-magga*); hence the use of the ploy of ignoble living.

Then the Buddha, together with Ven. Nanda, vanished from Tāvatiṁsa and appeared in the Jetavana monastery instantaneously. When Ven. Nanda took leave of him and had gone to his chamber to spend the time, the Buddha explained all that had transpired to the monastics who assembled to listen to his teaching.

Having informed the assembled monastics of what had happened, the Buddha gave the following instructions to them: "Go ye now, monastics, to rebuke Ven. Nanda, by calling out to him: "You big servant who wants something for his service. You are a great buyer who buys something at a fixed price in exchange."

In giving these instructions the Buddha was making use of a practical method employed in the world. A skilful person extracts an old nail, left firmly fixed to a post or a plank, by hitting it with another nail but smaller to cause it to vibrate before it could be loosened by hand and removed. In the same way, Ven. Nanda's intense attachment, deeply rooted in the person of Princess Janapadakalyāṇī, was first given a loosening jolt and then removed by the temporary diversion to the more attractive celestial maids. Then, in order to do

away with the new object of sense-pleasure and put Ven. Nanda back on the path of noble practice, the Buddha gave the above instructions to the assembled monastics.

In obedience to the Buddha's instructions, these monastics went about spreading the news that the son of step-mother Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī, and younger brother of the Buddha, Ven. Nanda, had been observing the noble precepts out of desire for the 500 celestial maids, and that the Buddha had also assured him of acquiring the 500 celestial maids whose feet are as tender-red as pigeons' feet. On hearing this, Ven. Nanda's friends went and heaped reproaches on him. [512]

"It is being said by the people: 'Ven. Nanda is a big servant; Ven. Nanda is a great buyer.' He has been observing the precepts because he desires the 500 fair maids of the Deva realm; and the Buddha has also assured him of getting the 500 maids whose feet are as tender-red as pigeons' feet."

Being called "big servant" and "great buyer" by his monastic associates, Ven. Nanda was filled with unbearable shame and disgust. He retired to a secluded place and strove with mindful and earnest diligence in the observance of the monastic training rules with his mind inclined towards Nibbāna and soon drained off all the pollutants (*āsava*), and attained full-fledged Awakening. He became recognised as one of the 80 great disciples (*asīti-mahā-sāvaka*).

Whereupon an Arahat Brahma approached the Buddha at night and, standing at a suitable distance, joyfully informed him of the Ven. Nanda's attainment of Awakening. Immediately after hearing the tidings, the Buddha, on contemplating: "How fares he?" became aware of Ven. Nanda's attainment of Awakening through his omniscience.

As stated above, because of reproaches and jeers heaped upon him by his associates, Ven. Nanda developed a sense of spiritual urgency through shame and remorse: "Having entered the Dispensation with a well-expounded teaching and disciplinary rules (*Dhamma-Vinaya*), I have held the Buddha responsible for assuring me of getting the 500 celestial maids; as such I have committed a grave misdeed." Accordingly, he strove hard relentlessly until he became an Arahat.

He then considered that it would be well to go to the Buddha and relieve him from the responsibility of the assurance he had made. He therefore approached the Buddha early the following morning and made the following address: "Most exalted elder brother, you have assured me of the hands of 500 celestial maids

with feet as tender-red as pigeons' feet. Most exalted elder brother, I now absolve you from that responsibility."

The Buddha said in reply: "Dear younger brother, Nanda, I have already known, by judging the state of your mind analytically with my own, that you have become an Arahat. An Arahat Brahma also informed me earlier of your attainment to the exalted state of an Arahat. I have been absolved from that responsibility from the very instant your mind became free of the pollutants (*āsava*)."

The Realised One was greatly pleased and made the following utterance of exultation (Ud 3.2):

> *Yassa nittiṇṇo paṅko, maddito kāma-kaṇṭako,*
> *mohakkhayaṁ anuppatto, sukha-dukkhesu na vedhatī sa bhikkhu.*
>
> A noble one (*ariya*) has crossed the slough of wrong view, in other words, the slough of Saṁsāra, by way of the bridge of the noble path to the shore of Nibbāna. The thorn of sensual passion that pierced the heart of all sentient beings has been crushed to dust with the cudgel of wisdom. Such a noble person has traversed the fourfold path (*magga*) and reached Nibbāna, attaining Awakening, the point of the cessation of delusion (*moha*). That Arahat monk, who has thus destroyed the darkness of the defilements, is no longer affected by joy or sorrow. He remains unshaken and indifferent to worldly vicissitudes.

Soon afterwards, a number of monastics asked Ven. Nanda: "Friend Nanda, you said in the past that you were not happy within the Dispensation (*Sāsana*) as a monastic; what is the state of your mind these days?" Ven. Nanda replied: "Friends, at present, I have no mind at all to revert to the life of a layman."

On hearing these words of Nanda, monastics rebuked him, saying, [513] "Ven. Nanda is telling lies; he is talking about the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*). He had quite recently been saying that he was not happy in this Dispensation (*Sāsana*) and now he is saying that he has no mind at all to revert to the life of a layman."

They then went to report the matter to the Buddha, who explained to them: "Monastics, in the immediate past, Nanda's corporeality was just like a badly roofed house, but now, it is like a house which is properly roofed. True, this Ven.

Nanda strove for the highest level of attainment of a monastic after he had seen the fair maids of the world of the Devas, with the result that he has now reached that highest level of attainment and is an Arahat."

The Buddha then gave a discourse by reciting the following two verses (Dhp 13-14):

> *Yathā agāraṁ ducchannaṁ, vuṭṭhī samati-vijjhati,*
> *evaṁ abhāvitaṁ cittaṁ, rāgo samati-vijjhati.*
>
> Monastics, just as rain-water can penetrate and flood a badly roofed house, so the mind, which has not been trained through tranquillity and insight meditation, is liable to be inundated with defilements, that is, to be flooded with the rain waters of lust, malice, delusion, conceit, etc.
>
> *Yathā agāraṁ succhannaṁ, vuḍḍhī na samati-vijjhati,*
> *evaṁ subhāvitaṁ cittaṁ, rāgo na samati-vijjhati.*
>
> Monastics, just as rain-water cannot penetrate and flood a properly roofed house, so the mind, which has been trained through tranquillity and insight meditation, cannot be inundated with defilements, that is, cannot be flooded with the rain waters of lust, malice, delusion and conceit, etc.

By the end of this discourse, a large number of monastics attained the fruition stage of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*). Thus this discourse was of great benefit to many persons.

The Story of Kappaṭa

Some time after, the monastics were gathered at the Assembly Hall for discussion of the Dhamma and speaking in praise of the Buddha thus: "Friends, Buddhas are really great and worthy of praise with the snapping of fingers. Even Ven. Nanda, who had almost lost interest in the life of a monastic, has been disciplined by employing the fair Deva maids as an allurement."

At that moment, the Buddha entered the hall and asked: "Monastics, what kind of discussion are you engaged in as I came into the hall?" – "We are assembled here, discussing the marvellous way in which the Buddha has disciplined Ven. Nanda."

Whereupon the Buddha said: "Monastics, it is not only on this occasion that I have exhorted Ven. Nanda, by employing a female as an enticement, I also won

him over by using the same tactic in the past," and at the request of the monastics, he expounded the Birth Story about Kappaṭa (*Kappaṭa-jātaka*) that follows (from DhpA 1.9, *Nandatthera-vatthu*):

"Monastics, once upon a time, there was a trader by the name of Kappaṭa in the city of Bārāṇasī during the reign of King Brahmadatta. He had a donkey that could carry a load weighing one third of a cart load and could travel seven leagues in a day.

Once, he went to the city of Takkasilā accompanying a caravan of merchants [514] carrying merchandise for sale. He set his donkey free to seek for pasture and graze while his goods were being disposed of. As the donkey wandered around grazing on the soft ground near the palace moat, he espied a female donkey and approached her. He eventually became engaged in conversation with the female donkey and the two exchanged words of love:

Female: Where do you come from?

Male: I come from Bārāṇasī.

Female: On what business have you come?

Male: I have come for trading purposes.

Female: What is the weight of the goods that you have to carry?

Male: I have to carry goods weighing one third of a cart load.

Female: How many leagues have you got to cover carrying such a load in a day?

Male: I have to cover seven leagues a day.

Female: Have you someone to look after you wherever you go?

Male: No, I haven't anybody.

Female: It's a pity you have to go about unattended. You must be undergoing great hardships, aren't you?

She spoke with seductive insinuations to win his heart. On hearing these seductive words from the female donkey, the male donkey lost interest in his work and became listless.

After disposing of his merchandise, the trader, Kappaṭa, went to his donkey and said: "Come, dear son, let's be off." The animal replied: "You may go by

yourself, I cannot follow." When the trader had made several vain attempts to persuade the donkey to obey him, he decided to use threats to make him obey:

Patodaṁ te karissāmi, sāḷasaṅguli-kaṇṭakaṁ,
sañchindissāmi te kāyaṁ, evaṁ jānāhi gadrabha.

You mean and wicked donkey, I shall have to goad and beat you with a sixteen-inch long cane, tipped with iron spikes. I shall have to lacerate your body until it is broken and torn into tatters. Take heed of that.

When the donkey heard this threat, he retorted by saying: "If that should be the case I too, have to mind as to how I should retaliate."

Patodaṁ me karissasi, soḷasaṅguli-kaṇṭakaṁ,
purato patiṭṭhahitvāna, uddharitvāna pacchato,
dantaṁ te pātayissāmi, evaṁ jānāhi Kappaṭa.

O merchant Kappaṭa, if you will actually goad and beat me with a sixteen-inch long cane, tipped with iron spikes, I shall stand firmly on my forelegs and raising my hindlegs, kick you with all my strength to break and knock out your teeth. You might as well know that.

When the trader Kappaṭa heard this bold and aggressive retort of the donkey, he wondered what caused it, and looking round, he saw a maiden donkey nearby. Then he thought to himself: "This maiden donkey must have taught him to speak like this. It would be wise to allure him away and tell him: 'My son, I will get you such a maiden donkey.' " [515]

Catuppadiṁ saṅkha-mukhiṁ, nāriṁ sabbaṅga-sobhiniṁ,
bhariyaṁ te ānayissāmi, evaṁ jānāhi gadrabha.

My big son, I will find a young, beautiful, well-formed maiden donkey with a face as fair as a conch-shell to be your wife soon after our arrival back at Bārāṇasī. My son, you can take my word for it.

The donkey was very pleased with the encouraging words of his master and replied:

Catuppadiṁ saṅkha-mukhiṁ, nāriṁ sabbaṅga-sobhiniṁ,
bhariyaṁ me ānayissasi, evaṁ jānāhi Kappaṭa,
Kappaṭa bhiyyo gamissāmi, yojanāni catuddasa.

> My benefactor and master, Kappaṭa, if it is really true that a beautiful well-formed youthful maiden donkey with a face as fair as a conch-shell will be obtained for me soon after we have returned to Bārāṇasī, I, your good son, am prepared to work with redoubled zeal, breaking a journey of fourteen leagues a day. You can take my word for it.

Trader Kappaṭa then took the donkey with him to his home town of Bārāṇasī. A few days after their arrival, the donkey went to Kappaṭa and asked him to fulfil his promise: "My benefactor and master, Kappaṭa, have you not promised me a beautiful, well-formed, youthful, maiden donkey as my wife?" Then trader Kappaṭa replied: "Yes, it is true I have said so; I will not fail to fulfil my promise. I will find you a beautiful, well-formed, youthful, maiden donkey; but I will be able to provide food for you only, not for your wife. It is up to you to think if the food that I offer you will or will not be sufficient for both of you. And another thing, I wish to emphasise is that, in due time, you will have offspring to look after, and here again, it is for you to consider whether the food which I provide you will be sufficient for your growing family. It is not my responsibility. Think about it, my son." As the trader Kappaṭa was giving this sound advice, the donkey's attachment to the female donkey was severed.

Recounting the Birth Story about Kappaṭa (*Kappaṭa-jātaka*) in his discourse, the Buddha revealed: "Monastics, the Sakyan Princess Janapadakalyāṇī then was the maiden donkey, Ven. Nanda then was the donkey, and I was then the trader Kappaṭa. I had thus, at a time long past, also disciplined Ven. Nanda with the lure of a female," and he brought the discourse to a conclusion.

20c: The Wealthy Man Anāthapiṇḍika

How Anāthapiṇḍika met the Buddha

The Buddha granted permission to monastics to make use of the monastery as a requisite, in compliance with the request by the wealthy man of Rājagaha,[196] who made it through the monastics while he was residing there during the second Rains Retreat.

The wealthy man of Rājagaha and the wealthy man, Anāthapiṇḍika of Sāvatthī, were brothers-in-law because they married each other's sister. On the occasions when the wealthy man of Rājagaha found the prices of goods in Rājagaha were far below those currently at Sāvatthī, he would buy the goods and go to Sāvatthī with 500 carts loaded with such goods for sale. One league before his arrival at Sāvatthī, he would send intimation of his arrival to Anāthapiṇḍika who would then arrange a grand reception for his brother-in-law, and the two would enter the city together in the same carriage. If the goods found a ready market in Sāvatthī, the rich man of Rājagaha disposed of them at once. In case they did not find a ready market, he left them in the house of his sister and went back. The wealthy man, Anāthapiṇḍika, also did likewise at Rājagaha.

At the time when the Buddha was observing his second Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in Rājagaha, the wealthy man, Anāthapiṇḍika of Sāvatthī, had 500 carts loaded with products at Sāvatthī and left for Rājagaha. He sent a written intimation of his arrival to the wealthy man of Rājagaha from a distance of one league, as on the many previous occasions.

The wealthy man of Rājagaha could not, however, give any heed to his intimation for he had just returned from the remote monastery of Sītavana where he had listened to a discourse by the Buddha and having invited him and his Saṅgha to partake of alms food the following day, he was busily engaged with the work, making the necessary arrangements for the reception and provision of food.

Anāthapiṇḍika approached the city thinking all the way that a grand reception would await his arrival as on previous occasions, but he found no reception,

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[196] [His name is not given in the sources].

even on his reaching the door of the house of the rich man of Rājagaha. On entering the house, there was not much of an effusive speech of welcome on the part of his host, but only: "Wealthy man of Sāvatthī, how are your children? Are they in good health? I hope you have had an easy and comfortable journey." And he kept himself busy with the work in hand.

As stated above, the wealthy man of Rājagaha could only extend these few words of welcome to Anāthapiṇḍika. He was giving priority to the ceremonial functions and he went on giving instructions to his men: "Mind that you get up early on the morrow and get busy with boiling the broth, cooking rice and curry, and preparing mixed salad dishes, all replete and in time for the Buddha and his Saṅgha."

It crossed the mind of Anāthapiṇḍika: "The wealthy man of Rājagaha used to leave aside all other business and talk with me enthusiastically on previous occasions, but now he is full of anxiety about holding a grand feast for one reason or the other. Is he doing all this with his servants to bring someone's daughter here to get married to his son (*āvāha*) or [497] give away his daughter in marriage to some one's son (*vivāha*) or else, has he invited King Bimbisāra and his retinue of soldiers to a feast tomorrow?"

When everything had been arranged, the wealthy man of Rājagaha came to Anāthapiṇḍika and engaged himself in conversation with him enthusiastically as ever before. Whereupon, Anāthapiṇḍika asked him: "Wealthy man, you used to leave aside cares of business and speak with me joyfully on all previous occasions. But now you seem to be anxious about holding a food-offering ceremony, giving priority to making arrangements with your men in preparation for the ceremony to be held tomorrow. Is it for a ceremony to bring someone's daughter to your house for marriage to your son, or a ceremony to give away your daughter in marriage to someone else's son? Are you preparing for a great alms giving ceremony, or have you invited King Bimbisāra and his retinue of soldiers to a feast tomorrow?"

The wealthy man of Rājagaha replied: "Wealthy man, I will not be holding ceremonies to give or take in marraige. Nor have I invited King Bimbisāra and his retinue to a feast. I have been making the necessary arrangements for a grand alms giving ceremony. I have invited the Buddha and his Saṅgha so I can do a meritorious deed tomorrow."

When Anāthapiṇḍika heard the word 'Buddha' uttered enthusiastically by the wealthy man of Rājagaha, his entire body was pervaded throughout with the five grades of joyful satisfaction (*pīti*): a slight sense of interest (*khuddaka-pīti*), momentary joy (*khaṇika-pīti*), an absorbing interest with a flood of joy (*okkantika-pīti*), interest amounting to a thrilling point (*ubbega-pīti*) and fully developed, intensive rapture or zest suffusing the whole body and mind (*pharaṇa-pīti*).

Anāthapiṇḍika experienced this fivefold rapturous joy which overwhelmed him from head to toe and again from toe to head; they spread from the side of his body to the middle and from the middle to the sides. Feeling these five kinds of ecstasy without intermission, he asked the wealthy man of Rājagaha: "Wealthy man, did you say 'Buddha'?" Thrice he asked and thrice he received the same reply: "Yes, I did say 'Buddha'."

Anāthapiṇḍika then inquired about the Buddha: "In this world, it is rare indeed even to hear the word 'Buddha'. Would it be possible for me now to go and pay homage to the Buddha, the Arahat, the Perfectly-Self Awakened?"

The wealthy man of Rājagaha deliberated: "It is as difficult to approach the Buddha as it is to get close to a venomous snake. The Buddha's remote monastery where he is residing is close to the cemetery and it would be impossible for him to go there late in the evening."

He therefore made this reply: "Wealthy man, there is no time now for you to go and pay homage to the Realised One, the Arahat, the Perfectly Self-Awakened. You will be able to go and pay homage to the Realised One only early tomorrow morning."

Upon hearing this, Anāthapiṇḍika thought to himself: "I shall be able to pay homage to the Buddha only early in the following morning," and he went to sleep with no other thought or object in mind except that of the Buddha. Anāthapiṇḍika was no longer interested in the merchandise that he had brought and the attendants at his service from the moment he heard the word 'Buddha'. Forgoing his dinner, he went up to the topmost chamber of the seven-storey mansion and laid himself down on a well-laid out and decorated bed and fell asleep, muttering: 'Buddha, Buddha.'

When the first watch of the night was over, Anāthapiṇḍika got up to contemplate the attributes of the Buddha time and again. His sense of deep

devotion towards him became exceedingly great (*balava-saddhā*), so much so that his body emitted a radiance through joy (*pīti*). It was as if 1,000 oil lamps were lit or the sun or the full moon rose in the sky, thereby dispelling the darkness of the night. He then thought to himself: "I have been so forgetful of the passing of time. Even the sun has risen," thus he murmured and got up. But [498] when he saw the moon still in the sky, he realised that two more watches of the night had yet to pass before dawn. So he lay down on his bed once again.

Thus he passed the two watches of the night, getting up at the end of each watch. At the close of the last watch, immediately before dawn, he walked along the balcony till he reached the main entrance door. He found the entrance door of the seven storey mansion already open. He went down the seven storeys and walked along the main street in the city.

As he went near the city gate, the guardian Devas, who were noble ones (*ariya*), kept the gate open in advance. They considered: "This wealthy man has come with the intention of paying homage to the Buddha and serving him. This rich man on his worshipping the Buddha for the first time will be established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*), and surpassing all others will become the noblest of disciples in rendering service to the Three Treasures of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. He will build a magnificent, matchless monastery, the doors of which he will keep open to all the noble Saṅgha from the four directions of the world. It would not be proper to close the door against him."

As Anāthapiṇḍika went out of the city, the radiance emitting from his body disappeared and darkness reigned, with the result was that fear and trembling arose in him and the hair of his body stood on end. Therefore, he felt like retreating even from that very spot.

> Rājagaha was a cosmopolitan city with a population of 180 million: 90 million within the city and 90 million without. The city gates were closed after dusk and the bodies of those who died at unearthly hours during the night were thrown over the walls around the gate. Blinded by the darkness, Anāthapiṇḍika accidentally trod on a freshly discarded corpse and tripped against another corpse with his insteps. This caused the flies on the decomposed bodies to rise with a roar and buzz about him and the foul smell from the dead bodies rushed into his nose. As a result, his devotional faith towards the Buddha began to weaken which resulted in the disappearance of the radiance from his body which was emitted because of

> the rapturous joy he felt within. Darkness fell. Fear and trembling arose and his hairs stood on end. Therefore he felt like retreating from that place.

A celestial Yakkha, intending to make the wealthy man exert himself to continue his journey, approached Anāthapiṇḍika without making himself visible and addressed him with a voice as sweet as the tinkle of a small golden bell.

> *Sataṁ hatthī sataṁ assā, sataṁ assatarī-rathā,*
> *sataṁ kaññā-sahassāni, āmukka-maṇi-kuṇḍalā,*
> *ekassa pada-vīti-hārassa, kalaṁ nāgghanti soḷasiṁ.*
>
> O wealthy man of great fame, 100,000 royal elephants worthy of kings, 100,000 royal horses worthy of kings, 100,000 royal chariots drawn by mules (*assatara*), and 100,000 royal maidens bedecked with priceless jewels are not worth a 256th part of the good volition (*cetanā*) behind each step that takes you on your way to the monastery to pay homage to the Realised One, to listen to a discourse, and to render service to the Saṅgha. Wealthy man, Anāthapiṇḍika, go forward. Proceed on your way. Only your going ahead will be noble and worthy of praise. Your retreat will be ignoble and not worthy of praise.

On hearing this Anāthapiṇḍika considered: "I thought I was all alone, but I now find there are some companions with me. Why should I be afraid?" He became bold and courageous. His powerful devotional faith in Buddha began to strengthen once again. Therefore darkness disappeared, and there was light, and fear and trembling were dispelled. [499]

He was on the road once again, on the fearful journey through the cemetery, with dead bodies in varying states of decomposition scattered all over. The voices of domestic dogs and jackals disturbed his mind with the result that light disappeared and darkness fell as on the previous occasion. Here again, the celestial Yakkha, Sīvaka, came to his aid and he went along the road again.

When for the third time, as on the previous occasions, he encountered the disheartening circumstances of the disappearance of light, Sīvaka, by making him nurture his devotional faith in the Buddha again and again, helped him overcome all danger. Continuing on his journey, he eventually arrived at the forest grove of Sītavana. It was about daybreak and the Buddha was walking up and down the passage in the open space.

As Anāthapiṇḍika was walking, an idea crossed his mind: "In this world, Purāṇa Kassapa and the other sectarian teachers have declared themselves Awakened Buddhas. This being so, how can I know whether the Buddha is truly a Self-Awakened One?" Then again in his mind the thought occurred: "All the people know me as Anāthapiṇḍika for my generosity in feeding the destitute. But the name given to me by my parents is Sudatta, which no one knows except myself. If the Buddha is truly a Self-Awakened One, he will call me by the name given by my parents, Sudatta."

On seeing Anāthapiṇḍika from a distance, the Buddha came down from the passageway and sat on the seat reserved for him. As Anāthapiṇḍika came nearer to him, having read his mind, he addressed him: "Come, dear Sudatta." Anāthapiṇḍika was rejoiced when he heard the Buddha calling him by the name given by his parents.

He approached him and paid homage, prostrating himself at the feet of the Buddha and addressed the Fortunate One: "Most exalted Fortunate One, have you enjoyed a sound sleep?" the Buddha said in reply (SN 10.8):

> *Sabbadā ve sukhaṁ seti, brāhmaṇo parinibbuto,*
> *yo na limpati kāmesu, sīti-bhūto nirūpadhi.*
>
> Wealthy man Anāthapiṇḍika, the Arahat, who is not besmeared with desire for sensual pleasures, being free from burning passions, is calm and serene. He is also free from the three grounds for rebirth (*upadhi*): defilements (*kilesa*), accumulated deeds (*abhisaṅkhāra*) and sensual passion (*kāma-guṇa*). Having expelled all evil, and all defilements having been eradicated, all sorrow has ended and as such that Arahat, at all times, night and day, truly sleeps and lives in ease of mind and body.
>
> *Sabbā āsattiyo chetvā, vineyya hadaye daraṁ,*
> *upasanto sukhaṁ seti, santiṁ pappuyya cetasā.*
>
> Wealthy man Anāthapiṇḍika the Arahat, who has cut off the five sensual pleasures by means of the fourfold Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*), and extinguished the flames of the defilements, has frequently entered the tranquil state of Nibbāna by way of the attainment of the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala-samāpatti*). Having extinguished the blazing fire of the defilements, he sleeps and lives with ease and tranquillity.

Having thus explained how he lives with ease and comfort in all the four postures of the body, the Buddha taught Anāthapiṇḍika the course of moral practice leading to the paths and fruitions: 1) Generosity (*dāna-kathā*), 2) morality (*sīla-kathā*), 3) heaven (*sagga-kathā*), 4) path (*magga-kathā*), the disadvantages of senuality (*kamānaṁ ādinavaṁ*), and the advantages of renunication (*nekkhamma-ānisaṁsa-kathā*) in the correct sequence. When he knew that the mind of Anāthapiṇḍika had become adaptable, soft, and free from hindrances, eager, gladdened, purified and pellucid, he taught the Dhamma which was originally discovered by him (*sāmukkaṁsikā Dhamma-desanā*), the four noble truths. Eventually, Anāthapiṇḍika became established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). [500]

Then Anāthapiṇḍika addressed the Buddha thus: "So delightful is it! Exalted Buddha! So delightful is it! Exalted Buddha! As though what is placed downwards has been turned up, so goes a worldly simile, as though what is covered has been disclosed, as a man losing his way has been guided in the right direction, as a lamp that has been lighted in the dark with the thought: 'Those who have eyes may see the various shapes of things,' so the Buddha has clearly taught me the Dhamma in manifold ways. Exalted Buddha! I recognize and approach the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha for refuge and shelter. May the exalted Buddha, take me as a devotee with the threefold refuge from today onwards, until the end of my life.

Having thus taken refuge in the Three Treasures, the wealthy man Anāthapiṇḍika extended an invitation to partake of a meal, saying: "Exalted Buddha, in order that I may gain merit and have delight, may you accept my offering of a meal together with the Saṅgha tomorrow morning."

The Buddha remained silent, signifying his acceptance of the invitation to the next morning meal. Whereupon, Anāthapiṇḍika joyously rose from his seat and, after paying respects to the Buddha by circumambulating him clockwise, he left for the residence of his host, the wealthy man of Rājagaha.

The news of the Buddha's acceptance of Anāthapiṇḍika's invitation to a meal instantly spread all over the city. The wealthy man of Rājagaha, on hearing the news, offered to render service, saying: "I have heard the news that you have invited the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha to a meal tomorrow in order to gain merit. You happen to be a visitor here; may I offer you assistance with

provisions and payment for services?" Anāthapiṇḍika refused the offer saying that he would be able to manage the affair with what was in his own possession.

Members of the merchants' association of Rājagaha also came forward to help by way of supplying provision and payment of services in the same way as the wealthy man of Rājagaha. Their offer was also not accepted in like manner.

King Bimbisāra also offered to render help in the same way as the others, and his request was also refused in the same way: "Your majesty, I need no such help. I should be able to hold the feast with what I have."

On the following day, Anāthapiṇḍika held the food-offering ceremony at the residence of his brother-in-law, the wealthy man of Rājagaha, serving food of great worth with delicacies. He then sat at a suitable spot and respectfully presented an invitation to come to his home town of Sāvatthī: "Most exalted Buddha, may I humbly request you? Please keep the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in our town of Sāvatthī, together with all your monastics." The Buddha gave the reply: "Devotee Anāthapiṇḍika, Fully Self-Awakened Buddhas are pleased to reside in secluded places." Anāthapiṇḍika replied: "Exalted Buddha who always speaks good words (*Gracious One*), your devotee understands that full well, your devotee understands that full well." Then after speaking words of Dhamma to Anāthapiṇḍika, the Buddha returned to the monastery.

At that time, Anāthapiṇḍika was a person who had a great many friends, and his word was respected by many. He disposed of his merchandise and hastily returned to Sāvatthī. On his way home, he urged the inhabitants at the intermediate stations: "Plant gardens, build shelters for rest and lodging. Build monasteries and keep reserves of provisions for alms giving. A Buddha has blossomed forth in the world. That Buddha will be coming to your place at my request."

In response to Anāthapiṇḍika's exhortation, all his wealthy associates and childhood friends, at the intermediate stations, built shelters, parks and gardens, kept provisions for alms giving at their own expense without accepting any assistance from him, while the [501] needy ones took the responsibility of building shelters and monasteries and set up reserve provisions for alms giving with the money that they received from him.

Anāthapiṇḍika contributed 100,000 in cash and in kind, such as timber and construction materials, to the value of 100,000 to accomplish the project of

constructing a shelter and a garden at each league along the route between Rājagaha and Sāvatthī, a distance of 45 leagues. He returned to his home town of Sāvatthī after completion of the work.

The Purchase of the Jetavana

On arrival at Sāvatthī, Anāthapiṇḍika searched the surrounding localities for a suitable site for a monastery; a site which must meet the following five conditions: 1) not too far from the city; 2) not too near the city; 3) communicable by roads; 4) of easy access for everybody at any required time; and 5) free from noise of the city, village and people clamouring for the five sense objects. He found that Prince Jeta's garden land met the said conditions and so he went to the prince and offered to buy it: "Your Highness, I wish you would sell me your garden at a certain agreed price." Prince Jeta replied: "Wealthy man, I cannot give you my garden even if you were to lay gold coins edge to edge over it."

> Note that if Prince Jeta had said: "I cannot sell my garden," it would not be tantamount to fixation of a price. But he happened to say: "I cannot give you my garden even if you were to lay gold coins edge to edge over it." That was tantamount not only to a fixation of a price but also to quoting an exorbitant price for it.

Anāthapiṇḍika took advantage of Prince Jeta's commitment in his speech and said: "Your highness, you have quoted terms for the sale of your garden." Prince Jeta's denied it saying: "I have not said a word about the sale of my garden."

Anāthapiṇḍika contended that the prince had to sell his garden while the prince argued that he had never said a word about the sale of the garden and the two finally agreed to secure the judgment of a court of law. The ministers who were judges passed the judgment: "Your highness, because your highness happened to have quoted an exorbitant price with the words: 'Even if gold coins were laid edge to edge' you have committed yourself to negotiations for the sale of your garden."

Having thus won the case at the court of law, Anāthapiṇḍika ordered cartloads of gold coins taken out and transported and laid them edge to edge over the surface of Prince Jeta's garden. For the spaces which could not be laid over with gold coins such as those occupied by trees and ponds, he had the dimensions of

their girth or areas measured and placed the gold coins, edge to edge, over equivalent areas at other places. In this way, the rich man, Anāthapiṇḍika, spent 180 million gold coins, which he had put aside for emergency use, in buying the site for the monastery.

With the first batch of cartloads of gold coins, it was found that there were enough gold coins to cover much of the garden-land when placed edge to edge except for a small area earmarked for the construction of an archway. Anāthapiṇḍika ordered his men: "Men, go and bring more cartloads of gold to cover this space for the archway constructions."

On seeing that Anāthapiṇḍika's face grew brighter and brighter as he went on giving away his enormous amount of wealth, the prince reflected: "The abandoning of immense wealth in gold coins by the wealthy man for a good cause such as this must be a noble act of generosity." With this thought, he requested Anāthapiṇḍika: "Enough, enough! Please do not lay any more coins on that plot. Please be so good as to leave it for me to donate an archway for the monastery." Anāthapiṇḍika thought to himself: "This Prince Jeta is a famous person, well known to all. Showing devotional faith in the teaching of the Buddha by such a famous personage will be greatly beneficial." So he left the required plot to the [502] prince who proceeded to build an archway with tiered roofs for the monastery.

The Construction of Jetavana

Having bought the garden of Prince Jeta at a cost of 180 million gold coins, Anāthapiṇḍika spent another 180 million to create a magnificent monastery on it. First he had unwanted trees felled, leaving the desirable ones for the sake of shade and natural beauty. The perfumed chamber (*gandha-kuṭi*) for the accommodation of the Buddha was surrounded by dwellings for monastics with stately seven-tiered archways constructed at a selected place. Assembly halls with terraced roofs for the Saṅgha, small buildings to store allowable articles, lavatories, passage ways with roofing, water wells complete with roofs over them, bath rooms for both cold and sweat baths in separate buildings, square water tanks and pavilions were constructed within the sacred precincts of the monastery, leaving nothing which would be needed.

The location of the Jetavana monastery was not only the site of the monastery of this Gotama Buddha alone; it was also the location of the monasteries of the preceding Buddhas, such as Buddha Kassapa, Koṇāgamana, etc., as related below:

1. During the time of Buddha Vipassī, a wealthy man, named Punabbasumitta, bought a piece of land at the very site of this Jetavana monastery, then measuring one league, by paying with golden bricks placed edge to edge on it. Constructing a huge monastery on it, he donated it to the Saṅgha.

2. During the time of Buddha Sikhī, a wealthy man, Sirivaḍḍha, bought a piece of land at the same site by paying, according to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary, with the golden teeth of ploughs placed tip to tip; or with golden staffs placed end to end according to the Vinaya commentary, and donated it, measuring three miles, after constructing monasteries on it, to the Saṅgha.

3. During the time of Buddha Vessabhū, a wealthy man, Sotthika, bought a piece of land at the same site by paying with golden blocks moulded into the shape of elephant legs according to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary; or the golden teeth of ploughs according to the Vinaya commentary, placed end to end and donated it together with all the buildings on it, to the Saṅgha. The plot measured half a league or two miles.

4. During the time of Buddha Kakusandha, a wealthy man, Accuta, bought a piece of land in the same site, then measuring one mile, by paying with gold bricks according to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary; or gold blocks made into the shape of elephant legs according to the Vinaya commentary, placed end to end all over the land and donated it to the Saṅgha together with all the buildings on it.

5. During the time of Buddha Koṇāgamuna, a wealthy man, Ugga, bought a piece of land in the same site by paying with golden tortoises according to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary; or golden bricks according to the Vinaya commentary, placed end to end on the land measuring half a mile and donated it together with all the buildings constructed on it, to the Saṅgha.

6. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, a wealthy man, Sumaṅgala, bought a piece of land in the same site by paying with gold blocks according to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary; or golden tortoises according to the Vinaya commentary, placed edge to edge all over the land, then measuring two units of land measure, and donated it together with the monasteries constructed on it, to the Saṅgha.

7. Now in the time of our Buddha Gotama, the wealthy man Sudatta, also known as Anāthapiṇḍika, bought a piece of land in the same site, measuring eight units by paying with gold coins placed edge to edge on it and after building the Jetavana monastery donated it to the Saṅgha.

Reflecting seriously on the varying extent of land and the price paid for the site of the [503] monastery at the time of the seven Buddhas, one should arouse in oneself the sense of spiritual urgency that "all worldly attainments of success and prosperity are subject to deterioration," and thus now is the appropriate time for strenuous effort to free oneself from attachment to these worldly attainments through developing weariness and disenchantment towards them.

Buddha's Journey to Sāvatthī

When the delightful and pleasant Jetavana monastery had been constructed at a cost of 180 million gold coins, on an enchanted plot costing another 180 million gold coins, Anāthapiṇḍika sent a special messenger to the Buddha with his respectful invitation. The Buddha, upon receipt of the invitation through the messenger, decided to proceed to Sāvatthī, partly because he foresaw that Sāvatthī would become one of his residences for the greater part of his life, and partly because it would also serve as a favourable "victory ground" for him to save humans, Devas and Brahmas by the millions from the slough of suffering. With that end in view, he left Veḷuvana monastery in Rājagaha for Sāvatthī, accompanied by his Saṅgha, stopping one night at the shelters at each station, located at intervals of one league along the route, as arranged by Anāthapiṇḍika in advance.

When the Buddha arrived at Vesālī on the way to Sāvatthī, he resided at the Kūṭāgāra monastery with terraced roofing in the Great Wood. At that time, he laid down the rule for the appointment of a monk, with the consent of the

community (*kamma-vācā*) to take charge of the repairs (*navakamma*) necessary for monastic dwellings donated by the public.

Then, after leaving Vesālī and proceeding towards Sāvatthī, pupils of the Group-of-Six monks (*Chabbaggī*), having gone along ahead of the Saṅgha with the Buddha at its head, took possession of the good dwelling places, the good sleeping places, saying: "This will be for our preceptors, this will be for our teachers."

Whenever the Buddha went on a journey accompanied by the Saṅgha, Ven. Sāriputta, though he could selfishly claim the privilege of staying close to the Buddha as the chief disciple at the right-hand, he would never do so and leave other monks to look after themselves, but would follow at the tail end of the procession, personally caring and seeing to the comfort of the aged and sick monks.

Such being the case, on this occasion also, having followed at the very end of the procession, he arrived late and all beds and places being taken up by the Group-of-Six monks. Having nowhere to sleep, he had to spend the night at the foot of a tree. The Buddha, coming to know of this incident, considered: "If, while I am still living, monks behave without respect for and showing deference towards one another, what would they do when I attain Parinibbāna?"

Being filled with great urgency for the Dhamma (*Dhamma-saṁvega*), he caused an assembly of monks to be held in the morning and asked: "Monks, is it true that monks of the Group-of-Six monks, having gone along ahead of others, took possession of the good dwelling places for themselves, denying suitable resting places for the elder monastics?"

On being told that it was true, the Buddha rebuked the Group-of-Six monks and, after having given a reasoned Dhamma talk, asked the monastics: "Who, monastics, is worthy of priority concerning place, water for washing, and food?"

Some monastics replied: "Monastics of the royal blood have prior claim to a place, washing water and food;" some said: "Monastics of the Brahmin class have the priority concerning a place, washing water and food;" others again said: "It is monastics of the wealthy householder class who are worthy of being offered first a place, washing water and food;" while others maintained: "One well versed in the Discipline, or a Dhamma teacher (*Dhamma-kathikā*), one possessed of the first absorption (*jhāna*) … the second absorption … the third

absorption … the fourth absorption … are worthy of the first offer of a place, washing water and food."

Finally, there were those who opined that: "One who is a Stream-Enterer (*Sotāpanna*) … Once-Returner (*Sakadāgāmī*) … Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*) … an Arahat with simple insight (*sukka-vipassanā*) … an Arahat without super knowledge (*abhiññā*) … an Arahat with the three knowledges (*tevijja*) … an Arahat with the sixfold super knowledges (*chaḷ-ābhiññā*) is worthy of the best seat, the best water for washing, the best alms." [504]

Then the Buddha addressed the monks: "Monastics, in dealing with the matter of priority to a place, water for washing or alms food, in my Dispensation, consideration of birth, blood, caste and social status is of no importance, nor of being a bearer of Vinaya, Dhamma or Abhidhamma; nor of being possessed of the first absorption, and so on, nor of being a Stream-enterer, and so on.

In reality, dear monks, those within my Dispensation should live paying due respect, rising up and greeting with both palms together in salutation, giving proper homage according to seniority; the best seat, the best water for washing, the best alms should be accorded in order of seniority. In the matter of receiving the best seat, and so on, only seniority in age, seniority with regard to the duration of monkhood is of consequence. Thus the monastic with such seniority is worthy of such priority.

At the present time, monastics, Sāriputta is the chief disciple on my right. He keeps the Dhamma Wheel taught by me in motion; he is one worthy of my place when I am no more. Sāriputta had to spend the whole of the previous night walking or sitting under a tree for want of a place to rest. Monks, when there are such deeds of disrespect and lack of consideration on the part of monks even during my life time, how will the members of the Saṅgha behave in the time to come after I attain Parinibbāna?"

Then the Buddha, in order to exhort the monks, told them the story of three friends: a partridge, a monkey and an elephant (*Tittira-jātaka*, Ja 37): "Monastics, in ancient times, even animals came to an understanding: 'It is not proper to be disrespectful and disobedient to one another; we will determine first who is the oldest amongst us and then we will show due respect and pay homage to him.' Then having chosen the oldest of them, they honoured him and

obeyed him, thus cultivating the practice of paying respect to the elder (*vuḍḍha-pacāyana*) which led them to rebirth in the Deva realm.

> *Ye vuḍḍha mapacāyanti, narā Dhammassa kovidā,*
> *diṭṭheva dhamme pāsaṁsā, samparāye ca suggati.*
>
> Those who are wise in the practice of paying respect to the illustrious and the aged, choose among the three categories of birth, virtue and age, those who are both virtuous and senior in age they honour and show respect to. Such people are worthy of praise, even in this life and have prospects of becoming celestial beings in future existences.

Monks, even these three animals, a monkey, an elephant and a partridge could live together for mutual benefit, courteous, deferential and polite to one another. If you, who have gone forth and received ordination through faith (*saddhā-pabbajita*) in my Dispensation (*Sāsana*), which dispenses righteous instructions, live without mutual benefit, without courtesy, without regard for one another, can such behaviour be seemly or proper? Indeed, it cannot be. Such conduct, lacking due respect and humility also cannot arouse respect and esteem for this Dispensation (*Sāsana*) in those who are still outside it … and so on."

After teaching the discourses extensively on the importance of mutual respect and reverence, by way of rebuking the Group-of-Six monks, the Buddha proclaimed the following rule of discipline: "I allow monastics, paying due respect, rising up and greeting with both palms together in salutation, giving proper homage according to seniority; the best seat, the best water for washing, the best alms should be accorded in order of seniority. Monastics, in the matter of monastic dwellings and sleeping places belonging to the whole Saṅgha one should not hinder their occupation according to seniority. For whoever should do so there is an offence [505] of wrong doing (*dukkaṭa-āpatti*)."

Unworthy and Worthy Monastics

Having thus laid down the two rules, one concerning what was allowable (*anuññāta*), and the other concerning what is not allowable (*paṭikkhitta*), the Buddha continued to address the monks saying: There are these ten individuals enumerated here, who should not be worshipped:

1. A monastic ordained earlier should not worship another who received ordination later.

2. A monastic should not worship anyone who is not a monastic.
3. A monastic should not worship anyone belonging to a different communion (*saṁvāsa*), who speaks what is not Dhamma (*adhamma-vādī*), even if he is more senior.
4. A monastic should not worship a woman.
5. A monastic should not worship a eunuch.
6. A fault-free monastic (*pakaṭa*) should not worship a monastic under suspension from association with the rest of the Saṅgha (*parivāsika*).
7. A fault-free monastic (*pakaṭa*) should not worship a monastic who has been judged to undergo the stages of penance again, starting from the first stage of probation (*parivāsa*) for having transgressed one of the offences Requiring a Meeting of the Saṅgha (*Saṅghādisesa*) which are expiable while observing the probation penance; while undergoing a further period of penance (*mānatta*), for six days to gain approbation of the Saṅgha; while having undergone penance, and is about to be reinstated (*abbhāna*).
8. A fault-free monastic should not worship a monastic, who, having observed the probation, has been judged to undergo penance.
9. A fault-free monastic should not worship a monastic who is undergoing the penance.
10. A fault-free monastic should not worship a monastic who, having undergone penance, is about to be reinstated (*abbhāna*)."

Having thus explained the ten kinds of person not worthy of homage, the Buddha continued to give an enumeration of the three types of individuals who deserve to be venerated.

"Monastics, these three types of individual are worthy of veneration:

1. A monastic ordained earlier is worthy of veneration by one ordained later.
2. A senior monastic belonging to a different communion if he speaks what is Dhamma (*Dhamma-vādī*) is worthy of veneration.

3. In the world of sentient beings with its humans, Devas and Brahmas, the Arahat, Perfectly Self-Awakened, exalted Buddha is worthy of veneration by all beings."

Rules concerning Buildings and Furnishings

All along the route by which the Buddha travelled to Sāvatthī in the company of the Saṅgha, local people built pavilions, temporary sheds furnished with mattings and Assembly Halls in anticipation of their visit. Here again, disciples of the Group-of-Six monks went ahead and occupied the dwelling places as on the previous occasion and, as a result, Ven. Sāriputta was obliged to spend the night under a tree as he arrived with the group at the end of the procession.

The Buddha investigated into the truth of the matter and rebuked the Group-of-Six monks and prescribed a set of additional rules for observance by the Saṅgha: [506] *Na, bhikkhave, uddissa-katam-pi yathā-vuḍḍhaṁ paṭibāhetabbaṁ. Yo paṭibāheyya, āpatti dukkaṭassa*, "monastics, even before formal consecration, pavilions and temporary sheds, etc., meant for the whole Saṅgha can be occupied without hindrance by the Saṅgha in order of seniority. Whoever should hinder such occupation in order of seniority, there is an offence of wrong doing (*dukkaṭa-āpatti*)."

> Concerning the Group-of-Six monks (*cha-vaggiya*), the sub-commentary Diamond Intelligence (*Vajira-buddhi*) says that the Group-of-Six monks made their appearance only when the Buddha had completed the first 20 years of his Buddhahood. And there is the statement in the Discourse giving the Simile of the Saw (*Kakacūpamasutta*, MN 21): *Ārādhayiṁsu vata me, bhikkhave, bhikkhū ekaṁ samayaṁ cittaṁ* … "during the first period after Awakening of 20 years, the monastics had behaved so well as to give much delight to the Realised One." It is a matter for consideration here that the account given above of the Group-of-Six monks can be reconciled with those given in the sub-commentary Diamond Intelligence (*Vajira-buddhi*) and the Discourse giving the Simile of the Saw only by assuming that the story given here of the Group-of-Six monks' behaviour was taken from the account of the journey to Sāvatthī on a later occasion. This is included just to highlight the rulings made by the Buddha on some types of offences.

Now at that time, village people appointed elevated places (*uccā-sayana*), and exalted places (*mahā-sayana*) in the alms house of the village and furnished

them with a 1ong-tufted carpet, a many-coloured wool coverlet, a white wool coverlet, a wool coverlet with floral designs, a cotton quilt, a woollen carpet decorated with animal forms, a carpet with fur on both sides, a carpet with fur on one side, a coverlet with gold embroidery, a silken coverlet, a large size woollen carpet, an elephant rug, a horse rug, a chariot rug, rugs of antelope hide, a coverlet of bear skin, a fancy red ceiling, a couch with red cushions at either end. Monastics, not being certain whether they are allowable did not sit on them.

When the matter was related to the Buddha, he made the following ruling concerning them: *Anujānāmi, bhikkhave, ṭhapetvā tīṇi: āsandiṁ, pallaṅkaṁ, tūlikaṁ,* etc., "monastics, with the exception of three things: a couch with very long legs, a divan, a cotton quilt, I allow you to sit on what is appointed by the people as elevated places, exalted places, but not to sleep on it."

In the village, in the same alms house, people provided a low bedstead quilted with silk cotton on both upper and lower sides; monastics, being meticulous, did not use it. The Buddha made a ruling also in this matter: *Anujānāmi, bhikkhave, gihivikataṁ abhinisīdituṁ, natveva abhinipajjituṁ*, "I allow you, monastics, to sit on the bedstead quilted on both sides, provided by the people, but not to sleep on it."

As stated above, the Buddha, accompanied by many monastics, set out on his journey from Rājagaha towards Sāvatthī and in due time arrived at the boundary of the Sāvatthī region. The wealthy man, Anāthapiṇḍika, having attended to preparations for a grand ceremony to make the formal offering and dedication of the monastery to the Buddha with the symbolical pouring of water, made arrangements to conduct the Buddha to the monastery on a grand scale as described below.

Princess Sumanā

King Pasenadi Kosala had a daughter, named Sumanā, who, during the time of Buddha Vipassī, was the daughter of a wealthy man and was known as Saddhā Sumanā. Being quick-witted and intelligent, she took the opportunity of offering thick milk rice, which was prepared with pure unadulterated milk to Buddha Vipassī before anyone else did. Having made her offering to the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha, she made this wish: "Exalted Buddha, wherever I am reborn throughout the long journey in Saṁsāra, may I never have to [507] earn my living in want and with great difficulty; and may I be reborn as a much loved

and charming lady for offering this garland of jasmine flowers and be known as Sumanā (Jasmine).” Her wishes were fulfilled as she was never reborn in the planes of misery. She was born only either in the plane of the Devas or humans throughout the past 91 aeons. In all these existences, because showers of jasmine flowers fell almost knee-high at her birth, she had always been named Sumanā (*Sumanā-sutta*, AN 5.31, and its commentary).

At the time of her birth, there was a shower of jasmine flowers, spreading nearly knee-high all over the palace. She was, therefore named Sumanā by her royal father. There were also 500 girls who were born simultaneously with Princess Sumanā. The Princess and her 500 connatals were brought up in luxury. As insignia of office and trappings of rank, the Princess was provided with 500 coaches; and whenever she moved out from the palace, she was accompanied by her 500 birth mates each in her own coach.

Throughout the whole of Jambudīpa, one of the four great continents, there were only three young women who were provided, as symbols of rank and office, by their fathers with 500 attendants, each with a coach. They were: 1) Princess Cundī, daughter of King Bimbisāra; 2) Visākhā, who later became the supporter of the Pubbārāma monastery, daughter of a wealthy man, Dhanañjaya; and 3) Sumanā, daughter of King Pasenadi Kosala.

Princess Sumanā was seven years old when the Buddha went to Sāvatthī to accept the Jetavana monastery. Anāthapiṇḍika went to King Pasenadi Kosala and made the request: “Your majesty, the coming of the Buddha to our town of Sāvatthī is a blessing for us and, as well as a blessing for your majesty. I would like to request you to send your daughter, Princess Sumanā, together with her 500 attendants, each carrying a pot filled with water and scents and flowers, for the reception of the Buddha. The king agreed saying: “Very well, wealthy man,” and made the necessary arrangements to comply with Anāthapiṇḍika’s request.

As ordered by her father, Princess Sumanā set out together with her attendants, in full insignia befitting a princess, to take part in receiving the Buddha. They offered scents and flowers to the Buddha and then took seats at appropriate places. The Buddha taught Dhamma to Sumanā with the result that she and her 500 attendants attained the fruition of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). At the same time, 500 other young women, 500 elderly women, and 500 laymen devotees also attained Stream-entry. Thus 2,000 persons achieved the stage of

Stream-entry while the Buddha was still on his way to the Jetavana monastery that day.

Anāthapiṇḍika's own Arrangements

Anāthapiṇḍika had not only arranged for Princess Sumanā's participation in conducting the Buddha to the monastery, but also for his son and 500 attendants, who were sons of wealthy men of Sāvatthī. In compliance with his father's wishes, Anāthapiṇḍika's son and his 500 attendants in their five-hued ceremonial dress, each holding a bright streamer, took their positions in front of the Buddha and led the procession right up to the monastery.

Next to their brothers, came the two daughters of Anāthapiṇḍika, Cūḷā Subhaddā and Mahā Subhaddā, with their 500 female attendants, who were daughters of wealthy men of Sāvatthī, and each carrying a pot full of water.

Then came the wife of Anāthapiṇḍika, Puṇṇā Lakkhaṇā, in full ceremonial dress and bedecked with jewellery, accompanied by the wives of 500 wealthy men, each holding a gold or silver cup full of sweet scents and other offerings.

At the end of the procession to welcome and receive the Buddha came Anāthapiṇḍika himself in a newly made dress of a wealthy man, accompanied by his party of 500 [508] wealthy men, all in newly made dresses of wealthy men.

Led by the long procession, the Buddha proceeded, attended by many monastics, causing the surrounding forest to glow golden, as liquid golden yellow orpiment, with the aura of his presence. Then with the infinite grace and glory of an omniscient Buddha, he entered the precincts of the Jetavana monastery.

Formal Donation of Jetavana

At the conclusion of the reception ceremony, Anāthapiṇḍika approached the Buddha and respectfully invited him and his monastics to a meal offering ceremony at his residence, the following day. Having made all arrangements for a sumptuous meal of hard and soft food at his house the next morning, Anāthapiṇḍika sent a messenger to the monastery, informing him: "Most exalted Buddha, it is time to partake of the meal; the food offering is ready." The Buddha, accompanied by his Saṅgha, went to his house and took seats at the places reserved for them. Anāthapiṇḍika personally attended to the Buddha and his monastics by offering delicious food to them with zealous devotion and sat at

a suitable distance. He then addressed the Buddha: "Most Exalted Buddha, may I know how the Jetavana monastery should be dedicated."

The Buddha then gave this instruction to Anāthapiṇḍika: "It would be proper for you to dedicate the monastery to all of the monastics who have arrived, are still arriving and may arrive from the four directions." Guided by the instructions of the Buddha, Anāthapiṇḍika dedicated the Jetavana monastery to the Saṅgha who have already arrived, are still arriving and may arrive from the four directions (*āgatānāgata-catuddisa-saṅgha*), by pouring ceremonial water as a token thereof.

Five Verses of Appreciation

Having accepted the formal offer of Jetavana monastery, the Buddha delivered a discourse in five verses to express appreciation for the donation of the monastery (Vinaya *Cūḷa-vagga*, PTS 2.148):

Sītaṁ uṇhaṁ paṭihanti, tato vāḷa-migāni ca,
sarīsape ca makase, sisire cāpi vuṭṭhiyo.

The monastery which you have donated provides sufficient conditions for protection from the dangers of extreme cold caused by internal disturbances of elements or external inclemency of weather; the danger of heat caused by wild forest fires; the danger of wild beasts, such as lions, leopards, tigers; the danger of reptiles and creeping creatures, such as snakes and scorpions; the danger of gnats, mosquitoes and flies whose bites harm concentration; the danger of biting cold from week long unseasonal rains during the period of two months from the 1st waning moon of January (*Phussa*) to the full moon of March (*Phagguṇa*) (*sisira-utu*); and the danger of torrential rains during the rainy season.

Tato vātā-tapo ghore, sañjāto paṭihaññati,
leṇatthañ-ca sukhatthañ-ca, jhāyituñ-ca vipassituṁ,
vihāra-dānaṁ Saṅghassa, aggaṁ Buddhena vaṇṇitaṁ.

The monastery which you have donated provides sufficient conditions for protection from violent and fearful seasonal winds of great velocity and intense heat: it enables monastics to live in solitary seclusion without mental distraction; it enables them to live without danger, and with happiness; it enables them to cultivate meditation (*jhāna*) practices; it enables them to practice insight meditation (*vipassanā*).

Those who donate monasteries should make it a [509] point to bear in mind such benefits rendered to the Saṅgha by the monastery they have donated. Buddhas, past and present, have extolled the donation of a monastery to the Saṅgha, as being noble.

Tasmā hi paṇḍito poso, sampassaṁ attham-attano,
vihāre kāraye ramme, vāsayettha bahussute.

Therefore, a wise man of good birth, who considers well and perceives the benefits for himself in the human world and for Nibbāna, should build monasteries for the Saṅgha to live with ease and comfort of body and serenity of mind. Having built them, he should dedicate them to monastics who are wise and virtuous and have the necessary qualities and qualifications to control and look after them as a presiding monk, namely: 1) One who has a full ten years (*vassa*) of monastic life; 2) one who is well acquainted with two sections of Vinaya, viz., the male monastic rules (*bhikkhu-vibhaṅga*) and the female rules (*bhikkhuni-vibhaṅga*); 3) one capable of administering and performing various deeds pertaining to the Saṅgha according to the Discipline (*Saṅgha-kamma*); 4) one with the knowledge of the aggregates; and 5) one versed in the analytical knowledge of mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*). It is necessary to select an elder (*thera*) with these qualifications to be appointed as presiding monk of these monasteries.

Tesaṁ annañ-ca pānañ-ca, vattha-senāsanāni ca,
dadeyya uju-bhūtesu, vippasannena cetasā.

To the inwardly upright, virtuous and knowledgeable residents of the monastery, the supporters should offer alms food, drinks, robes and lodging with a mind full of faith in the Three Treasures and in the beneficial results of good deeds.

With this verse the Buddha instructs the supporters of monasteries to support the resident monk with the four requisites also.

Te tassa Dhammaṁ desenti, sabba-dukkhāpanūdanaṁ,
yaṁ so Dhammaṁ idhaññāya, parinibbāti anāsavo.

The learned monastics, who reside in the monasteries, should, in return, preach with compassion and loving-kindness the Dhamma which would lead to emancipation from all the sufferings of the cycle of rebirth for the

> benefit of the supporters of these requisites. In my Dispensation with eightfold wonders, the supporter of the monastery, endowed with pure faith, hearing such Dhamma discourses from the resident monks and practising them according to their instructions, will become enlightened, and with complete eradication of the pollutants (*āsava*) and cessation of suffering became Arahats.

The Buddha, after delivering this discourse on the benefits of donating a monastery (*vihārānisaṁsa*) in appreciation of Anāthapiṇḍika's dedication returned to Jetavana monastery.

The ceremony held for the successful donation and dedication of the monastery started from the second day of the arrival of the Buddha and lasted nine months. The ceremony held by Visākhā, the wife of a wealthy man, on the occasion of the dedication of the Pubbārāma monastery lasted only four months. The cost of the nine month's celebration [510] consisting of offerings of various alms amounted to 180 million.

Thus, as a measure of support to the Dispensation (*Sāsana*), Anāthapiṇḍika spent altogether 540 millions in gold: 180 million for the cost of the site, 180 million for the construction of the monastery and 180 million for the celebrations for the successful dedication of the monastery.

The Second, Third and Fourth Rains Retreats

Concerning the second, the third and the fourth Rains Retreats kept by the Buddha at Rājagaha, the ancient treatise of *Wasozin*, an account of the series of Rains Retreats kept by the Buddha, deals only with the three stories described below.

1. The story of a friend of Ven. Sāriputta, who was a Brahmin.
2. The story of Cunda, a butcher of pigs.
3. The story of Ven. Mahā Kassapa.

The *Wasozin* treatise concludes the account of the second, the third and the fourth Rains Retreats (*Vassa*) with these words: Thus the Buddha, in keeping with the promise given to King Bimbisāra, [516] spent the second, the third and the fourth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at Rājagaha, expounding such discourses and showing innumerable Devas and humans the path to Nibbāna. [517]

21: Sumana, Aggidatta and Jambuka

The Story of the Flower-Seller Sumana

The Buddha taught a verse, beginning with the words (Dhp 68): *Tañ-ca kammaṁ kataṁ sādhu*, "having done an act, the doer has no bitter regret for it," on the advantages of a reward for a deed of merit with reference to a flower seller named Sumana of Rājagaha during his stay at Veḷuvana monastery in that city (for the story see DhpA V.9).

The flower seller used to present King Bimbisāra with eight measures of Royal Jasmine (*Jasminum grandiflorum*) every morning, for which he was granted eight pieces of money each day. One day, as Sumana was entering the city with the flowers as usual, the Buddha, attended by many monastics, was also entering the city for alms round, with a radiant light shining forth from his body, and with great dignity, splendour and the glories of a Perfectly Awakened Buddha.

> Sometimes, the Buddha used to go round, like an ordinary monastic on an alms round, with the six radiant lights concealed by the robes. For instance he went out all alone incognito to a distance of 30 leagues to meet Aṅgulimāla, the notorious robber. But, at other times, he used to go with radiant light shining, for instance, when he went on alms round in the city of Kapilavatthu. And, on this day, when he was to meet Sumana, the flower seller, the Buddha entered the city of Rājagaha with radiant light shining forth from his body, and with great dignity, splendour and the glories of a Perfectly Awakened Buddha.

When Sumana saw the Buddha – with a body like an ornamented gateway column, replete with the 32 major characteristics and 80 minor characteristics, with the six-coloured radiant light emitting from his body – enter Rājagaha to go on alms round with great dignity, splendour and with the glory of a Perfectly Awakened Buddha, there arose in him intense devotional faith and reverence for him.

He then considered: "What kind of offering should I make to gain merit?" When he could not think of anything with which to pay homage to the Buddha, he thought of offering the flowers in his hands. But, on second thought, he came to realize: "These are the flowers meant for presentation to the king, as a matter of daily routine. If I fail to do my daily duty, I shall be liable to be put in the stocks,

bound with ropes and imprisoned or executed or expelled from the country. What should I do?" A bold thought entered his mind at this juncture: "Let the king kill me, should he so desire, put me in jail, expel me from the country. I might be rewarded by the king for carrying out the daily duty; such a fortune would be sufficient for my livelihood during the present life. But if such an offering is made to the Buddha, it is certain that I will reap the fruits of my meritorious act for aeons to come." He, therefore, decided to sacrifice his life in making his homage to the Buddha.

He was, at the same time, mindful that he should act while his intense devotional faith was at its pitch and so he started offering the flowers in the following manner:

1. First, he threw two handfuls of flowers high above the head of the Buddha; the flowers formed into the shape of a canopied ceiling, hanging in the air right above the head of the Buddha.
2. Then he threw two handfuls of flowers in a like manner; the flowers came down, standing in the form of a flower curtain on the right side of the Buddha.
3. Again, he threw two handfuls of flowers in a like manner; the flowers came down, standing in the form of a flower curtain at the back of the Buddha.
4. Lastly, he threw two handfuls of flowers in a like manner; the flowers came down, standing in the form of a flower curtain on the left side of the Buddha. [518]

Thus, the eight measures of Royal Jasmine flowers stood around the Buddha like a canopied ceiling with curtains of flowers on the top, right, left and back, leaving a space in front just enough for the Buddha to enter. It is remarkable that the flowers fell in place with the flower stalks turning inward and petals outward in an orderly fashion.

The flower curtain around the Buddha, like a silver screen, moved along together with him as if it were an animate body, without sundering apart or falling down. It stopped wherever the Buddha made a rest. Rays of light emitted continuously from five places: the front and the back, the right and left sides and from atop the head of the Buddha, like millions of flashes of lightning.

Having emerged from the body of the Buddha, every single shaft of these radiances first turned clockwise three times round him, forming a mass of bright light resembling a search-light beam directed towards the Buddha, the size of a young palm tree, before shooting away ahead of him.

The whole city of Rājagaha with a population of 180 million was agog with excitement and agitation, and came out clamourously. Of the 180 million men and women, there was none who came out without holding vessels filled with alms food for offering.

All the citizens, clamouring and proclaiming aloud and courageously like a lion king, throwing aloft their twisted headdresses, moved along in large groups, leading the procession before the Buddha. The Buddha, in order to bring out the attributes of Sumana, the simple flower seller, walked along the main streets within the city covering an area of approximately three miles. Hence the entire body of Sumana was suffused with five forms of delightful satisfaction (*pīti*).

Sumana went along with the Buddha only for a distance, like a person who took a plunge into a red orpiment-coloured stream of water, then he entered into the compass of the brilliant radiance emitted by the Buddha and after paying reverential homage to him, he left for home carrying the empty flower basket.

On arrival at his house, his wife asked him: "Where are the flowers?" he replied: "My dear, I have offered the flowers to the Buddha." His wife then asked: "What about the presentation of flowers to the king?" Whereupon, Sumana replied: "Let the king kill me should he so desire or expel me from the country, but I have offered the flowers to the Buddha at the sacrifice of my life. The eight measures of flowers, which formed only eight handfuls, indeed worked miracles. He then related in detail what had actually happened. The whole 180 million citizens were now following the procession in honour of the Buddha, making loud proclamations. What you are hearing is their cheers congratulating me on my deed of merit." He told her this in a delightful tone full of deep satisfaction.

Sumana's wife, being very foolish and ignorant, took not the slightest interest in the miraculous display of the glories of the Buddha and scolded her husband with abusive words and said: "Kings are harsh and ruthless. Once you have incurred their displeasure, your hands and feet may be cut off. I may also be adversely affected by your acts, which may bring ruin on me."

Nagging continuously, she left, taking away her children to see the king at the palace. The king asked her: "What is your complaint?" She complained thus: "Your majesty, my husband, Sumana, the flower seller, has offered the Buddha all the flowers that were to be presented to you as usual and returned home empty handed. When I asked him: 'Where are the flowers?' he related to me what he had done with them. I scolded him in many ways, saying: 'Kings are very harsh and ruthless. Once you incur their displeasure, your hands and feet may be cut off. I may also be adversely affected by your act which may bring ruin on me.' After severing my relationship with him, I have come to your presence. Whatever he has done, good or bad, that is his own affair, his own responsibility. Let him fare according to his deeds all by himself, your majesty, I have forsaken that husband of mine and I make this formal report in advance to your majesty."

King Bimbisāra had become a noble disciple (*ariya-sāvaka*), having attained the fruition stage of a Stream-enterer (*Sotapatti-phala*) ever since his meeting with the Buddha at the grove of young palms, near the city of Rājagaha, and, as such, his confidence in him was unshakable.

The king thought: "This woman is so foolish and stupid, she cannot arouse devotional faith in the glories and miraculous powers of the Buddha," and pretending to be indignant asked her: [519] "Woman, have you just said that your husband, Sumana, had offered all the flowers that were to be presented to me?" – "Indeed, I have said so, your Majesty," replied the flower seller's wife.

The king replied expediently: "Woman, you have done well by severing your relationship with your husband, and now I am to consider what kind of punishment should be meted out to Sumana for offering the Buddha the flowers which were to be presented to me." Then dismissing the woman, the king went out quickly to pay homage to the Buddha and joining the procession, followed him all the way.

On seeing King Bimbisāra in a reverential mood, the Buddha made it a point to walk along the congested main streets within the city and finally went towards the palace gate. When King Bimbisāra removed the bowl from his hand and started to conduct him into the palace, he noticed the indications that the Buddha had a desire to stop at the courtyard just outside of the palace. He at

once had a temporary pavilion erected in the courtyard, and the Buddha and his monastic followers took rest on the prepared seats in the newly erected pavilion.

> A question may arise as to: "Why the Buddha did not go into the palace?" The answer is: It occurred to him that, should he choose to go into the palace, the 180 million citizens would not be able to pay obeisance to him and the virtues of Sumana, the flower seller, would not become manifest. True, only Buddhas could show plainly the attributes of virtuous people, when ordinary people try to do honour where honour is due. Others are apt to have a feeling of jealousy.

As the Buddha went inside the pavilion and sat on the seat which was prepared for him, the four screens of flowers moved to the edge of the crowd in the four directions, each standing like living objects. Then the people rallied round him to pay homage; and King Bimbisāra offered hard and soft food of the best quality to the monastics headed by the Buddha. After the meal was over, and when the Buddha had given a discourse of appreciation for it, the four screens of flowers went back to their places surrounding him on four sides. Surrounded by 180 million citizens and amidst deafening sounds of the uproarious crowd, the Buddha returned to the Veḷuvana monastery.

On returning to the palace, after seeing the Buddha off, King Bimbisāra sent for Sumana and asked him: "How were the flowers meant for me offered to the Buddha?" Sumana replied thus: "I offered the flowers to the Buddha, making this resolution: 'Let the king kill me should he so desire, let him expel me from the country, I will offer these flowers to the Buddha,' thus have I made the offering of flowers at the risk of my life." Whereupon, King Bimbisāra said these congratulatory words: "You are a noble person, indeed." The king then presented Sumana with eight royal elephants, eight royal horses, eight male servants, eight female servants, eight sets of costumes, 8,000 pieces of money, together with eight fully dressed maidens and eight villages, making what is known as the all-eights (*sabbaṭṭhaka*) reward for a gift consisting of 8x8 things.

This great event made Ven. Ānanda wonder as to what kind of benefit Sumana would derive from his deed of merit which was marked by the sounds that rent the air like thunderous roars of a lion king, and by throwing aloft of thousands of head dresses of citizens from the early part of the morning. Therefore, he went to the Buddha and asked to be enlightened as to what sort of benefit Sumana would enjoy. The Buddha told Ānanda: "Dear son Ānanda, you should

not think that Sumana, the flower seller, had made just a small offering! In offering the flowers to me, he had made a liberal alms giving (*dāna*) of his own life, with full devotional faith in his mind." (DhpA, PTS 2.46)

> *Kappānaṁ sata-sahassaṁ, duggatiṁ na gamissati,*
> *ṭhatvā Deva-manussesu, phalaṁ etassa kammuno,* [520]
> *pacchā Paccekasambuddho, Sumano nāma bhavissati.*
>
> For this meritorious deed of his, for a full 100,000 aeons, he will not be reborn in the planes of misery. He will be born again and again in the realms of Devas and humans enjoying the fruits of his deed of merit and will become a Paccekabuddha in the future.

This was the Prophecy uttered by Buddha Gotama in response to Ven. Ānanda's request.

> On reaching the Veḷuvana monastery, as the Buddha entered the Scented Chamber, the Jasmine flowers lay behind in heaps at the entrance.

In that evening, the monastics gathered together in the Dhamma Hall and expressed their appreciation of Sumana's deed of merit and the result, thereof saying: "Friends, the benefit derived by Sumana from his deed of merit is really wonderful, worthy of applause by the snapping of fingers. He has offered the living Buddha a handful of Jasmine flowers at the risk of his life, and for this, he has been rewarded by the king, at that very moment, with gifts made up of eight kinds of animate as well as inanimate objects, each numbering eight (*sabbaṭṭhaka*)."

The Buddha left his chamber and came to the Dhamma Hall where, after sitting on the Dhamma throne of the Buddha, he asked: "Monastics, what is the subject of your conversation?" They explained the subject of their discussion. He then said: "You are right, monastics, by doing an act for which no feeling of remorse should ever occur, but only the feeling of happiness whenever he dwells upon it everytime. A deed of such a nature is indeed worth performing." And in this connection, he recited the following verse to serve as a maxim of what he had already said (Dhp 68):

> *Tañ-ca kammaṁ kataṁ sādhu, yaṁ katvā nānutappati,*
> *yassa patīto sumano, vipākaṁ paṭisevati.*

> Having done an act, the doer has no bitter regret for it; he only enjoys the fruits of that act with joy and gladness. Such an act is faultless and wholesome and is worth doing.

At the end of the discourse 84,000 sentient beings Awakened and gained release from the round of suffering.

The Story of the Ascetic Aggidatta

This discourse of five verses, beginning with the words: *Bahuṁ ve saraṇaṁ yanti* (Dhp 188-192), was expounded by the Buddha while residing at Jetavana monastery, with reference to a recluse by the name of Aggidatta, formerly a court Brahmin of King Kosala, who was then residing near a pile of sand.

> The recluse Aggidatta was living near a pile of sand lying between the three countries of Aṅga, Magadha and Kuru that were adjacent to Rājagaha.

The Brahmin Aggidatta was the court advisor of King Mahā Kosala, father of King Pasedani Kosala. On the expiry of his father, King Pasedani Kosala retained Aggidatta in the same rank as his court advisor, esteeming him as his father's old counsellor. When Aggidatta went to the palace to attend to duties, he was treated with due respect by the king and was given the same seat which he had occupied before.

One day, it occurred to Aggidatta: "King Pasenadi Kosala treats me with due respect, no doubt, but it is not easy to make kings accept one's counsel all the time. It is natural that the [521] king would prefer to deal with advisors of his own age. I have become too old, it is time that I lead the life of a recluse."

So he sought permission from the king and having made public his decision by the beating of drums in the city of Sāvatthī, within seven days he abandoned all his belongings to become a recluse outside of the Buddha's Dispensation (*Sāsana*).

10,000 male followers became his disciples and they dwelt at a place situated between the Aṅga, Magadha and Kuru countries. Aggidatta, as their leader, gave them instruction for their observance: "Anyone thinking any of these thoughts: thoughts of sensual desire (*kāma-vitakka*), thoughts of ill-will (*vyāpāda-vitakka*), thoughts of harming others (*vihiṁsa-vitakka*), shall carry one bundle of sand from the river and dump it here." His disciples promised to observe this

disciplinary rule and every time they detected an unwholesome thought, such as thoughts of sensual desire, arising in their mind, they chastised themselves by carrying a bundle of sand from the river and dumping it as promised, in the appointed place. In time, the pile of sand assumed a huge dimension.

The pile of sand was later taken over by a Nāga King named Ahichatta. People from Aṅga, Magadha and Kuru used to come with offerings for the recluses every month. The recluse Aggidatta then exhorted them thus: "Disciples! Go to the hills for refuge, go to the jungles for refuge; go to the parks for refuge; go to the trees for refuge. If you take refuge in the hills, the jungles, the parks and the trees, you will be free from all kinds of suffering." He also made the same exhortation to his 10,000 recluse disciples.

Aggidatta was popularising himself through teaching wrong practices at a time when the Bodhisatta, as Prince Siddhattha, after renouncing the world, had become a Buddha and was residing in the Jetavana monastery of Sāvatthī. Rising early one morning at dawn and mentally surveying the whole world for sentient beings who were ripe for emancipation, the Buddha perceived in his mind's eye the recluse Aggidatta together with his 10,000 disciples. The Buddha also knew then that all of them had accomplished the sufficing conditions (*upanissaya*) for the attainment of Awakening. So he gave instructions to Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, saying: "Son Moggallāna, why have you ignored the recluse Aggidatta who is making people walk along the wrong path that will not lead them to the shores of Nibbāna, son Moggallāna, go now to these recluses and exhort them."

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna replied: "Most glorious, exalted Buddha, the number of these recluses is great. They might not readily accept the instructions from me alone. Should your reverence also come along, they would readily obey your instructions." Whereupon, the Buddha responded: "We will come also, but you might go ahead first to exhort them."

While proceeding first as instructed by the Buddha, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna thought to himself: "These recluses are many and strong, any attempt to give instructions to them while gathering in one place might lead them to turn against me." So he caused a torrential rain to fall, through the power of his super knowledge (*abhiññā*), with the result that the recluses rising from their places, rushed into their own dwelling places.

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna then stood in front of the entrance to Aggidatta's dwelling and called the recluse by name. On hearing Ven. Mahā Moggallāna's voice, Aggidatta wondered as to who had called him by name, since there was no one in the world who could address him thus. In a fit of pique, he gave a sharp reply: "Who is that calling me by my name?" Ven. Mahā Moggallāna answered: "It's me, Brahmin Aggidatta." – "What do you want to say?" responded Aggidatta. When Ven. Mahā Moggallāna made the polite reply: "I wish you could show me a place where I could spend a night," Aggidatta said curtly: "There is no place for you; each room has its own occupant."

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna then replied: "Aggidatta, it is natural that men come to the abode of men, bullocks to the abodes of bullocks, and recluses to the abode of recluses. Please do not talk to me like that, do allot a lodging for me to spend the night." The recluse [522] then asked: "Are you a recluse?" – "Yes, I am," was the reply. Aggidatta then queried: "If you are a recluse, where are the equipments of a recluse; what are your utensils?" – "Brahmin," replied Mahā Moggallāna in a serious manner, "I possess the equipments of a recluse; but thinking it is cumbersome to carry them separately while wandering around, I take them along inside me." Aggidatta was much annoyed to see Ven. Mahā Moggallāna going about without the necessary equipments of a recluse.

Knowing the state of his mind, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna said: "Aggidatta, don't be angry with me, just point out a place for me." Aggidatta gave the terse reply: "There is no place for you around here." Indicating the pile of sand with his finger, Mahā Moggallāna enquired with patience: "Who lives at that pile of sand?" – "A dragon king," was the reply. "Then allot it to me," insisted Ven. Mahā Moggallāna. The recluse made the cautious reply: "I dare not allot it to you. The dragon king is of a violent, terrible nature." Mahā Moggallāna replied: "Let it be, never mind about it. You just allot it to me." – "If so, you better judge for yourself whether the place is suitable for occupation or not," retorted Aggidatta.

Then Ven. Mahā Moggallāna went towards the pile of sand and when the dragon King Ahichatta caught sight of him, he thought to himself: "This recluse does not seem to see my presence here. I will dispose of him by exhaling fumes." With this thought, the dragon king started emitting dense clouds of noxious vapour. Ven. Mahā Moggallāna considered: "This dragon king has overestimated himself, thinking no one else can send out fumes." Therefore, he

also started exhaling wave after wave of vapour, which, together with that emitted by the dragon king, rose higher and higher up to the realm of the Brahmas. The voluminous fumes exhaled by both of them caused great suffering to the dragon king while Ven. Mahā Moggallāna remained unscathed.

Suffering from the effects of the fumes, the Nāga king became so furious that he sent out a continuous stream of blazing flames. By developing the fourth absorption (*rūpāvacara-kriya-jhāna*) with a fire-device as its object, Mahā Moggallāna also sent out, in competition, more violent flames. The blazing fires produced by both of them went up as far as the Brahma realm; but none of them caused any harm to Ven. Mahā Moggallāna while the Nāga king was subjected to great suffering. His whole body appeared as though it were consumed in a blazing fire. At the sight of the massive conflagration, the recluse teacher, Aggidatta, and his disciples wrongly concluded: "The Nāga king had set the recluse ablaze; he has been destroyed completely, for not listening to our advice. It serves him right."

Having overcome the Nāga king by subduing its haughtiness, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna sat on the pile of sand, while the Nāga king kept itself coiled around the sand-pile, with its hood spread over him like a terraced chamber crowned with a fine pinnacle.

To make immediate enquiries as to the fate of the recluse, the recluses went to the scene of recent combat and saw Ven. Mahā Moggallāna sitting becomingly on the peak of the sand-pile. They could not help but pay respects to him with their clasped hands, speaking highly of him in many ways, and they asked him: "Recluse, have you not suffered anything at the hands of the Nāga king?" Then Ven. Mahā Moggallāna replied: "Don't you see the Nāga standing nearby with its hood spread like a white umbrella over me?" The recluses uttered in amazement: "Friends, this is a wonderful feat worthy of cheers by the snapping of the fingers! The recluse has subdued a powerful Nāga such as this. It is marvellous indeed!" They then rallied round Ven. Mahā Moggallāna in a group.

At that moment the Buddha arrived and Ven. Mahā Moggallāna rose from his seat and made obeisance to him. The recluses asked him: "Is this recluse more powerful than yourself?" – "This great recluse is replete with six glories; he is my master, I am merely his disciple," was the reply.

The Buddha took his seat on the pile of sand. The recluses went round and with clasped hands raised, spoke in high praise of the Buddha: "The recluse who subdued the Nāga king is but a disciple, one wonders how mighty his master might be." The Buddha then called Aggidatta and asked him: "What kind of instructions do you give to your recluses and lay [523] disciples for their guidance?"

Aggidatta gave his reply: "Exalted Buddha, I gave this instruction to them: 'Disciples, go to the hills for refuge, go to the jungles for refuge, go to the parks for refuge, go to the trees for refuge. If you take refuge in the hills, the jungles, the parks and under the trees, you will be free from all kinds of suffering."

On hearing this answer, the Buddha said: "Aggidatta, one who takes refuge in the mountains, forests, gardens and trees cannot escape from suffering; as a matter of fact, only one who takes refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha can escape from the sufferings of the round of rebirths! The Buddha then expounded the true way of escape from suffering in five verses (Dhp 188-192):[197]

Bahuṁ ve saraṇaṁ yanti, pabbatāni vanāni ca,
ārāma-rukkha-cetyāni, manussā bhaya-tajjitā.

Aggidatta, people take refuge, through fright, in the mountains, such as Mount Isigili, Mount Vepulla, Mount Vebhāra, etc., or in the forest groves, such as the Great Wood, Gosiṅga, Sālavana, etc., or in the gardens and parks, such as the Veḷuvana, Jīvaka's Mango Park, etc., and under the trees, such as at the Udena tree-temple, Gotama tree-temple, etc. All these are erroneously regarded as refuges and means of protection from dangers.

Netaṁ kho saraṇaṁ khemaṁ, netaṁ saraṇam-uttamaṁ,
netaṁ saraṇam-āgamma, sabba-dukkhā pamuccati.

Aggidatta, these mountains, forests, gardens or trees are not safe, harmless refuges, they do not constitute the best, the highest refuge. By taking refuge in these mountains, forests, gardens or trees one cannot gain release from the continuous cycle of suffering (*dukkha*).

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[197] [The story comes from the commentary to these verses].

Yo ca Buddhañ-ca Dhammañ-ca, Saṅghañ-ca saraṇaṁ gato,
cattāri ariya-saccāni, sammappaññāya passati.
Dukkhaṁ dukkha-samuppādaṁ, dukkhassa ca atikkamaṁ,
ariyaṁ caṭṭhaṅgikaṁ maggaṁ, dukkhūpasama-gāminaṁ.

Aggidatta, any person, whether lay or recluse, who takes refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha as a safe haven, as a secure shelter with sincere, pure faith in the Three Treasures; with transcendental consciousness (*lokuttara-saraṇa-gamana-cittuppāda*); any person, whether lay or recluse, who realizes the path truly and rightly through insight path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*), the four noble truths: the noble truth of suffering (*dukkha*), the noble truth of the origin of suffering, the noble truth of the cessation of suffering and the noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering, that is, the eightfold noble truth of right view, right thought, etc.

Etaṁ kho saraṇaṁ khemaṁ, etaṁ saraṇam-uttamaṁ, *[524]*
etaṁ saraṇam-āgamma, sabba-dukkhā pamuccati.

Aggidatta, only the refuge taken by such a person of noble disposition, with abounding faith in the Three Treasures is a safe and harmless refuge. Only the refuge taken by such a person of noble disposition, with abounding faith in the Three Treasures, constitutes the best, highest refuge. Only the refuge taken by such a person of noble disposition, with abounding faith in the Three Treasures, can bring about release from the continuous cycle of suffering (*dukkha*).

At that very moment, all the recluses, the leader and his followers instantly turned into full-fledged monks like senior monks (*thera*) of 60 years' standing readily robed and equipped with the eight requisites, paying homage to the Buddha with great respect.

That day, when all the recluses became summoned monastics (*ehi-bhikkhu*), happened to be the occasion when the people from Aṅga, Magadha and Kuru congregated at the recluses' place with offerings for their recluse teachers. When they saw the recluses assuming the form of monastics, they began to wonder: "How is it, is our teacher Aggidatta superior to the great ascetic Gotama, or is the great ascetic Gotama superior to our teacher?" Then they

wrongly surmised that since the great recluse had come to the presence of their teacher, their teacher, Aggidatta, must be superior to the great recluse.

The Buddha knew what was in the minds of the people, and he told Aggidatta: "Dear son Aggidatta, you might yourself remove the doubts from the minds of your audience." Aggidatta replied: "Most exalted Buddha, it has also been my intention to do so," and so saying, he went up high into the air and descended therefrom seven times. And after that he stood paying respects to the Buddha, declaring: *Satthā me, bhante, Bhagavā, sāvakoham-asmi*, "you, the exalted Buddha, are my teacher; I am but a disciple of yours," thus removing doubt being entertained by his followers.

The Story of the Naked Ascetic Jambuka

This discourse beginning with the words: *Māse māse kusaggena* (Dhp 70), was given by the Buddha while residing at the Veḷuvana monastery in Rājagaha in connection with the naked ascetic Jambuka (for the story see DhpA V.11).

Jambuka's Demeritorious Deeds of the Past

During the time of Buddha Kassapa, a rich man of a village in the countryside built a monastery for a monk. He made regular offerings of food, robes, living quarters and medicine, which are the four requisites for monastics, to the resident monk. The resident monk made regular visits to the house of the rich man for his daily meal.

One day, an elderly monk who was an Arahat, going on alms round, arrived at the gate of the rich man. The rich man was very pleased with the deportment of the monk and so he invited him into the house and offered him food with profound respect and said: "Your Reverence, please accept this piece of cloth for use as a robe, after dyeing and stitching. Your hair is also long enough to be cut, I will bring a barber and a bedstead for you to the monastery."

The resident monk saw the reverential way in which his supporter made his offering to the Arahat monk. He was instantly assailed by unwholesome thoughts of envy concerning the offerings gained by the Arahat monk (*lābha-macchariya*) and also his superior birth (*kula-macchariya*); and he was very worried, thinking to himself: "The rich man has shown more reverential attention to the monk whom he has just met, than to myself, even though I

frequent his house regularly for meals." He returned to the monastery in an angry mood. [525]

The guest monastic, who was an Arahat, followed the resident monk to his monastery. He dyed and stitched the piece of cloth offered to him by the wealthy monastery supporter and sat down wearing it as a robe. The wealthy man arrived, bringing with him a barber who attended to the Arahat monk's hair. The rich man prepared the bedstead he had brought with him, ready for use and invited the Arahat monk to take a rest on it. Then after inviting both monks for a meal on the morrow, he went back home.

The resident monk was so overcome by malice towards the guest monk that he went to the place where the Arahat monk was resting, and gave vent to his bitter feeling in very offensive words:

Look here visitor, it would be better for you to eat faeces than the food offered at the house of the rich man, the supporter of my monastery. It would be better for you to have your hair pulled out with the outer shells of a palmyra seed than cutting it with the knife of the barber brought by the rich man, the supporter of my monastery. It would be better for you to go about naked than wearing the robe offered by the rich man, the supporter of my monastery. It would be better for you to sleep on the ground than lying on the bed offered by the rich man, the supporter of my monastery.

The Arahat monk left the monastery early in the morning for a place where he could find peace and happiness, foregoing the invitation by the rich man for a meal, in order that nothing untoward might happen to the resident monk on account of him.

The resident monk attended quite early to all the routine works in the monastery, and when the time came for going on the alms round, he thought: "The lazy visitor is still asleep. I might strike the bell to wake him up. But feeling uneasy that the visitor would actually get up on hearing the sound of the bell, he just touched the bell with his finger nails and made off for the village to receive alms food. After having made magnificent arrangements for a meal offering, the rich monastery supporter was waiting for the arrival of his two invited monks. On seeing the resident monk coming alone, he asked: "Venerable sir, where is the guest monk?" The envious resident monk replied: "Don't you talk about him, supporter of the monastery! Your monk went into his room to sleep

since you left the monastery last evening and did not wake up while I had the monastery compound swept, and the pots filled with water; nor did he hear the sound of the bell when I struck it as the time came for alms round."

The rich supporter thought to himself: "It is absurd that such an exalted personage with such commendable deportment should have slept for such a long time. This resident monk, through jealousy on seeing me showing great respect and courtesy to the visiting monk, must have spoken some reproachful words to him." Having thus surmised correctly, being wise and intelligent, he kept his thoughts to himself and made his offering of a meal respectfully to the monk. After the meal was over, he took the empty bowl of the resident monk, had it washed carefully and filled it with delicious food. He then handed the bowl back to the resident monk, with the request: "Venerable sir, please be so kind as to give this food to the guest monk when you meet him."

While going back to the monastery with food for the Arahat monk, the envious resident monastic had this wrong thought: "The indolent visitor would stay on in the monastery if he were to enjoy delicious food such as these," so he threw away the bowlful of food offered by the rich monastery supporter. On arrival at the place occupied by the visiting monk, he looked for him, but the Arahat monk could not be found.

The evil deed of this envious monk against the Arahat monk, the destruction of the food offered to the Arahat, was so demeritorious that its ill-effects outweighed the merits accruing from 20,000 years of living a holy life as a monk. Consequently, after his death he was reborn in the lowest plane of woe (*mahā-avīci*) to undergo intense suffering for the duration of the incalculably long interval between the disappearance of Buddha Kassapa and the appearance of Buddha Gotama. After such suffering, he was born in a household, [526] where food was abundant, at Rājagaha at the time of Buddha Gotama.

Jambuka in the Present Life

He was named Jambuka by his parents. He did not wish to sleep in a bed ever since he could walk about; and instead of taking ordinary food, he ate his own excrement. His parents and relatives at first thought that he took up these habits through youthful ignorance and tried to help him mend his ways, taking pains to feed him and clean his body. But even when he had grown up, he did not wish to wear cloths; he walked about naked, slept on the ground and ate his own filth.

Jambuka's parents came to realize in due course that he was not fit to live in a family of good birth like their own, as he had no sense of shame and should be in the company of the Ājīvakas, a heretical sect. So they took him to the monastery of the Ājīvakas and entrusted him to their care.

The Ājīvakas then ordained him as a novice in their sect and the following is an account of how it was carried out: He was placed in a pit that was deep as far as his neck; wooden planks were placed covering the hole and resting upon his shoulders so that he might not struggle his way out. Sitting on the planks, the Ājīvakas pulled out the hair from the head of Jambuka. This was how the Ājīvakas initiated a lad as a novice. Then his parents left after inviting the Ājīvakas for the next day's meal at their home.

The following day, the Ājīvakas said to Jambuka: "Come along, let's go to the village." He replied: "You better go and I will remain in the monastery." After several vain attempts to persuade him to follow, they left him all alone and went into the village. Once he knew that they were gone, he took off the wooden covering of the latrine and went into the pit, picked up the filth with his two hands and helped himself to his heart's content.

The Ājīvakas, being unaware of the truth, sent food to him from the village. But he was not interested in it and rejected it, and in spite of persuasive advice given by the Ājīvakas, his reply was: "I don't want this, I have enough food for myself." When he was asked: "From where did you receive it?" he replied: "From within the precincts of the monastery." The second, the third and the fourth days passed in the same manner, Jambuka refusing the invitation to go out for food but choose to stay alone in the monastery.

The Ājīvakas began to wonder what Jambuka was up to: "This Jambuka refuses every day to go into the village, rejects the food that was sent to him, saying, he gets the food for himself from within the precincts of the monastery. What is he up to? We will have to investigate." They then decided to leave behind one or two of the brethren to keep a watchful eye on Jambuka's activities, while they went to the village. Those charged with the responsibility of investigation, pretended to go along with the group, but remained behind under cover to watch Jambuka. Thinking that all the Ājīvakas had left for the village, Jambuka went down the latrine pit as on the previous days and ate the faeces.

Jambuka was caught red-handed by the spies and the matter was reported to their elders. The elders, on hearing the report murmured: “Jambuka’s action is grievous. Should the disciples of ascetic Gotama come to know of this affair, they will surely decry us as a wandering tribe of filth eaters, which will be much to the detriment of our dignity. He is not fit that he remain with us any longer.” So saying they unanimously expelled him from their sect.

When he was expelled by the Ājīvakas, Jambuka went to stay near a huge stone slab which was close to a spot used by the citizens of Rājagaha as a public lavatory. There was [527] also a huge sewage pipe adjacent to that large stone slab. People usually came to ease and relieve themselves behind the stone slab screen. Jambuka ate the refuse matter at nighttime, and when people came to answer the call of nature during the day, he stood with an arm rested on the edge of the flat stone and with one of his legs rested on the knee of the other leg, keeping his head erect with the mouth open.

Those who came to answer the call of nature, on seeing him, approached him and asked: “Venerable sir, why are you standing like this with your mouth open?” – “I live on air, there is no food for me other than air,” he replied boastfully. People asked: “Venerable sir, why do you stand on one leg only, with one leg rested on the knee of the other one?” – “I am a person engaged in rigorous austerity practices. When I stand with both my legs touching the ground, the earth cannot withstand my glories and attributes and trembles violently; that is why I stand in this posture. In truth it is because of the earthquakes. I have got to stand on one leg night and day, without sitting down, without sleeping,” replied Jambuka with an air of ostentation.

It is a general fact that people accept readily what others say; only a few take the trouble to consider whether there is element of truth or not. So they said in admiration: “Marvellous indeed it is! There are such personalities in the world who undertake such severe practices. We have never before seen such personalities having such rigorous practices.” A great number of people from the Aṅga and Magadha countries, agitated and excited by hearing the news of Jambuka’s austerities, came together with offerings for him and paid homage to him every month.

Jambuka rejected delicious and wholesome food offered by people, maintaining: “I live on air only, I do not take any other food. If I do take any other thing than

air, it means a breach of my practice." People beseeched him, repeatedly saying: "Venerable sir, may you not deny us this opportunity to gain merit; only if a personality such as yours, well advanced in austerity practices, would accept our offer of alms food, will our prosperity and happiness grow and last long." Jambuka was not interested in any food but only excrement, but pressed by earnest requests of the people, he was obliged to taste such food as butter and molasses the people fetched, picking them up with the tip of a blade of grass, just to give them satisfaction. Then he dismissed them, saying: "Go now; this much will go far to do a great deal of good for you."

Thus Jambuka had to pay for his offences against an Arahat by suffering for 55 years in these four ways: he could not put on any clothes; he ate nothing except faeces; he had to pull out his hair by using palmyra seed shell; and he slept on the ground.

Emancipation of the Naked Ascetic Jambuka

It is the usual practice of Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddhas to survey the whole world at early dawn, every day, to see who are ready for liberation from the cycle of suffering. Thus, early one morning, the omniscient Buddha, on surveying the world, perceived the person of Jambuka in his mind's eye. Upon further investigation, he discovered that Jambuka had already accumulated meritorious deeds which would serve as sufficing conditions for his attainment of the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*), complete with the fourfold analytical knowledge (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*). He also came to know that he would have to teach a verse to the naked ascetic Jambuka, and that this teaching will also bring about the realisation of the four noble truths by 80,000 sentient beings who will thus gain emancipation. "Because of this person Jambuka, thousands of people will come to achieve [528] happiness."

Thus, after going round Rājagaha for alms food, he informed Ven. Ānanda: "My dear son, Ānanda, I will be going to see Jambuka." – "Exalted Buddha, is it that you are going there alone," asked Ānanda. "That's right, Ānanda. I will go alone," replied the Buddha and went to the place of Jambuka in the evening of that day.

The Devas considered: "The exalted Buddha is visiting the naked ascetic Jambuka this evening; but that naked ascetic's abode is the great stone slab which is abominably filthy and smelly with an accumulation of excrement, urine

and discarded twigs used as tooth cleaners. We should wash up the loathesome mess by a downpour of rain." Thus they caused, by means of their supernatural power, a falling at that very instant of a torrential rain, which washed away all the filth and dirt from the stone slab, making it look spick and span. Then the Devas caused the falling of flowers of the five colours on the stone slab.

On arrival at Jambuka's place in the evening, the Buddha called out the naked ascetic by his name, who felt annoyed being discourteously addressed by name by an unknown person who, he thought, must be a lowly person. He retorted angrily: "Who is that calling me by my name?" the Buddha replied: "I am a noble recluse." Jambuka asked then: "What is that you want here?" When the Buddha said: "I wish you would allot me a place to stay for one night." Jambuka replied bluntly: "There is no place for you in this place." But the Buddha insisted: "Jambuka, please do not say this; do allot me a place to stay for one night. It is only natural that a recluse seeks the help of a recluse, men expect help of men and beasts expect help of their own kind." Whereupon the naked ascetic asked: "Are you, indeed, a recluse?" – "Yes, I am a noble recluse," answered the Buddha. Jambuka then queried: "If you are a recluse, where are the equipments of a recluse, such as gourd, ladle for stirring fire, sacrificial threads?" the Buddha replied: "I possess the equipments of a recluse you ask about; but thinking it is cumbersome to carry them separately while wandering around, I take them along only inside me." Jambuka was much annoyed and reproached the Buddha: "Being a recluse, how could you go wandering about without the necessary equipments of a recluse?" The Buddha made a gentle reply: "Jambuka, let that be! Don't be angry with me. Just point out a place for me." But Jambuka gave the terse reply: "There is no place for you around here."

There was a small valley close by Jambuka's place and the Buddha asked: "Who stays there?" – "No one," replied Jambuka. "If so, I want that place allotted to me," said the Buddha. Whereupon, Jambuka made a reply: "It is up to you to judge whether it is suitable or not," implying that he had no objection for the occupation of the place but took no responsibility whatsoever.

The Buddha placed a small mattress at a spot in the valley and sat upon it. At the first watch of the night, the Four Great Kings came, illuminating the four points of the compass and waited upon the Buddha. When Jambuka saw the illumination he wondered what it could be. At the second watch of the night, Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, came to attend upon the Buddha and Jambuka

remained puzzled as before. At the last watch of the night, when Mahā Brahma, who had the power of lighting one world with one finger of his, two worlds with two fingers, ten worlds with ten fingers, came to wait upon the Buddha, illuminating the whole forest, Jambuka pondered, as before: "Now, what could that illumination be!"

When the morning came, Jambuka approached the Buddha and after courteous exchange of greetings, sat down at an appropriate place and addressed him: "Great recluse, who were those that came to you, in the first watch of the night, lighting up the four points of the compass?" –"Jambuka, they were the Four Great Kings," he replied. "Why did they come?" asked Jambuka. "They came to pay homage and wait upon me," was the reply. Jambuka asked again: "Great recluse, how is that? Are you superior to them?" "Yes, Jambuka, that's right, I am superior to them," replied the Buddha.

The naked ascetic Jambuka asked again: "Great recluse, who was the one that arrived in the middle watch of the night?" – "He was Sakka, the Lord of the Devas," replied the Buddha. [529] "And why did he come?" asked Jambuka. The Buddha replied: "He came to pay homage to me and attend upon me." Jambuka asked again, "Great recluse, how is that? Are you superior to Sakka also?" – "Yes, Jambuka," replied the Buddha, "I am superior to Sakka also; Sakka is just like a nurse attending on me or a resident novice who looks after me."

Jambuka asked the Buddha: "Great recluse, who was he that came in the last watch of the night, flooding the whole forest with his bodily radiance?" – "Jambuka, the one who came in the last watch of the night was none other than Mahā Brahma whose name is often invoked by Brahmins and others saying: 'I worship the Mahā Brahma,' when they suddenly sneeze or loose balance and totter." Jambuka asked again: "Great recluse, how is that? Are you superior to Mahā Brahma too?" – "Yes, Jambuka, I am beyond the king of the Brahmas, superior to Mahā Brahma as well."

Then the ascetic Jambuka made his usual boastful remark: "Great recluse, you are worthy of admiration indeed, by the snapping of fingers. None of those persons have ever come to pay homage to me at this place where I have been practising austerities for 55 years. True! For the last 55 years I have been sustaining myself only on air; and over all those years, these Devas, Sakka and Brahmas have never approached and paid homage to me."

Whereupon, the Buddha gave Jambuka a very plain talk: "Jambuka, you, who have been cheating persons of poor intelligence, think of playing the same game with me! Have you not been eating filth for the past 55 years, sleeping on the bare ground, wandering round naked, extracting hair by means of a shell of palmyra seed? And yet you have been deceiving all the people, telling them: 'I only live on air, standing on one leg without sitting down and sleeping,' and now you wish to play the same trick on a Fully Awakened Buddha like me! Jambuka, because you professed this vile, base, heretical view you have to live on filth, sleep on bare ground, roam about naked, extract hair with the shell of a palmyra fruit seed for all these years, experiencing intense suffering; and yet you are still holding this wretched, base, heretical view."

Then Jambuka asked the Buddha: "Great recluse, what kind of unwholesome deeds have I committed?" Whereupon, the Buddha explained to him extensively the various misdeeds he had done in the past. While the Buddha was giving this discourse, Jambuka was assailed by remorse, conscience and concern about the consequences of his past misdeeds; he was shaken so much that he squatted down to conceal the private parts of his body.

The Buddha threw a bathing robe for him to cover himself. Jambuka put on the robe and sat down at a suitable distance paying respects to him. Then the Buddha expounded a graduated discourse touching on points connected with generosity (*dāna-kathā*), moralality (*sīla-kathā*), etc., and finally the four noble truths. At the end of the discourse, Jambuka became an Arahat, complete with the four analytical knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*). He stood up from his seat and worshipping the Buddha, made a request for the going forth as a novice and higher ordination as a monastic.

> Thus, the ill-effects of the unwholesome deeds which he had committed in the past had ceased. To elaborate: For his offence against an Arahat during Buddha Kassapa's Dispensation, as stated above, he had suffered intensely, being burnt and incinerated in the lowest hell of Avīci for a long duration of time, long enough for the earth to rise to a height of one league and three miles. And after that, for the amount of retribution still outstanding against him, he had to make his expiation by going through 55 years of wretched, abominable, inhuman life. Having thus paid off the debts of evil deeds, the consequences of his past misdeeds had become exhausted.

But his accumulation of merit, which he had earned by observance of moral precepts as a monastic for 20,000 years, still remained undisturbed by his evil deeds.

Therefore, when Jambuka requested for initiation and ordination, the Buddha stretched [530] out his right hand and called out: *Ehi bhikkhu*, *cara brahma-cariyaṁ sammā dukkhassa anta-kiriyāya,* "come monastic, accept the monkhood that you request, strive to take up the three noble practices which form the moral training in my Dispensation (*Sāsana*), in order to bring about the end of the rounds of suffering." At that moment, Jambuka turned into a full-fledged monk like a senior monk (*thera*) of 60 years standing, readily robed and equipped with the eight requisites.

On that very day when Jambuka became an Arahat, people from Aṅga and Magadha visited him with offerings to pay homage. When they saw the Buddha, and began to wonder: "How is that? Is our teacher Jambuka superior to the great ascetic Gotama or is the great ascetic Gotama superior to our teacher Jambuka?" Then they wrongly surmised that since the great recluse had come to their teacher, their teacher Jambuka must be superior to the ascetic Gotama.

The Buddha knew what was in the minds of the people, and he told Jambuka: "Dear son Jambuka, you might remove the doubt yourself from the minds of your followers." Jambuka replied: "Most exalted Buddha, it has also been my intention to do so," and so saying, he entered into the fourth absorption (*jhāna*). Then rising up from his seat, he went up into the air to the height of a palm tree from where he addressed the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, you, the exalted Buddha, are my teacher, I am but a disciple of yours." Then he came down to earth and after paying homage to the Buddha, rose up in the air again. He repeated the same performance seven times, going up higher and higher, to the height of two palm trees, three palm trees, etc., up to the height of seven palm trees. In this manner, he had made it very clear to the assembled crowd that he was just a disciple of the Buddha. On seeing these strange phenomena, people were struck with wonder and said: "Buddhas are worthy of admiration by the snapping of fingers; they are glorious and there is no equal to them."

The Buddha, being desirous of holding a discussion with the masses on Dhamma subjects addressed them: "Lay devotees, Jambuka has lived here for the last 55 years telling you ostentatiously: 'I have been exercising self-denial, eating only

what is picked by the tip of a blade of grass out of the whole lot of offering you have brought.' Supposing, he continued on with this practice of self-denial till it reached 100 years, and a certain amount of merit accrued on that score. Such a measure of merit to his credit would not be worth even 1/256th part of the merit he would earn by refusing to take any food now as a noble one (*ariya*), through having some doubt whether the food and the time it is offered is allowable or not allowable."

Then the Buddha expounded the following Dhamma verse which was pertinent to what he had been telling the people (Dhp 70):

> *Māse māse kusaggena, bālo bhuñjeyya bhojanaṁ,*
> *na so saṅkhāta-dhammānaṁ, kalaṁ agghati soḷasiṁ.*
>
> Even though, month after month the fool who does not know the four noble truths, bent on living in austerity, takes his food sparingly by picking it up on the tip of a blade of grass for 100 years; he is not even worth one part out of 256 of a noble one (*ariya*) who has comprehended the four noble truths.

The verse was expounded with reference to a particular individual, namely, Jambuka. When considered in its generic sense: There is the volition (*cetanā*), which arises when an ignorant heretical recluse practises self-sacrifice for as long as 100 years; there is the volition (*cetanā*), which arises when a noble one (*ariya*) who comprehends the four noble truths, refuses an offer of food through having some doubt whether the food and the time it is offered is allowable or not allowable.

Of the two types of volitions (*cetanā*) mentioned above, the volitions accumulated by the heretical recluse for as long as 100 years is not worth 1/256th part of the volition that arose [531] when a noble one (*ariya*) refused food through doubt over the time the food was offered.

To explain further, the amount of merit accruing from the volition occasioned by mere doubt on the part of a noble one (*ariya*) as to the kind of food and the time it is offered, entailing the loss of a meal for him, is 256 times greater than the sum of merit gained by a heretical recluse through his faulty practice of self-denial for 100 years.

At the close of the discourse, 84,000 sentient beings gained release from the cycle of suffering through realization of the four noble truths. [532]

22a: The Discourse on the Treasures

The Founding of Vesālī

A long time ago,[198] the Chief Queen of the King of Bārāṇasī conceived a child. The queen brought this news to the king and he appointed a sufficient number of maids of honour to attend on the queen for the duration of her pregnancy. The queen lived in ease and comfort, carefully tending the embryo in her womb, and entered the maternity chamber in due time. It is taken to be a natural fact that ladies of high social status, enjoying the fruits of past meritorious deeds, usually give birth to children at early dawn in the morning.

The queen, being one such lady of the elite class, gave birth at early dawn, to a lump of flesh as red as a hibiscus flower or as red as lac. The queen thought to herself: "The king will surely remark: 'Other queens give birth to children who resemble golden statues; but this Chief Queen of mine gave birth to a lump of flesh,' and I shall lose favour and fall down in disgrace before the king." Wishing to avoid disgrace by losing favour and dignity, she had the lump of flesh put into a vase covered by another vase and caused it to be thrown into the current of the river Ganges.

Miraculous events took place: The moment the vase containing the lump of flesh left human hands, it was taken charge of by the Devas who placed it securely in a vase, on which were inscribed in vermillion the words: "These are the sons born of the Chief Queen of the King of Bārāṇasī." Protected by the guardian Devas, the cup floated along smoothly with the current, undisturbed by billows and swelling tides.

At that time, a recluse was residing close by the river Ganges depending on a village of cowherds for alms food. When he went to the river early one morning, he saw a vase floating down the stream and recovered it as an object discarded by someone up stream. He saw the royal insignia stamped on the vase and discovered the gold lettered plate and the lump of flesh on opening the vase. As

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[198] The following account is based on the commentary to the Short Readings (*Khuddaka-pāṭha*) on the Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*) and the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*).

soon as the recluse saw the lump of flesh, he opined that the lump of flesh must be in embryo stage since it raised no foul odour. He brought it to his hut and kept it in a clean corner.

After a lapse of fifteen days, the lump of flesh was seen to have divided into two separate units. The recluse took great care of the object on seeing these strange developments. In another fortnight's time, each lump was found to have bulged in five places where the head, two arms and two legs would appear. The recluse attended to them with greater care than before. In another fifteen days time, one was transformed into a boy with golden body and the other into a girl with a golden body.

The love developed by the recluse for the infant boy and girl was so intense that it was like that of a parent for his own offspring. The two thumbs of the recluse turned into fountains from which milk gushed out. From then onwards, the recluse received gruel cooked with milk from the village of the cowherds by virtue of the babies' merit. The recluse ate the solid portion of the gruel and fed the babies with the fluid that remained. Whatever went inside their bodies could be seen like objects going through a glass vessel. They were therefore named "Licchavī" after their soft, delicate, thin skin.

> *Licchavī*, derived from *nicchavī*; *ni*, "soft, thin;" *chavi*, "having skin," therefore one having delicate, thin skin. *Ni* is changed into *li* to form *Licchavī*.

Having to attend to the babies, the recluse could go to the village for alms round only very late in the morning and he had to return to his hermitage in a hurry. When the villagers came to know about his worries, they addressed the recluse: "Venerable sir, looking after babies is a great hindrance to the observance of the precepts incumbent upon recluses. May you hand the babies over to our care. We will relieve you of the burden of looking after them, then you could attend to your Dhamma practice without [533] any obstruction." The recluse agreed to their request, saying: "Yes, you may."

On the following day, the villagers made the roads smooth, level and clean, scattered flowers on them and, after planting streamers and banners on the sides of the road, gathered at the hermitage playing various kinds of musical instruments, to receive the children from the recluse. The recluse then gave them words of advice: "Lay devotees, these babies are of great power and glory

because of their great accumulation of past merits. Bring them up with much care, attention and heed till they come of age; and arrange for their matrimonial ceremony when they come of age. Go to the King of Bārāṇasī and having paid him tributes of the five kinds of produce of the cow (*go-rasa*): milk, curds, ghee, butter milk and butter, make a request to him to grant you some land for the founding of a city. Then having circumambulated the city, appoint this young man your king, holding the coronation ceremony in the new city." With this advice the recluse handed over the babies to the care of the villagers. After giving him a promise that they would follow his advice, the villagers took away the babies and brought them up in accordance with the instructions given by the recluse.

When they grew up, they played together with the children of the cowherds. But whenever there was a dispute while at play, they beat and kicked their playmates. When the parents saw their children crying, they asked them why they were crying. The children would reply: "The two orphans, cared for by the recluse, beat and kicked us." Even the adopted parents of the two children, along with other villagers, rebuked them, making remarks, such as: "These two children bully our children; they are too troublesome. We should not gratify them; we should avoid the pair of them (*vajjetabbā ime*), brother and sister." Ever since that time, the region measuring 30 leagues where the cowherds' village was situated was known as the Avoidance (*Vajjī*) country."

In due time, the cowherds approached the king, as instructed by the recluse, with offerings consisting of the five kinds of produce of the cow (*go-rasa*) and requested the allotment of a place and founded a city there. As the boy had reached the age of sixteen, he was crowned king of the region. This was followed by a matrimonial ceremony in honour of the two youths. The people of the region agreed then to make a ruling that no woman from another place should be made their queen, and none of their women should be given away in marriage to those outside of their country.

The crowned king and the queen produced their offspring in due time, the queen giving birth to a pair of twins, one male and one female. The queen gave birth to twins in like manner sixteen times in all. When those children came of age, they in turn gave birth to twins sixteen times each.

The population of the city grew rapidly, so much so, that there was no longer sufficient land in the city to accommodate all the princes and princesses with their palaces, pleasure parks and their large retinues. Therefore, the city had to be extended by one mile each on all four sides, entailing the construction of a second wall to enclose the whole city.

After a long time, the growth of the city, in like manner, demanded further extension to meet the requirements of the increasing number of royal families. As before, it was extended again by one mile each on all four sides with the construction of another wall round the entire city. As years rolled by, the city had to be extended again by one mile on all four sides in the same way for the third time. Thus the city grew and flourished with the march of time. It came to be known far and wide as the city of Vesālī, the Big City, throughout the southern sphere of the universe, Jambudīpa.

This is an account of the origin of the nomenclatures, such as Licchavī, the Vajjī country and the city of Vesālī. [534]

The Background to the Discourse

Vesālī city was thriving and prosperous, like its contemporaries Rājagaha and Sāvatthī, in the time of Buddha Gotama. At that time, the city was inhabited by 7,707 reigning monarchs, each with their crown princes, army generals, finance ministers, and various officials, each of them numbering 7,707. For their accommodation, there were 7,000 palaces and mansions with decorated terraced roofing and an equal number of law courts, Assembly Halls, gardens, pleasure parks and lakes. The city was thickly populated and food was abundant.

As years rolled by, the rulers and the ruled of the city failed to observe their bounden duties (*aparihāniya-dhamma*), and they eventually fell victims to disaster, such as drought, poor harvest, shortage of food, famine, etc.

> Factors of non-decline (*aparihāniya dhamma*), part of a discourse taught to the Vajjī princes by the Buddha in order to maintain their prosperity and welfare. For full particulars refrence may be made to the Discourse about the Great Emancipation (*Mahā-paribbāna-sutta*, DN 16).

The first disaster caused a great number of deaths amongst the poor people. Dead bodies, thrown everywhere out of the city, were soon found in various

stages of decomposition and letting off a foul ordour. Such a condition gave the opportunity for the Yakkhas to enter the city and play havoc with the people.

The second disaster was a famine, and together with the evil influence of the Yakkhas, it brought about more deaths and suffering. To make matters worse, there occurred a third disaster, an epidemic of an infectious disease known as snake-wind sickness (*ahi-vāta-roga*), which shook the morale of the people and took an even heavier toll than before.

The citizens, reeling under the continuous shocks of the three disasters: the famine disaster, the havoc caused by the evil spirits and the outbreak of the epidemic, went to the king and made the following address: "Your majesty, the city of Vesālī is facing three kinds of scourges; no such disaster ever occurred during the reigns of the past seven kings. The consensus of opinion now is that such disasters are brought about by the negligence of duty on the part of the sovereign rulers."

The king then caused all the citizens to assemble at the court of law and addressed them: "Citizens, you may hold an inquest to find out if there were any failures on my part in the discharge of my royal duties towards my people." On systematic inquiry of all the daily performances of the king, people found that there was nothing wanting on the part of his majesty, in the discharge of his duties towards his people. They then put their heads together to find a way to overcome the disasters that had fallen on them.

The disciples of the six teachers of the heretical sects suggested that the city of Vesālī would be rid of the three scourges as soon as the six heretic teachers set foot in the city. But some of the citizens who had faith in the Three Treasures said: "Friends, it is said that a Buddha has appeared in the world. He is said to have expounded Dhamma for the welfare and prosperity of all beings. He is powerful and glorious. Our city may be free from all disasters once he is in our city."

All the people were delighted with the proposal. But some people wanted to know the whereabouts of the Buddha and expressed their doubt: "He may not care to come here even if we invite him."

Whereupon, some intelligent persons expressed the optimistic view: "Buddhas are always helpful and have compassion for sentient beings; so why wouldn't he come if we invite him? There is however, one thing to note. The [535] Buddha is

now residing in Rājagaha; King Bimbisāra, a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) and supporter of the monastery, is attending upon him, providing him with the four requisites. He might stand in the way of the Buddha coming to our city."

The people unanimously decided that they should approach King Bimbisāra and acquaint him with the circumstances they were faced with and with his approval should request the Buddha to make a visit to Vesālī. Accordingly, they sent two Licchavī princes to Rājagaha with the responsibility of meeting King Bimbisāra of Rājagaha, carrying with them numerous gifts for him and accompanied by armed guards and troops.

The two princes arrived at Rājagaha and having presented valuable gifts to King Bimbisāra, they then told him the situation in their city and the reason why they had been sent to Rājagaha, and then made the request: "May your Majesty present this request, on our behalf, for the Buddha to visit Vesālī." The King did not comply with their request, but advised them: "You should approach the Buddha yourself and enquire as to the Buddha's intention."

The two Licchavī princes then went to the Buddha and addressed him with profound respect: "Exalted Buddha, our city of Vesālī is being visited by three calamities. If, out of compassion, you would kindly make a visit to Vesālī, it will be a blessing to all of us, the citizens of Vesālī."

Upon kind consideration of their request, the Buddha perceived: "The recitation and teaching of the Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*, Khp 6; Snp 2:1) in Vesālī would bring 1,000 billion universes under protection against diseases; and at the end of the discourse, 84,000 sentient beings would be emancipated through realization of the four noble truths." He therefore accepted the reverential invitation of the two Licchavī princes.

A Ceremonial Departure

On hearing the news of the acceptance by the Buddha of the invitation to visit Vesālī, King Bimbisāra caused it to be proclaimed all over the city: "Know ye, all men, the Buddha has accepted the invitation to visit the city of Vesālī."

He then went to the Buddha and asked: "Most exalted Buddha, have you accepted the invitation of the citizens of Vesālī?" the Buddha replied: "Yes, I have accepted, your Majesty." –"If that be so, may the Buddha wait till all necessary preparations for a ceremonial send-off are complete."

Then King Bimbisāra caused the road between Rājagaha and the river Ganges which was five leagues in length, to be levelled and made even, and temporary pavilions were set up at every league along the route. When the Buddha was informed that everything was set, he started the journey in the company of 500 monastics.

The five-league long route was strewn with flowers of five different colours up to knee height, colourful streamers were erected along the route, pots filled with water and plantain trees were placed in order on either side of the road. Two white umbrellas protected the Buddha from the weather; likewise every monastic was protected by a white umbrella each. The King and his retinue of courtiers and army made offerings with flowers and scents along the route and at every stop, giving the Buddha and the company of monastics enough time to take rest. After a comfortable journey of five days, the whole procession reached the bank of the Ganges.

While the royal barge was in the process of being decorated, King Bimbisāra sent a written intimation to the Licchavī rulers, saying: "The Buddha is on the way to Vesālī; necessary arrangements should be made to keep the roads in a good state of preservation, for a grand reception of the Buddha and his monastics by all the Licchavī rulers."

When the members of the Licchavī clan received the good news, they unanimously made the decision to organise a welcoming ceremony which would be twice as grand as the reverence shown by King Bimbisāra. They levelled the roads between Vesālī and the bank of the river Ganges which was three leagues. They kept four white umbrellas for the Buddha and two white umbrellas each for every monastic accompanying the Buddha. The whole city came out in a grand procession to the bank of the river Ganges to await the arrival of the [536] Buddha.

In the meantime, King Bimbisāra caused two big boats to be kept side by side and firmly tied together to form a huge barge. On the top of it was erected a pavilion, which was decorated profusely with bouquets of flowers and scents, suspended wreaths of flowers fashioned like a fan; inside the pavilion was installed the throne for the Buddha. It was studded with the seven kinds of precious jewels. On arrival at the bank of the river Ganges, the Buddha and his

monastics went aboard the royal barge; the Buddha took his seat on the throne and the monastics took their seats at appropriate places.

After conducting the Buddha and his monastics to the barge, King Bimbisāra went into the river Ganges up to his neck, and holding the barge, addressed the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, I will be waiting for your return, on the bank of the river Ganges," and he gently released the royal barge from his hand as he came out of water.

Celestial beings of the Deva realm, including the Brahmas of the Akaniṭṭha realm, paid honour to the Buddha. Similarly, beings from the lower planes, such as Kambala Nāga King and Assatara Nāga King, also paid homage to the Buddha.

Thus, amidst great festive celebrations, Devas and humans vied with one another in paying honour to the Buddha while he was being conducted across the Ganges, which measured one league from bank to bank, until eventually he entered the territory of the Vesālī rulers.

The Buddha was received on the opposite bank of Ganges by the Licchavīs who were ready waiting for his arrival. They honoured the Buddha twice as much as King Bimbisāra had shown, going down the river deep up to their neck to welcome him with profound respect.

The Lotus Rain

As soon as the royal barge carrying the Buddha reached the opposite bank of the river, wave after wave of dark rain clouds gathered from all sides, accompanied by flashes of lightning and the deafening roar of thunder, presaging a violent thunderstorm. The setting of the Buddha's right foot on the bank of the river was marked by a falling of a torrential lotus rain (*pokkhara-vassa*) which wetted those who wished to get wet, leaving alone those not wanting to get wet. Streams of rain water with varying depths, ranging from the depth of the knee to the waist, the chest and to the neck, rushed all over the city of Vesālī, washing away the decaying dead bodies which were left unattended, as they flowed into the river Ganges. The whole city became clean once again, free from rubbish of all kinds and descriptions.

The Licchavīs conducted the Buddha from the river bank to Vesālī, three leagues away, amidst enthusiastic festivities, stopping one night at every

pavilion which had been constructed at one league intervals. On the way, offerings were made which were twice as much as those given by King Bimbisāra. Finally the Buddha arrived at Vesālī after three days.

When the Buddha arrived at Vesālī, Sakka accompanied by Devas came down from their celestial planes to pay homage to him. The congregation of powerful Devas at Vesālī caused most of the Yakkhas, who had hitherto played havoc with the citizens, to flee the city.

The Buddha stood at the city gate and gave instructions to Ven. Ānanda: "Dear Ānanda, after learning this the Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*) from me, you should recite it within the three walls of the city as a protective measure (*paritta*), going round the city accompanied by the Licchavī princes who should be instructed to carry offerings in their hands."

Having learned the Discourse about the Treasures from the Buddha at the gate of Vesālī on the very day of arrival, Ven. Ānanda went round within the three walls of the city reciting it rhythmically, with correct intonation, pronunciation, accent and punctuation. He took with him as he went round the Buddha's alms bowl filled with water which he sprinkled all over the city.

The Discourse

> [The following translation has been moved here from the section on the Dhamma Jewel, as it is needed to complete the story.]
>
> The Pāḷi text of the Treasures Discourse (*Ratana-sutta*) is included with this English translation. The very elaborate and ornate Myanmar style of the translation is reduced to simple English prose with care being taken to include its essential features.

Reflecting on the many noble qualities of the Buddha such as: The ten kinds of perfection (*pāramī*) of three grades: ten perfections in the ordinary degree, [1172] the higher degree, and the superlative degree; the five kinds of self-sacrificing charity (*mahā-pariccāga*); the three types of good conduct (*cariyā*): conduct aimed at the welfare of the world, conduct aimed at the welfare of kinsmen, and conduct aimed at becoming a Buddha – all of which the Bodhisatta had taken upon himself since the day he wished to become a Buddha and received the assurance of being a Bodhisatta from the mouth of Buddha

Dīpaṅkara, who was the fourth Buddha to arise in the aeon in which four Buddhas appeared.

Reflecting on the memorable events of the Bodhisatta's conception in his last existence, his birth in Lumbinī Park, his great renunciation, his great endeavour involving six years of self-mortification, his noble victory over the five kinds of deaths (*māra*) and his Perfect Self-Awakening as the Buddha, having attained the all-knowing wisdom seated on his throne of victory at the foot of the Bodhi tree, his delivering of the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse at the Deer Park, and the nine supermundane states (*dhamma*).

Establishing a compassionate mind towards all beings in trouble, like the mind of Ven. Ānanda when reciting the Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*) around the three walls that guarded the city of Vesālī through the three watches of the night.

Let us recite the Discourse about the Treasures, whose benign authority all the Devas living in the million world-elements gladly acknowledge; and the recital of which alone had the immediate effect of stamping out the three scourges of the plague, demons and famine in the city of Vesālī.

This is the prelude to the Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*). The first part in Pāḷi prose beginning with: *Yānīdha*, is found in the commentary on the *Dhammapada* (DhpA XXI.1), variously called the Story of One's Previous Deeds (*Attano-pubba-kamma-vatthu*) and the Story about the Arising of the Ganges (*Gaṅgārohaṇa-vatthu*). The second part concerning the Discourse about the Treasures is in two verses composed by ancient teachers. The sutta as uttered by the Buddha began from the verse beginning with: *Yānīdha bhūtani*, "May all the Devas belonging to the earth" Note that the last three verses were uttered by Sakka, the Lord of the Devas.

1. Yānīdha bhūtāni samāgatāni,
bhummāni vā yāni va antalikkhe;
Sabbeva bhūtā sumanā bhavantu,
athopi sakkacca suṇantu bhāsitaṁ.

May all the Devas belonging to the earth and to the celestial realms, who are assembled here, be happy. Moreover, let them listen to this discourse respectfully.

***2**. Tasmā hi bhūtā nisāmetha sabbe,*
mettaṁ karotha mānusiyā pajāya;
Divā ca ratto ca haranti ye baliṁ,
tasmā hi ne rakkhatha appamattā.

Devas! All of you who have assembled here to hear the discourse, pay attention to what I am going to say, bestow your loving-kindness on human beings. By day or by night, they bring offerings to you. Therefore, protect them without remiss.

***3**. Yaṁ kiñci vittaṁ idha vā huraṁ vā,*
saggesu vā yaṁ ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ;
Na no samaṁ atthi tathāgatena,
idampi buddhe ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ;
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu.

Whatever treasure there be, either in this human world or in the worlds of Nāgas or Garuḷas, or the celestial worlds, there is no treasure that can equal the Realised One. This is the incomparable quality in the Buddha that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy, both here and in the hereafter.

***4**. Khayaṁ virāgaṁ amataṁ paṇītaṁ,*
yadajjhagā sakyamunī samāhito;
Na tena dhammena samatthi kiñci,
idampi dhamme ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ;
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu.

The great Sakyan sage, with the tranquillity, which is the outcome of the noble path, has comprehended Nibbāna, the element of the extinction of the defilements, the end of attachment, the deathless. This is the incomparable quality in Nibbāna that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy, both here and in the hereafter!

***5**. Yaṁ buddhaseṭṭho parivaṇṇayī suciṁ,*
samādhimānantarikaññamāhu;
Samādhinā tena samo na vijjati,
idampi dhamme ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ;
Etena saccena suvatthi hotu.

The Perfectly Self-Awakened One, the Supreme Buddha, extolled the concentration that is the outcome of the noble path. This concentration has been declared by the Buddhas as instantly beneficial. There is an incomparable quality in the concentration associated with the noble path since it is by far superior to the concentration pertaining to the fine-material absorption (*jhāna*) or the non-material absorption (*jhāna*). By this truth, may all beings be well and happy, both here and in the hereafter!

***6**. Ye puggalā aṭṭha sataṁ pasatthā,*
cattāri etāni yugāni honti;
Te dakkhiṇeyyā sugatassa sāvakā,
etesu dinnāni mahapphalāni;
Idampi saṅghe ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ,
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.

There are these eight individuals whom the noble ones (*ariya*) praise. They are the four pairs of noble ones (*ariya*) at the four stages of path-knowledge, each with path and fruition knowledges. These noble disciples of the Buddha deserve choicest offerings by those aspiring to Awakening. Such offerings made to them yield abundant fruit. This is the incomparable quality in the Saṅgha consisting of these eight pairs of noble ones (*ariya*) that excel [1173] all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy, both here and in the hereafter!

[There was a long explanation of the 108 types of noble ones inserted here. I have removed it to the Further Explanations, as that is more suitable.]

***7**. Ye suppayuttā manasā daḷhena,*
nikkāmino gotamasāsanamhi;
Te pattipattā amataṁ vigayha,
laddhā mudhā nibbutiṁ bhuñjamānā;
Idampi saṅghe ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ,
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.

Those noble Arahats, who strive with steadfast minds under Buddha Gotama's teaching, are released from the defilements. They have their mind well settled on [1174] Nibbāna, the deathless element. Having become Arahats, they enjoy the bliss of Nibbāna without having to incur

any expense. This is the incomparable quality in the Arahat that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy, both here and in the hereafter!

***8**. Yathindakhīlo pathavissito siyā,*
catubbhi vātehi asampakampiyo;
Tathūpamaṁ sappurisaṁ vadāmi,
yo ariyasaccāni avecca passati;
Idampi saṅghe ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ,
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.

Just as a pillar at the city gate, firmly fixed in the ground, is unshaken by the fierce winds from the four quarters, even so do I declare that the noble one (*ariya*) who perceives the four noble truths through his first path-knowledge is unshakable under all worldly conditions. This is the incomparable quality in the Stream-enterer that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy, both here and in the hereafter!

***9**. Ye ariyasaccāni vibhāvayanti,*
gambhīrapaññena sudesitāni;
Kiñcāpi te honti bhusaṁ pamattā,
na te bhavaṁ aṭṭhamamādiyanti;
Idampi saṅghe ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ,
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.

Those Stream-enterers have perceived the noble truths clearly, being well-taught by the Buddha, the possessor of most profound knowledge. However exceedingly forgetful they might be, they do not take birth for an eighth time. This is the incomparable quality in the Stream-enterer that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy, both here and in the hereafter!

***10**. Sahāvassa dassanasampadāya,*
tayassu dhammā jahitā bhavanti;
Sakkāyadiṭṭhī vicikicchitañca,
sīlabbataṁ vāpi yadatthi kiñci.
Idampi saṅghe ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ,
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.

At the instant of the arising of Stream-entry knowledge, the three defilements of wrong view concerning this body of five aggregates, which arises in 20 ways; eight kinds of doubts and sixteen kinds of uncertainty; and the wrong belief in misguided practices outside the noble path, should there be any, are discarded once and for all.

***11**. Catūhapāyehi ca vippamutto,*
chaccābhiṭhānāni abhabba kātuṁ ;
Idampi saṅghe ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ,
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.

Although certain defilements still remain in him, he is absolutely freed from the four lower worlds (*apāya*). He is also incapable of committing the six gross evil deeds: the five evil deeds and following teachers other than the Buddha. This is the incomparable quality in the Stream-enterer that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy, both here and in the hereafter!

***12**. Kiñcāpi so kamma karoti pāpakaṁ,*
kāyena vācā uda cetasā vā;
Abhabba so tassa paṭicchadāya,
abhabbatā diṭṭhapadassa vuttā;
Idampi saṅghe ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ,
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.

In case, through being heedless, the Stream-enterer commits an evil action by deed, word or thought, he is incapable of concealing it. That quality of being incapable of concealing any misdeed, the Stream-enterer, who has seen Nibbāna, becomes endowed with. This has been pointed out by the Buddha. This is the incomparable quality in the Stream-enterer that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy, both here and in the hereafter!

***13**. Vanappagumbe yatha phussitagge,*
gimhānamāse paṭhamasmiṁ gimhe;
Tathūpamaṁ dhammavaraṁ adesayi,
nibbānagāmiṁ paramaṁ hitāya;
Idampi buddhe ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ,
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.

Just like the forest in spring time, the first month of the hot season has its tree tops ablaze with blossoms, is a scene of delight, so also the doctrine, delightful in word and in meaning, leading to Nibbāna, has been delivered by the Buddha for the highest benefit of Nibbāna. This is the incomparable quality in the doctrine that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy, both here and in the hereafter!

***14**. Varo varaññū varado varāharo,*
anuttaro dhammavaraṁ adesayi;
Idampi buddhe ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ,
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.

The excellent one, the knower of the excellent element of Nibbāna, the bestower of the supermundane to the three spheres, the one who has embraced the old path of the eight constituents, the peerless Buddha, has explained the excellent doctrine comprising ten stages. This is the incomparable quality in the Buddha that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy, both here and in the hereafter!

***15**. Khīṇaṁ purāṇaṁ nava natthi sambhavaṁ,*
virattacittāyatike bhavasmiṁ;
Te khīṇabījā avirūḷhichandā,
nibbanti dhīrā yathāyaṁ padīpo;
Idampi saṅghe ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ,
etena saccena suvatthi hotu.

To Arahats, the old deeds (*kamma*) are extinct beyond the present existence, no new deeds are created. Their mind is not attached to any future existences. They have completely destroyed the seeds of existence. They do not hanker after continued existence. Just as the lamp is extinguished, these wise ones have their aggregates extinguished. This is the incomparable quality in the Arahat that excels all worldly treasures. By this truth, may all beings be well and happy, both here and in the hereafter!

The following is spoken by Sakka, Lord of the Gods:

***16**. Yānīdha bhūtāni samāgatāni,*
bhummāni vā yāni va antalikkhe;
Tathāgataṁ devamanussapūjitaṁ,
buddhaṁ namassāma suvatthi hotu.

Devas belonging to the earth and to the celestial realms are assembled here. We all pay our homage to the Buddha whose coming to the world is most auspicious. May this good deed bring peace and happiness to all beings.

***17**. Yānīdha bhūtāni samāgatāni,*
bhummāni vā yāni va antalikkhe;
Tathāgataṁ devamanussapūjitaṁ,
dhammaṁ namassāma suvatthi hotu.

Devas belonging to the earth and to the celestial realms are assembled here. We all pay our homage to the Dhamma whose proclamation in the world is most auspicious. May [1175] this good deed bring peace and happiness to all beings.

***18**. Yānīdha bhūtāni samāgatāni,*
bhummāni vā yāni va antalikkhe;
Tathāgataṁ devamanussapūjitaṁ,
saṅghaṁ namassāma suvatthi hotūti.

Devas belonging to the earth and to the celestial realms are assembled here. We all pay our homage to the Saṅgha whose presence in the world is most auspicious. May this good deed bring peace and happiness to all beings.

That concludes the Discourse about the Treasures, but the author adds the following encouraging verse, which is an earnest wish:

Let the devotees recite the Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*) beginning with: May all the Devas, up to this verse, which is an earnest wish, and the three scourges will be kept at bay as in ancient Vesālī. This discourse, uttered by the Buddha himself, will prove efficacious to those who recite it with due faith. Accordingly, may those wishing to be free from all troubles recite Treasure Discourse, which is most excellent. [1176]

As soon as Ven. Ānanda started reciting the first verse of the sutta with the words: [537] *Yaṁ kiñci vittaṁ* … those Yakkhas, ghosts, ghouls, goblins and demons who had not yet fled the city but had remained taking shelter under the garbage dumps or clinging to the walls, etc., made off in great haste through the four city gates. As the gates were jammed with fleeing evil spirits, some of them were forced to break through the walls of the city. With the fleeing of beings from the city, those who suffered from their evil influence regained their health and the pestilences disappeared. The citizens came out from their homes with bunches of flowers and scents and paid homage to Ven. Ānanda.

The Buddha recites the Discourse about the Treasures

The king and the citizens decorated the legislative Assembly Hall in the heart of the city with garlands of flowers and scents, setting up a canopied ceiling with studded ornaments. Then they installed the throne for the Buddha in a proper place and conducted him to the hall. The Buddha took his seat on the throne while the monastics, kings and princes, and citizens sat at appropriate places. Then Sakka, accompanied by the Devas of the two celestial realms of Catumahārājika and Tāvatiṁsa as well as Brahmas and other Devas, also arrived to pay homage to the Buddha.

Ven. Ānanda, having taken preventive measures by reciting the protection (*paritta*) all over Vesālī, arrived at the city hall with the crowd of citizens and they all took seats at suitable places. At this huge gathering of humans, Devas and Brahmas, the Buddha recited the same discourse (*Ratana-sutta*), which he had taught Ānanda.

> The Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*) text which the Buddhist public see, read and study nowadays is made up of three sections: 1) The portion beginning with: *Paṇidhānato paṭṭhāya* … up to: *Parittaṁ taṁ bhaṇāmahe* … is the preface in prose and verse composed by scholars of the past; 2) the fifteen verses, beginning from: *Yānīdha bhūtāni samāgatāni* … to: *Khīnaṁ purānaṁ nava natthi sambhavaṁ* … are the original Pāḷi text expounded by the Buddha; 3) the last three, *Yānīdha bhūtāni samāgatāni* … etc. were uttered by Sakka to the congregation at the end of the recital.

At the conclusion of the discourse on the Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*) on the first day, the Licchavī royal families together with all the citizens

of Vesālī were freed from suffering and gained happiness; all kinds of dangers and pestilence were removed and peace was restored. 84,000 sentient beings were emancipated through realizing the four noble truths.

It dawned upon Sakka then that: "The Buddha has brought happiness and prosperity to the people of Vesālī by speaking words of truth about the attributes of the Three Treasures, I should also utter words of truth concerning the virtues of the Three Treasures for the welfare of the citizens of Vesālī." He therefore rose to recite the three verses: *Yānīdha bhūtāni samāgatāni* … etc. which appear at the end of the discourse.

After reciting the three verses, Sakka paid homage to the Buddha by circumambulating him three times and left for the world of the Devas accompanied by his celestial followers. But the Buddha went on expounding the discourse on the second day when 84,000 sentient beings were again emancipated through realizing the four noble truths. In this way, the Buddha continued to expound the same discourse for seven days in succession, emancipating 84,000 sentient beings on each day.

> A total of 84,000 x 7 days = 588,000, this is the amount of beings who were emancipated through realization of the four noble truths. [538]

The Fundamental Principles of Protection Recitation

Protection recitations (*paritta*) are the Buddha's word, otherwise known as discourses (*sutta*), which serve as a protective measure, dispelling all forms of danger from all quarters: pacifying and making those dangers presently arising, cease and disappear and preventing the impending dangers from arising at all.

The discourse on the Blessings (*Maṅgala-sutta*, Khp 5, Snp 2.4) the Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*, Khp 6, Snp 2.1), etc. are discourses taught by the Buddha, and they are powerful enough to protect both the reciter and the listener from impending danger, and also to repel or disperse the danger presently operating. They have the special attributes of bringing well-being and prosperity; hence they have the special name of protective (*paritta*) discourses.

In order to bring about such beneficial effects, it is necessary that the reciter should have the four accomplishments and the listener should also possess four accomplishments as set out below:

The Four Accomplishments of a Reciter[199]

1. The reciter must be capable of reciting passages, phrases, syllables of the Pāḷi text with the correct mode of articulation, enunciation, and accent.
2. He must have full and exact understanding of the Pāḷi text he is reciting.
3. The reciter should chant the protection (*paritta*) without expectation of gifts or presents.
4. The protection (*paritta*) should be recited with a pure heart full of loving-kindness and compassion.

The protection (*paritta*) should be recited only with the fulfilment of these conditions so as to be really effective in warding off and dispelling the impending dangers to the listener. Unless these conditions are fulfilled by the reciter, no beneficial results will accrue and no advantages gained as intended by the reciting of the protection (*paritta*).

The above modes of reciting and listening to the protection (*paritta*) are prescribed on the lines laid down in the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*) commentary. Systematic study and scrutiny of words and phrases should be made, proper attention being paid to the understanding of Pāḷi terms employed. Unless proper attention is paid to study correct enunciation and meaning of the Pāḷi text, the chances of securing the desired result are remote. Only recitation by those who have carefully studied the modes of reciting will bear powerful effects. Recitation of protections (*paritta*) by those with intention to receive gifts or offerings will not produce any real result. Recitation of protections by those with hearts full of loving-kindness and compassion and with an inclination towards freedom from the cycle of suffering will be advantageous.

> Therefore, one who administers protection (*paritta*) must first and foremost study the Pāḷi text, together with the relevant commentaries, under a qualified teacher, special attention being paid to the mode of

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[199] The author gave two versions, one having three accomplishments and another having four. As the second version includes the first version also, we translate only the second version of the four accomplishments.

enunciation, accent and punctuation. Any omission or deletion of words or phrases from the Pāḷi text may render the recitation altogether meaningless. The correct mode of recitation, with full understanding of its meaning, are the vital forces of the protection which will bring about the desired result.

Mistakes in the way of administration, lack of correct enunciation and understanding of its true meaning, coupled with a desire to receive something in return, will undermine the strength of the protection and no desirable result will be obtained.

It must, therefore, be emphasised that it is necessary to administer the protection according to the conditions laid down, with a heart full of loving-kindness, and compassion and resolute inclination towards release from Saṁsāra and curbing one's desire to receive offerings.

Failure and Success of the Recitor

Failure of one who administers protection (*paritta*) arises from two causes, namely: a failure in the undertaking (*payoga-vipatti*) and a failure through wrong determination (*ajjhāsaya-vipatti*).

1. The inability to express words and phrases of the text with accuracy and exactness and with full understanding of their meaning, through a lack of effort and [539] diligence (*payoga-vipatti*).
2. Administration of protection (*paritta*) with a desire for gains and fame (*ajjhāsaya-vipatti*).

The success of one who administers protection arises from two causes, namely: success in the undertaking (*payoga-sampatti*) and success through right determination (*ajjhāsaya-sampatti*).

1. Proficiency in administering protection through diligence, through learning the correct modes of enunciation and with full understanding of the meaning (*payoga-sampatti*)
2. Proficiency in administering protection through loving-kindness, compassion with an inclination towards emancipation and without a selfish motive looking for rewards (*ajjhāsaya-sampatti*).

This section on failure and success are excerpts from the sub-commentary to the Āṭānāṭiya discourse (*Āṭānāṭiya-sutta*, DN 32).

The Four Accomplishments of a Listener

1. The listener should be free from the guilt of the five grave transgressions which bring immediate retribution (*pañcānantarīya-kamma*): killing his father, killing his mother, killing an Arahat, causing bleeding in an attempt on the Buddha's life, causing schism amongst the disciples of a Buddha.
2. The listener should be free from wrong views with a fixed destiny (*niyata-micchā-diṭṭhi*).[200]
3. The listener should possess unshakable faith in the efficacy and beneficial results of the protection.
4. The listener should listen to the protection recitation with due diligence, full attention and profound respect.

These are the qualifications which should be possessed by a listener to the protection recitations (*paritta*); in the Questions to Milinda (*Milinda-pañhā*), in the chapters on the Question about the Ram (*Meṇḍaka-pañhā*), and the Question on becoming free from the Snare (*Pāsamutti-pañhā*) the first three accomplishments are mentioned as follows: "Your majesty, hindrances, such as the five grave transgressions, wrong views or heretical beliefs and a lack of confidence in the protection, cannot serve as a means of protection against dangers." These are the words of Ven. Nāgasena spoken to King Milinda. In view of this, it must be concluded that only those who are free from the three hindrances, stand to enjoy the benefit of the protection.

Failure and Success of the Listener

The failure of one who listens to the protection arises from two causes, namely: a failure in the undertaking (*payoga-vipatti*) and a failure through wrong determination (*ajjhāsaya-vipatti*).

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[200] The views of the uncausedness of existence (*ahetuka-diṭṭhi*); of the inefficacy of action (*akiriya-diṭṭhi*); and nihilism (*natthika-diṭṭhi*); see the Buddhist Dictionary by Ven. Ñāṇatiloka).

1. Failure to listen to the protection recitation with due respect, raising the palms together; with one's mind fixed on the protection without any distractions, through lack of diligence and effort (*payoga-vipatti*).

2. Listening to the protection half-heartedly, without confidence in the efficacy and the beneficial result of the protection; listening to the protection just to oblige and please the person who invites one to the protection ceremony (*ajjhāsaya-vipatti*).

Success of one who listens to the protection arises from two causes, namely: success in the undertaking (*payoga-sampatti*) and success through right determination (*ajjhāsaya-sampatti*).

1. Making the necessary effort in listening to the protection recitation by raising the hands with palms together having profound respect and with one's mind fixed [540] on the protection without any distractions (*payoga-sampatti*).

2. Listening to the protection wholeheartedly, with full confidence in the efficacy and beneficial result of listening to the protection, not just to oblige and please the person who invites one to listen to the protection but with wholesome desire to gain merit (*ajjāsaya-sampatti*).

Listeners of the protection (*paritta*) should abandon the two factors of failure as mentioned above and strive to be accomplished in the two successes, so as to secure the true benefit of protection from impending dangers.

Just as the protection reciter has to abandon the two factors of failure and become accomplished in the two factors of success, so also the listener has to do likewise.

Protection Discourses that possess Unique Power

1. The Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*, Khp 6, Snp 2.1) is possessed of a power which extends over 1,000 billion world-elements. It has brought about the realization of the paths and fruitions and the attainment of Nibbāna by 588,000 humans, Devas and Brahmas. It is therefore a ward-rune or protection (*paritta*) of great authority or influence.

2. The Discourse on the Blessings (*Maṅgala-sutta*, Khp 5, Snp 2.4) is also possessed of a power which extends over 1,000 billion world-elements. An innumerable number of humans, Devas and Brahmas have realised the paths and fruitions and attained Nibbāna through listening to this discourse.

3. The Discourse on Friendliness Meditation (*Metta-sutta* or *Karaṇīyametta-sutta*, Khp 9, Snp 1.8) is a well known discourse of great power. Its authority extends over 1,000 billion world-elements. It had helped forest dwelling monastics become Arahats, through extinction of the pollutants (*āsava*). By assiduously and fully cultivating the moral instructions laid down in this discourse, one can assuredly gain the path to emancipation. It is also a powerful protection (*paritta*).

4. The Discourse about the Constituents (of Mind & Body) (*Khandha-sutta*, AN 4:67) is another powerful discourse, the authority of which extends over 1,000 billion world-elements. It has the power to ward off dangers from various poisons at all times. This discourse contains certain portions that describe the virtues and glories of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha and also the good effects of loving-kindness (*mettā*). Thus it is a powerful protection (*paritta*) which can bring about unique beneficial results.

5. The Discourse about the Top of a Banner (*Dhajagga-sutta*, SN 11:3) is also a discourse of great power which extends over 1,000 billion world-elements. The contemplation of the virtues of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha extolled in this discourse is a means to strengthen one's intellectual power, to enjoy celestial bliss for 3,000 aeons, to be reborn as Sakka for 80 times, as a Universal Monarch for 1,000 times, as an ordinary king or emperor for a countless number of times; to be always rich and prosperous in every existence, when the property he possesses cannot be lost, stolen or destroyed. For 100,000 aeons, he would not be reborn in the planes of woe nor would he be disturbed or shaken through fright which causes the hair to stand on end and goose flesh to appear. Such is the immense power of this discourse which will ultimately lead one to Awakening.

6. The Discourses on the Factors of Awakening (*Bojjhaṅga-sutta*, SN 46:14-16) wield great authority which extends over 1,000 billion world-elements, possessing the power to ward off danger and ailments. A complete cultivation of the seven factors of awakening contained in this discourse leads to Nibbāna in this very life through realization of the paths and fruitions.

7. The Āṭānāṭiya Discourse (*Āṭānāṭiya-sutta*, DN 32) was originally composed by the Four Great Kings (*Catu-mahā-rājika*), having gathered together in the celestial city of Āṭānāṭā. They first paid homage to the seven Buddhas, praising their virtues and attributes. They then composed this discourse and made a proclamation: "Those unruly wild celestial beings such as Yakkhas, who are not amenable to the instructions of the Buddha, nor to the code of conduct laid down by ourselves, will be punished according to the celestial laws." The guardian Devas then went to the Buddha, accompanied by a great number of celestial guards and troops, and presented to him this powerful discourse, which they had [541] composed. The Buddha taught this discourse to the monastics which thus became a powerful authoritative, protective word-rune, or protection (*paritta*).

The relevant commentary lays down the method of administering the protection as follows: In the case of those possessed by demons, Petas and unruly beings, the Āṭānāṭiya Discourse (*Āṭānāṭiya-sutta*) should not be administered initially. For seven days continuously, the Discourse on Friendliness Meditation (*Metta-sutta*), the Discourse through the Top of a Banner (*Dhajagga-sutta*) and the Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*) should be recited first. Should the possessed person become normal after these recitations, there is no need for administering the Āṭānāṭiya Discourse (*Āṭānāṭiya-sutta*).

Only when the desired result is not achieved after reciting continuously for seven days of the first three discourses, should the Āṭānāṭiya Discourse (*Āṭānāṭiya-sutta*) be recited. The monastic who recites the Āṭānāṭiya Discourse (*Āṭānāṭiya-sutta*) should not eat cakes made of flour, meat and fish; nor should he reside in a cemetery. This is because if such a monastic eats flour cakes, meat or fish or resides in a cemetery, he is liable to be possessed by evil spirits. The place chosen for recitation of the protection should be kept clean and tidy and besmeared with turmeric power.

The monastic who would administer the protection should be conducted from the monastery to the house, surrounded by a security guard of men armed with bows and arrows, shields, swords and spears. The monastic should not recite the protection in the open; the gate door, windows and doors of the house should be securely closed and the monastic should sit down closely surrounded by the armed guard. Then with a heart full of loving-kindness he should administer the protection according to the following guide lines: it is essential that the afflicted person should be first established in morality (*sīla*) by observance of the precepts and then this is followed by the recitation of the protection.

Should such measures fail to drive away the evil ones, the possessed person should be taken to the monastery and kept lying on the relic shrine (*stūpa*) platform. The shrine platform should be swept clean and offerings of light should be made; then Pāḷi prose and verses, such as: *Divā tapati ādicco …* (Dhp 387) etc., which generally bring auspiciousness, should be chanted. An announcement should then be made to the effect that all monastics have gathered together at that place.

Then someone should go to the nearby forest grove where there would be a tree which is conspicuous by special features, such as size, height, etc., and invite the guardian dryad, saying: "All the monastics are desirous of your coming to the gathering." Such an invitation by the monastics can never be refused.

Then the person possessed should be asked: "What is your name?" Should it be Naradeva, for instance, he should be addressed by that name: "Naradeva, you have been given a share of merits gained from provision of accommodation to the Saṅgha, the share of merits gained from the offerings of scents and flowers, from the offering of meals to the Saṅgha; the monastics have also recited auspicious discourses, such as The Discourse on the Blessings (*Maṅgala-sutta*), as a gift of Dhamma to you. So out of consideration for these deeds of kindness and out of respect to the Saṅgha, we pray that you release this patient."

Should such measures fail to secure the release of the demoniacal possession, the situation should be made known to the benevolent Devas: "Good Devas, you are fully aware that this unruly evil spirit does not take notice of our request made with loving-kindness. We have no alternative but to have recourse and invoke the authority of the Buddha." So saying, the Āṭānāṭiya Discourse (*Āṭānāṭiya-sutta*) should be recited.

The above method is applicable only to lay people. For the monastic who is possessed by demons, Petas and unruly beings, his room should be swept clean and made tidy, then all the Saṅgha should be invited to assemble there. After sharing the merits gained from offerings of flowers, scents, etc., the Āṭānāṭiya Discourse should be recited as described before.

Thus the administration of the Āṭānāṭiya Discourse is elaborately described in the commentary on the Discourse. When recited systematically as laid down in the commentary, the Āṭānāṭiya Discourse is of immense authority, wielding great power and influence.

Likewise, the other protections are also of great power and influence in their own way. In short, the words of the Buddha, such as the Basket of Discourses (*Sutta-piṭaka*) consisting of the five Collections (*Nikāya*), are of great authority, its influence pervading over 1,000 billion world-element, promoting welfare and prosperity both in mundane and supermundane spheres. It wards [542] off all kinds of dangers and paves the way to the attainment of Nibbāna through realization of the paths and fruitions. These words of the Buddha, enshrined in the Collections are the noblest of all the spoken words and it should thus be confidently taken to be of immense authority, wielding great power and influence in accordance with this saying (SN 8.6):

> *Yaṁ Buddho bhāsate vācaṁ, khemaṁ Nibbāna-pattiyā,*
> *dukkhassanta-kiriyāya, sā ve vācānam-uttamā.*
>
> The Fully-Self Awakened Buddha has expounded out of great compassion the Five Collections with the object of attainment of Nibbāna, which is the cessation of all sufferings. The words spoken by the Buddha, as contained in the Collections, excel all other words, free of any fault and conducive to peace and happiness.

Leaving Vesālī

After a fortnight's stay in the city of Vesālī, the Buddha told the Licchavī princes: "We are leaving," by way of farewell. Whereupon the Licchavīs honoured the Buddha as much as twice that of King Bimbisāra and in three days they conducted him to the bank of the Ganges.

The Nāgas in the region of the Ganges agreed amongst themselves saying: "Men have made homage to the Buddha on a lavish scale and why should we not do

likewise? We will do likewise." They proceeded to create golden boats, silver boats, and emerald boats mounted with golden, silver and emerald thrones, and covering the entire surface of the Ganges with a blanket of five different species of lily. They then approached the Buddha and made the solemn request: "Most exalted Buddha, may you grant us a favour by gratifying our wish out of compassion for us?"

The Buddha conceded to their request and went aboard the boats which were created by the Nāgas with jewel ornamentations. Each of the 500 monastics also occupied a jewelled boat. Whereupon, the Nāga kings conducted the Buddha and his 500 monastics to the Nāga realm, and the Buddha spent the whole night expounding discourses for the benefit of the Nāgas. The next morning, a great offering of celestial food was made to the Buddha and his monastics by the Nāga kings. After teaching a discourse in appreciation of the offerings, the Buddha made his departure from the land of the Nāgas.

Devas, who had dominion over that region of the earth (*bhumma-devā*), also agreed amongst themselves, saying: "Humans and Nāgas have made great homage to the Buddha, why should we not do likewise? We shall follow suit." They proceeded to do honour to the Buddha by setting up excellent umbrellas all over the hills, forest and trees. In this manner similar offerings were made right up to the Brahma realm of Akaniṭṭha.

King Bimbisāra, making great homage twice as much as that of the Licchavīs, conducted the Buddha and his monastics to Veḷuvana monastery, Rājagaha, making the whole journey as before, in five days.

The Life of the Bodhisatta Saṅkha

After the arrival of the Buddha at Veḷuvana monastery, the monastics assembled at the main hall in the afternoon to discuss matters relating to meditation. Their discussion was often interrupted by conversations, such as: "The glories of the Buddha are really wonderful. The stretch of land on this side of the Ganges is five leagues and on the other side of the Ganges it is three leagues, a total of eight leagues; the surface of the land on both sides was without bumps or hollows at any place. It had an even surface all over and was strewn with white sand and flowers. The surface of the river Ganges, with a width of one league, was covered by a blanket of five-hued species of flowers. The whole region was

decorated with white umbrellas right up to the Akaniṭṭha Brahma realm." Their discussion on [543] meditation was often interrupted by such words of praise in honour of the Buddha.

Aware of what was happening, the Buddha left the scented chamber and went to the Assembly Hall. He sat on the reserved seat. He then asked the monastics: "Monastics, what is the subject of your discussion at this moment?"

When it was explained what it was, he said: "Such a wonderful manner of paying respects is not attributable to my glories as a Buddha, nor to the powers of the Nāgas, Devas and Brahmas. It should be attributed to the beneficial results which accrue from a small deed of mine done in the past."

When the Buddha had given such a hint, the monastics approached him with the request: "Most exalted Buddha, we do not have any knowledge of that small deed of generosity done in the past. Most exalted Buddha, we pray that we may be enlightened so as to know about it fully."

The Buddha, thereupon, proceeded: Monastics, what happened in the past was this: There was a Brahmin in the city of Takkasilā by the name of Saṅkha. He had a son named Susīma, who was sixteen years old. One day, Susīma approached his father with great respect and his father asked him: "My dear son, what is the matter with you?" Then the lad replied: "Father, I would like to go to Bārāṇasī to acquire an education." His father said: "My dear son, there is a Brahmin teacher in Bārāṇasī. He is my childhood friend, you might go to him and receive your share of education." He then gave his son a sum of 1,000 pieces of money for his necessary expenditure.

Susīma paid due respect to his parents and taking the money, set out on his journey and arrived at Bārāṇasī in due time. He approached the teacher with profound respect and in a customary way. He told the teacher that he was the son of the Brahmin Saṅkha of Takkasilā. The teacher gave him a warm reception making the remark: "So you are a son of my friend."

After a moment of rest, Susīma went again to the Brahmin, and placing the sum of money at his feet, requested him for permission to acquire education under his care. The permission was willingly granted. He took pains in learning, so that, in a very short time, he added everything to the fount of his knowledge, just like the precious grease of lions is retained in a gold cup for the sake of security. As he was endowed with the perfections (*pāramī*), he completed the

full course of learning in a few months instead of the twelve years an average pupil would have to spend.

As Susīma was in the middle of studying a Veda text, he discovered that the treatise contained only the beginning and middle of the subject they treated; the final section was not to be found therein. He brought the matter to the notice of the Brahmin, saying: "Great Brahmin, this Veda text deals only with the beginning and middle of the subject, the final portion is not found in it." Whereupon, the Brahmin also admitted that he too did not find it. Susīma then asked the Brahmin: "Is there anyone who knows all about the subject from beginning to end." The Brahmin replied: "My dear son Susīma, those Paccekabuddhas who live in the forest of the Deer Park at Isipatana, may possibly know." – "If so, may I have your kind permission to go and ask those Paccekabuddhas about it," requested the youth Susīma. The Brahmin granted his permission, saying: "My dear son Susīma, you may go as you like."

Susīma, who was accomplished in the perfections (*pāramī*), went to the forest of the Deer Park at Isipatana, approached the Paccekabuddhas with due respect and asked: "Venerable sirs, do you know the subjects in the Vedas from beginning to end?" – "Yes, we do, lay devotee Susīma," was their reply. Then he requested them: "Kindly teach me the last part of the knowledge which is missing in the Veda." The Paccekabuddhas told him: "Lay devotee Susīma, you will have to renounce the world and become a recluse. No one other than a monastic could learn that." Susīma agreed and gave his word: "Very well, venerable sirs, please ordain me as a monastic. You may direct me to do anything that is necessary so long as it helps me learn the last portion of Veda knowledge."

He was ordained as a monastic as requested and was taught how [544] to wear the robes properly such as keeping the borders of both the upper and lower robes in a tidy circular fashion. They could teach him only the precepts of good conduct (*abhisamācārika-sīla*), and not any meditation, because unlike omniscient Buddhas, they had not the ability to give instructions on how to practise insight meditation (*vipassanā*).

The newly ordained monastic Susīma devoted himself earnestly to the observance of the precepts of good conduct as instructed by the Paccekabuddhas, Having performed deeds of merit in the past which formed sufficing conditions

(*upanissaya*) for the attainment of Paccekabuddha knowledge (*Paccekabuddha-ñāṇa*), after a brief period of practice, he became a Paccekabuddha. He was soon held in high repute and reached the height of his glory acquiring great fame and gains and a large number of followers and disciples. But because of his past misdeeds, which prohibited longevity, he did not live long and passed away while still young. His remains were cremated by the Paccekabuddhas and the citizens of Bārāṇasī. The relics of his body were placed in a relic shrine (*stūpa*) built near the gate of the city.

The old Brahmin father, Saṅkha, thought of his son one day: "My son had been gone for a long time now and no news had been received from him." So he left Takkasilā with a longing to see his son and eventually reached the gate of the city of Bārāṇasī. He saw quite a number of people gathered together near the shrine there; and thinking someone from amongst the crowd would perhaps know something about his son, he approached them and enquired: "Friends, there is a young man by the name of Susīma who came to Bārāṇasī to study; perhaps some of you might know something about him."

"Yes we do, old Brahmin. That young man Susīma, after acquiring the complete knowledge of the Vedas under the care of the Brahmin of Bārāṇasī, received ordination at the place of the Paccekabuddhas, and eventually became a Paccekabuddha through realization of Paccekabuddha knowledge (*Paccekabuddha-ñāṇa*). He has passed away now, attaining Nibbāna with no residue remaining (*anupādisesa-nibbāna*). This is the shrine where his relics are enshrined."

After hearing this shocking news, the poor old Brahmin wept most hopelessly, beating the earth with his palm many times. After mourning the loss of his dear son to his heart's content, he went into the precincts of the shrine and removed grass, and spread white sand which he had brought from a nearby place with his shoulder towel. He poured water from his jug all over the place to keep the dust from arising; then he collected as many wild flowers as possible and offered them to the shrine. He put his shoulder towel into the shape of a streamer and wrapping it around his umbrella, he placed it high above the shrine, tying them tight to the shrine. Then he departed.

Having thus told the story of the past, the Buddha correlated the events of the past with those of the present by giving the following discourse: "Monastics, you

might be wondering who the Brahmin Saṅkha of this story could be. You need not ponder any more about it. The Brahmin Saṅkha was none other than myself.

I, who was a Bodhisatta then, cleaned the precincts of the shrine containing the relics of the Paccekabuddha Susīma, removing the grass roots, stump, etc. As a beneficial result of this act of merit, the people made the road clean and free of tree stumps and levelled it for a stretch of five leagues on this side of the Ganges and three leagues on the far bank.

I, then a Bodhisatta, spread white sand in the precincts of the Paccekabuddha shrine. As a benefit accruing from this act of merit, people spread white sand all along the route measuring eight leagues.

I, then a Bodhisatta, had collected as many wild flowers as I could and placed them in the shrine. This meritorious deed of mine resulted in Devas and humans strewing various kinds of flowers on land and the river, covering a distance of nine leagues. [545]

I, then a Bodhisatta, sprinkled the precincts of the Paccekabuddha shrine with water from my jug to prevent the dust from arising. As a result of this act of merit of mine the lotus rain (*pokkhara-vassa*) from a cloud bank the size of a lily leaf fell the moment I set foot on the land of Vesālī.

I, then a Bodhisatta, set up a streamer at the shrine of the Paccekabuddha and erected an umbrella on top of it. For that act of merit, streamers were set up all the way to the Akaniṭṭha Brahma realm and white umbrellas were erected all over the regions.

Monastics, making homage to me in such wonderful manner is not attributable to my glories as a Buddha, nor to the powers of Nāga, Devas and Brahmas. It should be attributed to the beneficial results which accrue from a small deed of merit done by me as a Bodhisatta in my existence as Brahmin Saṅkha." The Buddha summed up the discourse by expounding the following verse (Dhp 290:

> *Mattā-sukha-pariccāgā, passe ce vipulaṁ sukhaṁ,*
> *caje mattā sukhaṁ dhīro, sampassaṁ vipulaṁ sukhaṁ.*
>
> When it is known with certainty that a generous abandoning by way of sacrifice of pleasurable sensations, which gives a small amount of happiness, will bring a vast amount of reward such as the happiness of

> Nibbāna, then surely a wise person should forego such an insignificant reward of a small pleasure in favour of the great reward of Nibbāna.

At the conclusion of the exposition, many sentient beings attained the Stream-entry path and fruit, etc.

Uggasena, the Acrobat

> [The following is based on DhpA XXIV.6, the commentary to Dhp 348, it is moved here from the following chapter, so as to make that chapter more focused.]

Uggasena, the Son of a Richman

In the time of the Buddha a theatrical troupe of 500 entertainers used to stage shows to entertain the King of Rājagaha for seven days annually or bi-annually, for which they received an enormous amount of reward in gold and silver. The prizes awarded by the enthusiastic general public in their honour, at intervals of performances, was inestimable. The citizens sat upon rows and rows of four-legged bedsteads of their own, arranging them behind and above one another, each row getting higher and higher than the one in front.

Their shows usually started with the appearance on the stage of a young actress, the daughter of the troupe's leading acrobat. She displayed her skill in acrobatics in various styles on a string of bamboos at a certain height from the ground; she moved from end to end gently and steadily, as she danced and sang with a pleasant voice.

Amongst the audience was a youth named Uggasena, the son of a rich man. He was enjoying the show together with a friend. He gazed attentively at the impressive performer displaying her acrobatic skill in different postures and styles, softly bending, raising, stretching her delicate hands and feet. He went back home driven mad with intense attachment and love for the youthful actress. On arriving home, he threw himself down on bed, saying: "I will live only if I can have her or else I will die on this bed," and sentimentally went on hunger strike.

His parents asked him: "Dear son, what ails you?" – "Dear mother and father, I will live only if I win the hand of the actress whom I have seen performing in the precincts of the royal palace; if not, I will die on this bedstead," was his

frank, blunt reply. His parents consoled him by saying: "Dear son, don't get so sentimental. We will find a fair lady suitable for you from amongst our own clansmen of wealthy status." But Uggasena was not moved by the pleadings of his parents but reiterated his wish as before without any [546] change and persisted in lying on his bed.

Uggasena's father made several attempts to persuade his son to change his mind, talking to him privately with soothing words, but to no avail. Finally the parents sent for his friend and asked him to negotiate with the head acrobat, the father of the girl, on their behalf, saying: "Friend, please take his sum of 1,000 and give it to the father of the actress with a request to accept it and to give his daughter in marriage to my son, Uggasena."

The head acrobat's reply to the messenger's request was: "I am not prepared to accept the money in exchange for my daughter. If the rich man's son Uggasena cannot live unless he wins the hands of my daughter, he will have to come along with us. I will give away my daughter only on this condition that he follows us wherever we go."

When his parents conveyed the news to him, Uggasena said: "Mother and father, in that case I will go along with them," and so saying he left for the head acrobat's place in spite of repeated requests of his parents and relatives not to do so. The head acrobat was as good as his word, he gave away his daughter and they all wandered about towns and villages staging shows and acrobatic performances.

A son was born of the union of Uggasena and the actress. The mother used to coax and cuddle the child by singing a lullaby: "Son of a watchman of the carts … I wish you would sleep. Son of a wicked man, the custodian of prize money … I wish you would sleep. Son of an ignoramus … I wish you would sleep." She sang this in a mocking, ridiculing manner.

This lullaby reflected on the life being led by Uggasena. Whenever the entertainment troupe rested during the course of wanderings, he was charged with the responsibility for securing food for the oxen and feeding them, and for the security of the camp. He was also responsible for the safe custody of the proceeds from the performances.

Uggasena realized that by singing mocking lullabies, the actress was making insinuations and ridiculing him, so he asked the actress: "Are you singing to

despise me?" She replied: "Yes, it was intended for you." Uggasena retorted: "Then I will abandon you and go back to my parents." The actress was unmoved by this threat and she replied: "I don't care at all whether you go away or come back," and went on repeating the lullaby again and again knowing that it was irritating to Uggasena.

> The actress was puffed up with the pride of her beauty and her fine art of dancing which enabled her to earn her living easily.

Uggasena thought over how the actress became so conceited and finally realised: "Her pride is rooted in her prowess as an acrobatic artist." He made up his mind to learn the skill of acrobatic feats. Approaching his father-in-law, the acrobatic master, he sought and received permission from him to be trained in the art of gymnastics until he became an expert in it. He then went from place to place staging shows in villages and marketing towns and finally he came back again to the city of Rājagaha. There, he had it announced widely throughout the city that "Seven days from now, Uggasena, the son of the rich man, will stage a performance, demonstrating amazing feats of acrobatics and somersaults."

The citizens vied with one another in setting up bedstead seats with longer legs to get a better view of the performances and they assembled around the stage on the appointed day. Finally, Uggasena appeared and he climbed up a pole of 60 cubits high and made up of many lengths of bamboo affixed to one another firmly. He stood on top of the pole poised to stage a performance. [547]

Uggasena appears to the Buddha

On the day fixed for the staging of the performance by Uggasena, the Buddha surveyed the world of beings before dawn and perceived by means of his omniscience a vision of Uggasena, who was caught in his supernormal mental screen, like a fish trapped in a net, and he reflected on what would come to pass.

He saw in his mind's eye: When the morning comes, Uggasena will stand on top of the pole of 60 cubits high to stage a performance and the citizens will appear to witness it. At that assemblage of people, I will expound the Dhamma made up of four verses. As a result of hearing this teaching of mine, 84,000 sentient beings will gain emancipation through realization of the four noble truths, and Uggasena will become an Arahat.

As the time for alms round arrived, the Buddha went into the city in the company of his monastics as usual. Just before the Buddha's entry into the city, Uggasena had signalled to the audience by pointing his index finger towards them that he was about to begin the show; that brought thunderous applause from the crowd. Uggasena who was then standing on top of the pole took a leap up in to the air and somersaulted seven times in the air before he came down and stood on the pole.

The Buddha, who had now arrived in the city, caused the audience, by his supernormal power, to pay exclusive attention to him, thus diverting their interest which was directed to Uggasena a moment ago. Watching the mood of the audience from atop the pole, Uggasena noticed their attention which was fixed on him, suddenly turn towards the Buddha. He felt down-hearted that the audience had lost interest in him. He thought to himself: "I can stage this acrobatic show only once a year, yet, as soon as the Buddha has come into the city, the audience is no longer interested in me, instead, they give their attention only to him. All my efforts to demonstrate my skill in acrobatic feats are in vain, and fruitless."

The Buddha knew what was in the mind of Uggasena and asked Ven. Moggallāna: "Dear son Moggallāna, go to the son of the rich man and tell him that he is asked to go on with the acrobatic performance." Ven. Moggallāna went as instructed by the Buddha and standing at the base of the pole gave encouragement to Uggasena by the following verse (DhpA, PTS 4.62):

> *Iṅgha passa naṭa-putta, Uggasena mahabbala,*
> *karohi raṅgaṁ parisāya, hāsayassu mahā-janaṁ*
>
> O gymnastic artist of great strength, Uggasena, I urge you to resume your display of skill in somersault with ease of mind. Look at the crowd that has gathered. Let the mass of people enjoy your amazing entertainment and praise your skill with uproarious cheers.

On hearing the words of Ven. Moggallāna, Uggasena felt greatly delighted and encouraged; he thought that the Buddha was desirous of seeing his skill. He replied while still standing on top of the pole by the following verse:

> *Iṅgha passa mahā-paññā, Moggallāna mahiddhika;*
> *karomi raṅgaṁ parisāya, hāsayāmi mahā-janaṁ.*

> Ven. Moggallāna of great wisdom and of the highest degree of supernormal power! Please watch, I will entertain the crowd that has gathered by displaying my skill with ease of mind. I will perform such an amazing feat that the audience will give enthusiastic cheers and praise uproariously.

So saying, he threw himself up into the air and made fourteen complete rounds of somersault [548] before coming down on his feet on top of the bamboo pole.

Exhortation by the Buddha

At that moment, the Buddha exhorted Uggasena by these words: "Dear son Uggasena, a wise man should abandon attachment to the five aggregates which arose before, to the five aggregates which will arise in the future and to those which are presently arising. Not clinging to the five aggregates, he should strive for the release from the suffering of birth, the suffering of ageing, the suffering of death." The Buddha went on expounding the Dhamma by means of the following verse:

> *Muñca pure muñca pacchato,*
> *majjhe muñca bhavassa pāragū,*
> *sabbattha vimutta-mānaso,*
> *na punaṁ jāti-jaraṁ upehisi.*
>
> Dear son Uggasena, give up and abandon the craving for the fivefold aggregates of mind and matter of the past … the future … and the present. Once you have completely forsaken the attachment to these aggregates of the past, the future and the present, you will have transcended the round of suffering in the three realms: the sensual world (*kāma-bhava*), the world of form (*rūpa-bhava*) and the formless world (*arūpa-bhava*) and you will have reached perfection and become an authority in matters pertaining to super knowledge (*abhiññā*), full comprehension (*pariññā*), letting go (*pahāna*), meditation (*bhāvanā*) and realisation (*sacchikiriyā*); you will live fully emancipated from all forms of the conditioned and pass beyond the stages of birth, ageing, sickness and death.

At the conclusion of the discourse, 84,000 sentient beings became emancipated through realization of the four noble truths. The rich man's son, Uggasena, became an Arahat complete with analytical wisdom (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*) while still standing on top of the bamboo pole. He came down from it and went

towards the Buddha, paying homage with full reverence. He then requested permission to receive ordination. The Buddha stretched out his hand and pronounced: *Ehi bhikkhu* … to summon him as a full-fledged monastic. The form of an acrobatic artist disappeared instantaneously and Uggasena assumed the form of a great elder (*mahā-thera*) of 60 years' standing aged 80, and fully equipped with the eight requisites of a monastic.

Fellow monastics asked Uggasena: "Did you not feel afraid when you came down from the top of the bamboo pole 60 cubits high?" Thereupon, Uggasena replied: "Friends, I had not the slightest fright." The monastics went to the Buddha and reported: "Most exalted Buddha, Uggasena has claimed to be an Arahat by telling lies that: 'He did not feel the slightest fright when he was coming down from the top of the pole.' "

The Buddha gave them a brief explanation in support of Uggasena: "Dear monastics, all the monastics, like my son Uggasena, through eradication of the pollutants (*āsava*), by cutting off the ten fetters (*saṁyojana*) are free from fright." [549]

> The bonds or fetters (*saṁyōjana*) bind all beings to the wheel of existence. When they are completely broken or eliminated, emancipation results. The ten fetters are: 1) belief in a soul, the view that the body and mind is 'myself' (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*); 2) doubt or wavering concerning the Buddha's Enlightenment, His Teaching and His Order (*vicikiccha*); 3) the belief that there are paths other then the a noble (*ariya*) path of eight constituents that can liberate one from suffering (*sīlabbata-parāmāsa*); 4) sensual desire, sensuous passion (*kāma-rāga*); 5) ill-will (*paṭigha*); 6) craving for existence in the fine-material (Brahma) realms (*rūpa-rāga*); 7) craving for existence in the formless Brahma realms (*arūpa-rāga*); 8) pride, awareness of superiority or inferiority (*māna*); 9) restlessness, agitation, mental unrest (*uddhacca*); 10) ignorance, lack of real or correct knowledge as to the nature of existence, as to the Four Noble Truths (*avijja*). It is the main root of suffering and of rebirth.

The Buddha then expounded the following verse which is included in the Chapter about Brahmins (*Brāhmaṇa-vagga*) of the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 397).

> *Sabba-saṁyojanaṁ chetvā, yo ve na paritassati,*
> *saṅgātigaṁ visaṁyuttaṁ, tam-ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ*

> Monastics, a monastic who has became an Arahat through eradication of the pollutants (*āsava*) has indeed cut off the ten long fetters by the sword of the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*); he cannot therefore be moved or startled by fright which has its origin in greed (*lobha*). I praise and proclaim such an Arahat who has overcome the seven kinds of clinging (*saṅga*): sensuous passion, ill-will, conceit, wrong view, moral defilement, physical, verbal and mental misdeeds, and who has nothing more to do with four ties (*yoga*) sensuality (*kāma*), coninuation (*bhava*), views (*diṭṭhi*) and ignorance (*avijjā*) as a truly noble, pure person, a Brahmin, who has done away with all kinds of evil.

A large multitude of people attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*), and so on, at the conclusion of the discourse.

Uggasena's Past Deeds

One day, monastics were assembled again in the main hall and were discussing the mode of Uggasena's attainment to Awakening: "Friends, one wonders, in the first place, how a person such as Ven. Uggasena, who was predestined to become an Arahat, got entangled through an actress with the troupe of acrobatic performers, following them wherever they wandered; and in the second place, what was the cause of the powerful sufficing condition for attainment of Awakening."

The Buddha went to the main hall and asked: "Monastics, what is the subject of your discussion?" When they explained what the subject of their discussion was, he explained to them briefly thus: "Monastics, Uggasena himself was the cause of these two events; the one that entailed his engagement with the dancing troupe and the other that resulted in his attainment to Awakening."

He then went on to relate the full account as follows: "Long, long ago, when a relic shrine (*stūpa*) was built to enshrine the relics of Buddha Kassapa, men and women of Bārāṇasī went in large numbers to the shrine site to contribute the necessary labour, carrying plenty of food in their carts. On the way they met a great elder (*mahā-thera*) entering the city on his alms round.

At that time, one woman noticed the great elder and told her husband: "My dear lord, the elder is receiving food on his rounds, please go and bring his bowl so that we may offer something to him. We have brought along in the cart plenty

of food." The man went and fetched the bowl from the monastic and after filling it with hard and soft food to its brim, they returned it to the great elder and both the husband and wife declared their wish: "Revered great elder, for this deed of merit, may both of us be blessed with a share of the supermundane knowledge which you have realized."

The recipient of their gift food was not an ordinary monastic, he happened to be an Arahat devoid of the taint of pollutants (*āsava*). He foresaw, by means of his knowledge of the future (*anāgata-ñāṇa*), that their wishes would be fulfilled and so he smiled happily. The woman caught a glimpse of it and she muttered: "My dear lord, the venerable who received our offering might be an actor." The husband also agreed, saying. "Yes, he might be an actor." They then departed from that place. This then was the deed the husband and wife had done in the past.

The couple lived to the end of their lifespan in that existence and were reborn in [550] the realm of the Devas. After enjoying the life of Devas, the wife was born as the daughter of the leading acrobatic performer in her present and last existence. The husband was born as the son of a rich man in the last stage of his existence, by the name of Uggasena. Although born as a son of a rich man, he had to accompany the dancing troupe in their wanderings, for the demeritorious deed of agreeing: "Yes, he might be an actor," to his wife in a past existence. But for the good deed of offering food to an Arahat, in pure piety and devotional faith, he became an Arahat."

When Uggasena became an Arahat and became a summoned monastic, his wife, the young actress, thought to herself, awakened by the meritorious deed in her past: "Whatever level of intelligence possessed by my husband, my level of intelligence should also be the same as his." Reasoning in this way she approached the female monastics and received ordination from them. Then devoting herself to the practice of Dhamma, in due course she also became an Arahat, having eradicated all the pollutants (*āsava*).

22b: 500 Monastics become Arahats

The War over the River Rohinī

There was a small river by the name of Rohinī between Kapilavatthu and Koliya. The two kingdoms took turns, in harmony, to water their respective arable lands by controlling the flow of the channel with a single dam.

The level of the water in the channel was at its lowest in the month of June (*Jeṭṭha*) and the crops usually withered. The farmers of the two countries called a meeting to discuss the matter of sharing the water in the channel. At the meeting the Koliyan farmers said: "Friends, if the small amount of water in the river was to be divided and shared by both of us, neither of us would receive a sufficient amount to water our fields. One more flood of water would suffice to bring maturity to our crops. We request you therefore to let us make use of this small amount of water."

The farmers of Kapilavatthu also had their say in this manner: "Friends, we can't go from door to door of your houses carrying baskets with our purses filled with gold, silver and precious jewels in search of paddy, in a dejected manner, while you all sit down with your minds at ease having filled your granaries with paddy to their full capacities. Our early crops, too, are about to mature and need watering in the same manner as yours do."

Heated arguments ensued, one side saying: "We are not going to yield," the other side retorting in the same words. The exchange of words eventually led to blows, a farmer on one side attacked a farmer from the other side and the latter retaliated in a like manner. The affray that started between the farmers on both sides ultimately grew into hostilities, like a small bush fire which grows fierce and finally burns down a palatial mansion to the extent of decrying the royal clans on both sides.

The Koliyan farmers began the quarrel: "You have threatened us by placing your reliance on the royal clan of Kapilavatthu. The Kapilavatthu royal clan you depend upon behave like common dogs and jackals of the forest making

their own sisters their wives.[201] What harm can their elephants, horses and armour do to us?"

The Kapilavatthu farmers retaliated in a no less acrimonious tone: "You threatened us by relying on your little lepers inflicted with horrible leprosy. The Koliyan descendents on whom you lean on for support are themselves in a miserable plight ever since they were banished from the city and lived like animals [551] in the hollow of Kola trees. What harm can their elephants, horses and armours do to us?"

The farmers returned to their respective cities and reported the matter to the ministers of agriculture, who in turn, brought the state of affairs to the notice of their chiefs.

Consequently, the Sakyans of Kapilavatthu prepared to wage war on the Koliyas and came out of the city, shouting the war cry: "The husbands of their own sisters will demonstrate their strength of arms." The rival royalties on the side of Koliyas also prepared for war and came out, their war cry being: "Those taking shelters in the hollows of Kola trees will display their strength of arms."

At that time, the Buddha was residing in the Jetavana monastery of Sāvatthī. On the very day on which the two rival communities of Kapilavatthu and Koliya were prepared to go to the battlefield, he surveyed the world early at dawn and perceived that a bloody battle was imminent between the two opposing sides that very evening. He further perceived that he would be able to avert the war by going to the scene of hostilities and expounding three Birth Stories (*Jātaka*): The Birth Story about the Flame of the Forest Tree (*Phandana-jātaka*, Ja 475), the Birth Story about the Jackal's Roar (*Daddara-jātaka*, Ja 172) and the Birth Story about the Quail (*Laṭukika-jātaka*, Ja 357). This would bring about peace, after which, he will have to teach the Birth Stories about the Way of Trees (*Rukkha-dhamma-jātaka*, Ja 74) and the Birth Story about the Quail (*Vaṭṭaka-jātaka*, Ja 33), aka the Birth Story about being in Agreement (*Sammodamāna-jātaka*, Ja 33) and lastly, followed by the Discourse about Taking up Weapons (*Atta-daṇḍa-sutta*, Snp 4.15) to bring home the benefits of unity and harmony. Having heard the discourses, the Sakyans and Koliyans will each give him 250 youths to enter

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[201] For the background stories about the Sakyans and Koliyans see the Further Explanations.

the Saṅgha: “I will ordain them as monastics and it will culminate in the convening of the great assembly (*mahā-samaya*).”

Having perceived this, the Buddha decided to go to the place of hostilities and save the warring kinsmen from mutual destruction. He went early for the usual round of receiving alms food and stayed the whole day in the scented chamber. Towards evening, he left the chamber for the scene of strife all alone, carrying the double robe and alms bowl himself, without informing anyone. On arrival at the spot, he sat cross-legged in the sky in the middle of the rival groups, and caused a dark blue radiance to be emitted from his hair so that darkness prevailed all over, although the sun had not yet set. This was meant to cause contrition in the heart of the warring factions. While all the people were greatly frightened by the strange phenomenon, the Buddha, sending out a six-coloured radiance from his body manifested himself to them.

When members of the Sakyan clan saw the Buddha, they began to contemplate thus: “The Buddha has come, he is of our own blood. Perhaps he has knowledge of our strife.” They discussed among themselves and decided: “It is not right and proper for us to let our weapons fall upon the bodies of others in the presence of the Buddha; let Koliyans kill us or take us captives, should they desire to do so.” By mutual consent they abandoned all their weapons and sat down respectfully paying homage to the Buddha.

The Koliyans also arrived at the same decision amongst themselves. They too abandoned their weapons and sat down paying obeisance to the Buddha who then descended from the sky and sat on a reserved seat on the delightful sandy plain, with all the grace and glory of a Buddha.

The Buddha’s Teaching

The Buddha knowingly asked: “Why have you all come to this place?” The kings of both countries replied: “Most exalted Buddha, we have not come just to see the river, nor to sport in the river; as a matter of fact we have come to wage war upon one another on this sandy plain.”

The Buddha again asked: “Your royal highnesses, what is the actual cause of your strife?” Then they replied: “The water of this Rohinī stream is the cause of it.”

The Buddha then asked: "Your royal highnesses, what is the value of the water of this [552] Rohinī stream?" They replied: "Exalted Buddha, it is of small value." The Buddha asked an additional question: "What is the value of the earth?" – "Its value is limitless," was the reply.

Whereupon, the Buddha made this direct question: "How would you evaluate the nobility?" They replied: "The value of the nobility is unlimited."

The Buddha then made this address: "Your royal highnesses, for some water of this Rohinī channel that is of small value, why do you wish to destroy the priceless nobility by fighting one another. Not the slightest amount of pleasure could be found in worthless conflicts and wasteful strifes. Your royal highnesses, there was a glaring instance where the seed of enmity sown by a tree Deva and bear remained potent throughout the auspicious (*bhadda*) world-element."

The Birth Story about the Flame of the Forest Tree

The Buddha then went on to expound the Birth Story about the Flame of the Forest Tree (*Phandana-jātaka*, Ja 475), a brief account of which is as follows: "Your Royal Highnesses, a long time ago, during the reign of King Brahmadatta in Bārāṇasī, there was a village of carpenters just outside the city; and there was a Brahmin who was a carpenter by profession, he brought wood from the forest and made them into chariots for a living.

At that time, there was a Flame of the Forest (*Phandana*) tree in the region of the Himālayas. A bear used to go and sleep under that tree with ease and comfort after his meal. One day a dried branch broke due to a strong wind and fell on the bear's back, hurting it slightly. The bear ran away through fright but soon returned to seek out the cause of his injury. He did not see his enemy.

So he thought to himself: "There is no wild beast, such as a lion, leopard or tiger, around here to harm me; and there can't be anyone except the tree Deva who might be jealous of my sleeping under the tree, to cause me harm. I will surely have my revenge on him." Thus making a mountain out of a molehill the bear hit the tree and scratched it with its paws, saying: "I have not eaten your leaves, nor broken your branches, you don't show spite towards other animals taking rest under the tree, but you are jealous of me. What fault is there? You just wait for two or three days and I will uproot your tree and cut it into pieces." Having

threatened the tree Deva, the bear stayed in the neighbourhood, looking for a person capable of causing damage to the tree.

A Brahmin carpenter, accompanied by a few hands, went into the forest in a small vehicle in search of wood for the construction of chariots. They left the vehicle in a certiain place and went into the forest with hatchets and choppers. They went round looking for the right type of wood and eventually came near the Flame of the Forest tree.

When the bear saw the Brahmin carpenter, it thought: "Today, I shall have my retaliation against my enemy," and he went and stood at the base of the tree. As the carpenter passed by the tree, the bear seized the opportunity of addressing[202] him thus:

> "My dear man, you have come into the forest with a hatchet in your hand. Tell me frankly which tree you have in mind to cut down?"

When the carpenter heard the words of the bear, he uttered in amazement:

> "Dear boys, it is strange indeed that a bear speaks the language of the humans, a thing I have hitherto never seen or heard."

He thought to himself then, such a bear speaking the human language would know the kind of wood suitable for making chariots, and so he asked the bear:

> "Dear bear king, you have wandered all over, up the hills and down the valleys, please tell me honestly which kind of wood is most suitable for the construction of chariots?" [553]

When the bear heard this, he felt that his wish was going to be fulfilled and he replied in verse:

> "Red sandalwood (*Pterocarpus indicu*) is not strong enough to use as frame work; Cutch (*Acacia catechu*) is equally unsuitable; the Sāl tree (*Shorea robusta*) is the same; and shrubs (*Lythrum fructicosum*) are out of the question as they are equally weak. There is a certain kind of tree

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[202] The conversation between the bear and the carpenter was made in seven verses. The verses in Pāli, which are not so important, are not reproduced; only their translation is provided here.

> known as the Flame of the Forest; the wood of that tree is the strongest for the construction of chariots."

The carpenter was delighted to hear it and so he thought to himself:

> "I've come into the jungle on a truly auspicious day and even a beast, like the bear, pointed out to me the most suitable kind of wood for the construction of chariots. What good fortune!"

He asked the bear:

> "My dear bear, how about the branches and leaves of that tree and its stem? Dear good friend, please tell me everything so that I know all about that tree."

The bear gave his reply in two verses:

> "My dear friend, Brahmin, there is a certain tree whose branches and twigs bend downwards and hang down. They are pliant, durable and strong. I am now standing at the base of that tree, it is called the Flame of the Forest. Its wood is the right stuff for making the circumference of wheels, axles, shafts and all other components of a chariot."

After uttering these two verses, the bear made off with a happy mind to some other place suitable for seeking his prey. Then the carpenter started to make arrangements for cutting down the tree. The guardian spirit of the tree thought:

> "Although I had not thrown down anything on his back, the bear has been harbouring a grudge against me and has sewn the seed of enmity for nothing. He has now plotted to cause the destruction of my habitation. With the destruction of my dwelling, I am certain to be destroyed too. I shall have to bring about his destruction with a ruse."

He then transformed himself into the form of a human labourer and approaching the carpenter asked him: "Man, you have got a beautiful tree; what do you intend to do, once you have cut it into wood?" The carpenter replied: "I will make it into a chariot frame."

"Who has told you that the wood of this tree is good for making chariots?" queried the tree Deva. "A bear told me so," was the reply. The tree Deva said: "That's good. The bear has given you a good advice. Indeed, the chariot you are going to make, according to the advice of the bear, should turn out to be a fine

looking one. I too should like to give you a suggestion, that is, strengthen your chariot frame work with a girdle of bear's skin, removed from round its neck. This will make it stronger than if it were secured with tin plates, and increase your income from the chariots."

When asked by the carpenter: "My dear man, from where can I get the bear's skin?" the tree Deva said:

"Man, are you still a young boy not to know that the tree is inanimate; it will remain here and will not run away. Just hurry after the bear who has told you about the tree and ask him by showing great respect: 'My lord, which part of the tree you have shown me should be cut?' and persuade him to come back to the tree. Then suspecting nothing, he would point out with his long stretched-out snout: 'Cut here, cut here." At that moment, you can cut him down with a sharp axe and put him to death. Then strip him of his leather, eat his flesh and attend to the business of cutting down the tree."

Thus the seed of enmity was sown. On hearing the guardian spirit of the tree, the Brahmin carpenter expressed his feeling of delight in these words: "How marvellous, this is an auspicious day for me." He returned home after killing the bear and cutting down the tree.

The Buddha concluded his discourse by expounding the following verses in order to exhort and instruct the feuding kinsmen:

> *Iccevaṁ phandano issaṁ, [554] isso ca pana phandanaṁ,*
> *aññam-aññaṁ vivādena, aññam-aññam-aghātayuṁ.*

Your royal highnesses, in this manner, the tree Deva quarrelled with the bear; and the bear in turn disputed with the tree Deva. Their animosity finally led to the destruction of both.

> *Evam-eva manussānaṁ, vivādo yattha jāyati,*
> *mayūra-naccaṁ naccanti, yathā te issa-phandanā.*

Your royal highnesses, when people fight against one another, they do so like the bear and the tree Deva in the manner of a dancing peacock. Just as a peacock could not dance without exposing the private parts of his body, so the people fighting one another are not capable of concealing what is to be concealed.

This is a reference to the derogatory remarks concerning the origin of the Sakyans and the Koliyans made by the warring factions.

Taṁ vo vadāmi bhaddaṁ vo, yāvantettha samāgatā,
sammodatha mā vivadatha, mā hotha issa-phandanā.

Your royal highnesses, may you always be blessed with glory and graciousness, you who have gathered together on the banks of Rohinī, I exhort you to act after the manner of the waters of the two rivers, Ganges and Yamuna, harmoniously mixing together with loving-kindness. Avoid fighting one another and caused mutual destruction. Do not follow the example of the bear and the tree Deva.

Sāmaggim-eva sikkhetha, Buddhehetaṁ pasaṁsitaṁ,
sāmaggi-rato dhammaṭṭho, yogakkhemā na dhaṁsatī"ti.

Your royal highnesses, strive only for unity. Every Buddha has praised the virtues of unity. He who delights in harmonious living, established in the ten modes of good conduct (*sucarita*)[203] is bound to achieve nothing less than the happiness of Nibbāna, the end of all ties (*yoga*), which yoke one to rebirth.

The two rival factions of the Sakyans and Koliyans were amicably reunited after hearing the discourse of the Buddha. In winding up the discourse, the Buddha revealed that he was the Chief Guardian deity of the whole forest who had personal knowledge of the conflict between the bear and the tree Deva.

The Birth Story about the Jackal's Roar

The Buddha then went on by giving exhortation to the assembled crowd: "Your royal highnesses, do not believe what others say without giving careful consideration. All the quadrupeds of the Himālaya forest, which is three leagues in extent, were once about to plunge into the great ocean for trusting, without reason, the word of a hare that ran away screaming: 'The earth has crumbled! The earth has crumbled!' You should never allow yourself to become a person who is taken in by what others say without careful [555] consideration." With

[203] *Sucarita*: 1. Avoidance of killing, of stealing, sexual misconduct, telling lies, slandering, harsh, abusive language, frivolous speech, avarice, ill-will, wrong view.

these introductory words, the Buddha gave the discourse on the Birth Story about the Jackal's Roar (*Daddara-jātaka*, Ja 172).

This Birth Story (*Jātaka*) treats of the story of a hare who was unduly scared by the fall of a beli fruit on the palm leaf under which it was sleeping. It ran towards the ocean through fright screaming: 'The earth has crumbled.' Equally frightened without any reason, all the four-legged animals of the Himālayan forest ran along until they were stopped by the lion king who saved them from the impending danger after careful investigation into the matter.

The Birth Story about the Quail

Then the Buddha went on to explain to them that sometimes it is possible that someone who is weak could get an opportunity to destroy someone who is strong while, on other occasions, someone who is strong gets the chance to wreak havoc with someone who is weak.

Giving the instance where a young skylark had caused the death of a full grown elephant, he gave the following discourse on the Birth Story about the Quail (*Laṭukika-jātaka*, Ja 357):

Excellencies, once upon a time, a Bodhisatta was born as an elephant during the reign of King Brahmadatta in Bārāṇasī. When it grew up, it had a fine appearance and a huge body. It lived in the forests of the Himālayas, governing a herd of elephants numbering 80,000.

At that time a female skylark happened to have laid her eggs on the floor of the beaten tracks of elephants. The Bodhisatta elephant travelled in the company of 80,000 elephants along the route at a time when the baby skylarks were not yet capable of flying. Eventually, the Bodhisatta and his herd of elephants arrived at the spot where the skylarks were living.

When the skylark saw the king elephant, she was worried about the safety of her chicks. She thought: "If I do not approach the king elephant, it will surely tread upon my chicks and kill them. I should immediately approach it with a request for a rightful protection of my chicks." So with her wings closed together as if to make obeisance, she stood right in front of the king elephant and made her submission:

> *Vandāmi taṁ kuñjara saṭṭhi-hāyanaṁ,*
> *āraññakaṁ yūtha-patiṁ yasassiṁ,*

pakkhehi taṁ pañjalikaṁ karomi,
mā me vadhī puttake dubbalāya.

O your majesty, king of elephants, one whose strength wanes only at the age of 60, chief of the herd of elephants that roam in the forest, I salute you, paying homage to you with clasped wings. I pray that my children be spared their lives by not treading upon them.

Whereupon the Bodhisatta gave her comfort with those words: "Skylark, don't be downhearted, I will protect your chicks so that no harm will come to them," and he stood over the young ones shielding them with his body. All the elephants by-passed him and the young skylarks were saved.

The Bodhisatta then called the female skylark and gave advice before he left: "Young skylark, a large rogue elephant, with no companions, will come this way after us. He will not listen to our words. When he comes along, you had better approach him also for the safety of your children, praying him to spare their lives."

When the female skylark saw the rogue elephant coming along, she approached him with her wings clasped in homage and beseeched him thus as advised by the elephant king:

Vandāmi taṁ kuñjara eka-cāriṁ,
āraññakaṁ pabbata-sānugocaraṁ,
pakkhehi taṁ pañjalikaṁ karomi, [556]
mā me vadhī puttake dubbalāya.

O elephant king, a lone wanderer of the forests, grazing in the valleys of rocky and sandy hills, I salute you, paying homage to you with clasped wings. I pray that my young ones will be spared their lives by not treading upon them.

On hearing the skylark's humble request, the rogue elephant replied:

Vamissāmi te laṭukike puttakāni,
kiṁ me tuvaṁ kāhasi dubbalāsi,
sataṁ sahassāni pi tādisīnaṁ,
vāmena pādena papothayeyyaṁ.

Hey, skylark why do you put your young ones in my way? That's enough of your insolence. I shall tread upon them and crush them to death. How

> can you wreak revenge on me when you are weak and I am powerful enough to pulverise 100,000 of your kind with just my left foot.

So saying the rogue elephant crushed the skylark's young ones to dust, and washed them away in a stream of urine and departed, shouting with the voice of a crane.

Perched on the branch of a tree, the female skylark threatened: "Hey, you great brute of an elephant! You have the upper hand this time and go away, crowing gleefully in the tone of a crane. You just wait! Within two or three days you will see what I can do. You are not aware that intellectual might is more powerful than physical force. I will make you aware of that fact within a few days.

> *Na heva sabbattha balena kiccaṁ,*
> *balañ-hi bālassa vadhāya hoti,*
> *karissāmi te Nāga-rājā anatthaṁ,*
> *yo me vadhī puttake dubbalāya.*
>
> O elephant king, not everything can be accomplished by means of physical force alone; unwise use of physical strength can be suicidal. You have mercilessly crushed to death my helpless children; I will bring about your destruction within a few days.

After thus making this war-cry, the skylark managed within two or three days to gain the friendship of a crow by waiting upon it. Being delighted by the skylark's pleasant behaviour, the crow asked her: "Is there any thing I can do for you?" The skylark replied: "What I want to ask you as a favour is to cause damage to the eyes of the rogue elephant that used to roam about alone; that is the assistance I need." The crow gave his word: "I will do it."

The skylark then went to a big bluebottle fly and formed a friendship with it in a like manner. When the fly asked her what she wanted, she requested: "When my friend the crow has damaged the eyes of the lone rogue elephant, it is my wish that you help me by laying your eggs in the sockets of the elephant's damaged eyes."

When the bluebottle fly gave her assurance for co-operation, saying: "Yes, I will," the skylark approached a frog and sought its friendship as before. The frog asked her what it could do to help her and she replied: "When the lone rogue elephant has gone blind through the assistance of my two friends, the

crow and the fly, and is looking for water to quench his thirst, I wish you to croak from the top of the hill. When the elephant climbs up the hill after hearing your voice, you might get down to the bottom of the cliff to make a sound from there. This is all the assistance I look for from my frog friend." The frog, likewise, gave his promise to assist the skylark.

On the following day, the crow pounded the eyes of the elephant with its beak as requested by the skylark; the bluebottle fly laid its eggs in the damaged eyes. Suffering painfully from damaged eyes now infested with maggots and from intense thirst, the rogue elephant groped blindly after water. [557] The frog then started croaking from the top of the hill, hearing the frog croaking, and thinking: "Where the frog croaks, there must be water," the elephant climbed up the hill with great hope. The frog went down the cliff and started making a noise from the bottom of the hill. Heading towards the cliff from where the sound seemed to come, the elephant went tumbling down the hill and died through the fall.

The skylark was delighted when it came to know of the death of her enemy, the rogue elephant, and uttered out of joy: "Oh! I have seen the back of my enemy," so saying, it strutted to and fro on the back of the elephant several times and made off to a place of its liking.

The Buddha exhorted the two royal families, saying: "Your royal highnesses, you should not engage in hostilities with anyone; as explained, even an elephant of great strength can be brought to ruin by the combined efforts of small powerless creatures, such as the crow, the bluebottle fly, the frog and the skylark," and he continued by teaching the following verse:

> *Kākañ-ca passa laṭukikaṁ, maṇḍūkaṁ nīla-makkhikaṁ,*
> *ete nāgaṁ aghātesuṁ, passa verassa verinaṁ,*
> *tasmā hi veraṁ na kayirātha, appiyena pi kenaci.*

Members of the Sakyan clan! Look at these small creatures, the crow, the skylark, the frog and the bluebottle fly; these four creatures, because they were united, brought about the complete downfall of a powerful bull elephant. You can see the outcome of hatred accruing to a person who wishes to engage in hostilities. Therefore, you should not carry on a feud with anyone, not even with someone you do not like.

In winding up the discourse, the Buddha revealed that: "The rogue elephant at that time was the Devadatta of today, and the noble leader of the elephant herd at that time was myself."

The Birth Story about the Way of Trees

Having expounded the three Birth Stories (*Jātaka*): about the Flame of the Forest Tree, the Jackal's Roar and the Quail, the Buddha proceeded to expound two more Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) to bring home the advantages of unity.

The first was the Birth Story about the Way of Trees (*Rukkha-dhamma-jātaka*, Ja 74): "Your royal highnesses, you all are related to one another by blood; and it would be only right and proper for blood relatives to be closely united and work together in harmony. No enemy can harm you when you stand united. Unity is necessary even for trees that are insentient, leave alone conscious creatures such as human beings.

I will cite a relevant instance: once upon a time, a forest of Sāla trees in the Himālayas was struck by a violent storm. But not a single tree suffered the slightest damage, as they stood in a body, securely fastened to one another by plants and bushes. The storm could not touch the trees but brushed against the topmost part of the tree and broke away. In contrast a lone tree complete with big trunks and branches was blown down, root and branch, by a strong wind for want of solidarity and a united front, in close association and collaboration with other trees, plants and bushes. It is essential, therefore, that you all stand in a body united through co-operation and co-ordination."

Whereupon the members of the royal family requested the Buddha to expound the appropriate Birth Story (*Jātaka*) in more detail: "Royal highnesses, it was during the reign of King Brahmadatta in Bārāṇasī that a Vessavaṇa Deva passed away and Sakka appointed another Deva in his place. During this transitional period, the new Vessavaṇa Deva issued a fresh order permitting all the Devas to accommodate themselves in the places of their own choice amongst trees, plants and thickets. [558]

The Bodhisatta was then a sylvan deity in charge of a Sāla forest in the region of the Himālayas. He gave advice to his relatives thus: "My dear men, don't choose the trees growing in the bare plane as your dwelling places; you will be well

advised to dwell on the trees surrounding the one which I have chosen as my abode in the forest."

The wise ones among the deities occupied the trees surrounding the abode of the Bodhisatta as he had advised. The unwise deities agreed amongst themselves: "No useful purpose would be served by residing in trees amidst the forest away from human habitations. Only those living in the vicinity of villages and towns could better their prospects, both for gain and fame." So deciding, they chose to occupy trees along the main road in the bare plains.

After some time a violent storm accompanied by torrential rain visited the area and all the trees including the trees of great dimensions got their boughs and branches broken away and they fell down by the roots. When the violent storm reached the Sāla forest controlled by the Bodhisatta, they blew wildly all over the forest, but none of the trees fell because they were closely knit together.

Those, who were rendered homeless, went about holding their young ones by the hand, to their friends dwelling in the Sāla forest in the Himālayas and acquainted them with their miserable plight. Their friends in the Sāla forest recounted in turn, the story of their woes to the sylvan Deva who was the Bodhisatta.

Whereupon, the Bodhisatta made it plain to them: "It is quite natural that the people who decided to dwell in such places, against the advice of the wise, have to face such difficulties," and expounded the following discourse in verse (Ja 74):

> *Sādhū sambahulā ñātī, api rukkhā araññajā,*
> *vāto vahati ekaṭṭhaṁ, brahantam-pi vanappatiṁ.*
>
> O my relative Devas, when a great number of friends and relatives live close together, dependent upon one another, even the trees growing all over the forest, dwell comfortably, free from oppression by their enemies. But the tree growing in isolation on the open plain, in spite of its huge trunk and many thick branches, cannot withstand the tempest which uproots it with all its branches and leaves.

After giving this discourse, the Bodhisatta passed away at the expiry of his lifespan.

The Buddha concluded the discourse by exhorting them thus: "Royal highnesses, all the relatives should first strive to achieve unity; having achieved it, live

happy, harmonious lives, suffusing one another with loving-kindness." He finally revealed that: "The audience present today were the deities of the Sāla forest and I was the wise sylvan deity who gave them guidance."

The Birth Story about the Quail

The Buddha then made further exhortation: "Royal highnesses, it is not at all proper to quarrel amongst your own relatives. There was an instance in the past where even animals could conquer their enemies by living together harmoniously and in unity, but they perished due to internal strife." At the request of the kinsmen, the Buddha then gave an exposition of the Birth Story about the Quail (*Vaṭṭaka-jātaka*, Ja 33):

"Royal highnesses, a long time ago, the Bodhisatta was born as a quail and lived in a forest with thousands of companions during the reign of King Brahmadatta in Bārāṇasī. A bird-hunter used to go to where the quails dwelt and entice them by imitating their cry. Once the quails arrived and formed a gathering at the spot, he spread out his net over them. He then walked around the edge of the net to drive the quails to the centre of the net. The quails were then seized and put in a basket and taken away for sale. The hunter earned his living by catching and selling the quails in this way. [559]

One day, the Bodhisatta addressed all the quails in the group under his care: "My dear quails, the bird-hunter has caused serious damage to our kind several times now. I have devised a plan to avert the danger of being caught by the bird-hunter, and this is what each and every one of us should do. Once we are caught under the net thrown over us by the hunter, everyone should push his head through the holes in the netting and then, all together lifting the net, fly away. You should all perch on a cluster of bushes, in a safe place, where the net will remain entangled with them. We can then make our escape from beneath the net and fly away."

All the quails in his group accepted his advice saying: "Very well." On the following day, all the quails lifted up the net at the same moment they were caught in the hunter's net, and flew away. They threw the net on a bush and flew away in different directions.

The hunter could free his net from the bush only after dusk and went back home empty handed. The next day the quails acted in the same manner also. The

hunter took a long time to retrieve his net and went home empty handed again. It continued in this way for some time. The hunter's wife became cross with her husband and asked him: "You come home late and empty handed day after day. It is as if you have someone else to be maintained besides myself."

"My woman, I have no one to maintain except you. The thing is, the quails are there flying about, but they are now more closely knit than before. As soon as I spread the net over them, they lift it up and carry it away and drop it onto thorny bushes. But, my dear, they cannot remain united for ever; so don't trouble yourself with suspicion about me. There will surely come a time when the quails will start quarrelling with one another, then I will catch them all and bring them to you to make you smile," advised the hunter, who recited the following verse:

> *Sammodamānā gacchanti, jālam-ādāya pakkhino,*
> *yadā te vivadissanti, tadā ehinti me vasanti.*
>
> My good lady, with harmonious unity and co-operation the quails carry away the net I have thrown over them, drop it on the thorny bushes and make their escape. There will be a time when they start quarrelling amongst themselves. At that time, they will have to yield to my wishes.

A few days later, a quail accidentally trod on the head of another quail as it came down into the pasture. The one trod on, showing its anger asked in a threatening tone: "Who trod on my head?" The other quail replied meekly: "Please pardon me, my dear friend, I trod on it through carelessness. Please don't be angry with me." But the angry quail could not be pacified. The two began to make scurrilous attacks upon each other very often, beginning from that day.

When the two quails were found to be in a quarrelsome mood, arguing as to who could lift the hunter's net, the Bodhisatta foresaw a trail of consequences: "Where there are heated arguments, there can be no peace and happiness. As of now, the quails will fail to take part in the lifting and carrying away of the net. The lives of numerous quails are at stake, the hunter will undoubtedly take advantage of the situation. It will not be proper for me to stay in this place any longer."

He therefore departed from that place, taking along with him all the quails which were the associates forming his group. Only the group of quails, headed by the future Devadatta, remained in that forest.

The bird-hunter went to the same spot a few days later and made the sound in imitation [560] of the quail, and threw his net over the quails headed by Devadatta. Then, instead of working unitedly for their freedom, the quails started finding faults among themselves, quarrelling and challenging one another as to their superiority in strength and their ability in lifting the net. The bird-hunter lost no time in capturing and taking them to his house as presents for his wife.

The Buddha, in winding up the discourse said: "Royal highnesses, strife amongst relatives is, on no account, justifiable. It is the causal condition of destruction," and finally revealed that: "Devadatta was the leading and most ignorant quail and I was the wise leader of the quails of the other group at that time."

The Discourse about Taking up Arms

The Buddha after expounding the five Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) proceeded to teach the Discourse about Taking up Weapons (*Atta-daṇḍa-sutta*, Snp 4.15) of the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*), as the final discourse.

> [Mingun Sayādaw did not provide a translation of this important discourse, so I have made one myself, following his expansive style of translation.]

1. Fear arises, both now and in the future, for those who have taken bodily, verbal and mental weapons, just look at these Sakyans and Koliyans who are quarreling; I will explain how I was stirred with a sense of spiritual urgency.

2. Seeing this generation of men trembling because of craving, views and other defilements like fish in a small pond tremble because of crows, herons and storks. Seeing them fight with each other I was overcome with fright.

3. The world is insubstantial on all sides, from hell unto the Brahma world, all conditioned things are in turmoil; desiring to find a shelter for myself, I saw nowhere that was not overcome by ageing, sickness and death.

4. Even at the end of their lives they are hostile. Seeing that I no longer took delight in life, I saw the darts of lust, hatred, delusion, conceit, views, suffering, and doubt that had settled in the mind.

5. When struck by those darts one runs around in all directions engaging in bad conduct, but when one has drawn out those darts one does not run around engaging in bad conduct any more, one does not get reborn over and over.

6. Here the training rules are recited: Whatever ties to the strands of sensual desire there are in the world, having pierced through all sensual desire, you must train yourself in higher conduct, higher mind and higher wisdom so as to attain Nibbāna.

7. One should be truthful in words, knowledge and path, not forward, free of deceit, one should get rid of slander, being without anger, a sage will cross over the evils of greed and selfishness.

8. One should overcome sleepiness, laziness and sloth, without abiding in heedlessness. One who does good deeds with a mind set on Nibbāna should not have great conceit.

9. One should not be determined on false speech, nor have affection for form, one should completely know conceit, and live without violence driven by passion and so forth.

10. One should not find happiness in what has passed, one should not prefer what is present now, one should not grieve for conditioned things in decline, one should not have an attachment to attractive things.

11. Yearning for conditioned things, I say, is a great flood, wanting is like the rapids that washes all away. It is the basis for forming intentions, the defilement of sensual desires which is hard to overcome.

12. The sage never deviates from truthfulness, right view and the path, the true Brahmin stands on form ground. Having forsaken all the sense spheres, one is indeed said to be peaceful.

13. The one who understands, the one who has highest knowledge, having understood the Dhamma, abandoning defilements, he is independent of the senses. He moves around rightly in the world, not yearning for anything at all.

14. Whoever has crossed over sensual desire, the clinging that is hard to cross over in the world, does not grieve, nor does he long for anything, having cut off the stream, he is no longer bound.

15. One must dry up whatever defilements there are regarding what has passed, and let there be none that come later, if you do not grasp at the five aggregates in the present, peacefully you will wander around.

16. One who cherishes nothing in the whole realm of mind and matter, and does not grieve for what he does not have, does not lose anything in the world.

17. The one who has nothing that he thinks is his own or as belonging to others, not finding any selfish attachments, has nothing to grieve about thinking: it is mine.

18. Not being jealous, not having greed, impertubable, everywhere eqaunimous, being asked about being unshakeable, I say those are the four advantages.

19. The one who is impertubable, who understands the Dhamma, who abstains from volitional striving, sees safety and security in all places.

20. The sage does not speak of himself as being amongst equals, superiors or inferiors, he is one who is at peace, without selfishness. He does not take anything up nor does he throw anything off.

The members of the royal families of the two countries were finally reconciled and appeased, and with devotional faith and full of gratitude, agreed amongst themselves: “Had not the Buddha come and intervened, we would certainly have destroyed one another and made blood flow in a stream. We have been saved from mutual destruction only because of him. Above all, had he not chosen to renounce the world, he would have been enjoying the life of a Universal Monarch, ruling over the four continents surrounded by 2,000 smaller islands. Accompanied by thousands of his sons of great intellectual and physical strength, he would have roamed over all his dominions followed by a large retinue.

But our royal kith and kin of noble blood, the Buddha, had renounced all the pleasures and luxuries of a Universal Monarch to become a recluse and he has blossomed forth as a Fully Self-Awakened Buddha. It would be only right and proper, now that he had become a Buddha, we should let him have monastics of royal blood attend upon him.” With this unanimous decision, the royal members

of the two countries offered 250 princes from each country to the Buddha, for ordination.

The Buddha accepted them and ordained them as summoned monastics and took them to the Great Wood near the city of Kapilavatthu. From the following day onwards, he took alternate turns to receive alms food from Kapilavatthu and Koliya in the company of these 500 monastics. The people of the two countries offered the Saṅgha a large amount of alms food.

These 500 monastics had taken up the ascetic life not out of their own volition, but because they were unable to refuse the request of their parents and relatives. Thus, within a few days, the 500 monastics found their life tedious, uninteresting, and boring. News from their homes also did not help to make them happier in the monastery. "We beseech you not to take delight in the life of a monastic; from the time of your departure, our private business have been deteriorating day by day," wrote their wives to them.

The Birth Story about Kuṇāla

The Buddha kept constant watch over these 500 monastics by personal contact, three times in a day and three times at night, a total of six times a day, just as a pheasant looks after her eggs, or as the fabulous yak (*camarī*) regards its tail, a mother cares for her only son, or a one-eyed man regards his one good eye.

He became aware of the unhappy state of their minds and he considered: "These monastics felt discontented and tedious even in the company of such a person as myself, the Buddha, what kind of discourse would be suitable for them?" He perceived that the Birth Story about the King of the Cuckoos, Kuṇāla (*Kuṇāla-jātaka*, Ja 536) which mentions the frailties and weaknesses in the character of women would be best for them. Therefore, he made the decision: "I shall first take these monastics to the Himālayas, then, by relating the Birth Story about Kuṇāla, I shall bring home to them the imperfections and defects in the character of [561] women. In this way, I shall remove the unhappiness and discontent which has risen in their hearts and give them the knowledge of the Stream-entry path (*Sotāpatti-ñāṇa*)."

The Buddha entered the city of Kapilavatthu in the morning for the usual round of alms food, and in the afternoon he asked the 500 monastics: "Have you ever seen the pleasant forests of the Himālaya regions?" and they replied: "We have

never seen them, Lord." He asked them again: "Would you like to pay a short visit to the forests of the Himālayas?" – "Most exalted Buddha, we do not possess any supernatural power; how would we go there?" Whereupon he asked: "But if someone who has the power offers to take you there, would you like to go along with him?" The monastics answered: "Yes, Lord, we will go."

The Buddha, exercising his supernormal power, took them through the air to the Himālayas, and in the course of the journey, while still in the sky, they were shown the golden, silver, emerald, vermillion and mountains of glass, etc., the five great rivers and the seven great lakes. The Himālayas were of huge dimension, 500 leagues high with an area of 3,000 leagues. The Buddha revealed to the 500 monastics by his supernatural power only a small portion of the delightful splendours of the Himālayas. He also showed them four-legged animals such as lions, tigers, elephants, as well as enchanting parks and gardens teeming with the various kinds of flora and fauna, abounding in numerous species of birds, aquatic and land birds. They were shown the sheer cliff on the east side of the Himālayas, the whole surface of which was golden and the cliff on the west completely covered with vermilion.

From the moment they witnessed this rare spectacle and the strange scenery in the mighty Himālayas, all these 500 monastics had cut off their attachment to their former wives. Then the Buddha, with all 500 monastics, descended on the western slope of the Himālayas where there was a massive vermillion slab, 60 leagues in extent, on which was a huge Sāla tree that will last to the end of the present world-element, with a height and width of seven leagues. Under the shade of that tree, on a vermillion platform, three leagues in width, the Buddha took his seat surrounded by the 500 monastics. With brilliant six-hued radiance emitting from his body, he sat there looking like the morning sun whose radiance was reflected from the surface of the ocean. He then addressed the monastics: "Monastics, you may ask me if there is anything in this vast region of the Himālayas you have not seen before."

At that moment, a king of the cuckoos, seated on a stick that was carried by a pair of youthful hen cuckoos with their beaks on either end of the horizontal stick, was seen coming down from a higher altitude They were accompanied by groups of eight youthful hen cuckoos, each group taking their positions above their heads, below them, on their right and left and on their front and back. Struck with wonder at the sight of the strange spectacle, the 500 monastics made

their request to the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, what kind of birds are these and what are they called?"

"Monastics, those birds are the descendants of a succession of generations of cuckoos that owe their origin to a species of bird I was born into a long time ago. Such youthful hen cuckoos treated me in like manner at the very outset, their number being 3,500 in my days. The number has dwindled in time and there is now just enough to preserve the species."

Then the monastics requested the Buddha to recount how those 3,500 cuckoos had attended upon him in those forests. So he expounded the Birth Story about Kuṇāla in 300 verses so they could draw the lessons therefrom.

The Monastics become Stream-Enterers

By the end of the discourse, all 500 monastics, the descendents of the Sakyan clan, attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). At the moment of entering the path to Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*), all the monastics became endowed with supernormal psychic powers such as flying through space, etc.

> An ordinary worldling has to practice the method of concentration on a meditation-device (*kasiṇa*) in order to attain the mundane meditations (*jhāna*) with supernormal psychic powers [562] (*abhiññā*).
>
> Certain noble persons (*ariya-puggala*), after realization of the path and fruit, practise concentration meditation and attain the mundane meditations with psychic powers (*abhiññā*); other noble persons, having attained mundane meditations with psychic powers even while they were still worldlings, have no need to practise concentration meditation afresh; they can enjoy the privileges of mundane meditations and psychic powers easily at will.
>
> Still there is another type of a noble person (*ariya*) who were not endowed with mundane meditations and psychic powers while still ordinary worldlings and yet, the moment they realize the supermundane path and fruition, they become endowed with mundane meditation and psychic powers which they can enjoy at will and easily. Such meditation attainments are termed absorption attained through the realization of the path (*magga-siddhi-jhāna*); and such psychic powers are called super knowledges attained through the realization of the path (*magga-siddhi-abhiññā*)."

> Those 500 monastics, due to former application, and deeds of merit, achieved absorption and super knowledges attained through the realization of the path, without having to specially practise concentration meditation for them. They can enjoy these privileges freely at will.

The Buddha considered that the path and fruition stage of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*) should be sufficient for the 500 monastics for the time being and departed for the Great Wood by his psychic power. The monastics, who had relied upon him on their outward journey, returned to the Great Wood, by their own powers, accompanying the Buddha.

The Great Assembly

Taking his seat on the prepared throne in the Great Wood, the Buddha had the monastics assembled and addressed them: "Dear monastics, come on, sit down, I shall teach you the meditation practice that leads you to the three higher stages of the path (*magga*), through eradication of the defilements." He then instructed them on the meditation method for attainment of the three higher paths.

The monastics thought to themselves: "The Buddha, being well aware that we were not happy leading the lives of monastics in the Dispensation, took us to Lake Kuṇāla and then, having removed our discontent and unhappiness, led us to the first stage of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). And now that in this Great Wood he has taught us the meditation method of attaining the three higher paths, we should not become lax with the thought: 'We are noble Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna-ariya*),' but should strive hard like those pioneers who have gone before us to attain the state of perfection through application."

They paid homage to the Buddha and left; in the secluded place at the root of trees, each of them spread their own small mats, and sat on them. The Buddha perceived: "These monastics, being Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*), know the way of attaining the path and fruit, and as such, they will not have any difficulty in achieving the higher stage of the paths and fruitions. Each and every one of these monastics who have now gone to practice insight meditation (*vipassanā*) will return in the evening to acquaint me with the virtues of the Arahat fruition he has gained. All the Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element will also gather together in this universe at the same time. Then this will be an occasion of a Great Assembly (*Mahā-samaya*). It would be better for me to wait for such an assembly in a secluded place." Having considered in this way, he

went to a secluded spot and sat on the reserved place abiding in the fruition attainment (*phala-samāpatti*).

Of the 500 monastics, the one who left first after receiving instructions on meditation became an Arahat complete with the four analytical wisdoms (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*) before the rest. The [563] monastic, who left second after receiving instructions, became an Arahat with the four analytical wisdoms like the first one. He was next followed by the third monastic in a like manner. Thus all the 500 monastics had their knowledge of the four noble truths blossom into the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) one after another, like lilies blooming forth into beautiful flowers in order of maturity.

The first monastic who became an Arahat rose from his seat, picking up the small mat on which he had been sitting, with a view to go to the Buddha to acquaint him with his attainment. The second and the third monastic and all the rest of them followed suit and headed towards the refectory. Then they went in a long queue as if they had lined themselves according to seniority in monkhood, to where the Buddha was waiting for them.

The monastic who arrived first sat on the small mat at a suitable distance and prepared to address the Buddha with the virtues of the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) he had attained. But first, he turned round to see if there was anyone coming behind him with the same idea, and saw the second monastic, the third monastic, and finally all the 500 monastics lined up in a row after him.

When all the monastics had taken their seats at suitable places, each one looked at the other with a searching eye to form an idea of one another's intentions and discovered that each one of them felt shy to address the Buddha about his attainment.

Noble Arahats always have the welfare of all beings at heart and their sincere wish is that humans, Devas and Brahmas acquire the penetrative insight-wisdom which they themselves have attained. They have no desire to reveal their attainment of Awakening for conspicuousness unlike the person who has discovered a pot of gold.

The Discourse about the Great Assembly

The Great Assembly of the 500 monastics, according to the commentary om the Discourse about the Great Assembly (*Mahā-samaya-sutta*, DN 20) took place in

the cool evening on the full moon day of June (*Jeṭṭha*). No sooner had the 500 Arahats taken their seats than the moon appeared, rising from the top of Mount Yugandhara in the eastern hemisphere, free from the five kinds of obstructions: dew, mist, cloud, eclipse and smoke. The moon, in its fullness, assumed the form of a framed disc of a silver mirror or the frame of a silver wheel turning round and round on its edge, hanging high above the eastern horizon, shining with all its brightness as if to reveal the world that was made delightful and pleasurable by the appearance of the Awakened Buddha. At that auspicious moment, the Buddha was still in residence in the Great Wood near Kapilavatthu in the Sakka country, in the company of the 500 Arahats.

The Devas residing in the environs of the Great Wood, in great excitement, hailed one another: "Friends! Come, let us go. To pay homage to the Buddha is meritorious; to listen to the Dhamma is beneficial; to pay respects to the Saṅgha is to acquire great merit; Come, friends, let us go." Thus clamouring, they congregated in the presence of the Buddha, made obeisance to him as well as to the 500 monastics who had just became Arahats.

Their rousing clamour, spread far and wide, reaching by stages from a haling distance, to half a mile, to a mile, to half a league, and to a league and thus extending from the centre of this universe to the surrounding 10,000 world-element. All the Devas and Brahmas, inhabiting these 10,000 world-element, therefore congregated in this universe, excepting for the Unconscious (*Asaññā*) Brahmas, the formless (*arūpa*) Brahmas and those Brahmas who happened to be absorbed in their meditation attainments (*jhāna-samāpatti*).

At that time, the universe was entirely packed with Devas from the celestial regions, reaching up to the Brahma realms like a needle case packed tightly with needles with no space left [564] between them who had come to attend the Great Assembly. The distance between the plane of the Brahma worlds and the human world may be reckoned by dropping a boulder of the size of seven tiers, crowning the graduated mansion known as Lohapāsāda in Śrī Laṅkā from the Brahma land. It took four months for that boulder to reach the human plane. The space between the two planes was so tightly packed with the Devas and Brahmas that there was no vacuum whatsoever, even for the sweet fragrance of flowers to float upwards or a mustard seed to find its way downwards.

When a Universal Monarch sat in congregation with all the monarchs from the vassal states, privileged and powerful rulers who arrived earlier could find their seats which were in the vicinity of the Universal Monarch and were not too uncomfortable. But those who arrived later could occupy only the back seats which were packed tight and provided little comfort. In a like manner, the space around the Buddha, who was like a Universal Monarch, was comparatively not so tight. All the powerful Brahmas, such as the Mahā Brahmas,[204] could find their seats close by the Buddha. But even there, those privileged, powerful Brahmas had to make themselves comfortable, occupying a tiny space the size of a yak tail's tip, in batches of 10, 20, upto 60, by making their bodies subtler and subtler.

When the Buddha and the 500 Arahats, together with the Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element, had assembled, four Arahat Brahmas rose from absorption at the expiry of the pre-determined duration. When they looked around the Brahma realms, they found the whole region lifeless like a deserted mess room after lunch time. On investigating where the Brahmas had gone, they noticed that the Great Assembly was in progress.

The four Arahat Brahmas discussed among themselves: "This is a Great Assembly and we are left behind, and there will be no seats for late comers. Let us not go empty handed; let each of us prepare a verse for presentation to the Assembly. These gift verses will serve as an intimation of our arrival and as a gesture of our homage to the Buddha." Having agreed thus, each Brahma composed a verse before they left the Brahma realm and then one Arahat Brahma descended on the edge of the eastern hemisphere of the universe; another descended on the edge of the southern hemisphere of the universe; another one descended on the edge of the western hemisphere of the universe and the last one on the edge of the northern hemisphere of the universe.

The Arahat Brahma who had descended on the edge of the eastern hemisphere entered into absorption through the meditation device on a dark blue object (*nīla-kasiṇa*); and to signify his presence, emitted brilliant dark-blue radiance from his body that enveloped all the Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-

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[204] Original had: Mahāsakkha Brahmas, but there seems to be no such category, or anything similar.

element as though they were covered with an emerald blanket. He then traversed along the Buddha approach passage (*Buddha-vīthi*), free from any hindrance and reserved for easy access to the Buddha and stood in front of the Buddha, paying homage by presenting the verse he had composed:

> *Mahā-samayo pavanasmiṁ, Deva-kāyā samāgatā,*
> *āgatamha imaṁ Dhamma-samayaṁ,*
> *dakkhitāye aparājita-saṅghaṁ.*
>
> Most exalted Buddha, today a Great Assembly of Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element has convened in the Great Wood to pay homage to the Arahats who have conquered the five kinds of death (*māra*) with pure devotional faith. Like all these Devas and Brahmas, we have also arrived with great delight at this congregation to pay our respect to the invincible victors, the Arahats, out of pure devotional faith.

Having presented this verse, he returned for want of space in the vicinity of the Buddha's throne to the edge of the eastern hemisphere of the universe and remained standing there.

The Brahma who had descended on the edge of the southern hemisphere of the [565] universe entered into absorption based on a meditation device of yellow colour (*pīta-kasiṇa*); and to signify his presence, emitted brilliant yellow radiance from his body that enveloped all the Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element as though they were covered under a cloak of gold. Then after the manner of the first Brahma, he approached the Buddha and presented his verse:

> *Tatra bhikkhavo samādahaṁsu,*
> *cittam-attano ujukaṁ akaṁsu,*
> *sārathīva nettāni gahetvā,*
> *indriyāni rakkhanti paṇḍitā.*
>
> Most exalted Buddha, at this congregation of the Devas and Brahmas, the 500 Arahats maintain their minds at peace and they are perfectly tranquil through developing the highest state of concentration (*appana-samādhi*). They maintain their minds perfectly upright, free from mental deviations which may be likened to the three deviations from straightness exemplified by a zigzag track of the urine of an ox, the comb shape crescent of the moon and the curvature of a plough's handle. In the same

way, a skilful charioteer of a chariot harnessed to well-tamed Sindh horses holds the reins gently without pulling them roughly to get an easy, comfortable ride, these 500 Arahats, wise with path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*), have guarded with mindfulness the sense doors: the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, against the inroads of the defilements. Most exalted Buddha, we have come to this Great Wood with the object of paying homage to these 500 Arahats.

Then he went back to his place at the edge of the southern hemisphere of the universe like his predecessor and remained standing there.

Then the Brahma who had descended on the edge of the western hemisphere of the universe entered into absorption based on the meditation device of a red colour (*lohita-kasiṇa*); and to signify his presence at the Great Assembly emitted shining red colour from his body that enveloped all the Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element as though they have been wrapped up in a red cloak. Then after the manner of his predecessors, he approached the Buddha and presented his verse:

Chetvā khīlaṁ, chetvā palighaṁ,
inda-khīlaṁ ūhacca manejā,
te caranti suddhā vimalā,
cakkhumatā sudantā susu-nāgā.

Most exalted Buddha, the youthful Arahats, who, being well instructed, have been subdued and trained to restrain their six faculties by the Buddha who is gifted with five kinds of eyes: the eye of a Buddha who sees the heart of humans (*Buddha-cakkhu*); the eye of truth which means attainment of the path-knowledge (*Dhamma-cakkhu*); the eye of all round knowledge or omniscience (*samanta-cakkhu*); the Deva-eye which is all pervading, seeing all that proceeds in the hidden worlds (*dibba-cakkhu*) ; the physical eye which is exceptionally powerful and sensitive (*maṁsa-cakkhu*).

These youthful Arahats have done away with the thorns of greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*) by the sword of the fourfold path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*). They have struck off and destroyed the crossbars and bolts on the door of the chamber of existence: greed, hatred and delusion, which hinder any escape from Saṁsāra. By the same

> weapon of path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*), they have uprooted the pillars: greed, hatred and delusion, stoutly standing at the gate of the city of personality-belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), by means of the fourfold path. Being devoid of craving, free from taints and desires, they freely roam about in all [566] four directions without the hindrance of defilements. We have come to pay homage to these youthful Arahats.

Then he went back to the edge of the western hemisphere of the universe and like his predecessors remained standing there.

Then the Brahma who had descended on the edge of the northern hemisphere of the universe entered into absorption based on the meditation device of white colour (*odāta-kasiṇa*); and to signify his presence at the Great Assembly emitted radiance of white colour from his body enveloping all the Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element as though they have been wrapped up in robes made of jasmine flowers. Then like the previous Brahmas, he approached the Buddha and recited the verse he had composed:

> *Ye keci Buddhaṁ saraṇaṁ gatāse,*
> *na te gamissanti apāya-bhūmiṁ,*
> *pahāya mānusaṁ dehaṁ,*
> *Deva-kāyaṁ paripūressanti.*
>
> Most exalted Buddha, any person who has taken refuge with confidence in the Buddha will not be reborn in the four realms of misery: the realm of suffering, animals, Petas and Asuras. Having thrown off the human body, they will fill up the Deva realms.

After presenting the verse, he went back to the edge of the northern hemisphere of the universe like his predecessors.

The Buddha observed that the Great Assembly of Devas and Brahmas was taking place in the vast space which extended to the edges of the universe in width and to the plane of Akaniṭṭha Brahma in height. He considered: “This is indeed a huge congregation of Devas and Brahmas; the 500 monastics may not be aware of this fact. I will make it known to them presently.”

He therefore addressed them: “Monastics, all the Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element have congregated here now to pay homage to the omniscient Buddha whose coming is just as excellent as those of the Supreme

Buddhas of the past, and to the monastics as well. Monastics, just like this Great Assembly, similar congregations of Devas and Brahmas of the same magnitude, no more and no less, have taken place during the time of Buddhas of the past also.

Monastics, just like this great assembly, similar congregations of Devas and Brahmas of the same magnitude, no more and no less, will also take place during the time of the Supreme Buddhas in the future."

The Devas and Brahmas at the Assembly were of the opinion that, in consideration of the huge number of celestial beings present, the Buddha might mention only the names of the powerful Devas and Brahmas and those of minor importance might not be brought out. The Buddha, on considering what the Devas and Brahmas might be thinking about, perceived what was going on in their minds, as though he had held their hearts, or just as the case of a thief being caught red-handed with the exhibit, and accordingly decided: "I shall reveal the names and clans of all the Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element who are present at this Great Assembly, irrespective of whether they are of great or small power."

Buddhas are very great and glorious personalities. There is nothing that is beyond their ken. All six sense objects that make contact with the sense-organs of men and celestial beings to produce eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness and mind-consciousness are within the scope of their perception, with no obstruction whatsoever. The Buddha, therefore, had the power of differentiating between those who were fully mature and developed and ready to be released from Saṁsāra and those who were not yet ready to gain emancipation. He first mentally put aside all those beings who were not ready and gave his concentrated attention to those who would benefit immediately by his teaching. [567]

Again, amongst those who would gain release from Saṁsāra, the Buddha divided them mentally into six groups, according to their inclinations, viz., Devas and Brahmas with a propensity for lust (*rāga-citta*); Devas and Brahmas with a propensity for hatred (*dosa-citta*); Devas and Brahmas with a propensity for delusion (*moha-citta*); Devas and Brahmas with a propensity for thought-

conception (*vitakka*); Devas and Brahmas with a propensity for faith (*saddhā*), and Devas and Brahmas with a propensity for wisdom (*paññā*).

Then of these six groups, he decided that Devas and Brahmas with an inclination towards lust and craving should be taught the Discourse on the Correct Way to Wander (*Sammā-paribbājanīya-sutta*, Snp 2.13); those with a tendency towards aversion should be taught the Discourse on Quarrels and Disputes (*Kalaha-vivāda-sutta*, Snp 4.11); those with an inclination towards delusion should be taught the Long Discourse on the Array (*Mahā-byūha-sutta*, Snp 4.13); those with an inclination towards thought-conception should be taught the Short Discourse on the Array (*Cūḷa-byūha-sutta*, Snp 4.12); those with an inclination towards faith should be taught the Discourse of Being Quick (*Tuvaṭaka-sutta*, Snp 4.14) and those with wisdom should be taught the Discourse entitled Before the Break-Up (*Purā-bheda-sutta*, Snp 4.10).

He next determined which mode of teaching would be suitable for the assembled Devas and Brahmas out of the four modes, namely:

1. Teaching according to the Buddha's free will (*attajjhāsaya-sutta-nikkhepa*).
2. Teaching according to the wish of the audience (*parajjhāsaya-sutta-nikkhepa*).
3. Teaching according to occasion or prevailing circumstance (*aṭṭhuppattika-sutta-nikkhepa*).
4. Teaching in the form of an answer to a particular question (*pucchā-vasika-sutta-nikkhepa*).

And he perceived that Devas and Brahmas would gain emancipation through realization of the four noble truths, on hearing a discourse taught by way of answering the question asked in harmony with their inclination. He then looked to see if any of the 500 Arahats was capable of raising such a question that would be in accord with the inclinations of the Devas and Brahmas, and perceived that there was none among them. He also found out that the 80 senior disciples and the two chief disciples were not capable of raising such a question.

He perceived that a Paccekabuddha was equally incapable of raising such a question. He then considered whether Sakka or Suyāma Deva could fulfil his need, but they were also found to be incapable of raising such a question.

Finally, realising that only a Fully Awakened Buddha like himself would be able to raise a question in accordance with the inclination of Devas and Brahmas, he looked into the innumerable world-elements with his infinite power of vision to see if there was another Awakened Buddha in any of the universes, and he discovered that there was none of his equal in any of the universes.

> There is no wonder that he could find none to equal him. Indeed there was none of his equal, amongst the Devas and humans, even at the time of his last birth. As baby Prince Siddhattha, he uttered the bold words: *Aggoham-asmi lokassa*, "I am supreme in the whole world." Needless to say, there was no one to equal him now that he had become a Fully Awakened Buddha.

Perceiving there was not another Buddha like himself, the Buddha considered: "These Devas and Brahmas would not get a penetrative insight into the Dhamma if I were to ask a question and then provide the answer myself. Only if another Buddha raised the question and I gave the answer to it, would it be a wonderful feat and the Devas and Brahmas would get a penetrative insight into the teaching. I have to create an image of my true likeness."

For this purpose, the Buddha entered into the fourth form world absorption (*rūpāvacara-kiriya-jhāna*) which formed the foundation for the development of supernatural power (*abhiññā*). Then arising from the absorption, he made the resolution, through the exercise of the great knowledge joined with a thought process focused on determination (*mahā-kiriya-ñāṇa-sampayutta-adhiṭṭhāna-javana*), so that a Buddha of complete [568] likeness to himself, in all respects, such as handling the bowl and robe, looking straight forward and glancing sideways, bending and stretching the limbs, should come into being. Thus he created another Buddha, an exact replica of himself, as though it had emerged from the surface of the full moon which was just then rising from the top of Mount Yugandhara in the eastern hemisphere.

At the sight of the mind-made Buddha (*nimitta-buddha*), the Devas and Brahmas expressed their views saying: "Friends, another moon has appeared besides the existing one." When the mind-made Buddha was seen emerging from the surface of the moon and coming closer to them, they changed their views and said: "Friends, it is not the moon but the appearance of the sun." As the image came nearer, they said: "Friends, it is not the sun but the mansion (*vimāna*) of a Deva." When it was coming closer and closer, they said: "Friends, that is not a mansion

but a Deva," and again they said: "Friends, that is not a Deva but a Great Brahma," and finally as it came quite close to them, they concluded: "Friends, that is not a Great Brahma, but, in fact, it is another Buddha coming to us!"

Of the celestial beings, ordinary (*puthujjana*) Devas and Brahmas thought to themselves: "When the universe was packed to its capacity by Devas and Brahmas congregating to pay homage to a single Buddha, the number of Devas and Brahmas for two Buddhas would be beyond imagination." But the noble (*ariya*) Devas and Brahmas concluded that there could not be two Buddhas in one and the same universe at the same time; therefore the other Buddha must be a creation in his own likeness by the living Buddha."

In the meanwhile, the mind-made Buddha came closer to the Buddha as the Devas and Brahmas were looking on, and sat face to face with him, on a seat kept in reserve on an equal level, without paying homage to the Buddha.

There were 32 characteristics of a great person on the body of the Buddha, and the mind-made Buddha also bore the same characteristics. Six-hued radiance emanated scintillating from the body of the Buddha; and the same kind of six-hued radiance also emanated scintillating from the body of the mind-made Buddha. The radiance of the Buddha was reflected from the body of the mind-made Buddha, just as the radiance of the mind-made Buddha was reflected from the body of the Buddha. The flashes of radiance from the body of the Buddha and those of the mind-made Buddha shot up to the Akaniṭṭha Brahma realm, and retracing their paths, rested on the heads of the Devas and Brahmas before they scattered towards the edge of the universe. The whole universe assumed the form of a scaffolding, made of bent rafters of gold, enclosing a relic shrine (*stūpa*), looking graceful and glittering.

All the Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element, grouped together in this single universe, enveloped in the chamber formed of the meshing radiance emanating from the two bodies of the Buddha and the mind-made Buddha. The mind-made Buddha, in his sitting posture, put forward a question, after a formal address in verse in praise of the Buddha for his conquest over the defilements (*kilesa*) on the throne of Awakening under the Bodhi tree.

Before proceeding to deal with the question presented by the mind-made Buddha, in the Discourse on the Correct Way to Wander (*Sammā-paribbājanīya-sutta*, Snp 2.13), in order to make the minds of the Devas and

Brahmas malleable, pliable, firm and imperturbable, the Buddha decided to greet them, as it were, by announcing their names, families and clans, etc., without any distinction as regards to rank or status. Therefore, the Buddha proceeded to give the discourse on the Discourse about the Great Assembly (*Mahā-samaya-sutta*, DN 20), which began with words: *Ācikkhissāmi, bhikkhave, Deva-kāyānaṁ nāmāni* … "monastics, I shall disclose the identity of the audience by announcing their names, the names of their families, clans, etc."

> The Discourse about the Great Assembly has been dealt with in great detail by various eminent scholars giving the Pāḷi text and translation, including word by word translations (*nissaya*), based on the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*). Special mention must be made of the treatise entitled: "An Exposition of the *Mahā-samaya-sutta* with Pāḷi text and word-meanings," by Ven. Bhaddanta Nandiya, presiding monk of the [569] Mahāvissutārāma monastery of Pakokku. There is a section, at the end of that treatise, on the six inclinations dealt with by the Buddha in the six discourses such as the Discourse on the Correct Way to Wander following the Discourse about the Great Assembly; their Pāḷi text and word for word translation are also provided therein.

At the conclusion of the discourse on the Discourse about the Great Assembly, 1,000 billion Devas and Brahmas became Arahats, and those who attained noble Stream-entry (*Sotāpanna-ariya*) were beyond calculation, according to the commentary to the Discourse about the Great Assembly (*Mahā-samaya-sutta*).

Ven. Sayādaw U Budh's Note of Clarification

When we look at the Discourse about the Great Assembly as a whole, we find that the discourse was given with emphasis placed on the nomenclature of the Devas and Brahmas, mentioning their family and clan names; and the question may arise: in the absence of any exposition of the ultimate truth how could Devas and Brahmas realise the four noble truths and achieve emancipation, attain the state of Stream-entry, and so on only by hearing their family and clan names?

Here is the answer: 1) The Buddha was aware that by hearing the Great Assembly discourse, the mind of Devas and Brahmas had become imperturbable, malleable, free of hindrances, exulted and pellucid, and therefore at that moment he expounded the four noble truths which he himself had discovered. Having thus heard the discourse on the four noble truths, Devas and Brahmas

became noble persons (*ariya*); 2) in other words, by hearing the Discourse about the Great Assembly, there arose in the mind continuum of the Devas and Brahmas, continuous mental states one after another, the preceding one serving as the cause for the arising of the following, which developed joyful satisfaction (*pīti*), tranquillity (*passaddhi*), happiness (*sukha*), concentration (*samādhi*), knowledge according to reality (*yathā-bhūta-ñāṇa*); getting thoroughly tired of worldly life (*nibbida-ñāṇa*); fading away of lust or passion (*virāga-ñāṇa*); knowledge of release (*vimuccana-ñāṇa*) or knowledge of the path (*magga-ñāṇa*); knowledge of emancipation (*vimutti-ñāṇa*) or knowledge of fruition (*phala-ñāṇa*); insight arising from knowing and seeing emancipation (*vimutti-ñāṇa-dassana*) or reflection knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*). It was only because of the development of these series of mental states that Devas and Brahmas became noble persons.

In providing these clarifications, Ven. Sayādaw U Budh quoted the authority of the pertinent commentaries.

The Discourse about the Great Assembly has been held in high esteem by celestial beings. Therefore a wise person who wishes welfare and prosperity in both mundane and supermundane matters should recite this discourse on auspicious occasions such as the construction and occupation of houses, monasteries and villages.

> When we think of why the Discourse about the Great Assembly was held in high esteem by Devas and Brahmas, we find that the Buddha was naturally the chief personality at the Great Assembly which comprised a variety of beings from the lowly earth deities to the most powerful Hārita Brahmas. The Discourse about the Great Assembly was, in fact, the opening address by the Buddha in his capacity as the chairman of the Great Assembly.

The Great Assembly was attended by three categories of celestial beings: Those of the highest rank and power, those of the middle rank and power and those from the lowest strata. To an audience of different social status, it would be a tactful measure for the chairman to evince interest in the members of the lowest rank by announcing first their presence to the congregation, followed by mentioning those of the medium status and finally the most powerful Devas. Any attempt to introduce the Devas of highest rank and power at the outset by

announcing their family and clan names might cause displeasure and dissatisfaction among those of the lower rank.

As it happened, the Buddha made it a point to mention the members of the lowest [570] rank of Devas, such as the earth deities, at the beginning of the welcome address, followed by giving recognition of the presence of the Devas of medium status, and closing his address by giving attention to those of the highest rank. He thus gave delight to all classes of the audience, the lowest rank feeling happy that they were welcomed first and the Devas of position and influence satisfied that they were given prominence by being mentioned at the crucial closure of the proceedings. This can be regarded as how the Buddha set a fine example for the guidance of those who are responsible for delivering an address of welcome to a great gathering.

In view of the facts stated above, all the Devas have since been looking forward to hearing the Discourse about the Great Assembly, as they wander about in the four directions of the universe.

The following is an illustration of how the Discourse about the Great Assembly is held in high esteem by the Devas. There was a cave known as Nāgalena in the precincts of Koṭipabbata monastery. A celestial damsel was dwelling on an ironwood tree standing at the gate of the said cave. One day a young monastic dwelling in the cave was reciting the Discourse about the Great Assembly and the Devakaññā listened ardently to the recitation of the discourse. When the monastic's recitation came to a close, the celestial damsel uttered: *Sādhu, sādhu*, at the top of her voice and a dialogue ensued between the youthful monastic and the Devakaññā:

Monk: Who is that saying *sādhu*?

Devakaññā: Venerable sir, it is me, a female deity.

Monk: Why have you said *sādhu*?

Devakaññā: It is because I had the good fortune to hear the Discourse about the Great Assembly (*Mahā-samaya-sutta*) for the first time when the Buddha propounded it in the Great Wood, and for the second time I heard it today. I understand that you have learnt the discourse well, exactly as taught by the Buddha, not making the slightest variation from the original even for a single letter. I therefore said *sādhu* on that score.

Monk: Have you heard the recitation by the Buddha yourself?

Devakaññā: Yes, I have, reverend sir.

Monk: It is said that there was a great assembly of Devas and Brahmas at the time of the recitation by the Buddha of this discourse. From which place did you hear the recitation?

Devakaññā: Venerable sir, I was then a resident of the Great Wood near Kapilavatthu, but I was unable to acquire a place in the whole of Jambudīpa because the powerful Devas and Brahmas crowded in. I was compelled to go across to Śrī Laṅkā, and as I was attempting to listen to the discourse standing at the port of Jambukola, powerful Devas came crowding in again. I was again pushed further and further backwards until I got to a small village of Rohana near Mahāgāma where, standing in the ocean to the depth of my neck, I was finally able to hear the recitation.

Monk: Devakaññā, how could you see the Buddha at the Great Wood which was at such a distance from where you happened to be at the time?

Devakaññā: Venerable sir, I really did see the Buddha; it appeared as if the Buddha was looking at me fixedly from the Great Wood all throughout the time he was expounding the discourse; so much so, I felt afraid and abashed and I felt like hiding myself beneath the foamy waves.

Monk: It is said that 1,000 billion Devas and Brahmas became Arahats on the day when the Discourse about the Great Assembly was delivered. Did you become an Arahat too?

Devakaññā: No, venerable sir, I did not.

Monk: Then I think you attained fruition stage of a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*)!

Devakaññā: No, sir, I did not. [571]

Monk: Then I think you had attained the fruition stage of stage of Once-returner (*Sakadāgāmī*)!

Devakaññā: No, sir, I did not.

Monk: Devakaññā, it is said that hearing the Discourse about the Great Assembly countless number of Devas and Brahmas attained the three lower paths; I am sure you must have at least become a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*).

Devakañña: As one who had indeed attained the fruition stage of Stream-entry (*Sotāpanna*) the Devakañña felt shy and said: "Venerable sir, you should not have asked me such a question," thus avoiding the issue.

The young monastic then asked the Devakañña: "Can you manifest yourself to me?" She replied: "Venerable sir, not the whole body but only the tip of my finger, and so saying, she thrust one of her fingers through a key hole, exposing just the tip of it. The whole cave was then brightly illumined as though thousands of moons and suns had thrown beams of light into it.

> The Devakañña did not manifest her whole person so as to save the young monastic from the danger of temptation, which would ruin his life as a recluse.

Then the Devakañña departed after paying her respects and urging the young monastic not to be remiss in his effort to practise the precepts prescribed for monastics. This is how the Discourse about the Great Assembly (*Mahā-samaya-sutta*) is held in high esteem by the Devas and Brahmas.

Discourses in Harmony with Inclinations

After delivering the Discourse about the Great Assembly, the Buddha proceeded to give discourses to the same Great Assembly on the following discourses in accordance with the dispositions of the different groups of Devas and Brahmas.

1. The Discourse on the Correct Way to Wander (*Sammā-paribbājanīya-sutta*, Snp 2.13) was taught to the Devas and Brahmas who had a propensity towards lust (*rāga*), by way of a dialogue between a mind-made Buddha and the Buddha himself. 100,000 Devas and Brahmas became Arahats at the conclusion of the discourse and countless Devas and Brahmas attained the three lower paths at the same time.
2. The Discourse on Quarrels and Disputes (*Kalaha-vivāda-sutta*, Snp 4.11) was taught to the Devas and Brahmas with an inclination towards aversion (*dosa*), such Devas and Brahmas achieved emancipation in a like manner.
3. The Long Discourse on the Array (*Mahā-byūha-sutta*, Snp 4.13) was taught to those who had inclination towards delusion (*moha*), such Devas and Brahmas gained emancipation likewise.

4. The Short Discourse on the Array (*Cūḷa-byūha-sutta*, Snp 4.12) was taught to those who were inclined to thought-conception (*vitakka*) with the same results.

5. The Discourse of Being Quick (*Tuvaṭaka-sutta*, Snp 4.14) was delivered to the audience with a tendency of faith (*saddhā*) in the Three Treasures with the same results.

6. The Discourse entitled Before the Break-Up (*Purā-bheda-sutta*, Snp 4.10) was taught to those who were inclined towards wisdom (*paññā*) in the same manner and with similar results.

For full particulars in respect of these six discourses, reference may be made to Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation Suttanipāta, An Ancient Collection of the Buddha's Discourses, together with its commentaries. [572]

23a: The 5th Rains Retreat (Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī)

Having accomplished an incumbent duty of a Buddha by teaching the Discourse about the Great Assembly (*Mahā-samaya-sutta*, DN 20), the Discourse on the Correct Way to Wander (*Sammā-paribbājanīya-sutta*, Snp 2.13), etc., to the 500 Arahats of Sakyan descent and establishing seven 1,000 billion Devas and Brahmas in the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*), and a countless number of them in the three lower paths, as stated above, the Buddha took up residence at Kūṭāgāra monastery, which had terraced roofing and a crowning pinnacle, in the country of Vesālī to observe the fifth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*).

> There were two forests bearing the name of Great Wood: one near Kapilavatthu and the other near Vesālī. Of these two, the one where the Buddha taught the Discourse about the Great Assembly, near Kapilavatthu, extended from the edge of Kapilavatthu to the Himālayas on one side and to the ocean on the other side. The one near the city of Vesālī was a great forest with a marked boundary on all sides.

When the Buddha was observing the fifth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in the Great Wood near Vesālī, King Suddhodana entered Nibbāna after attaining the Arahat fruition under the white umbrella in his golden palace.

> An account of King Suddhodāna's attainment of the Arahat fruition under the white umbrella in his golden palace and entering Parinibbāna has been dealt with in detail in the treatise entitled *Tathāgata-udāna-dīpanī*. In view of this, it is only briefly mentioned here as treated in the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) commentary.

Permission for the Ordination of Women

The Buddha's step-mother Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī had approached the Buddha at the time of his first visit to Kapilavatthu with a request for admission of women to the Saṅgha by formal ordination. Since then she had made the request three times more and the Buddha had rejected her request each time.

The reason for such rejection was because the Buddha had decided not to grant admission of women to the Saṅgha easily, but only after painstaking efforts on the part of women to gain permission for ordination. Only then would they realize that becoming a nun (*bhikkhunī*) in the Dispensation was a thing difficult of attainment and would safeguard their monastic status with constant vigilance.

He wished them to cherish the hard won admission to the Saṅgha after a great struggle.

Thus, when Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī made her first request, which was repeated three times to the Buddha at the Nigrodha monastery of Kapilavatthu, her request was rejected by him for the reasons stated above. At each attempt, she had to abandon hope and return to the royal palace.

Now when the Buddha had taken up residence at Vesālī to keep the fifth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) an opportunity presented itself for her to make another attempt. As stated in the previous chapters, the 500 monastics of royal blood, prior to their attainment of Awakening, had messages sent to them by their former spouses, requesting them to return and live a household life again. These ladies made their earnest appeal again by sending messages, as before, to the 500 monastics who had become Arahats now. But the Arahat monks sent the reply: "We are no longer in a position to lead a worldly life."

The 500 deserted wives considered it would not be appropriate to seek for a [573] new married life, and decided unanimously to go to Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī to appeal to her to obtain permission from the Buddha for admission to the Saṅgha as female monastics. Accordingly, they went in a group to Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī and made their appeal to her.

Their request reminded her of her failure to obtain permission for women to receive ordination when the Buddha was in residence at Nigrodha monastery on a previous occasion and so she had a hair-dresser shave their heads, including that of her own, and asked the ladies to wear dyed clothes and assume the form of female monastics while they were still in the royal palace. Then they made arrangements to set out all together for the Great Wood of Vesālī where the Buddha was then residing.

The distance between Kapilavatthu and Vesālī was 50 leagues; and when the Sakyan and Koliyan royal families considered arrangements for their journey, they concluded: "It would not be possible for these princesses and royal ladies, who were brought up so regally and gently, to make the journey on foot," and they arranged to provide them with 500 sedans to solve the problem.

The 500 ladies agreed amongst themselves that such a mode of travelling might be tantamount to an act of disrespect to the Buddha and they therefore made the journey of 50 leagues on foot. Royal families of both countries arranged for

regular provision of food at every stop and a sufficient number of escorts for their security on the way to Vesālī.

Having made the difficult journey of 50 leagues, their delicate feet were swollen with callouses which rose and burst, looking as if they were covered with the seeds of the clearing nut (*Strychnos potatorum*). All 500 fair ladies, headed by Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī, who arrived at Vesālī with swollen feet, bodies besmeared with dirt and dust, with tears streaming down their cheeks and in sore distress, stood in a group at the gate of the Kūṭāgāra monastery in the Great Wood.

> They dared not enter the precincts of the monastery at once. Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī reflected to herself that she had taken on the dress of a nun without the permission of the Buddha, and the news of her action may have already spread throughout the land. It would be well if the Buddha would be pleased to admit her into the Saṅgha. But, failing that, she would have to withstand reproaches. That was the reason why she stood wailing at the gate without daring to seek entry.

When Ven. Ānanda noticed Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī in such a plight at the gate, he came to her and inquired: "Dear step-mother, why do you look so miserable? Have the royal relatives of the Sakyan and Koliyan families met with tragedies and are ruined? Why are you in an unsightly appearance such as this, with swollen feet, and looking shabby, with a grief-stricken face, standing helplessly and weeping at the gate?"

Whereupon, Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī replied: "Venerable Ānanda, we have been standing at the gate with tears in our eyes for failure to get the Buddha's permission for women to receive formal ordination, so that they might lead the life of female monastics in this Dispensation."

Ānanda soothed her by saying a few words of encouragement: "Step-mother, if that is the case, I will go and approach the Realised One for admission of women into the Saṅgha by formal ordination, so that they might lead the life of female monastics in this Dispensation; please remain at the gate until I come back."

So saying Ven. Ānanda went to the Buddha and made this request: "Most exalted Buddha, step-mother Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī is standing at the gate with her feet swollen, her body covered with dirt and dust, her heart seared, tears streaming down her cheek, and in a miserable plight for failure to obtain

permission for womenfolk to receive formal ordination, so that they might lead the life of female monastics within the Dispensation (*Sāsana*). May I pray solemnly that they be granted permission to receive formal ordination!"

The Buddha said in response: "That is not a proper thing, dear Ānanda, and I advise you not to be interested in the matter of admitting womenfolk into the order as female monastics." [574] With an undaunted will, Ven. Ānanda made similar requests for the second time, for the third time, but received the same words of discouragement from the Buddha.

Ven. Ānanda thought of a new approach, after failure to obtain permission for admission of womenfolk to this Dispensation of the Dhamma-Vinaya for three times, and accordingly went to the Buddha and addressed him: "Most exalted Buddha, could womenfolk become noble persons (*ariya*) ranging from the fruition stage of a Stream-enterer, Once-returner, Non-returner and Arahat, by leading the life of female monastics within the framework of the Dhamma-Vinaya?"

Whereupon, the Buddha replied: "Ānanda, womenfolk could become noble persons ranging from the fruition stage of a Stream-enterer, Once-returner, Non-returner and Arahat, by leading the life of female monastics within the framework of the Dhamma-Vinaya."

"Most exalted Buddha, if womenfolk are capable of attaining the four stages of the attainment by way of their being female monastics within the framework of the Dhamma-Vinaya, may I submit a case that is worthy of the Realised One's sympathetic consideration in support of my request: Most exalted Buddha, Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī had rendered great service to you besides being your step-mother. She was responsible for feeding and nursing you and for your physical and mental well-being ever since the time of your birth. She used to tidy you up by showering you with scented water twice a day. Indeed, she was exclusively responsible for feeding you with the milk that flowed from her breast."

> Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī gave birth to Prince Nanda a few days after Mahā Māyā Devī had given birth to the Bodhisatta. She entrusted her own child, Nanda, to the care of wet nurses, and she volunteered to act as wet nurse and caretaker to the Bodhisatta; hence this additional weight applied to his request.

"Most exalted Buddha, I humbly pray for the favour of granting permission for womenfolk to receive ordination as female monastics within this framework of the Dhamma-Vinaya."

Eight Special Rules

The Buddha finally acceded to Ven. Ānanda's entreaties, saying: "Ānanda, if Mahā Pajāpatī accepts the eight special rules (*garu-dhamma*), let such acceptance mean her admission to the Saṅgha. The eight special rules are:

1. A female monastic, even if she enjoys a seniority of 100 years in the Saṅgha, must worship, welcome with raised clasped hands and pay respect to a male monastic, even though he may have been a monastic only for a day. This rule is to be strictly adhered to for life.
2. A female monastic must not keep her rains-residence at a place that is not close to one occupied by male monastics. This rule is also to be strictly adhered to for life.
3. Every fortnight, a nun must do two things: Ask the Saṅgha for the Observance day (*Uposatha*) and approach the Saṅgha for instruction and admonition. This rule is also to be strictly adhered to for life.
4. When the rains-residence period is over, a nun must attend the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*) ceremony at both of the male and female monastic assemblies, in each of which she must invite criticism on what has been seen, what has been heard or what has been suspected of her. This rule is also to be strictly adhered to for life.
5. A female monastic who has committed an offence Requiring a Meeting of the Saṅgha (*Saṅghādisesa*) must undergo penance for a half-month (*pakkha-mānatta*) in both assemblies of the male and female monastics. This rule is also to be strictly adhered to for life.
6. A female monastic must arrange for ordination by both assemblies of male and female monastics for a woman novice only after two year's probationary training under her in the observance of six training practices. This rule is also to be strictly adhered to for life. [575]
7. A female monastic should not revile a male monastic for any reason whatsoever. This rule is also to be strictly adhered to for life.

8. Female monastics are prohibited from exhorting or admonishing monastics with effect from today; but male monastics can exhort female monastics when and where necessary. This rule is also to be strictly adhered to for life.

These are the eight special rules. If Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī accepts the eight special rules, let such acceptance mean her admission to the Saṅgha."

The Buddha thus permitted the establishment of the female Saṅgha after expounding the eight special rules for their guidance.

Ven. Ānanda learned the eight special rules from the Buddha and returned to Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī at the gate and told her what had transpired at his meeting with the Buddha: "Great step-mother, if you accept the eight special rules, such acceptance means your admission to the Saṅgha. He then explained the rules as given to him by the Buddha above, and then he said: "Great step-mother, you can count yourself as one who has been duly admitted to the Saṅgha of female monastics, the moment you adhere strictly to these eight special rules."

Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī responded: "Ven. Ānanda, just as a young maiden who is in the habit of decorating herself with flowers, with her hair washed and brushed, or a man in like manner, would eagerly receive lilies, jasmine or other flowers, with outstretched hands, for planting on their heads if and when offered; so also I am prepared to adhere to the eight special rules (*garu-dhamma*), with great delight and due respect till I breathe my last.

Thereupon, Ven. Ānanda approached the Buddha again with profound respect and stood at a suitable distance and addressed him thus: "Most exalted Realised One, Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī has vowed to adhere strictly to the eight special rules as laid down, with due diligence and respect up to the end of her life."

> Her enthusiastic acceptance of the eight special rules constituted automatic admission to the Saṅgha; she became a nun without formal ordination in a boundary hall (*sīma*). Such procedure of admission into the Saṅgha is known as the higher ordination through taking up the eight special rules (*aṭṭha-garu-dhamma-paṭiggahaṇa-upasampadā*).

Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī went to the Buddha and sat at a suitable distance with due respect and asked: "Exalted Buddha, what should I do with the 500 princesses of royal blood?" He gave her certain instructions. She left after hearing the Dhamma and paying respects to him.

23a: The 5th Rains Retreat (Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī) – 806

Then the Buddha told the monastics about his instructions to Mahā Pajāpatī and laid down the following rules: "Monastics, I give permission to monastics to help in ordination of female candidates to become female monastics."

The monastics proceeded to help in the ordination of the 500 royal princesses with Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī as their preceptor (*upajjhāya*). They were known as ordained on one side (*ekato upasampannā*) there being insufficient number of female monastics to participate jointly with monastics in the ordination ceremony.

When the ordination ceremony was over, Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī attained fruition stage of Awakening through hearing the Discourse: 'In Brief' (*Saṅkhitta-sutta*, AN 8.553), and the 500 female monastics [576] attained according to their wishes, ranging from Stream-enterer, Once-returner, Non-returner and Arahat through hearing the Discourse giving Nandaka's Advice (*Nandakovāda-sutta*, MN 146).

> The ordination of distinguished female monastics, such as Princess Yasodharā, Princess Janapadakalyāṇī, Queen Khemā, Dhammadinnā, the wife of a rich man, Bhaddakapila, will be described separately when we come to chapter 44, The Life Stories of the Nuns.

23b: The 5th Year (Saccaka)

Victory over the Wandering Ascetic Saccaka

The Buddha conquered the wandering ascetic Saccaka while taking up residence at Kūṭāgāra monastery in the Great Wood near Vesālī. An account of this wandering ascetic, Saccaka, will be reproduced here from the Short Birth Story about the King of Kāliṅga (*Cūḷa-kāliṅga-jātaka*, Ja 301) and the Short Discourse about Saccaka (*Cūḷa-saccaka-sutta*, MN 35) and their commentaries.

A long time ago, 7,707 descendents of the Licchavī royal family of Vesālī took turns to rule the country. All those royal descendents were very much inclined to investigate into various ascetic views prevailing at that time. Once, a wandering mendicant, who professed 500 views, arrived in Vesālī. These royal descendents held him in high esteem and treated him well. A female mendicant, who also professed 500 views, arrived in the country of Vesālī at about the same time.

The descendents of the royal family arranged a debate between the two mendicants. The debate ended in a draw as one could not defeat the other since they were equally matched. A peculiar idea struck the Licchavīs: "Should the two be united in marriage, we could expect of them an offspring of great talent." So they persuaded them to remain in their country without taking the trouble of wandering about. They treated them with respect and arranged for their maintenance. As years rolled by, the couple produced four daughters and one son. The names of the daughters were Saccā, Lolā, Avadhārikā and Paṭicchādā, and that of the son was Saccaka.

> According to the commentary on the Short Discourse about Saccaka (*Cūḷa-saccaka-sutta*, MN 35) the names of the daughters were Saccā, Lolā, Paṭācārā and Ācāravatī.

When they came of age, they were given instructions on views held by their parents: 500 paternal and 500 maternal views, a total of 1,000.

Special parental advice was also given to the four daughters: "My dear daughters, if you find anyone who can refute your views, you might offer yourself as his wife if he is a layman; should he, however, happen to be a monastic, you might lead a homeless life under him."

After the death of their parents, the wanderer Saccaka, being more intelligent than his four elder sisters, studied more and more unorthodox views in addition to the 1,000 that he had inherited from his late parents. Without wandering forth he resided in Vesālī and gave instructions to the young royal princes. Fearing that his belly, which was full of wisdom, might burst at any moment, he had it wrapped up with iron plates.

His elder sisters held the view that Jambudīpa was conspicuous through the presence of the rose-apple tree (*jambu*). So they used to carry rose-apple flowers and fresh leaves as they moved from town to town in search of rivals in the matter of doctrinal views. They used to plant a few branches of a rose-apple tree on a heap of sand or earth at the entrance to a town, announcing: "Anyone capable of refuting our views can trample it down," by way of a challenge, before they entered the town.

As they wandered from place to place, they eventually arrived at Sāvatthī. Here, again, they planted a branch of rose-apple at the gate and made an announcement: "Anyone, whether a lay or a monastic, who can refute our ideology, can trample down this heap of earth and this branch of the rose-apple with his feet." They left their word with the children whom they found loitering round the gate, and went into the town.

Ven. Sāriputta's Intellectual Power

On that day, the chief disciple, Ven. Sāriputta, went for his usual round of receiving food fairly late in the morning, as he had been sweeping certain places in the [577] monastery, filling pots with drinking water and nursing the sick within the precincts of the Jetavana monastery. As he reached the gate, he came upon those branches of rose-apple. He, therefore, asked the nearby children about the strange spectacle. They gave a full account of it to Ven. Sāriputta.

Ven. Sāriputta asked them to trample down the rose-apple branches. The boys replied: "Reverend Sir, we dare not do it, we are afraid…" Ven. Sāriputta urged them again by saying a few words of encouragement: "Boys, don't be afraid; should they ask you as to who ordered you, just let them know that I, Sāriputta, the chief disciple of the Buddha, asked you to do it, and tell them also that if they want to challenge me in debate, they should come to the Jetavana monastery." The boys summoned their courage and trampled down the rose-apple branches as instructed. Ven. Sāriputta went on his round and having

received alms, returned to the monastery. When the four sisters came out of the town, they asked the boys: "Who has asked you to trample down our rose-apple branches?" They told them all about it.

The four women went back into the town, each moving along a different route, announcing: "We heard that the chief disciple of the Buddha, known as Sāriputta, is ready to engage in a debate with us. Those wishing to hear the debate come along." Many people came out and went along with them to the Jetavana monastery.

Ven. Sāriputta felt that presence of womenfolk in the residential area of monastics was not permissible, and so he went to the central part of the precincts of the monastery to meet them. On arrival, the womenfolk asked: "Did you ask the boys to trample down our rose-apple branch?" – "Yes, I did," was the reply. Those women then challenged Ven. Sāriputta to a debate on views. Ven. Sāriputta accepted their challenge and asked them as to who should start the questioning. They replied: "The onus of questioning rests with us." To which Ven. Sāriputta said: "Yes, you, being womenfolk, shall start the questioning."

The four women took positions, one on each of the four sides, and thrust a barrage of questions, 1,000 in number, which they had learnt from their parents. Ven. Sāriputta gave prompt answers to every one of their questions, just like cutting off the stalk of a lily with a double-edged sword, leaving no problem unsolved. He then invited more questions from the four women, who being subdued, replied: "Most reverend Sir, we know this much only."

Ven. Sāriputta then said: "Well, wanderers, I have answered all the 1,000 questions that you have asked, and now I will ask you only one question and how will you answer it?" Knowing by now somewhat about Ven. Sāriputta's standing, they dared not reply courageously: "Please do, Ven. Sāriputta, we will answer your questions," but, instead, they said meekly: "Reverend sir, please do. We will answer if we can." Before putting forward his question, Ven. Sāriputta made it plain to them that the question which he was about to ask was not of a higher standard but one meant for prospective novices who have to learn them after becoming novices and he asked this question: *Ekaṁ nāma kiṁ?*, "What is one?"

The four ascetic women could not make head or tail of the problem. Ven. Sāriputta asked them: "Heretics, answer the question," and they admitted their

inability: "Reverend sir, we have not the vaguest idea of the answer." Ven. Sāriputta told them: "Now I have answered your 1,000 questions, while you cannot answer a single question of mine, who then is the victor and who are the vanquished?"

Their reply was: "Reverend sir, you are the conqueror and we are the conquered." Ven. Sāriputta asked: "What will you do in such circumstances?" They told Ven. Sāriputta of what their parents had asked them to do in the event of their defeat, and expressed their desire to receive ordination under the patronage of Ven. Sāriputta.

Ven. Sāriputta then gave them this instruction: "This is not the right place for you womenfolk to receive ordination and you will be best advised to go to the monasteries of the [578] female monastics with our introduction and ask to be ordained there." Accordingly, they went to the monasteries of the female monastics with the introduction of Ven. Sāriputta and received ordination. They received ordination under the patronage of the elder Uppalavaṇṇā, according to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary. They became Arahats within a short period of time through mindful, earnest effort in the practice of the path.

> The Buddha expounded an account of this episode in the Short Birth Story about the King of Kāliṅga (*Cūḷa-kāliṅga-jātaka*, Ja 301). For further particulars, please refer to the commentary thereon. This episode happened only when the Buddha was taking up residence at Jetavana monastery of Sāvatthī, some time after the establishing of the female Saṅgha with the Buddha's approval and also in compliance with Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī's express request when he was residing in Great Wood, Vesālī. This interesting episode has connections with the story of the wanderer Saccaka, hence its exposition here.

The Story of the Wanderer Saccaka

As narrated above, the four women ascetics had a younger brother called Saccaka, who was acting as an instructor of the royal princes of Vesālī. It was during the period when the Buddha was staying at the Kūṭāgāra monastery in Great Wood, near Vesālī, that wanderer Saccaka, pupil of the sectarian Nigaṇṭha, was proclaiming himself as one skilled in debating, one who was very learned; and people also took him to be a holy person.

He boasted to the Vesālī citizens: "I have never come across any person claiming to have monastic followers, a sectarian, a sectarian leader, ascetic or Brahmin (*samaṇa-brāhmaṇa*) or one worthy of homage, a Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddha, who could resist without perspiring from their arm-pits when I refute and rebuke them on the ground of views. Even senseless logs or wooden blocks could not remain unshaken when I talk about things in terms of views, let alone living creatures!"

Wanderer Saccaka was, in fact, going about the city and boasting about himself as one who was out to find faults with the ascetic Gotama. One morning, as he was strolling about and taking walking exercise, he noticed Ven. Assaji on his alms round at a distance.

He thought to himself: "I am a person who has been contemplating how to debate with ascetic Gotama's teaching though I cannot do it yet, since I have no means of knowing his views. I must therefore try to get to know his views before I challenge him in a proper manner. Ven. Assaji is well versed in ascetic Gotama's views and I should make him declare their doctrine firmly before I can find fault with Gotama and rebuke him."

He approached Ven. Assaji with that end in view, and entered into conversation with him after exchanging friendly greetings: "Assaji, how does ascetic Gotama exhort his disciples? In how many ways does he give them instructions in minute detail?"

Whereupon, Ven. Assaji explained it to him in this way: "Descendent of Aggivessana, wanderer Saccaka, the Buddha exhorts his disciples in this manner. He gives detailed instructions in various ways, such as: 'Monastics, corporeality (*rūpa*) is impermanent, sensation is impermanent, perception is impermanent, volitions are impermanent, sixfold consciousness is impermanent. Corporeality is not self, sensation is not self, perception is not self, volitions are not self, sixfold consciousness is not self (*atta*). All conditioned things are not permanent; all things (*dhamma*) are without self.' O descendent of Aggivessana, wanderer Saccaka, the Buddha had exhorted his disciples in this way. He had given many detailed instructions in various ways." The above is Ven. Assaji's reply to the heretic Saccaka's query.

> Points of special interest which are worthy to note: From the foregoing statement, it will be seen that, in his reply to Saccaka's query, Ven. Assaji

mentioned the [579] facts of impermanence and unsubstantiality or non-self, but nothing was said about the fact of suffering. The reason for the omission of the fact of suffering has been explained in the commentary as follows: Had Ven. Assaji mentioned corporeality is suffering, sensation is suffering, perception is suffering, volitions are suffering, sixfold consciousness is suffering, Saccaka might have got a chance for disputation. This is because, figuratively speaking, path and fruition are regarded as suffering (*saṅkhāra-dukkha*). Hence, the omission of the fact of suffering.

Otherwise, Saccaka would have asked: "Assaji what is the object of your receiving ordination?" Then Ven. Assaji's reply would be: "For the sake of the paths and fruitions." In such a case, he would be exposed to censure: "Assaji, your Dispensation (*Sāsana*), after all, does not lead to emancipation, in reality, your so-called Dispensation simply is a place of oppression and destruction; your so-called Dispensation is a kind of hell plane of misery! Therefore, your minds are void of desire for joy. Indeed, you all have been wandering round striving anxiously after suffering." It was for this reason that Ven. Assaji had purposely avoided the employment of the figurative term (*pariyāya*), and adopted the abstract term (*nippariyāya*) that could not have another meaning, hence the exclusive presentation of impermanence (*anicca*) and unsubstantiality (*anatta*).

Whereupon, Saccaka said: "Assaji what improper things do I hear? We have heard what ascetic Gotama has been teaching. Perhaps we could meet with honourable Gotama sometime when there might be some discussion. Perhaps we could then rid him of this evil view."

At that time the 500 Licchavī princes were assembled at the Assembly Hall to transact some business. Saccaka thought to himself: "I was unable to decry the views of ascetic Gotama in the past because of not knowing anything about it. Now, I have learnt about it from his great disciple Assaji, and I know them fully well, I had better go to his place and reproach him for his views."

He went first to the Assembly Hall where his 500 Licchavī princes were holding a meeting. He bid them to come out from the chamber, shouting: "Come forth, honourable Licchavīs! Come forth, honourable Licchavīs! Today, there will be a discussion between ascetic Gotama and myself about his view. It is going to be a grand show! Assaji, one of the five monastics and a well-known disciple of

ascetic Gotama, has stood firmly on the view of impermanence and unsubstantiality. If ascetic Gotama also stands firm on the same view of impermanence and unsubstantiality:

Just as a powerful man taking hold of a long fleeced ram by its fleece, might pull, push and pull it about, even so will I pull and push and pull ascetic Gotama about with my arguments and refutations of his view.

Just as a powerful workman of a liquor shop, taking a big mat from the liquor shop, might throw it into a deep lake and seizing it by the corner, might pull it, push it, and shake it, even so, will I pull, push and shake ascetic Gotama about with my arguments and refutations of his view.

Just as a powerful drunkard, taking hold of a liquor strainer by its edge, might shake it up, shake it down, and toss it about, even so, will I shake up, shake down and toss about ascetic Gotama with arguments and refutations of his view.

Just as an elephant, which gets infirm only when it is sixty years old, might get down into a deep pond and play the game of washing hemp, even so, will I play with ascetic Gotama the game of washing hemp with my arguments and my refutations of his view.

> When hemp stalks are in the process of being transformed into fibres, they are made into bundles and dipped in the water for softening. After three days, when they are soft and pliant, workmen come with provisions, such as drinks and edibles, for enjoyment when the work is over. They take hold of bunches of hemp [580] and strike them hard against the planks laid on their right, left and front in turn, while they enjoy food and drink.
>
> The royal elephant, imitating the action of hemp workers, goes deep into the pond and drawing water with its trunk, blows it on its head, on its back, on either side of its body, and in between its thighs. Hence the term, (*sāṇa-dhovika*) playing the game of washing hemp.

"Licchavī princes come forth, come forth. Today there will be a debate between me and ascetic Gotama on his view. It's going to be a grand show!" Thus Saccaka invited his disciples.

Among the Licchavī princes there were those who expressed their conviction that: "The ascetic Gotama is not capable of refuting the views of Saccaka, it is Saccaka who will be able to refute the view of the ascetic Gotama;" and those

who said: "What kind of a man is Saccaka that he will be able to refute the Buddha? It is the Buddha who will be able to refute Saccaka."

Then Saccaka made his way towards the Kūṭāgāra monastery in the company of the 500 Licchavī princes. It was noon then and many monastics were walking to and fro to repulse sloth and torpor after having rich food.

> In other words, these monastics were meditators in the day time (*divā padhānika*), who usually took a walk to and fro to expose themselves to the sun at noon and then bathed. They found this practice most helpful in developing concentration in their meditation.

Saccaka approached these monastics and asked: "Friends where does the honourable Gotama take residence at the present moment? We would like to see him."

Early at dawn on that day, the Buddha, after abiding in the attainment of great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā-samāpatti*), looked into the 10,000 world-element and perceived through his omniscience, that Saccaka would be coming along with many Licchavī princes to rebuke him concerning his view. Therefore, he took his bath early in the morning and went out for receiving alms, accompanied by the monks. On return, he did not go into the scented chamber but went straight into the Great Wood and sat under a shady tree for the convenience of the visiting crowd, led by the heretic Saccaka.

Those monks whom Saccaka had contacted were meditating monks who had just returned from the Buddha. They, therefore readily replied indicating with their clasped palms pointing towards the Buddha, saying: "Saccaka, the Buddha is sitting under a tree in the Great Wood to spend the day."

Thereupon, Saccaka went into Great Wood in the company of a huge mass of people. He approached the Buddha, and after a cordial exchange of greetings with him, he sat down at a suitable spot.

> It should be noted that in addition to the 500 Licchavī princes who were his disciples, a huge crowd was following him, consisting of numerous citizens of Vesālī who were interested to witness the debate between the two distinguished personalities.

Those who came along with Saccaka may be divided into five categories: 1) Some people paid homage to the Buddha and sat in suitable places; 2) some

exchanged greetings with him, saying words that would remain always fresh in their hearts throughout their lives, and sat in suitable places; 3) some bowed with palms together towards him and sat in suitable places; 4) some announced their names and lineage and sat in suitable places; 5) some simply sat down in silence.

Having sat down at a suitable distance, Saccaka addressed the Buddha: "May I, with your approval, submit a question concerning a certain subject?" the Buddha replied: "Ask, Aggivessana, whatever you like."

> This is the sort of invitation to questions, peculiar to Fully Self-Awakened Buddhas, and beyond the range of Paccekabuddhas and disciples (*sāvaka*).

Saccaka started questioning: "Honourable Gotama, how do you exhort your disciples? What part of your many teachings is most emphasised for your disciples?"

To which the Buddha replied: "Descendent of Aggivessana, wanderer Saccaka, I exhort my disciples in this [581] manner, this part of the many teachings is most emphasised for my disciples: 'Monastics, corporeality is impermanent, sensation is impermanent, perception is impermanent, volitions are impermanent, sixfold consciousness is impermanent. Monastics corporeality is not self, sensation is not self, perception is not self, volitions are not self, sixfold consciousness is not self (*atta*). All conditioned things are impermanent; all conditioned and unconditioned things (*dhamma*) are not self (*atta*).' O descendent of Aggivessana, Wanderer Saccaka, this is how I exhort my disciples; this part of the many teachings is what I give most emphasis to for my disciples."

Saccaka said: "A simile occurs to me."

The Buddha then told him: "Descendent of Aggivessana, reveal it boldly and vividly."

Saccaka said: "Just as seeds and trees cannot grow without depending and resting on the earth that affords support; or just as a manual worker cannot accomplish his task without depending and resting upon the earth that affords support, O honourable Gotama, even so, this individual person produces merit or demerit based on corporeality that is self (*atta*); this individual person produces merit and demerit based on feelings that are self; this individual person produces merit or demerit based on perception that is self; this individual person

produces merit or demerit based on volitions that are self; this individual person produces merit or demerit based on the sixfold consciousness that is self." Thus Saccaka presented his view on self (*atta*) by way of similes.

> He had likened the fivefold aggregate to the earth; sentient beings are dependent on the fivefold aggregates like the earth. They produce merit or demerit based on the fivefold aggregates.

Saccaka further said: "The honourable Gotama has thus discarded the very evident and manifest self and declared it to be non-self (*anatta*)." Thus Saccaka presented his soul theory firmly supported by similes.

The supporting similes presented by Saccaka are notable, quite valid and firm. With the exception of the Fully Self-Awakened Buddhas, there is no one capable of refuting his criticism and condemning his soul theory. In fact, there are two types of people: 1) Those who are tractable by Fully Self-Awakened Buddhas only and 2) those who are tractable by disciples (*sāvaka*). Those in the second category can be corrected by the Buddhas and the disciples, but those in the first category can be guided by the Buddhas alone. Wanderer Saccaka belonged to the first category and could be instructed only by the Buddha.

The Buddha had, therefore, decided to personally rectify and refute his view: "The descendent of Aggivessana, Saccaka, do you say that corporeality is self (*atta*), that feelings are self, that perception is self, that volitions are self, that the sixfold consciousness is self?"

Saccaka came to realize then that: "The ascetic Gotama has put me in difficulty, making me declare, confirm and admit my self theory (*atta-vāda*) in the presence of an audience. Should anything untoward happen, I alone will be condemned for my self theory," and thinking of citing the people of Vesālī as co-adherents of self, he replied: "Honourable Gotama, indeed, I do say: 'Corporeality is self, feelings are self, perception is self, volitions are self, the sixfold consciousness is self, and the general mass of citizens of Vesālī also say this."

The Buddha, being 100,000 times superior to Saccaka in matters of views, would not let him make other people share the same fate with him. Instead, he would make his conquest over Saccaka alone, and said to him: "Saccaka what has the great mass of people to do with this? I urge you, Saccaka, to explain your view."

> What the Buddha meant to say was this: "Not all of these people are out to refute my view. You are the only one who has come to refute my view. They are here because you [582] have invited them to witness the debate. The onus of expressing the view rests with you, and don't let them share the same fate with you."

Saccaka was thus pressed to repeat his own view: "Honourable Gotama …. Indeed, I do say: 'Corporeality is self, feelings are self, perception is self, volitions are self, the sixfold consciousness is self."

After causing Saccaka to explain his own view, the Buddha proceeded to ask: "Saccaka, since you have admitted that the fivefold aggregates are self, I will ask you in turn about this. Answer me as you wish. Saccaka, what do you think of the question I am about to ask? Would an anointed king like Pasenadi Kosala, or the crowned King Ajātasattu, ruler of Magadha, son of Queen Vedehi, have the power in their respective realm to order the execution of one deserving to be put to death, to order the confiscation of one whose property deserves to be confiscated and to banish one deserving of banishment?"

In answer to the above question, Saccaka replied: "Honourable Gotama, a king like Pasenadi Kosala, or the crowned King Ajātasattu, ruler of Magadha, son of Queen Vedehi, have the power in their respective realm to order the execution of one deserving to be put to death, to order the confiscation of one whose property to be confiscated and to banish one deserving of banishment. O honourable Gotama, even those federations like the Vajjis or Mallas have power in their respective realm to order the execution of one deserving to be put to death, to order the confiscation of one whose property deserves to be confiscated and to banish one deserving of banishment. What more need we say of an anointed king such as King Pasenadi of Kosala or King Ajātasattu of the kingdom of Magadha, the son of Queen Vedehi? He would have the power, Gotama, he deserves to have the power."

> The Buddha had purposely brought Saccaka to state this in order to completely crush his self theory (*atta-vāda*). Saccaka being unwise had even gone to the extent of "sharpening the weapon meant for his own execution," by mentioning the governments of the Vajjis and Mallas in support of his statement.

"Saccaka, how do you like the question I am about to ask? You have said: 'Corporeality is self.' If so, can you cause that self to obey your words, saying:

‘Let my corporeality be thus; let my corporeality not be thus?’ When the Buddha asked in such a point blank manner, Saccaka remained completely silent.

> Saccaka had discovered his grave mistake. He thought to himself: “The ascetic Gotama had brought about the destruction of my view. I was foolish enough to have created a chance for ascetic Gotama to defeat me at my own game. I have been ruined beyond redemption. In case I say: ‘I can prevail my power upon my corporeality,’ the Licchavī princes would stand up and rebuke me for my ugly body compared with their own beautiful, admirable bodies which resemble those of celestial beings of Tāvatiṁsa. In case I choose to say: ‘I do not have power over my body,’ ascetic Gotama would stand up and rebuke me: ‘Saccaka you already have said that you have control over your body, and now you have retracted your own statement.’ ” He had placed him on the horns of a dilemma. He therefore kept complete silence.

For the second time the Buddha asked Saccaka to answer the same question: “How do you like the question I am about to ask? You have said: ‘Corporeality is self.’ If so, can you cause it to obey your words, saying: ‘Let my corporeality be thus; let my corporeality not be thus?’ ”

Saccaka remained completely silent, and did not answer the Buddha’s question for the second time.

> If no answer was given to a reasonable question put by a Fully Self-Awakened Buddha for three times in succession, it constitutes a grave act [583] against the Buddha, and the offender’s head is liable to be split into seven parts, according to a principle law of nature (*dhamma-niyāma*).

Fully Self-Awakened Buddhas had fulfilled the perfections (*pāramī*) for four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, out of great compassion for all beings, and, as such, the Buddha did not repeat the question for the third time, but changed the subject of discussion: “Saccaka, speak up now. This is not the time for you to keep silent. The head of one who does not answer a Buddha’s reasonable question for three times in succession is liable to have his head split into seven parts spontaneously.”

Then Sakka could not help coming to the scene under the guise of a Yakkha holding a burning, blazing, flaming thunderbolt and stood right on top of Saccaka’s head, as though threatening to punish him should he fail to answer the

Buddha's reasonable question for three times, but this strange spectacle was visible only to the Buddha and Saccaka, no one else could see it.

> According to the sub-commentary Sakka had come holding a thunderbolt in his hand and stood above Saccaka. Sakka has great compassion for him, like the Buddha, and wanted to persuade him to give up his wrong views by threatening him in the guise of a terrible Yakkha wielding a thunderbolt. He made his appearance, not because he actually wanted to do harm to Saccaka but because no untoward mishap to anyone should ever occur in the presence of a Buddha.
>
> According to the commentary the reason why Sakka came under the guise of a Yakkha was that, he had a desire to cause Saccaka to turn over a new leaf and accept right view. Sakka was in the company of Brahma Sahampati when the latter approached the Buddha with a formal request to preach the Dhamma. Both of them requested the Buddha to preach the Dhamma, and they, on their part, undertook to see to it that reluctant people are persuaded to act according to his instructions: "Let yours be the authority of the Dhamma, and ours will be the law of temporal authority," hence the appearance of Sakka under the guise of a Yakkha in fulfilment of his undertaking.

When Saccaka saw Sakka under the guise of a Yakkha, his body perspired profusely through fright, beads of sweat came streaming down, and waves of air swirled round in his stomach. He looked around to see if there was any one also witnessing the strange phenomenon and saw none. He thought it would be unwise to shout out "a great Yakkha" when no one saw it, and would be like creating a chance for the people to turn against him saying: "We also have eyes but you are the only one seeing a Yakkha. You see it only because you dispute with ascetic Gotama." He was so shaken that his hair stood on end and goose flesh developed all over his body. He found no one but the Buddha to take refuge in, and seeking shelter, protection and refuge only in the Buddha, he thus spoke to the Buddha: "Be pleased to ask me, honourable Gotama; I will answer."

The Buddha asked him: "Saccaka, how do you like the question I am about to ask? You have said: 'Corporeality is self.' If so, do you have power over that corporeality and can you say: 'Let my corporeality be thus; let my corporeality be not thus?' "

Saccaka replied: “Honourable Gotama, I do not have the power.” Then the Buddha warned him: “Saccaka, think it over again, ponder it over again before you give an answer. What you have said before does not agree with what you have just said; and what you have just said does not agree with what you said before. They do not corroborate one another,” and he proceeded to ask him again: “Saccaka, how do you like the question I am about to ask? You have said: ‘Feelings are self.’ If so, do you have power over those feelings and can you say: ‘Let my feelings be thus; let my feelings be not thus?’ ” Saccaka replied: “Honourable Gotama, I do not have the power.”

Then the Buddha warned him: “Saccaka, think it over again, ponder over it again before you give an answer. What you have said before does not agree with what you have just [584] said; and what you have just said does not agree with what you said before. They do not corroborate one another,” and he proceeded to ask: “Saccaka, how do you like the question I am about to ask? You have said: ‘Perception is self.’ If so, do you have power over that perception and can you say: ‘Let my perception be thus; let my perception be not thus?’ ” Saccaka replied: “Honourable Gotama, I do not have the power.”

Then the Buddha warned him: “Saccaka, think it over again, ponder over it again before you give an answer. What you said before does not agree with what you have just said; and what you have just said does not agree with what you said before. They do not corroborate one another,” and he proceeded to ask: “Saccaka, how do you like the question I am about to ask? You have said: ‘Volitions are self.’ If so, do you have power over those volitions and can you say: ‘Let my volitions be thus; let my volitions be not thus?’ Saccaka replied: “Honourable Gotama, I do not have the power.”

Then the Buddha warned him: “Saccaka, think it over again, ponder over it again before you give an answer. What you said before does not agree with what you have just said; and what you have just said does not agree with what you said before. They do not corroborate one another,” and he proceeded to ask: “Saccaka how do you like the question I am about to ask? You have said: ‘The sixfold consciousness is self.’ If so, do you have power over that sixfold consciousness and can you say: ‘Let my sixfold consciousness be thus; let my sixfold consciousness be not thus?’ Saccaka replied: “Honourable Gotama, I do not have the power.”

Then the Buddha warned him: "Saccaka, think it over again, ponder over it again before you give an answer. What you said before does not agree with what you have just said; and what you have just said does not agree with what you said before. They do not corroborate one another."

> The Buddha continued to exhort Saccaka by expounding a discourse which involves questioning and answering three times (*te-parivatta-dhamma-desanā*)."

"Saccaka what do you think of this? Is corporeality permanent or impermanent?" Saccaka answered: "Impermanent, Gotama." – "That which is impermanent, is it suffering (*dukkha*) or pleasant (*sukha*)?" – "It is suffering, Gotama." – "Would it be proper to consider that this corporeality, which is impermanent, suffering and subject to change as: 'This corporeality is mine through clinging, this corporeality is I through conceit, or this is self through wrong view?" – "Saccaka answered: "Gotama, it is indeed not proper."

"Wanderer Saccaka, what do you think of this? Is sensation permanent or impermanent? Is perception permanent or impermanent? Are volitions permanent or impermanent? Saccaka, how do you think of the question that I am about to ask. Are the six kinds of consciousness permanent or impermanent?" Saccaka answered: "Ven. Gotama they are impermanent." – "That which is impermanent, is it suffering or pleasant?" – "It is suffering, Gotama." Would it be proper to consider the six kinds of consciousness, which are impermanent, suffering and subject to change as: 'This consciousness is mine through clinging, this consciousness is I through conceit, this consciousness is self through wrong view." Saccaka answered: "Gotama, it is indeed not proper."

Just as an expert snake charmer caused the snake concerned to suck its venom out of the bitten part of the body of the victim, even so the Buddha had caused Saccaka to admit, by his own mouth, the fact that the five aggregates (*khanda*) are impermanent, suffering and insubstantial, [585] and not permanent, pleasant and substantial as he had previously maintained by the word of his mouth and in the presence of the same audience, which comprised the Licchavī princes.

> The venom, that is, the false view of the soul (*atta*), which had appeared out of the mouth of Saccaka, he made to be sucked out by the same mouth of Saccaka and an admission to be uttered that it is not self (*anatta*), in the presence of the audience.

In this manner the Buddha had Saccaka definitely admit that the five aggregates are impermanent, suffering and insubstantial in the presence of throngs of people, and being desirous of subduing him to accept the truth with his head hanging down, the Buddha went on to ask: "Heretic Saccaka, how would you like the question that I am about to ask? When a person clings to suffering (*dukkha*), adheres to suffering, cleaves to suffering and considers the suffering of the fivefold aggregates as: 'This suffering is mine through clinging; this suffering is I through conceit and this suffering is self through wrong view,' could he himself accurately understand suffering? Could he abide in the complete cessation of suffering?"

Saccaka answered: "Honourable Gotama, how could it be possible! It is an impossibility!" Whereupon, the Buddha went on to ask: "Wanderer Saccaka, how do you think of the question I am about to ask? If that is so, clinging to that suffering of the five aggregates, attached to that suffering of the five aggregates, cleaving to that suffering of the five aggregates, do you not hold wrong view, and consider that: 'This suffering of the five aggregates is mine through clinging, this suffering five aggregates is I through conceit, this suffering five aggregates is self through wrong view.' In view of all this, are you on the wrong track in respect of view?" Saccaka answered: "Honourable Gotama, how could it not be so! I do consider it so."

Then the Buddha gave further exhortation to Saccaka: "Saccaka, it is as if a man, desiring heart-wood, seeking heart-wood, and wandering about, might enter the forest with a sharp hatchet. He might see a plantain tree with a straight stem and devoid of a budding stalk. He might cut off the bottom part and then cut off its crown. Then he might peel the bark of the stem. Having peeled the bark of the stem, that man would not even get sap wood, let alone heart-wood. In the same way, Saccaka, as I question and cross-question you for reasons in regard to your view, you prove to be empty, futile and a great failure.

Saccaka, you have been boasting to the citizens of Vesālī, through empty pride thus: "I have never come across such ascetics and Brahmins as Fully Self-Awakened Buddhas, one who could resist me without perspiring from their arm-pits when I refute and rebuke them on the ground of views; and even senseless logs or wooden blocks could not remain unshaken when I talk about things in terms of views, let alone living beings."

The Buddha, exposing his golden coloured body to the assembly, then said: "Saccaka, there is no trace of perspiration on my body."

> As a matter of course, a compounded body perspires at one time or the other; hence the Buddha said: "There is no trace of perspiration on my body at the moment."
>
> As regards the exposition of the golden coloured body it does not mean that the whole body was exposed to view. It is customary among the Buddhas to have the button-knob properly fixed to the button-ring of the robe when they take their seat before an audience. The Buddha, on this occasion, held the robe above the upper part of the throat and dropped just four inches of it to permit the emergence of the golden radiance, whirling round like a stream of liquid gold or flashes of lightning, right round [586] his head, resembling a golden tabor and shooting skywards.
>
> The Buddha did such a thing to dispel doubt, if there was any, on the part of the people. If the Buddha did not disclose the true aspect by exposing his body, certain people might say: "We can see beads of perspiration streaming down Saccaka's body; ascetic Gotama had said he had no sweat but we cannot know if it is true because his body is completely cloaked in a double robe."

When the Buddha had said thus, Saccaka sat speechless with a sad look, drooping shoulders and downcast head and at his wit's end.

Then the Licchavī Prince Dummukha seeing Saccaka speechless with a sad look, drooping shoulders and downcast head and at his wit's end, addressed the Buddha: "Most exalted Buddha, a simile has occured to me." The Buddha urged him: "Dummukha, reveal it."

Prince Dummukha addressed the Buddha thus: "Most exalted Buddha, there was a pond near a village or a market. A crab was living in that pond. Many boys and girls, coming out from that village or town, might approach the pond and might go down into the pond. Taking the crab out of the water, they might put it on dry ground. And, venerable sir, as often as that crab would thrust out a claw, these boys and girls would cut it, break it and smash it with sticks and potsherds. Just as that crab, with its claws cut, broken and smashed, would be unable to get back into the pond again as before, even so, venerable sir, Saccaka will be unable now to come round to the Buddha to make refutations and assertions as

you have cut, broken and smashed all the distorted, conceited and twisted views of Saccaka."

Whereupon, Saccaka asked Dummukha: "Dummukha, stop it, Dummukha, stop it; you are a person with rough speech; we are not speaking to you, nor are we discussing with you. I have been discussing with Ven. Gotama." He thus objected to Dummukha's participation in the conversation.

> When other Licchavī princes heard the simile quoted by Prince Dummukha, they remembered the contemptuous treatment they received at the hands of Saccaka while undergoing training under his care. They thought the tables had been turned and it was the most opportune time for them to take revenge on their common enemy by quoting different similes, in the manner of delivering blows to a fallen enemy. So they waited their turn thinking of the similes they would quote.
>
> Saccaka had a presage of what the princes were planning and what was in store for him. He knew: "These princes were impatiently waiting their turn. If each of them gets the chance to come out with his simile, I will never be able to raise my head again in such crowds." He therefore planned to avoid such a mishap by approaching the Buddha with a request to solve a problem before they could intervene as planned. It was with this intention that he deterred Prince Dummukha from intervention and approached the Buddha with a request.

"Venerable Gotama, please leave aside my words, as well as those of many of the ascetics and Brahmins. Such words may be taken as idle talk. To what extent does a disciple of yours practise according to the teaching, following the instructions and abiding by the teaching of Gotama, having overcome uncertainty, having dispelled all doubts, having gained the courage of conviction. Is he no longer dependent on others in matters of faith?"

The Buddha gave the following answer in compliance with his request: "Wanderer Saccaka, in this Dispensation, a disciple of mine, who sees any or all corporeality with right understanding as they really are, whether past, future, or present, in oneself or outside oneself, gross or subtle, mean or exalted, far or near, in these eleven different manners, through insight meditation (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) and path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*), thus: 'This corporeality is not I, this corporeality is not mine, this corporeality is not my self (*atta*) … all sensation … all perception … all volitions … sees any [587] or all of the sixfold

consciousnesses with right understanding as they really are, whether past, future, or present, in oneself or outside oneself, gross or subtle, mean or exalted, far or near, in these eleven different manners, through insight meditation and path-knowledge. Thus, this consciousness is not mine; this consciousness is not I; this consciousness is not my self.' Wanderer Saccaka, it is to such an extent that a disciple of mine practises according to the teaching, following the instructions and abiding by the teaching, having overcome uncertainty, having dispelled all doubts, having gained the courage of conviction and he is not dependent on others in matters of faith."

> According to the canon, the three lower fruition stages are termed the training grounds (*sikkha-bhūmi*) for those still in training (*sikkha*); the canonical term for those who have reached the Arahat fruition stage is (*Arahatta-puggala*) or the abode of the noble persons (*ariya-puggala*).
>
> Herein, the term "sees" signifies a continuing process, not having completed the act of seeing. Although Saccaka was not acquainted with the terms employed in the Dispensation, it occurred to him that "sees' is somewhat short of "realization," and so he addressed the Buddha again.

"Venerable Gotama, to what extent, and in what manner does a monastic become an Arahat, having eliminated the pollutants (*āsava*), having accomplished the path (*magga*), having done what is to be done, having laid down the burden of the aggregates, defilements and conditioned existence, having attained his goal of the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*), having destroyed all the fetters of existence, and having become emancipated through full comprehension?"

The Buddha replied: "Wanderer Saccaka, in this Dispensation, a disciple of mine, who sees any or all corporeality with right understanding as they really are, whether past, future, or present, in oneself or outside oneself, gross or subtle, mean or exalted, far or near, in these eleven different manners, through insight meditation and path-knowledge thus: 'This corporeality is not I, this corporeality is not mine, this corporeality is not my self … all sensation … all perception … all volitions … sees any or all of the sixfold consciousnesses thus: 'This consciousness is not mine, this consciousness is not my self,' he becomes emancipated, having no clinging.

Wanderer Saccaka, it is to that extent that a disciple of mine become an Arahat, having eliminated the pollutants (*āsava*), having accomplished the path (*magga*),

having done what is to be done, having laid down the burden of the aggregates, defilements and conditioned existence, having attained his goal of the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*), having destroyed all the fetters of existence, and having become emancipated through full comprehension.

Wanderer Saccaka, such a monastic, with the mind thus emancipated becomes endowed with three eminent qualities: eminence in insight, eminence in practice and eminence in emancipation.

> Eminence in insight means insight into Nibbāna; eminence in practice means perfect practice, the noble path of eight constituents; eminence in emancipation means the attainment of the Arahat fruition.

Wanderer Saccaka, a monastic with his mind thus emancipated, reveres, esteems, honours, and venerates the Buddha saying:[205]

> *Buddho bodhāya desesi, danto yo damathāya ca,*
> *samathāya santo dhammaṁ, tinno va taraṇāya ca,*
> *nibbuto nibbānatthāya, taṁ lokasaraṇaṁ name.* *[588]*

> Our teacher, the Buddha, having gained Awakening with regard to the four noble truths, expounds the Dhamma to enlighten sentient beings. Our teacher, the Buddha, having subdued or tamed himself, expounds the Dhamma to tame sentient beings. Our teacher, the Buddha, having extinguished the flame of the defilements himself, expounds the Dhamma to sentient beings to help them extinguish the flame of their defilements. Our teacher, the Buddha, having crossed over the four great floods (*ogha*) of sensual desire, rebirth, wrong views and ignorance, expounds the Dhamma for crossing over. Our teacher, the Buddha, having achieved the total extinction of the defilements (*kilesa*), expounds the Dhamma to sentient beings, for the achievement of the total extinction of their defilements.

An Alms-Meal offered by Saccaka

When the Buddha had thus explained the exalted state of the Arahat fruition, Saccaka addressed him: “Venerable Gotama, we have, indeed, offended you and

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[205] [This verse seems to be based on a prose section of the Short Discourse about Saccaka (*Cūḷa-saccaka-sutta*, MN 35), and may have been composed by Sayādaw himself.]

were impudent to think that we could dispute your views and refute them. We have tried to disparage you with harsh and discourteous words.

Venerable Gotama, for example, a person might find safety after attacking an elephant in must. But there could be no safety for a man attacking the honourable Gotama.

Venerable Gotama, a man who attacks a blazing mass of fire might find safety but there could be no safety for a man attacking the honourable Gotama.

Venerable Gotama, a man who attacks a dreadful and poisonous snake might find safety, but there could be no safety for a man attacking the honourable Gotama.

Venerable Gotama, we have, indeed, offended you and were impudent to think that we could dispute your views and refute them. We have tried to disparage you with harsh and discourteous words."

> Saccaka said, "… there could be no safety for a man attacking the honourable Gotama." This meant that anyone, who chanced to pass strictures on venerable Gotama in a debate on views, cannot escape from being destroyed and has to depart with his views completely demolished. It should be noted that the Buddha did not cause harm to the life of anyone, like a big elephant, a great bonfire or a venomous snake.
>
> Saccaka had made such a statement, with three similes, not intending to praise the Buddha, but to blow his own trumpet. For example, a king, who had caused the death of an enemy might speak highly of the defeated by remarks, such as: "That man is such a brave and courageous one," just to glorify his feat of arms.
>
> Saccaka had, in like manner, praised the Buddha, who was difficult to be approached by an ordinary being, by the similes of a big elephant, a great bonfire and a venomous snake, just to show that he was the only wise man with enough courage to have challenged the Buddha to a debate on views.

When Saccaka had thus indirectly praised himself he turned to the Buddha and presented an invitation: "Venerable Gotama, may the honourable Gotama be pleased to accept my offering of an alms meal, together with the community of monastics at my place tomorrow." The Buddha accepted his invitation by keeping silent.

Saccaka then turned to the Licchavī princes and said: "Let the Licchavī princes listen to me. Venerable Gotama has accepted my invitation to the food offering at my place tomorrow. You might bring whatever you think is suitable for them." When the night passed, they all brought 500 pots of cooked food to him. Then Saccaka, [589] having made ready sumptuous food, hard and soft at his place, sent a messenger to inform the Buddha: "Honourable Gotama, it is time for the meal; the alms food is ready."

Then in the morning, the Buddha, having arranged his robes and taking his alms bowl and double robe, went to Saccaka's place and took the seat prepared for him, together with the community of monastics. Saccaka served, with his own hands, sumptuous food, both hard and soft, to the monastics headed by the Buddha, till they were completely satisfied and could not take any more.

When Saccaka knew that the Buddha had finished taking the meal, he sat down in a suitable place and addressed him: "Gotama, may the main beneficial result accruing from this alms meal (*dāna*) and the subsidiary consequences of this great offering be for the well-being of the supporters, i.e. the Licchavīs."

> The main beneficial results mean future existence in the form of the five aggregates in the Deva realms, or happy circumstances in the human world; the subsidiary consequences mean wealth, properties, regalia, etc., necessary for sumptuous living conditions.

Saccaka had made such a wish under the impression that only Licchavī princes were entitled to enjoy the fruits of the act of merit, which was performed with the food donated by them. But it was Saccaka himself who should enjoy the reward because he had actually made the offering to the Buddha and the Saṅgha with what he had received from the Licchavī princes.

The Buddha therefore removed his wrong impression by saying: "Wanderer Saccaka, the merit goes to the Licchavī princes for gifts offered to a recipient like you, who is not free from lust, hatred and delusion. Saccaka, the merit goes to you for gifts offered to a recipient like me, who is free from lust, hatred and delusion." Thus the Buddha impressed upon his mind the idea of consequences of deeds of merit so as to let it become a part of his nature.

Expounding of Mahā Saccaka-sutta

The above is the Short Discourse about Saccaka (*Cūḷa-saccaka-sutta*, MN 35). This is not the only discourse that the Buddha had expounded to Saccaka. The Long Discourse about Saccaka (*Mahā-saccaka-sutta*, MN 36) was also expounded to him at a later date. The Long Discourse about Saccaka deals with two modes of meditation: contemplation of the body and contemplation of the mind, and two types of persons: a bewildered person (*sammūḷha-puggala*) and one who is without bewilderment (*asammūhḷa-puggala*). For full particulars, please refer to the text.

The Buddha expounded the Short Discourse about Saccaka and the Long Discourse about Saccaka. The former is as long as a section for recitation (*bhāṇavāra*), while the Long Discourse about Saccaka is as long as one and a half sections for recitation. In spite of these long discourses and exhortation by the Buddha, Saccaka did not attain any stage of the paths and fruitions nor did he receive ordination. He did not take refuge in the Three Treasures either. A question might be asked as to why then the Buddha taught to him such exhaustive discourses (*sutta*)?

Ven. Kāḷa Buddharakkhita

The Buddha taught the discourses to sow the seed of the noble truths in him so as to reap the harvest of the paths and fruitions, in due course. This is an explanation in detail: The Buddha perceived that Saccaka lacked sufficing conditions for the attainment of the paths and fruitions during his present life time. But he was destined to become an Arahat 200 years after the Buddha's Parinibbāna when the Dispensation would be in full bloom in Śrī Laṅkā. He would be born to the family of a minister of a king. When he came of age he would become a monastic and after learning the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*) and practising insight meditation (*vipassanā*) he would attain the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*), endowed with the analytic knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*). He would be popularly known as Ven. Kāḷa Buddharakkhita. Perceiving his future destiny [590] through his knowledge of the future (*anāgata-ñāṇa*), the Buddha had instilled into his heart a spark of truth so that it might develop into a natural tendency in due time.

When the Dispensation was in full bloom in Śrī Laṅkā, he would pass away from the celestial plane and he was reborn in the family of a minister at a village that

was responsible for the provision of food for a great monastery known as Dakkhiṇagiri. He would receive ordination when he came of age and study the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*). He eventually rose to the status of a senior monastic in charge of a section of the Saṅgha. He would go to pay homage, in the company of his numerous disciples, to his preceptor, who was responsible for his ordination.

The preceptor would decide to censure his own disciple, Buddharakkhita, for neglecting the practices necessary for liberation, though he had studied the Three Baskets. The teacher then decided therefore, not to sit face to face with the disciple.

Going to his master's monastery on the following day, Kāḷa Buddharakkhita would ask his teacher: "Revered sir, now that I have come to see you after completion of the full course of learning the scriptures, I find that you do not seem to have the desire to see me. May I know if there is anything wrong I have done?"

His teacher would answer: "Buddharakkhita, do you think that you have accomplished all the tasks incumbent on a monastic just because you have studied the Five Collections (*nikāya*) and the Three Baskets?" Whereupon, he would seek for instructions by asking: "Revered sir, if so, what should I do?" His preceptor would then give the following instructions: "You must give up all the obligations to your followers (*gaṇa-paṭibodha*) which obstruct your progress, and cut off all the remaining defilements by repairing to the Cetiya mountain monastery and devote yourself entirely to meditation.

Ven. Kāḷa Buddharakkhita would do as he was advised by his old master and in due course he attained the exalted state of an Arahat with the analytic knolwedges (*paṭisambhidā*). He would continue to reside at the Cetiya mountain monastery amidst many disciples, and became well-known as the master of the king and the commoners, as well.

At one time, King Tissa was doing religious practice in a cave known as Rāja Lena on the hill of the Cetiya. He left words with a monastic who was attending upon Ven. Kāḷa Buddharakkhita: "Revered sir, kindly let me know when Ven. Kāḷa Buddharakkhita attends to questions or preaches Dhamma." On a day fixed for teaching, Ven. Kāḷa Buddharakkhita went to the precincts of the Khandhaka

relic shrine (*stūpa*) and sat on the Dhamma throne prepared at the base of an ebony tree.

Ven. Kāḷa Buddharakkhita recited the introductory verses and started to preach the Discourse at Kālaka's Monastery (*Kāḷakārāma-sutta*, AN 4.24). The monastic attendant to the elder went to King Tissa and informed him of the teaching of the Dhamma by the great elder (*mahā-thera*).

King Tissa reached the site of the Dhamma teaching while the elder was still reciting the introductory verses. He stood listening to the discourse on the fringe of the big audience, in the guise of a commoner, throughout the three watches of the night. He said: *Sādhu, sādhu,* at the conclusion of the discourse. The great elder recognized him to be the king and asked: "How long have you been here?" "Revered Sir, from the outset of the discourse," was his reply. Then the great elder said: "Your majesty, you have done a difficult thing indeed." To this, the king made this solemn reply: "Revered sir, this is not a difficult thing at all for me to stand and listen to the discourse for a night. In fact, I had been taking note of every word and following the discourse without my mind being led astray at any moment, from start to finish. This statement of mine is true, if I have told a lie, may I be stripped off my sovereignty over this island of Śrī Laṅkā, without having any more authority even over a tiny spot of land the size of the tip of a whip." He thus made a solemn vow very boldly. [591]

Infinite Attributes of the Buddha

The Discourse at Kālaka's Monastery (*Kāḷakārāma-sutta*, AN 4.24) illustrates the attributes of the Buddha, and therefore king Tissa asked the great elder: "Revered sir, should we take it that you have described all the attributes of the Buddha in full or are there any more besides these?" The great elder replied: "Your majesty, attributes of the Buddha are infinitely incalculable, many times more than what I have just described."

The king then requested: "Revered sir, kindly explain this to us with an example." The great elder gave an example in response to the king's request. "Your majesty, suppose there is a state paddy field measuring 1,750 acres.[206] The amount of seeds present in an ear or spike of corn is infinitesimal compared

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[206] One *pai* equals around 1.75 acres, and is covered by five baskets of seed.

with the number of seeds borne by the rest of the corn spikes in the whole field; even so the attributes of the Buddha that remain undescribed by me are innumerably times greater than what I have just described."

The king said: "Revered sir, please give us another example." The great elder said: "Just as the amount of water that would pass through the eye of a needle, which is dipped in alignment with the current of the river Ganges, is negligible when compared with the remaining volume of water that flows down the mighty river, even so the attributes of the Buddha that I have described is negligible compared to those that still remain undescribed."

The king said: "Revered sir, please give us one more example." The great elder said: "A tiny sky-lark can be seen flying merrily about the sky. Just compare the area of space that is covered by its spread-out wings with the remaining open space, and, tell me which portion of the space is greater?" The king readily responded: "Revered sir, now that you have said it, it goes without saying that the amount of space occupied by the spreading wing of the bird is negligible when compared to the remaining, infinite portion of the sky." The great elder told the king: "Your majesty, even so, the attributes of the Buddha that remain unrevealed by me are far greater than what I have just described."

The king then addressed the great elder: "Revered sir, you have taught well by comparing the infinity of the attributes of the Buddha with the infinity of space. May I express my profound respect and deep sense of gratitude to you. We are incapable of making a fitting homage to you. May I therefore offer you kingship and sovereign power over the island of Śrī Laṅkā with an area of 300 leagues! This is a humble offering of a poor man."

> The king had evaluated his kingship with regard to the invaluable discourse on the attributes of the Buddha; hence he likened the offering of his kingship as a poor man's gift.

Ven. Kāḷa Buddharakkhita made this remark in response to the king's offer: "Your royal highness, you have, indeed, shown your profound respect and deep sense of gratitude to me, and I now return the kingship, which you have offered to me with all its glories, to you with my blessings: my sincere wish is that you rule the people of Śrī Laṅkā and govern them with righteousness."

> This Arahat Kāḷa Buddharakkhita had set an example to the members of the Saṅgha. The kingship and regalia or emblems of royalty, offered out of

> deep devotional faith and reverence to monastics are not to be accepted
> since they are appurtenances and luxurious belongings of worldly people.
> They should be returned to the supporters.

During the fifth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), the Buddha had made the first and second visit to Śrī Laṅkā to give exhortations to the dragon King Cūḷodara and his nephew Mahodara. But as the Buddha made a third visit to the island during the eighth Rains Retreat, we have deferred inclusion of the first two visits in order to give a combined account of the three visits when we describe the events of the eighth Rains Retreat. [592]

24: The 6th Year (Miracles)

The Buddha's Journeys

The Buddha took up residence at the Great Wood in Vesālī country during the fifth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) emancipating those sentient beings who were deserving. He left there after the conclusion of the Rains Retreat, and travelled towards the countries of Sāvatthī and Rājagaha on a similar mission.

There are two kinds of journey undertaken by the Buddha, according to circumstances: the kind of journey made quickly (*turita-cārika*) and an itinerary with stops at villages and towns, covering distances from one to two leagues regularly per day (*aturita-cārika*).

1. The journey undertaken quickly when the Buddha sees someone deserving of emancipation (*turita-cārika*). There are many instances, such as the Buddha setting out all of a sudden to receive Ven. Mahā Kassapa covering three miles; then he covered a journey of 30 leagues in no time to save Yakkha Āḷavaka; he did the same thing at the time of saving Aṅgulimāla, a notorious robber; he covered 45 leagues swiftly to preach to King Pakkusāti after he had become a monastic; he covered 120 leagues in no time to save King Mahā Kappina; he covered 700 leagues in no time to save Dhaniya, the wealthy owner of bullocks and his wife. Such journeys made suddenly on such missions are termed journeys made quickly (*turita-cārika*).

2. When the Buddha left a certain place at the end of a period of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), and set out on a journey, he usually touched in at every intermediate town and village to receive aims or to preach, covering a distance of one or two leagues per day. Such journeys honouring all people along the route by receiving alms or teaching to them are known as journeys not made quickly (*aturita-cārika*).

The Buddha used to make three types of journey with varying circumferential dimensions: 1) A journey covering the most widespread territory (*mahā-maṇḍala*); 2) a journey with a medium coverage of territory (*majjhima-maṇḍala*); 3) a journey with the smallest coverage of territory (*anto-maṇḍala*).

Of these three types the great zone (*mahā-maṇḍala*) has an area of 900 leagues; the medium zone (*majjima-maṇḍala*) has an area of 600 leagues; 3) the inner zone (*anto-maṇḍala*) has an area of 300 leagues. This will now be clarified:

The Buddha held the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*) ceremony at the end of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) on the full moon day of October (*Assayuja*). Should there be no special reason to wait, such as to save a worthy sentient being from the round of existence, he started his journey on the first waning moon of October, in the company of a large number of monastics, covering one or two leagues per day.

He continued wandering thus for nine months till the full moon day of July (*Āsāḷha*) of the next year. At each stop on the way to the destination, enthusiastic supporters from all directions, within an area of 100 leagues came in groups to pay homage with offerings. Those who came late scarcely got the chance of extending an invitation to the Buddha to their places. These two other regions formed part and parcel of this great zone. The Buddha stayed a day or two at villages and towns within the vast great zone, to bless the people of the locality by receiving alms from them and by teaching the Dhamma to them, he thus developed their merit to escape from the round of rebirths. Thus the Buddha usually spent nine months on the way before he ended his itinerary.

The journey lasting nine months covered a distance of 300 leagues from the beginning to the [593] end. With this area of 300 leagues as the centre, people from places 300 leagues on the left side of the route as well as those on the right also had the opportunity of doing meritorious deeds such as offering alms and listening to the Dhamma. Thus, these areas may be considered as also having been visited by the Buddha. Hence the statement above that a great zone journey measuring 900 leagues is explained.

In case the monastics had not reached maturity in their practice of concentration and insight meditation, the Invitation Ceremony of the Saṅgha which fell on the full moon of October (*Assayuja*), was put off till full moon of November (*Kattikā*). Then only on the first waning moon of November, the Buddha would start the journey attended by the monastics.

If for some other reason he wished to go on a medium zone journey (*majjima-maṇḍala*), he would tarry till the full moon of November, a full four months at wherever he had kept the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), and then set out on the journey. In the above manner, the Buddha would spend an eight-month journey

honouring the populace with his visits and teaching the Dhamma. The journey of eight months would cover 200 leagues from the beginning to the end. Each area on either side of the road measured 200 leagues. People from these areas also had the opportunity of doing meritorious deeds such as offering alms and listening to the Dhamma. Thus these areas may be considered as also been visited by the Buddha. Hence the statement above that a medium zone journey (*majjima-maṇḍala*) has an area of six hundred leagues is explained.

Although Buddha had spent four months observing the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at a certain place, up to and inclusive of the full moon of November (*Kattikā*), if deserving beings were still lacking in maturity of faculties, he continued his stay at the same place for another month. When necessary, such time of grace was prolonged, month after month, even for four months right up to the full moon of February (*Phussa*), as occasion demanded, and then only did he leave that place in the company of a great number of monastics, to set out on the inner zone journey (*anto-maṇḍala*).

As in the previous case the Buddha spent these months, blessing people by his visits and teaching. The length of time necessary for traversing the country was reduced from seven to four months, for reasons described above. Because of the shortage of time that a seven, six, five or four month journey had, it only took in a distance of 100 leagues. As in the above manner, the areas on either side of this 100 leagues journey were also visited. Hence it is said: "The inner zone journey (*anto-maṇḍala*) ranges altogether 300 leagues."

It should be borne in mind that the Buddha had set out on these itineraries, not for receiving the four requisites: robes, food, shelter, medicines, but out of compassionate consideration and with the sole purpose of affording an opportunity to the poor, the ignorant, the aged, the sick, who would have no means of paying homage to him at any other time. Of them, some would be pleased just to see him, some would like to offer flowers and sweet scents, or a morsel of hard earned food, and there would be those who had given up wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) to take up right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*). Such encounters with him would bring about lasting peace, prosperity and happiness for these people.

This was how the Buddha, after having kept the fifth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in the Great Wood at Vesālī, travelled to Sāvatthī and Rājagaha with the villages

on their outskirts for the uplift of all living beings and administering the elixir of the Dhamma with his teaching.

Ven. Piṇḍola Bharadvāja and the Sandalwood Bowl

The Buddha kept the sixth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at Mount Makula monastery, which was situated by the side of the ocean and was shaded and walled by a forest of star flower trees, saving all deserving humans, Devas and Brahmas from the sufferings of sentient existence.

The Buddha, having kept the sixth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at the Mount Makula monastery, left for Rājagaha and took up residence at the Veḷuvana monastery there.

At that time, a rich man of Rājagaha, being desirous of disporting himself in the river [594] Ganges, caused a huge net to be constructed surrounding all four sides of the place where he was to disport, to protect himself against all possible danger from both above and below the spot and against the risk of his jewellery being washed away.

At that time, a red sandalwood tree was drifting down the Ganges from the upper reaches of the river. The current of the river had caused it to fall by washing away the sand at its base. The tree lost its size, shape and form as it dashed against the cliffs and rocks while floating along the swift current during the course of a long journey. It had been battered, broken into pieces, tattered and finally a heartwood piece of red sandalwood, with constant abrasion, had taken the form of a block of wood with a smooth surface. As it floated down, it was caught in the rich man's net with all the duckweeds wrapped around it. The servants and attendants brought it to their master, the rich man.

At that time, the rich man of Rājagaha was a man without any religious belief; he did not hold right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) or wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) either. He brought the bowl of sandalwood to his house and had the upper layer chipped off with an adze. They found the reddish heartwood emitting the sweet fragrance of sandalwood.

It set him thinking: "I have so many kinds of sandalwood in my home, what should I do with this one?" and it eventually dawned on him: "In the world today, there are many people, who profess themselves to be Arahats. I have no idea as to who is a real Arahat. I will have a lathe installed in my house and get

the block of sandalwood made into an alms bowl; the wood dust from the lathe I will use, but the bowl I will donate out of generosity. I will put it into a containing frame and keep it hanging from a pole made by tying a series of bamboos, end to end, to a height of 60 cubits, and announce: "Anyone who can prove himself to be an Arahat by flying into the air through absorption (*jhāna*) power and securing the bowl can have it. And the Arahat who can actually come by air and claim the bowl as announced I, together with my family, will accept him and worship him as our teacher."

He, accordingly, had the sandalwood made into an alms bowl, and kept it hanging in a framework from a series of bamboos tied together to a height of 60 cubits, and announced: "Any real Arahat in the world can take this bowl by flying through the sky."

The Six Sectarian Teachers

At that time, there were residing in Rājagaha the six sectarian teachers who professed themselves to be Arahats and sages of their own sects. They were:

1. Purāṇa Kassapa. His proper name is Purāṇa, and he belonged to a clan known as Kassapa, and he came to be known as Purāṇa Kassapa. This is a brief account of this sectarian teacher: There was a rich man who had 99 slaves, and Purāṇa was born as the 100th slave, hence he was named Purāṇa or centenary slave.[207] He was considered an auspicious slave for being the hundredth one, and he was not criticized for his misdeeds or blamed for his negligence of duty. With all that, he absconded with a conceited idea: "Why should I stay in this house?" But he ran straight into a gang of robbers who stripped him bare. He had not enough decency to clad himself in leaves or grass. He went into a village with his body altogether naked. People misplaced their faith in him, speaking highly of him: "This recluse is an Arahat; he is so self-denying and continent; there is no one like him." They went to him with offerings of hard and soft food. He thought to himself: "My being naked is the cause of gaining such gifts." From that time on, he remained unclothed even when he had clothing offered him. He became

[207] [This is a very strange etymology, as *purāṇa* cannot mean centenery, but rather old, ancient].

fixed in his belief that nakedness was a condition of a recluse. He had 500 men who became his disciples by adopting such a way of life. In this way he became a leader of a sect, an illustrious teacher, a god to his followers.

He and the following five sect leaders, in their self-acclaimed positions, made speculations and pronounced them as creeds of their own. For details, the reader may refer to the Discourse on the Fruits of the Ascetic Life (*Sāmañña-phala-sutta*, DN 2).

2. Makkhali Gosāla. His proper name was Makkhali, Gosāla was added to his name as he was born at the village of Gosāla, or as he was born in a cow-shed (*go-sala*) where bullocks were kept during the rainy season. A short account of his life: He was also a slave, like Purāṇa. One day as he was going across a muddy spot with an oil-pot on his shoulder, his master warned him to be careful not to slip and fall, saying: "My lad, don't slip." But he was so careless that he did slip and fall and so he tried to run away out of fear of his master. When his master caught him by a portion of his nether garment, he abandoned his clothings and escaped through the fingers of his master. The rest of the story is identical with that of Purāṇa Kassapa.

3. Ajita Kesakambala. He was also the teacher of a sect. His proper name was Ajita. He used to wear a garment (*kambala*) made of human hair (*kesa*), and he came to be known as Ajita Kesakambala.

4. Pakudha Kaccāyana. He was also the teacher of a sect. His proper name was Pakudha. He belonged to Kaccāyana clan, so he came to be known as Pakudha Kaccāyana. He eschewed cold water. He used either warm water or vinegar to tidy up after defecating, or to wash away dirt or dust. He considered himself to have breached the precepts whenever he had crossed a stream or a river. Such lapses had to be atoned for by piling sand in small heaps and taking the precepts before he could continue his journey.

5. Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta: he was also the teacher of a sect. Vens. Sāriputta and Mahā Moggallāna lived with him when they started leading the life of wandering ascetics. His proper name was Sañjaya. He was the son of

a man called Belaṭṭha, and so he came to be known as Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta.

6. Niganṭha Nāthaputta: he was also the teacher of a sect. He professed: "We have no defilements binding us; we are free from fettering defilements." Hence the term fetter-free (*Niganṭha*). In fact they were far from being free from defilements. His father was called Nātha and he came to be known as Niganṭha Nāthaputta.

The sandalwood bowl was kept hanging from the top of a pole made up of a number of bamboos, to a height of 60 cubits. A general announcement was made to the effect that: "Anyone who has become an Arahat in this world may receive the bowl by flying through space with absorption (*jhāna*) power." Whereupon, the teacher, Purāṇa Kassapa came to the rich man of Rājagaha and said: "Rich man, I am an Arahat and I am also one with power, so give the bowl to me." He made such a bold claim without any rhyme or reason. The rich man of Rājagaha tactfully made a meaningful reply: "Venerable sir, I have already offered the bowl to any real Arahat who possesses power. If you be a real Arahat and if you have such power, bring down and take away the bowl with your powers."

> Since Purāṇa Kasssapa was not an Arahat replete with meditational power, he had to return with his hopes dashed to the ground.

The other teachers also came to claim the bowl in like manner as Purāṇa Kassapa: on the [596] second day there came Makkhali Gosāla; on the third, Ajita Kesakambala; on the fourth day, Pakudha Kaccāyana, on the fifth, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta; they all met the same fate as Purāṇa Kassapa, since they could not fulfil the condition set out by the rich man.

On the sixth day, Niganṭha Nāthaputta summoned his disciples and confided to them: "Go to the rich man of Rājagaha and tell him: 'The bowl is only fit for our great sage; do not make our great teacher come all the way through the sky for a negligible wooden bowl such as that; exempt our great sage from such a task and offer it to him.' "

His disciples went to the rich man of Rājagaha and told him as instructed by their teacher. Whereupon, the rich man gave them a firm reply: "Only those who can come through the sky may have the bowl."

Niganṭha Nāthaputta had a desire to go there personally and so he confided these instructions to his disciples: "I will make a sham attempt by lifting one of my legs and hands, as though I am about to shoot up into the sky, and you all come saying: 'O great sage, what are you going to do? Please do not demonstrate the secrets of the virtues of the Arahat fruition for the sake of a wooden bowl,' and then you will push and make me fall to the ground." He thus confided to them his plans.

After conspiring with his disciples, Nāthaputta went to the rich man and said: "Rich man, this bowl is not fit for anybody else, why should you want me to fly in the air for such a paltry wooden bowl. Please offer it to me." – "Venerable sir, just fly up into the sky and take it," was the rich man's terse reply.

Whereupon, Nāthaputta said: "If that is the case I will shoot up into the sky," and turning to his disciples he asked them to move aside and he lifted one of his hands and feet. Then his disciples hastened to their teacher as previously arranged and said to him: 'Great teacher, what do you mean by this! It is not worth demonstrating the virtues of the Arahat fruition for the sake of a worthless wooden bowl." They pulled him by his hands and feet and caused him to fall to the ground. Nāthaputta, while still lying on the ground, told the rich man: "Rich man, you have seen that my disciples will not allow me to fly into the sky. I urge you to offer me that bowl." But the rich man was not to be moved. He calmly repeated: "Please take it by flying in the sky." Thus the six teachers made six attempts for six days in succession, but to no purpose.

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna and Ven. Piṇḍola

On the seventh day, the two venerables, Mahā Moggallāna and Piṇḍola came out of the Veḷuvana monastery to enter the city of Rājagaha for their usual round of receiving alms food. When they were putting on their robes, while stood on a huge rock near the city, they overheard the calumniating remarks of some drunken persons: "Friends, those six sectarian teachers used to go round announcing themselves as Arahats in the past. It is now the seventh day since the rich man of Rājagaha made the announcement: "If there is an Arahat, let him fly through the sky and take the bowl," after hanging the sandalwood bowl from a series of bamboo poles tied together to a height of 60 cubits. Not even one person declaring of himself: "I am an Arahat," has been able to fly into the sky. Today we know very well there are no Arahats in the world."

On hearing that remark, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna asked Ven. Piṇḍola: "Friend, do you hear the derogatory remark of those drunken persons? His sweeping calumniating remark also affects the prestige of the Buddha's Dispensation. You possess power; you are mighty; go and bring the sandalwood bowl by flying through the sky." Whereupon, Ven. Piṇḍola Bharadvāja replied: "Friend, the Buddha has elevated you to the foremost position (*etad-agga*) with respect to your supernormal power, and, as such, I wish you to do it yourself. I will accomplish the task only if you do not undertake it."

> This [597] shows that Ven. Piṇḍola had given priority to Ven. Mahā Moggallāna out of respect for his seniority.

Whereupon, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna willingly permitted Ven. Piṇḍola to accomplish the task himself; having obtained permission from Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, Ven. Piṇḍola entered into the fourth absorption (*jhāna*), it being the basis for supernormal psychic power, and rising therefrom, he caused the huge slab of rock on which they stood to put on their robes, to rise into space by means of his supernormal will. The rock, with neatly and elegantly trimmed sides, was made to fly like a piece of silk cotton-wool and circle seven times round above the city of Rājagaha which had an area of three miles. The huge slab of rock was like an enormous lid covering the city of Rājagaha.

The citizens were frightened at the sight of the huge rock hanging over their heads, and thinking: "This huge slab of rock has covered and presses down on us," ran helter-skelter and took shelter under nearby places, covering their heads with trays. When the huge rock had made its seventh round above the city, Ven. Piṇḍola made himself visible through the rock. Whereupon the citizens appealed to him: "Venerable sir, please hold the rock fast, lest it destroys all of us." Even as the people looked on, Ven. Piṇḍola caused the huge rock to return to its original position by kicking and tossing it with his toes.

Ven. Piṇḍola stood in the sky right above the residence of the rich man. The latter, on seeing him, crawled on his breast on the ground and invited Ven. Piṇḍola to descend. Once he was in his house, he had the bowl brought down and filled it with the four sweets (*catu-madhu*) to its brim. He then offered it to Ven. Piṇḍola with due respect.

As Ven. Piṇḍola was on the way to the monastery with the bowl, people who had missed the opportunity of seeing his supernormal power, through their being

away in the fields, came rallying round Ven. Piṇḍola and requested: "Venerable sir, please let us see your supernormal performance like the others saw." They followed him right up to the monastery hoping to witness the miracle demonstrated by Ven. Piṇḍola.

On hearing the uproar, the Buddha asked Ven. Ānanda: "Dear son Ānanda, why are they clamouring?" Ven. Ānanda replied: "Most exalted Buddha, Ven. Piṇḍola had flown up into the sky and brought down the sandalwood bowl offered by the rich man of Rājagaha. Hearing the news many people have followed at his heels. Those clamorous voices are the voices of the people."

Whereupon, the Buddha caused the Saṅgha to be assembled and asked Ven. Piṇḍola: "Dear son Piṇḍola, is it true that you obtained the sandalwood bowl of the rich man of Rājagaha by means of a miracle (*pāṭihāriya*)?" When Ven. Piṇḍola replied it was true, the Buddha censured him, giving many reasons and taught some discourses by way of exhortation, and then he prescribed a ruling: *Na, bhikkhave, gihīnaṁ uttari-manussa-dhammaṁ iddhi-pāṭihāriyaṁ dassetabbaṁ. Yo dasseyya, āpatti dukkaṭassa*, "monastics, no monastic shall display a miracle to householders; the one who does so is guilty of a wrong-doing."

He then continued by saying that the sandalwood bowl should be broken into pieces and distributed amongst the monastics to be powdered for use as eye medicine, and then he prescribed another ruling that no monastic should make use of wooden bowls, anyone doing so would be guilty of a wrong-doing.

Upon hearing that the Buddha had prohibited the monastics from demonstrating miracles, the heretics were confident that all the disciples of the Buddha would not breach such a ruling even on pain of death. They considered how they could take advantage of such a situation. [598]

They went about the streets and alleys of the town bragging to the people: "In the past, to uphold our prestige, we had not made any attempt to display our supernormal power for the sake of a wooden alms bowl. Only the disciples of the ascetic Gotama have shamelessly done such things. It is said that the ascetic Gotama, being a wise man, had caused all trace of the bowl to be lost by having it broken into pieces, and he has also prescribed a ruling prohibiting the monastics from performing miracles. We can now take advantage of the situation and challenge Gotama to perform a miracle."

The Buddha's Miracles

The Twin Miracle

On hearing the above news, King Bimbisāra approached the Buddha and discussed the question with him in this dialogue:

King: Most exalted Buddha, did you prescribe a rule prohibiting the monastics from a performance of miracles?

Buddha: Yes, I did, gracious king!

King: Sectarians have been going round boasting that they would challenge the Buddha to feats of miracles. What will you do now?

Buddha: If they are going to stage a performance of miracles, I too shall stage a performance of miracles.

King: Have you not prescribed a ruling prohibiting the performance of miracles?

Buddha: Gracious King, I have not prescribed the rule for myself, I have prescribed the ruling for my disciples!

King: Could a ruling be prescribed exclusively for the disciples, and not for the Buddha?

Buddha: Gracious King, in such a case, I will put a question to you: Are there mango trees and fruits in your garden?

King: Yes, there are, Revered Sir.

Buddha: What action would you take against a person who chanced to pluck the fruits and eat them?

King: I will have to punish him in that case.

Buddha: But do you have the right to enjoy the fruits yourself?

King: Yes, I have, exalted Lord, no action need be taken against me when I enjoy my own property.

Buddha: Gracious King, just as your authority prevails in this country with an area of 300 leagues, so my authority extends to one trillion world-elements (*āṇā-khetta*). There cannot be any ruling for me; only my disciples are subject to restrictions. I shall perform miracles.

King: Exalted Buddha, when will you perform the miracles?

Buddha: Gracious King, four months from today, on the full moon day of July (*Āsāḷha*), the miracles will be performed by me.

King: Exalted Buddha, at which place?

Buddha: Gracious King, near the Kaṇḍamba mango tree in the country of Sāvatthī.

> The term *Kaṇḍamba* means the white mango tree; but what the Buddha meant by the Kaṇḍamba mango tree (*Kaṇḍamba-rukkha*) was the mango tree planted by a gardener by the name of Kaṇḍamba.
>
> The Buddha chose that place firstly, because this is the place where all the previous Buddhas used to perform miracles; secondly, to enable a greater number of people to witness the great event. The Buddha had decided on this place which was a distance of 45 leagues, and the time, after a lapse of four months. [599]

When the heretics heard of the bold declaration by the Buddha that he would perform miracles on the full moon day of July (*Āsāḷha*), near the Kaṇḍamba mango tree, in the country of Sāvatthī they foresaw that they would be doomed forever. They, however, devised ways to mislead the people by false pretensions. They therefore agreed amongst themselves to follow the steps of the Buddha on the way to Sāvatthī, and to tell people, should they ask for explanation, that they had decided to stage a parallel performance of miracles in competition with the ascetic Gotama, but that the ascetic Gotama was now running away from them in fear and thus they were following his footsteps not to lose sight of him, and thereby give him the chance to escape. “With this scheme of ours, we will even receive much gain and fame,” thought the heretics hopefully.

The Buddha leaves Rājagaha for Sāvatthī

The matter of a performance of miracles cropped up some time about the full moon day of March (*Phagguṇa*), in the year 523 BCE. It was about the first waning of March that the Buddha went on alms round in Rājagaha and left that city for Sāvatthī in the company of his disciples.

The heretics also started their journey simultaneously and travelled almost together, trailing behind the Buddha all along the way, receiving food and partaking from the same place, starting off and halting at the same time,

sleeping at the same place and resuming the journey after breakfast at the same time the next morning. When asked by the people: "What makes you go along with the Buddha?" They gave the answer as stated above. Crowds of people went along intending to witness the performance of miracles.

The Buddha travelled along the route, and on arrival at Sāvatthī, took residence at the Jetavana monastery. The heretics, having travelled along with him, built a pavilion out of heartwood from the fund of 100,000 coins raised by their disciples at their request. They decorated the pavilion in a grand and novel way with blue lotus blooms and boastfully announced that this would be the centre for their performance of miracles.

King Pasenadi Kosala went to the Buddha and asked: "Most exalted Buddha, the heretics have already got a pavilion built. May I have your permission to build a pavilion for you." He replied: "Gracious King, you need not build it. I have a supporter at hand who is prepared to build it." – "Is there any person capable of building a pavilion for you other than myself?" – "Gracious King, Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, will build it," was the reply. The king asked: "Most exalted Buddha, at which place would you be pleased to perform miracles?" – "Gracious King near the Kaṇḍamba mango tree," was the reply.

The heretics were greatly shaken when they heard the news that the Buddha will perform miracles near a mango tree, and so they discussed with their lay supporters to buy and fell all the mango trees, even day-old sprouts, growing within a radius of one league around the city of Sāvatthī. The Buddha entered the city of Sāvatthī, accompanied by his disciples, to receive food on the morning of full moon day of July (*Āsāḷha*).

The Kaṇḍamba Mango Tree

Incidentally, the royal gardener, named Kaṇḍa, was scaring away crows which were attracted by the scent of a big ripe mango fruit within the folds of an old nest of red ants on the mango tree. He eventually picked it with the idea of offering it to the king. On his way, he beheld the Buddha and then a fresh idea dawned on him: "If the king were to enjoy this mango fruit, my reward would be something like eight or sixteen pieces of money, which would not keep me going for the whole of my life; if it was offered to the Buddha, I would get, in return, immeasurable benefit throughout the cycle of rebirths."

With this devotional faith, he offered it to the Buddha while on his way to the king. Whereupon, the Buddha turned round and looked at Ven. Ānanda, who being [600] perceptive understood what the Buddha wanted him to do. He handed the stone alms bowl that had been offered to the Buddha by the four Great Brahmas. The Buddha then lowered the bowl to accept the gift offered by the gardener Kaṇḍa. Then the Buddha showed signs of wishing to sit down at the spot.

Ven. Ānanda spread a robe over the spot for the Buddha and went ahead to prepare some mango squash and offered it to him. After partaking of the mango squash, the Buddha called upon the royal gardener and said: "Lay devotee Kaṇḍa, scrape the earth and have that mango seed planted here." When Kaṇḍa had sowed the seed, the Buddha washed his hand right on top of the mango seed.

As soon as Buddha had washed his hands over the seed, a sprout of the size of the stock of a plough came up; the sprout continued to grow gradually to a height of 50 cubits even as they looked on. The main stem put out four main branches sideways, into four directions, and the fifth shooting upwards each one measuring 50 cubits. The main branches, in turn, put out small branches and an abundance of fruits, till gradually the whole tree was full of bunches of ripe fruit.

All the monastics who arrived later could also partake of the fruits, there being enough and to spare. On hearing the marvellous appearance of the strange mango tree, King Pasenadi Kosala issued a royal order to the effect that no one should cut the tree and caused a number of security personnel to be posted around the tree.

> The mango tree was named after the gardener, Kaṇḍa, who planted the tree, hence it was called Kaṇḍamba tree. The Buddha was referring to this mango tree when he had told King Bimbisāra and King Pasenadi Kosala that he would perform miracles near the Kaṇḍamba mango tree, in answer to their query. This was a fact unknown to the heretics, and they had therefore arranged with their followers for the destruction of all mango trees, inclusive of sprouts, in and around the city of Sāvatthī, at their own expense so that the Buddha could not a perform miracle without breaking his word.

Drunken men of the locality also had their share of fruits to enjoy with great satisfaction. They turned to the heretics and they decried their low and selfish

motives saying: “Ha, you ruined heretics, you have destroyed all the mango trees, and uprooted even day-old sprouts in and around the city of Sāvatthī, for fear that the ascetic Gotama would perform miracles near them; but the miracles will take place near the mango tree planted by the gardener Kaṇḍa,” and they attacked the heretics by throwing the seeds of the mangoes they had eaten at them.

Sakka ordered the wind god: “Blow down the pavilion of the heretics, uprooting even the posts and dump it in the garbage.” The wind god did as he was told. Sakka asked the sun god to cause intense heat for the sectarians by taking his mansion down a little. The sun god did as he was bid. The wind god was asked again by Sakka to create a whirlwind exclusively at the place of the heretics. The wind god did as he was bid, with the result that the heretics were soaked with perspiration and covered with dust, and they resembled big red ant-hills. Sakka then asked the rain god to pour torrential rain together with hail stones. The rain god did as he was bid, with the result that the heretics looked like oxen with red and white spots all over their bodies.

The heretics, with their pavilion wrecked beyond repair, could not withstand the intense heat and the force of the whirlwind accompanied by hail, they became crestfallen under the hopeless conditions, and there was no alternative but to run away helter-skelter wherever their legs could carry.

Purāṇa Kassapa drowned Himself

Thus the six heretic teachers ran away in different directions. Meanwhile, a male servitor and devotee of Purāṇa Kassapa, who was a farmer, thought: “Now it must be time for my noble teachers, to perform miracles. I will go and see the miracles.” He released the [601] oxen from the plough, and carrying the pot in which he had brought his gruel early in the morning, a rope and the goad, he arrived at the spot where his sage was expected to show his miracle. When he saw Purāṇa Kassapa running hastily he asked him: “Most reverend sir, I have come to witness your performance of miracles, where are you bound for?” Purāṇa Kassapa replied: “What good would my miracle do? Just hand me the pot and the rope.” Taking the rope and the pot he ran straight to the bank of a nearby running stream, filled the pot with sand, and tying the pot tightly round his neck with the rope sprang into the running current to end his life. This was

marked by some bubbles floating on the surface of the stream while he was reborn in the plane of misery known as Avīci.

It is natural that those who are ignorant and unenlightened are destined to suffer for a long time, through many transient existences; while those who are noble, virtuous, intelligent and enlightened enjoy the maximum of peace, joy and benefits. Such is the nature of the world.

Sakka has a Pavilion Built

Towards the evening on that day, Sakka realized that it was his duty to arrange for the creation of a jewelled pavilion for the Buddha and so he commanded Vissakamma to create a great pavilion extending over twelve leagues, profusely covered with blue lotus blooms and adorned with the seven kinds of jewels. The Saṅgha and the laity would assemble around the Buddha in this pavilion.

Towards the evening on that day, the Buddha left his scented chamber to take up temporary residence at the pavilion, which was created by Vissakamma, getting ready for the demonstration of the miracle, and on arrival he sat on the jewelled throne of the size of one league and under a white celestial umbrella of the size of three leagues.

It will be recalled that a period of four months had elapsed since the last full moon day of March (*Phagguṇa*), when the Buddha had given intimation to King Bimbisāra of his desire to demonstrate a miracle near the Kaṇḍamba mango tree. This news had spread far and wide ever since, and now all the male and female monastics and male and female lay devotees had gathered around the Buddha on all four sides: at the front, back, left and right, and and for a stretch of 12 leagues long on each side; 24 leagues from end to end and 72 leagues in circumference. All the celestial beings from the 10,000 world-element had also assembled at this place at the same time.

The Addresses of the Buddha's Disciples

At the assembly, Gharaṇī, a female lay devotee and a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*) with great power, stood in front of the Buddha and paying obeisance with palms together, made her address: "Most exalted Buddha, when there is a daughter of yours such as myself, we see no need for you to exert yourself. May I be kindly permitted to demonstrate a miracle?" Whereupon, he asked: "Dear daughter Gharaṇī, how would you demonstrate your miracle?"

She replied: “Most exalted Buddha, I shall cause the earth portion of the universe to become water thereby turning the entire world-element into a uniform mass of water. I shall transform myself into a water hen and dive into it and reappear at the eastern edge, then likewise at the western, northern and southern edge of the universe, and then at the centre of the universe.

Whereupon, a certain person might ask who I am, and the people would answer: ‘She is Gharaṇī, daughter of the Buddha, a female Non-returner.’ This would lead the people to say: ‘If this display of power is only the prelude, the power of a [602] daughter of the Buddha, a young woman, the power of the Buddha must indeed be infinite.’ In consequence, all the heretics would naturally lose courage and flee without even daring to glance back at you.”

The Buddha told her: “Dear daughter Gharaṇī, I knew you have the power to demonstrate such a miracle, but the bouquet of flowers attached to the winning post was not meant for you.” Gharaṇī considered that the Buddha had not given her permission for good reasons; it might be that there was someone far superior than her in respect of power in the performance of miracles. So she remained at a suitable distance.

The Buddha contemplated: “If, in this manner, I should ask my sons and daughters, in the midst of this spectacle, covering 24 square leagues, they will rise up bravely and with the mien of a lion king, make such wildly confident declarations. In this way, the attribute of my sons and daughters will be already revealed.” He therefore asked other disciples, both males and females, about their individual achievements. The disciples courageously disclosed the way in which they would display their miracles in his presence.

Amongst those male and female disciples, who made such bold statements, Cūḷa Anāthapiṇḍika was one who had this to say: “Most exalted Buddha, when there is a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*) disciple of yours such as myself, there is no need to exert yourself. Let me be kindly permitted to demonstrate a miracle.” Whereupon the Buddha asked him: “Dear son Anāthapiṇḍika, in what form would you demonstrate a miracle?”

The lay disciple, Cūḷa Anāthapiṇḍika replied: “I will transform my body into that of Brahma’s body, which measures 12 leagues, and then by slapping one of the upper arms with the open palm of the other hand, produce thunderous sounds of a great rainstorm in the midst of the throngs of people present here.

Whereupon, people would ask: 'What sort of sound is that?' and the others would answer: 'This is the sound of the clapping of the arms by the young rich man, Anāthapiṇḍika, who is a Non-returner disciple of the Buddha.' This will lead the heretics to say: 'This is only the prelude, the power of a young lay-disciple. The power of the Buddha cannot even be guessed.' In consequence, they would naturally lose courage and flee without even daring to glance back at you."

He told him: "Dear Anāthapiṇḍika, I know that you have the power to display the miracle; but you had better wait."

A young novice (*sāmaṇerī*) of seven years old, known as Cīrā, who had acquired analytic knowledge (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*), after paying obeisance, requested the Buddha: "Most exalted Buddha, may I be permitted to display my miracle?" He asked her: "Dear young daughter Cīrā, in what form would you display your miracle?"

"Most exalted Buddha, I will bring three mountains: Sineru, Cakkavāḷa and the Himālayas to this spot, where the miracles are being demonstrated, and place them in a row. I will transform myself into a Brahmany duck and coming out from these mountains fly about freely without any hindrance.

Whereupon people would ask: 'Who is this little girl?' The others will answer: 'This is Cīrā, a young novice of the Buddha.' This would lead the heretics to say: 'This is only the introductory performance, the power of only a seven-year old novice. The power of the Buddha cannot even be conjectured.' In consequence, they will naturally lose courage and flee without even daring to glance back at you."

> Such remarks as the latter are applicable to subsequent cases of a similar nature and no attempt will be made to reproduce them hereafter.

The Buddha gave the same reply, and she was not [603] permitted to display her miracle.

Next, a young seven-year old Arahat novice, Cunda, who had acquired analytic knowledge (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*), after paying obeisance, made a request: "Most exalted Buddha, may I be kindly permitted to display my miracle?" he asked: "Dear son Cunda, in what form would you display your miracle?"

"Most exalted Buddha, I will shake the golden rose-apple tree which is regarded as the victory pennant of the universe by its stem and bring the fruits that fall to

feed the audience here; and again, I will bring flowers from the coral tree in Tāvatiṁsa and give them to the audience here."

The Buddha gave the same reply as before and did not permit the young novice to display his miracle.

Next, the elder nun Uppalavaṇṇā requested the Buddha to display her miracle and the Buddha asked her: "In what form would you demonstrate it?"

"Most exalted Buddha, I will create an audience extending to the length of 12 leagues, occupying a space of 36 leagues in circumference. I will transform myself into a Universal Monarch and surrounded by a Universal Monarch's attendants come to pay homage to you."

He replied: "I know that you have the power," but did not grant permission for demonstration as in the previous cases.

Next, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna requested permission to demonstrate a miracle. The venerable's request took the form a dialogue between the Buddha and himself.

Moggallāna: Kindly permit me to perform a miracle.

Buddha: Dear son Moggallāna, how would you perform a miracle?

Moggallāna: I will reduce Mount Meru to the size of a mustard seed, shelve it in between the fissures of my teeth and chew it in the presence of the spectators.

Buddha: What else would you do?

Moggallāna: The earth will be rolled up like a small thin mat and I will keep it in between my fingers.

Buddha: Anything else?

Moggallāna: Like a potter's wheel for grinding earth, I will turn up the great earth and feed the populace here with the fertile top soil that lies under the surface.

Buddha: And again?

Moggallāna: This earth will be put on the palm of my left hand, and human beings will be placed on another island continent.

Buddha: Any more?

Moggallāna: Most exalted Buddha, I will use Mount Meru like the shaft of an umbrella and placing the earth on top of it like the folds of an umbrella I will walk in space to and fro, holding both in one hand, like a monastic with an umbrella in his hand. The Buddha told Ven. Mahā Moggallāna: "Dear son Moggallāna, I know you have the power to demonstrate these miracles," but he did not permit him to perform them.

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna came to understand: "Permission was not given because the Realised One has in mind an even greater and nobler miracle than this to perform." So he remained at a proper distance.

The Buddha further pointed out to Ven. Mahā Moggallāna: "Dear son, this [604] victory bouquet is not earmarked for you. I have the power to accomplish any task that lies beyond the achievement of any other person. It is no wonder that there is no match for me when I have become a Fully Self-Awakened Buddha. I had no equal even when I was born as an irrational creature and the accomplishment of my perfections (*pāramī*) was still immature." At the request of Ven. Moggallāna, the Buddha propounded the Birth Story about the Bull Blackie (*Kaṇha-jātaka*, Ja 29), which tells a story of how he was once a bull who earned his owner a fortune by pulling carts no one else could pull, and taking the reward to his poor owner.

Creation of a Jewelled Walk

After recounting the Birth Story about the Bull Blackie, the Buddha created a jewelled walk, which extended from one end to the other of the 10,000 world-element, standing from east to west in a row. The 10,000 Great Merus in the 10,000 world-element served as posts in the creation of the walk. The eastern perimeter of the walk rested on the edge of the eastern-most world-element; the western perimeter of the walk rested on the western end of the western-most word system. The width of the walk was twelve leagues. The bordering surfaces on either side of the walk were golden in colour; the middle portion of the entire walk was filled with earth of rubies, and the rafters, beams, purloins were finished with various kinds of shining gems, the roofing was of gold, and balusters lining the walk were of gold; ruby and pearl grains were spread like sand on the entire surface of the structure.

On each of the four sides of the walk, extending to 12 leagues, was the audience of human beings. The number of humans, Devas and Brahmas was uncountable.

It was in the midst of such an audience that the Buddha demonstrated the twin miracles. The following is an excerpt, in abridged form, from the commentary (DhpA 14.2).

1. When there were flames of fire appearing from the upper part of the body, there were streams of water flowing from the lower part of the body; and when there were flames of fire appearing from the lower part of the body, there were streams of water flowing from the upper part of the body.

2. When there were flames of fire appearing from the front part of the body, there were streams of water flowing from the back part of the body; and when there were flames of fire appearing from the back part, there were streams of water flowing from the front part of the body.

3. When there were flames of fire appearing from the right eye, there were streams of water flowing from the left eye; and when there were flames of fire appearing from the left eye, there were streams of water flowing from the right eye.

4. When there were flames of fire appearing from the right ear, there were streams of water flowing from the left ear; and when there were flames of fire appearing from the left ear, there were streams of water flowing from the right ear.

5. When there were flames of fire appearing from the right nostril, there were streams of water flowing from the left nostril; and when there were flames of fire appearing from the left nostril, there were streams of water flowing from the right nostril.

6. When there were flames of fire appearing from the edge of the right shoulder, there were streams of water flowing from the edge of the left shoulder; and when there were flames of fire appearing from the edge of the left shoulder, there were streams of water flowing from the edge of the right shoulder.

7. When there were flames of fire appearing from the right hand, there were streams of water flowing from the left hand; and when there were flames of fire appearing from the left hand, there were streams of water flowing from the right hand.

8. When there were flames of fire appearing from the right side of the body, there were streams of water flowing from the left side of the body; and when there were flames of fire appearing from the left side of the body, there were streams of water flowing from the right side of the body.

9. When there were flames of fire appearing from the right leg, there were streams of water flowing from the left leg; and when there were flames of fire appearing from [605] the left leg, there were streams of water flowing from the right leg.

10. When there were flames of fire appearing from each of the ten fingers and the ten toes, there were streams of water flowing from the spaces between each of the ten fingers and the ten toes; and when there were flames of fire appearing from the spaces between each of the ten fingers and the ten toes, there were streams of water flowing from each of the ten fingers and the ten toes.

11. When there were flames of fire appearing from some individual hairs of the body, there were streams of water flowing from the other hairs.

12. When there were flames of fire appearing from some individual pores of the body, there were streams of water flowing from the other pores.

From these different parts of the body there was an emanation of six different colours of light: dark blue, gold, red, white, crimson and resplendent, in pairs, in streams or in groups.

> The Buddha developed the absorption based on the fire device (*tejo-kasiṇa-jhāna*) for the appearance of flames of fire from the upper part of the body and developed the absorption based on the water device (*āpo-kasiṇa-jhāna*) for the flow of the streams of water from the lower part of the body. The same principle was applied when reversing the performance of the twin miracle.
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> It should be borne in mind that the flames of fire did not get mixed with the streams of water and vice versa. They remained in their own orbit. Since there can be no two simultaneous thought moments in one instant of time, the creation of flames of fire and the creation of streams of water took two separate moments, taking turns in alternation, although they would appear to be taking place simultaneously in the minds of the

ordinary persons. The mental creation happened at very great speed although separately. This may be attributed to the moment between each state of mind of the Buddha being extremely short, the speed of mind and having reached the climax of mastery in the attainment of absorptions. The flames of fire and streams of water emitted from the Buddha's body went up to the summit of the universe and descended to the edge of the 10,000 world-element.

The Miracle of Unveiling the Universe

Following the demonstration of the twin miracle, the Buddha performed the miracle of unveiling the universe (*loka-vivaraṇa-pāṭihāriya*). This is how it was performed. He entered the form world fourth meditation (*rūpāvacara-kiriya-catuttha-jhāna*) based on the white object meditation device (*odata-kasiṇa*); arising therefrom, he made the resolution: "Let there be illumination throughout the 10,000 world-element." Instantaneously, the whole universe, right from the human world up to the Akaniṭṭha Brahma realm became illuminated.

All human beings could have full view of the universes from the Four Great Kings (*Catu-mahā-rājika*) to the Akaniṭṭha Brahma realm even as they stayed in their own residences. They could see all the celestial beings therein going about their daily life in their many special and various planes with all the lakes, gardens, thrones, couches, tiered-roof mansions, carriages, regalia, in a happy joyous mood, disporting themselves fully and enjoying a luxurious life in the jewelled brilliant flying mansions of their own creation, with both themselves and everything else radiantly bright.

In the sixteen form world (*rūpāvacara*) planes, some radiant Brahmas, still and serene as statues made of assorted jewels, were seen enjoying the tranquillity of their attainments (*samāpatti*), while others were seen engaged in discussing the profound and delicate essence of the Dhamma. They were clearly seen with human eyes by virtue of the glories of the Fortunate One.

In the same way, down and deep in the earth, there are eight great infernal planes, and each plane has four sides or minor regions of punishment, sixteen in all, known as Ussada Niraya. In between every three universes is a minor region of punishment known as Lokantara Niraya. These are regions of utter darkness. In each plane of misery, there are [606] beings in great agony, serving terms of punishment according to their deserts, depending upon the intensity of their

guilt. All the people on this earth could see these planes of misery and miserable beings clearly, by virtue of the glories of the Fortunate One.

All the Devas and Brahmas in the 10,000 world-element, who had arrived by means of their great powers, could be seen paying homage to the Buddha with hands raised and heads bowed in adoration and with minds filled with overwhelming wonder and devotion. They uttered verses in praise of the splendours and glories of the Buddha and spoke words of exuberant joy and happiness.

All these strange phenomena, such as the twin miracle, the six radiations from the body of the Buddha and witnessing the 10,000 world-element could be seen by all the people on this earth, caused much delight and reverential faith.

The Miraculous Display of Six Colours

The Buddha, who had demonstrated the twin miracles, had caused, by virtue of the twin miracle (*yamaka-pāṭihariya-ñāṇa*), the following radiations from his body:

1. Dark blue (*nīla*) radiation emanated from where the hair and the beard grew and from the iris of the eye, with the result that the whole sky appeared to have been sprinkled and scattered with powder of antimony or covered by the butterfly pea and blue lotus flowers; it resembled a moving fan made of bluish-green rubies; the whole sky was flooded with sapphire blue light.
2. Yellow (*pīta*) radiation emanated from the skin and the sockets of the eyes and all the golden parts of the Buddha. The entire environs were brightened by a golden colour as though the whole area was poured over with liquid gold or covered by a garment of gold, or as if saffron was sprinkled and golden silk cotton flowers strewn over it.
3. Red (*lohita*) radiation emanated from the flesh and blood and certain parts of the eyes and other red parts of the body. The entire environs was brightened by the red light as though dyed with vermilion or coated over with red lac, or covered with red velvet, or as if cloaked with noon flowers (*Pentapeters phonecea*), and Indian coral was strewn over it. The whole area was strangely and beautifully brightened by this radiation.

4. White (*odata*) radiation emanated from the bones, teeth and the eye-tooth of the Buddha, and from the whites of the eyes. The whole area looked as though covered with milk flowing constantly from silver pots, or with a silver ceiling hung with silver leaves and plates laid out layer upon layer, or a silver fan in motion, or as if wild jasmine, white lores, toothbrush tree, jasmine and Arabian jasmine were strewn all over the place.

5. Crimson (*mañjeṭṭha*) radiation emanated from the palms of the hands and soles of the feet, thereby beautifully brightening up the environs as though covered by a net of coral and flowers of the porcupine flower (*Barleria prioniti*) species.

6. Resplendent (*pabhassara*) radiation emanated from a single hair on the Buddha's forehead, nails of the fingers and toes, and all parts that shone, thereby brightening up the region as though filled with many constellations of the evening star and with flashes of lightning and currents of electricity. It was indeed a wondrously beautiful scene.[208]

The emanation of the six-hued radiance was indeed a strange phenomenon which resembled the continuous flow of streams of liquid gold, silver and ruby from a fountainhead shooting up to the roof of the universe and then descending to the edge of the universe. All the thousands of universes merged into a great, elegant, wonderful and beautiful golden mansion as it were with beams, rafters of assorted precious jewels.

On that day, the Buddha taught discourses in harmony with the inclinations of the people, at intervals, while demonstrating the twin miracles on the walk, which was laid from east to west, across the thousands of world-elements. He suspended the performance of miracles to allow a short interval of rest for the audience who, in return, said: *Sādhu* as [607] a gesture of gratitude. It was during these intervals that he looked into the dispositions of each and every member of the audience, who formed a sea of beings. To this end, he observed the mental process of each one of them by the exercise of contemplation of the mind (*cittānupassanā*), noting the sixteen different mental attitudes of each

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[208] These are excerpts from the Path of Discrimination (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*) commentary.

individual. One can only imagine the speed of the mind of Fully Self-Awakened Buddhas.

As stated above, the Buddha performed miracles and taught the Dhamma in harmony with the disposition and inclinations of the people, only after he had looked into and considered their mind process, with the result that numerous beings were emancipated from sentient existence through realization of the four noble truths. Indeed, it was the occasion of a great triumph of the Dhamma (*Dhammābhisamaya*).

The Creation of the Buddha's Double

The Buddha looked into the minds of individual persons, amongst a great company of beings, to find out if there were any who were capable of raising questions according to his own desire so that he might furnish the right answer, in return but he could not find anyone. So, he created his own double that gradually grew into two, then into three into four, and into hundreds, by multiplication.

There was an exchange of a series of questions and answers between himself and the mind-made Buddhas, alternately taking turns to raise questions and to answer. The mind-made Buddhas took up different postures while engaging in the dialogue: some were standing, some lying down, some walking and some sitting.

The glow and splendour of the six hues, together with the flames of fire and streams of water of the twin miracles of the Buddha, and brilliancy of the mind-made Buddhas, combined to light up the whole stretch of the sky, producing a clear array to an extent that lay beyond the capability of the disciples (*sāvaka*).

A great number of Devas and Brahmas spoke eulogies in praise of the glory, greatness and grace of the Buddha. The whole sky rang with the songs of the celestial beings. They poured showers of celestial flowers, the music from the thousands of musical instruments of the celestial beings combined with those of the human beings rent the air. It was indeed, as if a single grand festival of all beings was being celebrated.

Such an uncommon feat of the twin miracle was demonstrated by the Buddha by virtue of the wisdom peculiar to the Fully Self-Awakened Buddhas and not shared with Paccekabuddhas and disciples (*asādhārana-ñāṇa*). Having had the

opportunity to witness the miracles as well as listen to the teaching delivered at intervals, 200 million human beings, celestial Brahmas and other beings were emancipated at this great gathering performance of miracles.

25a: The 7th Rains Retreat (Abhidhamma)

[The first two sections are brought forward from the previous chapter to here as they are part of this story about the 7th Rains Retreat.]

The Buddha's Ascension to Tāvatiṁsa

The Buddha looked into the past, while still in the act of demonstrating the miracles, to see where his predecessors usually observed the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) after demonstrating the miracles, and he perceived that they ascended to Tāvatiṁsa to observe the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) and to preach the Abhidhamma to the celestial beings who were their respective mothers in their previous existence. Whereupon, he decided to ascend to Tāvatiṁsa, and as soon as he raised his right leg, the peak of Mount Yugandhara, with a height of 42,000 [608] leagues spontaneously moved to place its peak under the soles of his right foot. When the left foot was lifted, the summit of Great Meru, with a height of 84,000 leagues, came underneath his left foot automatically.

> No one had seen the summits of Yugandhara and Great Meru bending to place themselves beneath the feet of the Buddha; nor did he take unseemly strides to reach Tāvatiṁsa. This is purely a matter of supernormal power, exclusively the domain of Fully Self-Awakened Buddhas and beyond all other beings to conceive.

The Buddha reached Tāvatiṁsa with only two steps. Tāvatiṁsa is on top of Mount Meru, and to reach its summit is to reach Tāvatiṁsa itself.

As soon as Sakka saw the Buddha, he mistakenly thought: "The Buddha might take up residence on the emerald slab to observe the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) and the Devas and Brahmas would benefit from it. In such a case, no one would even have the chance of touching the emerald slab for the duration of the Rains Retreat. The emerald slab is of enormous size, being 60 leagues in length by 50 leagues in breath by 15 leagues in height. When the Buddha resides on it for the whole Rains Retreat, it would resemble the scene of a sparrow resting on a big flat tray, leaving a great amount of space vacant.

Having read the thought of Sakka, the Buddha dropped his double robe on the slab and it was completely covered by it. Sakka was still of the idea that a great amount of space would still be wasted after the Buddha had sat on it, because

even though the robe covered the whole slab of emerald, the Buddha's person would occupy only a small space.

The Buddha knew what was going on in the mind of Sakka and like a great elder sitting on a small stool and observing ascetic practice, he sat cross-legged on the emerald slab and occupied the whole slab with no space left.

Sakka realised his mistake and blamed himself for not knowing his own limitations: "What kind of person is the Buddha? We can never fully comprehend, nor can we discern to the full, the magnitude of his glorious attributes. About one such as the Buddha, replete with attributes beyond our mind's power to conceive, I have conceived erroneous thoughts and ideas!" In open acknowledgment of his wrong, he paid respects with deep devotion and profound respect to the Buddha.

In the human world, the people were struck with wonder when the Buddha suddenly disappeared. While they were witnessing the marvellous miracle, as though hundreds of thousands of suns and moons had set and disappeared and so they discussed the cause of the disappearance of the Buddha among themselves.

> *Gato nu Citta-kūṭaṁ vā, Kelāsaṁ vā Yugandharaṁ,*
> *na no dakkhemu Sambuddhaṁ, loka-jeṭṭhaṁ narāsabhaṁ.*
>
> The noblest leader of the three worlds, the most exalted and renowned Buddha, the omniscient one, has disappeared even now while we were witnessing the great miracle! We wonder if he has retreated far from this clamorous crowd to a place of seclusion like Mount Cittakūṭa, or to the silver mountain of Kelāsa or to Yugandhara?

They wept and uttered the above verse as they were discussing among themselves.

There were other people who opined that: "The Buddhas delight to dwell in seclusion. The Buddha must have reflected: 'In spite of liking seclusion, I have gone and exhibited the strange and wonderful miracle to this great multitude,' and feeling embarrassed he has retreated to a certain place of seclusion where no one could see him." They wept and uttered the following verse: [609]

> *Paviveka-rato Dhīro, nimaṁ lokaṁ punehiti,*
> *na no dakkhemu Sambuddhaṁ, loka-jeṭṭhaṁ narāsabhaṁ.*

> Now that the omniscient Buddha has retreated to a place of solitude where disturbances of the five senses are calmed, he will never again return to this frenetic human world, full of worldly temptations for the five human senses. The noblest leader of the three worlds, the most exalted and renowned Buddha, the omniscient one, has disappeared, even while we were worshipping.

People asked Ven. Mahā Moggallāna as to the present residence of the Buddha. Although he knew that the Buddha was in Tāvatiṁsa, he directed them to Ven. Anuruddha for an answer so that credit might be given to him. When they asked the great elder, they were told that the Buddha had taken up residence on the throne of Sakka, under the coral tree (*Erythria indica*) in Tāvatiṁsa, and was teaching the Abhidhamma to the celestial Devas headed by the mother of the Buddha in his previous existence. When asked about the return to earth of the Buddha, they were told that after teaching the Abhidhamma throughout the Rains Retreat he would return on the day of the Great Invitation (*Mahā-pavāraṇa*), which was the day of the traditional assembly of the Saṅgha at the end of the retreat, which falls on the full moon day of October (*Assayuja*).

These people decided: "We will not leave without paying homage to the Buddha," and so they erected temporary pavilions with leaves and shrubs in that locality. The sky itself served as the roof and mother earth absorbed all the refuse used by them, and the whole area was left in a sanitary condition.

The Buddha had given prior instructions to Ven. Moggallāna to preach to these people, and the lay devotee, Cūḷa Anāthapiṇḍika, was charged with the responsibility of providing them with food. He provided them with broth, rice, sweet meats, betel, tea-leaves, sweet scents, flowers, clothing and all articles for human use, with nothing wanting. As arranged in anticipation, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna taught to them throughout the period of the Rains Retreat.

Devas and Brahmas from the 10,000 world-element gathered around the Buddha to hear the teaching of the Abhidhamma from the throne of Sakka, under the coral tree in the celestial world of Tāvatiṁsa. There was no one among the Devas and Brahmas who surpassed Buddha in appearance; indeed he surpassed all others in comeliness.

When the most gracious and exalted Buddha sat on the throne of Sakka, Santusita Deva, who was previously the Bodhisatta's mother, descended from the Tusita plane and sat respectfully in front and on the side close to him.

Aṅkura Deva and Indaka Deva

Indaka Deva, who arrived after Santusita Deva, was seated on the right side close to the seat of Buddha, and Aṅkura sat on the left side in close proximity to him. Aṅkura Deva was obliged to make room for more powerful Devas and Brahmas every time they arrived until he was at a place twelve leagues away from the Buddha. But Indaka could retain his position. Here is why.

The genesis of Aṅkura's biography may be traced back to a dark period that followed the extinction of Buddha Kassapa's Dispensation. He was the youngest of the eleven children of Prince Upasāgara and Princess Devagabbhā. Prince Upasāgara was the son of King Mahā Sāgara of the Uttaramadhu country, and Princess Devagabbhā was the daughter of Mahā Kaṁsa, ruler of Asitañjana, a province of Uttarāpatha country. His eldest brother was Vāsudeva and eldest sister was Añjana Devī. [610]

When he came of age, his elder brothers made him the ruler of a town with a grant to receive the revenues of that town. This being his share of the spoils of victory after his elder brothers made a conquest of the whole of Jambudīpa with their political power. But he, in turn, surrendered the town to the eldest sister, Princess Añjana. He simply asked for exemption from taxation on merchandise involved in his private trading within the borders of their provinces. He led the life of a free trader. He was happy and content with his lot.

Once, he was put into a great difficulty through a shortage of provisions during his journey across a desert. There was a guardian deity of a banyan tree, who had the power to produce every necessary thing one could desire with only just a gesture of his right hand. He was a grateful deity and he fulfilled the needs of the prince and his people by producing their needs by pointing with his right hand, in repayment of his debt of gratitude towards the prince in a previous existence. The prince, out of curiosity, asked him about his mysterious power and he replied: "I was a poor tailor living near the house of a rich man, Asahya, in the town of Roruva. Once the rich man gave a great alms giving to the needy and I gladly assisted the poor who came my way by pointing my hand towards the direction of the pavilion of the rich man. I am thus enjoying the fruit of my

voluntary labour! Thus, all things necessary for human use such as food and clothing flow copiously, as desired, from my right hand."

In emulation of the guardian deity of the banyan tree, Prince Aṅkura, on arrival back in the country of Dvāravatī, as a great alms giving, donated alms to everyone in the whole of Jambudīpa, which was 10,000 leagues in extent. Such an act of generosity bore an adverse affect on the machinery of taxation. It, indeed, paralysed the system of tax levying or any description and his elder brothers had to advise him to be generous, but with a sense of proportion. He shifted to the city of Dakkhiṇapāṭha in the Damiṭṭha country to resume his deeds of generosity along a stretch of land measuring twelve leagues, by the side of the ocean. All along that stretch, he had rows of alms food resting on tripods and almost touching one another. He lived to be 10,000 years old, giving generously all the while and passed away. He was reborn in the celestial plane of Tāvatiṁsa bearing the same name, Aṅkura.

Although Aṅkura had given much for such a long time, he did not get much in return, this is because his recipients were destitute of virtue during a period the worlds that were void of the Dispensation, just like a farmer who had sown his seeds on barren ground.

> This is a brief sketch of the life of Aṅkura. For full particulars, please refer to the Stories about Petas (*Peta-vatthu*, Pv 2.9) and its commentary.

It was during the time of our Buddha Gotama and while Aṅkura Deva was enjoying the life of a celestial Deva in Tāvatiṁsa, that a young man by the name of Indaka offered, out of faith and devotion, a ladleful of rice to Ven. Anuruddha who was on alms round.

After his demise, he was reborn as a powerful Deva in Tāvatiṁsa, endowed with the ten privileges of celestial beings in reward for his meritorious deed done during the Dispensation of Buddha Gotama, like a farmer who had sown his seeds in a fertile field. He was known by the same name, Indaka.

The ten privileges of celestial beings are: 1) celestial objects of sight, 2) hearing, 3) odour, 4) taste, 5) touch; 6) longevity, 7) abundance of attendants, 8) good appearance, 9) wealth or prosperity and 10) supremacy.

Aṅkura Deva had to make room for the more powerful Devas and Brahmas attending the great Abhidhamma festival, so he was pushed back right up to 12

leagues from the Buddha, whereas Indaka Deva could retain his seat without having to make room for any other celestial beings.

When the Buddha saw the difference in the status of Aṅkura Deva and that of Indaka Deva, he thought it would be a good thing to bring out, for the sake of the edification of beings, the differences in the benefits accrued from deeds of merit done during the flourishing Dispensation of Fully Self-Awakened Buddhas and that from deeds of merit done during a period void of the Dispensation. The Buddha, therefore asked (Pv 322): [611]

Mahā-dānaṁ tayā dinnaṁ, Aṅkura dīgham-antaraṁ,
atidūre nisinnosi, āgaccha mama santike.

Aṅkura, lay devotee, why do you have to move back and make room for powerful Devas and Brahmas on their arrival at this great Abhidhamma festival, even though you have to your credit the merit for offering food produced from a line of pots laid across a stretch of land twelve leagues in extent, for 10,000 years? Now you are twelve leagues far away from me. Come now and sit in my presence!

The Buddha's utterance of this interrogative verse reached the earth and was heard by those in the world of men. Aṅkura Deva's reply to the Buddha's question constitutes one and a half verses and the supplementary verse by the great elder Saṅgītikāraka constitutes half a verse, amounting to two verses, and these were systematically recorded in the proceedings of the Buddhist Council in Pāḷi as follows (Pv 323-324):

Codito bhāvitattena, Aṅkuro idam-abravi:
Kiṁ mayhaṁ tena dānena, dakkhiṇeyyena suññataṁ,
ayaṁ so Indako yakkho, dajjā dānaṁ parittakaṁ,
atirocati amhehi, cando tāra-gaṇe yathā.

Having been questioned by the Buddha who had practised two types of meditation conducive to mental and physical composure, Aṅkura Deva, who had done meritorious deeds during a long dark period which was void of the Dispensation respectfully made a reply, as follows: "Most exalted Buddha, there is a kind of meritorious deed done assiduously during a period void of the Dispensation when there was not a single virtuous person deserving of an offering of alms. How could my

meritorious deed even though done for a long time during the period void of the Dispensation help me stand in good stead!

Although Indaka Deva, who is in your presence, had offered just a ladleful of rice to Ven. Anuruddha, with faith and devotion, he has received a reward that surpasses mine like a silvery moon that out-shines a multitude of stars; and for the same reason, he has the good fortune to enjoy the ten privileges of the Devas which are superior to those like us who have done meritorious deeds during a period void of the Dispensation!"

Whereupon, the Buddha asked Indaka Deva: "Indaka, you have been sitting on my right side without making a move? Why don't you have to make room for powerful Devas as and when they arrive, now and again?" This was Indaka's reply: "Most exalted Buddha, my case may be likened to that of a farmer who had sown a small amount of seeds in a fertile plot, and by the same analogy, I had the good fortune to have a recipient worthy of offering," and he went ahead to utter four verses in praise of the qualities and qualifications of the recipients of gifts (Pv 325-328):

Ujjaṅgale yathā khette, bījaṁ bahum-pi ropitaṁ, [612]
na vipulaṁ phalaṁ hoti, napi toseti kassakaṁ.
Tatheva dānaṁ bahukaṁ, dussīlesu patiṭṭhitaṁ,
na vipulaṁ phalaṁ hoti, napi toseti dāyakaṁ.

Although a great amount of seeds are sown in a plot on a hillock which is rocky, salty, caustic, barren and broken, the yield would be negligible and disappointing to the farmer.

By the same analogy, notwithstanding the vastness of an offering made to a recipient, who is destitute of virtue during a period which is void of the Dispensation, the benefit accrued therefrom would be negligible and disappointing to the supporter.

Yathā pi bhaddake khette, bījaṁ appam-pi ropitaṁ,
sammā dhāraṁ pavecchante, phalaṁ tosesi kassakaṁ.
Tatheva sīlavantesu, guṇavantesu tādisu,
appakam-pi kataṁ kāraṁ, puññaṁ hoti mahapphalaṁ.

Most exalted Buddha, just as the yield of products pleases a farmer who works hard in sowing seeds in a fertile field of first class soil which

receives a regular shower of rain every fifteen days; or of medium class soil that receives regular showers every ten days, or of a third class soil that receives regular shower of rain every five days.

So also, rewards accrued from a meritorious deed of offering gifts to noble persons (*ariya-puggala*), who are virtuous and self-composed, will turn out to be great and prosperous, as in the case of the yield of seeds grown in a fertile field.

Thus Indaka had drawn a distinction between deeds of merit done in favour of two different kinds of recipients at two different periods by way of four verses. Whereupon, the Buddha said: "Aṅkura, it is only right and proper that one makes a choice of both the gift and the recipient. A fitting reward could only materialise through the choice of the type of gifts and the type of recipient, just like good seeds that are sown in fertile soil. Of course, you could not make offerings in the manner just described since you happened to be born in a wrong period when there was no Dispensation, opposed to the right period when there is a Dispensation. Wherefore, your meritorious deeds were not as fruitful as those of Indaka." The following four verses were uttered by the Buddha for the sake of clarification (Pv 329-330):

Viceyya dānaṁ dātabbaṁ, yattha dinnaṁ mahapphalaṁ,
viceyya dānaṁ datvāna, saggaṁ gacchanti dāyakā.

O Aṅkura Deva, offerings made to persons of virtue with faith and [613] generosity bring about an abundance of rewards. A good choice of recipients should be made before offerings are made. Offerings of gifts to selected persons with faith and generosity invariably lead the supporter to the world of the Devas.

Viceyya dānaṁ sugatappasaṭṭhaṁ,
ye dakkhiṇeyyā idha jīva-loke,
etesu dinnāni mahapphalāni,
bījāni vuttāni yathā sukhette.

The choice of both gift and recipient has been highly praised by a succession of Buddhas. There are virtuous persons with longevity in this world. Gifts dedicated to such persons of virtue with faith and generosity will invariably bring about wealth and happiness to the supporters while

in the worlds of men and Devas before his attainment to the final goal of Nibbāna, as in the case of sowing the choicest seeds of five kinds.[209]

The Buddha went on to preach four more verses that lead to Nibbāna through the avenues of path and fruition stages (Dhp 356-359):

Tiṇa-dosāni khettāni, rāga-dosā ayaṁ pajā,
tasmā hi vīta-rāgesu, dinnaṁ hoti mahapphalaṁ.

There have been instances where potential seeds have been thrown on the fields full of grass and weeds. The same are gifts that have been offered to Devas and humans who are destitute of virtue and full of passion (*rāga*). Therefore, an offering of gifts should be made to the noble persons (*ariya-puggala*) who are void of passion (*rāga*), with a view to enjoy worldly life in the planes of Devas and humans before the attainment of the final goal of Nibbāna.

Tiṇa-dosāni khettāni, dosa-dosā ayaṁ pajā,
tasmā hi vīta-dosesu, dinnaṁ hoti mahapphalaṁ.

Just as there are arable lands full of grass and weeds, so there are Devas and humans who are destitute of virtue and full of anger. Wherefore, one should see to it that gifts are offered to those who are free from malice, so that one may enjoy the worldly life of Devas and humans before attainment of the final goal of Nibbāna.

Tiṇa-dosāni khettāni, moha-dosā ayaṁ pajā,
tasmā hi vīta-mohesu, dinnaṁ hoti mahapphalaṁ.

Just as the arable lands are naturally full of grass and shrubs, so Devas and humans are full of delusion. So gifts should be offered only to the noble persons (*ariya-puggala*), who are devoid of delusion, so that one may enjoy the worldly life in the planes of Devas and humans before attainment of the final goal of Nibbāna.

Tiṇa-dosāni khettāni, icchā-dosā ayaṁ pajā,
tasmā hi vigaticchesu, dinnaṁ hoti mahapphalaṁ.

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[209] *Bīja* or germ, five in number: root, aggregation, germ, fruit and seed; each of these is able to grow when separated from the tree.

> Just as arable lands are naturally full of grass and shrubs, so Devas and humans are naturally imbued with the five kinds of desire for the pleasures of the [614] five senses. Wherefore, gifts should be offered to the noble persons (*ariya-puggala*) who are void of desire (*iccha*). Such an act of merit invariably brings about a pleasant life in the planes of Devas and humans even up to the attainment of the final goal of Nibbāna.

At the conclusion of the discourse, Aṅkura Deva and Indaka Deva attained the fruition state of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*), and the discourse was of great benefit to all other Devas and Brahmas, as well. [615]

Teaching the Abhidhamma

Having established Aṅkura and Indaka Deva in the fruition stage of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*), the Buddha continued to stay on to observe the 7th Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), sitting crossed-legged on Sakka's throne in Tāvatiṁsa and taught the Abhidhamma, day and night, to all those Devas from the 10,000 world-element who rallied around him, with Santusita Deva, who had previously been his mother, at their head. He started with the law of good action and its result (*kusala-dhamma*); bad action and its result (*akusala-dhamma*); neutral or amoral or indeterminate action (*abyākata-dhamma*); teaching round the clock, like the river of the sky flowing continuously, for the duration of the Rains Retreat.

> [An examination of these items open the first book of the Abhidhamma, the Enumeration of Phenomena (*Dhamma-saṅgaṇī*)].
>
> Buddhas deliver discourses before noon in praise of food offered, such discourses could be as long as the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*) and the Collection of the Middle Length Discourses (*Majjhima-nikāya*) put together. The discourses taught to the Devas and Brahmas who arrived in the afternoon have the combined lengths of the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*) and the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*).
>
> This is because the thought-process of the Buddha is very fast, with very few intervening underlying consciousnesses (*bhavaṅga*). And as the Buddha's lips are proportionate and firmly set, the lip movements are precise. The tongue is long, slender and delicate. All these features contribute to production of a voice that is melodious, and that speaks very quickly and clearly.

> It is stated that when an ordinary average person had spoken a word, Ven. Ānanda had spoken eight words; when Ven. Ānanda had spoken one word, the Buddha had spoken sixteen words. It has thus been calculated that the Buddha's rate of speech is 128 times faster than that of an average person.

Thus, with such an unimaginable quick speech, it is no wonder that the Buddha taught the long discourses, in appreciation of the offering of food, before noon and more lengthy discourses to Devas who arrived in the afternoon. The Abhidhamma that the Buddha taught during that Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) of three months is thus endless and incomparable.

In case a question such as this arises: "How did the Buddha maintain his body when he was engaged in teaching the Abhidhamma during the whole period of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) lasting three months?" The brief reply is he did it by regular provision of nourishment.

The following is the extensive answer: all Buddhas are mindful of such matters; they usually follow the progress of time in the world of man while in the act of teaching the Abhidhamma. When the time came for going on alms round, he created a Buddha after his own image, acting after his own manner in handling the bowl and holding the robe and with a voice like his own. He caused the mind-made Buddha to preach the Abhidhamma to the extent prescribed.

The Buddha then left for Anotatta deep in the Himālayas with his bowl and robe. On his arrival at Lake Anotatta, Devas presented him with a twig frayed at one end. After brushing his teeth with the twig, he took a bath in the lake. After his bath, he stood on the slab of orpiment and donned the well-dyed double robe. He then took the brown stone-bowl that was offered by the Four Great Kings (*Catu-mahā-rājika*), under the Rājāyatana tree, that is, at the seventh place of the seven places at which Buddha Gotama spent seven days each after attaining Buddhahood. Each Deva had offered one bowl and the four were pressed into one by the Buddha with his hands. He then proceeded to the north continent of Uttarakuru for receiving alms food, and on return, he partook of the food on the peaceful bank of the enchanting and delightful Lake Anotatta. After his meal, he proceeded [616] to the forest of sandalwood trees to spend the day.

Ven. Sāriputta, the general of the Dhamma, went to the sandalwood forest to attend on the Buddha and stood at a place that was free from the six faults. Whereupon, the Buddha told Ven. Sāriputta: "Dear son Sāriputta, I have taught

this much of the Dhamma." He would only give the gist and the guidelines, but Ven. Sāriputta, being endowed with the four analytic knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*), could fully grasp the Dhamma outlined by the Buddha, like a man who is shown the vast ocean by someone with an outstretched hand. He had the ability to understand it in a hundred and in a thousand ways.

> The Buddha returned to Tāvatiṁsa in the afternoon to resume his teaching there. With the exception of the powerful Devas, no one knew that a mind-made Buddha was teaching the Abhidhamma in the place of the real Buddha and that the real Buddha had gone to the human world and had returned from it. The mind-made Buddha was an exact replica in all respects: in emission of radiance, in voice and in the manner of speaking.

Ven. Sāriputta teaches the Abhidhamma

Ven. Sāriputta, having learnt the Abhidhamma briefly from the Buddha daily, taught it in a form neither too brief nor too elaborate to his 500 monastic disciples, who had been common bats in a previous existence.

This is a short account of their previous life: They were little common bats dwelling in a cave, hanging down from its roof, in the time of Buddha Kassapa. They heard the recitation of the Abhidhamma by two monastics well-versed in the Abhidhamma. They had not even the slightest idea of what was meant by the waxing and waning of the moon, but, their attention was drawn to the recitation of the Abhidhamma by the monastics' pleasant and harmonious tone.

> The bats had no idea of what was meant by the Abhidhamma, the aggregates, sensation, elements, truths, not even the waxing and waning of the moon, but since the tone of the recitation by the monastics served as a good object (*kamma-nimitta*) of their dying consciousness for the following life, they were reborn in the plane of Devas.

They enjoyed the life of Devas from the time of Buddha Kassapa up to the time of Buddha Gotama, not being born even once in the lower planes. At the time of the present Buddha, they were reborn in the world of humans. They witnessed the twin miracle, which aroused their faith and devotion and made them receive ordination under the personal supervision of Ven. Sāriputta. Everyday, Ven. Sāriputta taught them the Abhidhamma in an extended form as he had learnt it from the Buddha in an abridged version.

The teaching of the Abhidhamma by the Buddha in the world of Devas came to a close simultaneously with the completion of the full study of the Abhidhamma taken up by the 500 monastics under Ven. Sāriputta in the world of humans.

Everyday the Buddha informed Ven. Sāriputta of the nature and extent of the Abhidhamma taught by both himself and the mind-made Buddha in Tāvatiṁsa and instructed him to teach his 500 disciples as necessary, before he returned to resume teaching from the point where the mind-made Buddha had concluded.

The teaching of the Abhidhamma came to a close at the end of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), on the full moon day of October (*Assayuja*), with the result that 800 billion Devas and Brahmas were emancipated through realization of the four noble truths. Santusita Deva, the Buddha's mother in the human world, also attained the fruition state of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*).

On the ninth waxing moon of October (*Assayuja*), people lingering within the area of 36 leagues, went and asked Ven. Mahā Moggallāna: "Venerable sir, it would be right and proper that we enquire as to the time of the Buddha's return to earth; we will not go back to our own homes until we have paid homage to the Buddha." Ven. Mahā [617] Moggallāna said: "Very well," and dived right into the earth and went right up to the base of Mount Meru. He willed that people should see him ascend to Tāvatiṁsa rising from within Mount Meru. Then like a fine golden string threaded through a ruby he was clearly visible to the people, ascending from within the centre of the mountain to Tāvatiṁsa.

People who saw Ven. Mahā Moggallāna during the course of his ascent to the summit through the inside of the mountain measured his progress in terms of leagues saying: "Now he has ascended one league, now he has ascended two leagues," etc. On arrival at Tāvatiṁsa it was as if the Buddha's feet rested on the head of Ven. Moggallāna who then approached the Buddha with profound respect and addressed him saying: "Most exalted lord, people will not return to their home without paying homage to you and they are anxious to know the time of your descent to the world of humans." The Buddha asked: "Dear son Moggallāna, where, at present, is your elder brother Sāriputta?" Whereupon Ven. Moggallāna replied: "Most exalted lord, he has been keeping the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at Saṅkassa."

The Buddha made the following reply: "Dear son Moggallāna, I will descend at the gate of Saṅkassa on the seventh day from now, which falls on the full moon

day of October (*Assayuja*), the time for the celebration of the Great Invitation festival (*Mahā-pavāraṇa*). The distance between the two towns is 30 leagues, but tell the people they need not bring any food for the journey, just as they would observe the precepts and go without taking any food or provisions to the monasteries at the head of the towns and villages but to listen to my teaching on this day. Ven. Mahā Moggallāna replied "Very well, most exalted lord." On arrival back on earth, he relayed the Buddha's message to the people.

Buddha's descent from Tāvatiṁsa

The Buddha made known his departure to Sakka: "Lay devotee Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, by way of formal leave taking I am informing you that I shall be returning to the world of humans.

At the close of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), on the full moon day of October (*Assayuja*), Sakka created a set of three stairways, one of gold, another of ruby and another of silver, side by side, with the bases at the gate of Saṅkassa and with their upper end resting on the summit of Mount Meru. The golden stairway on the right hand side was reserved for the Devas; the silver stairway on the left-hand side was reserved for the Great Brahmas; the ruby stairway in the middle was exclusively for the Buddha.

The Buddha, on the eve of departure, stood on the summit of Mount Meru and performed the twin miracle of water and fire, and looked up at the sky. The whole region, right up to the realm of the Akaniṭṭha Brahmas, appeared as an open space, unobstructed and clearly visible and when he looked downwards, he could see Avīci hell at the bottom of the eight planes of misery; when he looked forward and sideways, in all directions, thousands of world-elements could be seen without any obstruction whatsoever. The strange scene was witnessed by all the humans, Devas and Brahmas. Thus all the Devas and Brahmas could see the human beings and human beings could see them.

The Buddha caused the emanation of the six-hued radiance from his body as he descended from Tāvatiṁsa to the world of humans, and there was no one in that crowd of spectators of 36 leagues in circumference, who did not aspire to Buddhahood when they noticed the grandeur, greatness, grace and glory of the Buddha.

The Devas came down along the golden stairway on the right hand side. The Brahmas came along down the silver stairway on the left-hand side. The Buddha alone descended by the ruby stairway in the middle. Pañcasikkha Deva on the right side of Buddha, paid homage by playing his beluva-wood harp; Suyāma Deva also came along on the right side, fanning the Buddha with a fan made of of yak-tail hair; Santusita Deva came along on the same side fanning the Buddha with a fan studded with rubies, Sakka on the right hand side also blew the Vijayuttara conch shell. Devas from the rest of the world-element also came along paying homage in adoration in various ways. Brahmas came along by the silver stairway, holding the Brahmas' white umbrella over the head of the Buddha as a gesture of profound respect. [618]

Thus the Buddha descended to earth in the manner described above, and on arrival, stood at the gate of the town of Saṅkassa. Those people, who were gathered at Sāvatthī city, left after the morning meal, looking forward to seeing the Buddha on the Invitation (*Pavāraṇa*) day, at the end of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*). They eventually reached the gates of Saṅkassa town as quickly and effortlessly as if they were going to the monastery at the head of their village.

Ven. Sāriputta was the first person to pay homage to the Buddha as soon as he had set his right foot on the earth on arrival from Tāvatiṁsa. All those who were also present followed suit subsequently. The spot where the Buddha had set his right foot on the earth was later regarded as a sacred place and named the Unmoveable Shrine (*Acala Cetiya*).

The spot, where the Buddha set his right foot on reaching the earth, on his return from Tāvatiṁsa at the end of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), after teaching the Abhidhamma in keeping with the practice of Buddhas, is also regarded as one of the sacred places termed the unabandoned places (*avijahitaṭṭhāna*).

> Every Buddha after teaching the Abhidhamma in Tāvatiṁsa during the whole of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), on return to earth by the three stairways, had always first set his right foot on the very spot where the triple stairways were placed at the gate of Saṅkassa.

The Four Unabandoned Places

Here, as it is appropriate and needs to be specially noted, a brief mention will be made of the four unabandoned places. The permanent sacred sites utilized by all

Buddhas for the same purposes with unchanging uniformity are known as the unabandoned places (*avijahitaṭṭhāna*). They are four in number, namely:

1. The site of the Mahā Bodhi tree, the victory throne (*aparājita*) where all Buddhas have conquered the five kinds of death (*māra*).

   The very spot where there arose the unconquered throne for our Buddha Gotama had been the site of the unconquered thrones of all Buddhas. There is no change of location.

2. The Deer Park at Isipatana, where our Buddha Gotama taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*), the first discourse.

   This is the location where all the Buddhas had also taught the Dhamma Wheel. It is not taught at any other place.

3. The spot on which the Buddhas usually first set their right foot on their return from Tāvatiṁsa after teaching the Abhidhamma there.

   The gate of Saṅkassa town is that sacred place in our Buddha Gotama's time.

4. The location of the Buddhas' bedstead where the four legs of the Buddhas' bedstead usually rested without change.

   The scented chamber of Buddha Gotama in the monastery of Jetavana was the site where his bedstead lay.

   [A short passage which repeats information given earlier about the size of the Jetavana has been removed, see chapter 20c, under the Construction of the Jetavana for details.]

Although the size of the location of the monasteries differs through the passage of time, the location of the Buddha's scented chamber remained the same without any change.

As stated before, Ven. Sāriputta approached the Buddha after he first set his right foot at the head of the stairway, paid homage to him and addressed him: "All the Devas and laity here are filled with adoration for you, so much that they all long to become Buddhas." Whereupon the Buddha replied: "Dear son Sāriputta, it is true that all the humans, Devas and Brahmas love and revere the Buddhas for their being great, gracious and glorious," and then he uttered the following verse, in preparation to a discourse which he would be teaching (Dhp 181):

Ye jhāna-pasutā Dhīrā, nekkhammūpasame ratā,
devā pi tesaṁ pihayanti, Sambuddhānaṁ satīmataṁ.

Dear son Sāriputta, all the Fully Self-Awakened Buddhas have gained mastery over absorption (*jhāna*) practices in five ways and they delight in these absorptions. They also abide usually in fruition attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) that has, as its object, the absolute truth of Nibbāna, which is free from all suffering (*dukkha*). Even the Devas and Brahmas of the celestial regions have made the remark with great adoration and esteem for the Buddhas, who are always abiding in full mindfulness: "How great would it be, if we who have had this rare opportunity were to become Buddhas?"

According to the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) commentary, 300 million humans, Devas and Brahmas were emancipated at the conclusion of the discourse; and the 500 disciples of Ven. Sāriputta became Arahats as a result.

The Attributes of Ven. Sāriputta

While still standing at the head of the stairway, the Buddha contemplated thus: "People, who gathered here at this assembly, know that Ven. Moggallāna is the greatest in the matter of absorption; Ven. Anuruddha in supernatural vision; Ven. Puṇṇa Mantāṇiputta is a celebrated teacher in Dhamma; but no one knows the attributes of Ven. Sāriputta."

Therefore, he thought it would be proper to bring the knowledge and wisdom of Ven. Sāriputta to the limelight in some way or the other. He asked Ven. Sāriputta questions relating to the problems of ordinary average people (*putthujjana*), those of noble persons in the three lower paths and fruition stages (*sekkha*), and those of Arahats (*asekkha*), in the presence of all those present at the time. Ven. Sāriputta gave prompt answers to each and every question, stage by stage, concerning ordinary average persons, in the three lower path and fruition stages and the Arahats, the perfected ones, with the result that all those present came to realise Ven. Sāriputta's state of exaltation in wisdom.

The Buddha then proceeded to say: "Sāriputta has not exceeded the average level of intelligence only now, but he had also excelled others in the matter of knowledge and wisdom, in past existences also." He then related the Birth Story

about More than a Thousand Fools (*Paro-sahassa-jātaka*, Ja 99) and its commentary, given here in an abridged form.

The Birth Story about More than a Thousand Fools

Once upon a time, there lived in a forest, at the foot of a hill, more than 1,000 [620] recluses who lived on herbs, fruits and roots. Once their teacher fell sick, and the most senior disciple went out in search of medicine, leaving instructions with his juniors to attend on their teacher with due care and diligence.

The great teacher passed away before the return of the senior disciple. Upon a request being made by the disciples regarding the attainment of absorption (*jhāna-samāpatti*) on the verge of his demise, the old sage told them: *Natthi kiñci,* implying the third formless absorption (*akiñcaññāyatana*). Anyone wishing to abide in the third formless meditation (*arūpa-jhāna*) must first and foremost contemplate on the concept of non-existence of the first formless absorption repeatedly. This in fact was what the great master had in his mind when he said: *Natthi kiñci*.

But the disciples had missed the point and misunderstood the great master to mean that he had attained nothing (*Natthi kiñci* literally means: "there is none"), and they looked down upon him as one who had not attained any stage of meditation attainment (*jhāna-samāpatti*) and they did nothing about the burial rites concerning his remains.

> The great sage was accomplished in the third formless absorption (*akiñcaññāyatana-jhāna*) by which the formless Brahma realm is attainable but when asked by his disciples he simply said: *Natthi kiñci*, and passed away to be reborn in the Ābhassara Brahma realm which is attainable by the second form absorption (*rūpāvacara-jhāna*). This is because the four formless Brahma realms are not befitting (*abhabba*) for Bodhisattas.

On his return with suitable medicine, the senior disciple was told that the great teacher had passed away. He asked his juniors if they had asked him anything. They replied: "Aye, we asked, but *Natthi kiñci* was his reply, and he must, therefore, have gone without attaining any absorption (*jhāna*) level whatsoever."

The senior disciple explained to them thus: "You have no idea of what the great master meant. Our great teacher is endowed with the third formless absorption." He thus gave them a correct interpretation again and again to convince them.

But his correct answer simply fell on deaf ears. When the great teacher, the Bodhisatta, then living as an Ābhassara Brahma, came to know about the unhappy situation, he contemplated that he should reveal the truth by removing the doubt entertained by those ignoramuses, who were groping in the dark. Therefore, the great sage descended from the Ābhassara Brahma world to the world of humans. Positioning himself high above the roof of the hermitage with great power, and wishing to praise the senior disciple's wisdom, he uttered the verse (Ja 99):

Paro-sahassam-pi samāgatānaṁ,
kandeyyuṁ te vassa-sataṁ apaññā,
eko va seyyo puriso sapañño,
yo bhāsitassa vijānāti atthaṁ.

Those without any knowledge may cry for 100 years but they will have no idea whatsoever of what their master meant to say. The only person, among an assemblage of over 1,000 persons, capable of understanding what was meant, is worthy of praise.

The great teacher returned to the world of Brahmas after teaching the discourse. All the recluses attained absorption (*jhāna-samāpatti*) as a result of his visit, and they were reborn in Brahma worlds after death.

In winding up the discourse, the Buddha revealed that Ven. Sāriputta was then the senior disciple and he was the Great Brahma in the Ābhassara Brahma realm.

The Discourse where Sāriputta asked Questions

After the Buddha had taught the preceding discourse, Ven. Sāriputta put forward a questionnaire concerning the suitable and desirable abodes, lawful resorts for alms, meditation practices, etc. for the benefit of his disciples who were undergoing training under his personal supervision. These were presented

to the Buddha in eight verses and [621] the Buddha gave a series of answers in thirteen verses (*Sāriputta-sutta*, Snp 4.16).[210]

1. I, Sāriputta, have hitherto never seen or heard of a great sage of a sect, who has come into his mother's womb from the celestial abode of Tāvatiṁsa, who speaks so pleasantly and is endowed with the power of performing miracles, with all the greatness, graciousness and glory of a Fully Self-Awakened Buddha.

2. All the humans, Devas and Brahmas have seen him truly as one who has dispelled the darkness of delusion, as one who is peerless and unique, enjoying the calm state of absorption (*jhāna*), and the serene and tranquil state of Nibbāna. All the humans, Devas and Brahmas have looked upon him as the possessor of the five eyes.

> The five eyes are: 1) The human eye (*maṁsa*); 2) the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu*); 3) insight-wisdom (*paññā-vipassanā*); 4) the all-seeing eye (*samanta-cakkhu*); and 5) the Buddha eye (*Buddha-cakkhu*).

3. Most exalted Buddha, who is free from the two defilements of clinging and wrong view, one who is not to be moved or shaken by worldly vicissitudes, one who has never tried to attract the attention of people by trickery, who has come to the gate of the city of Saṅkassa as the leader of a sect I, Sāriputta, have come to this place with the object of presenting to you problems for your solution in the interest of my disciples.

4-5. How many fearful and offensive sense objects are there, that are harmful to a noble monastic, who retires through fear and loathing of the dangers of birth, etc., to the quiet root of a tree, a cemetery, a secluded place or a short-legged bedstead in a cave?

6. How many kinds of danger are there to suppress, which a noble monastic may encounter as he speeds his way to the strange yet unattained land of Nibbāna, in his lonely forest hermitage on the outskirts of a town or village?

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[210] They are lengthy and exhaustive, and it is proposed to reproduce them here in condensed form only. For full particulars, please refer to the discourse itself.

7. What are the words which a noble monastic may speak? What are the lawful resorts for a noble monastic? What are the meditation practices a noble monastic should develop with intensity?

8. How should a noble monastic observe the precepts with steadfastness, mature judgment and clear mindfulness to discard the dust of the defilements, just as a goldsmith purifies gold?

> Thus Ven. Sāriputta presented eight verses, of which the first three verses are in praise of the attributes of the Buddha, and the remaining five are regarding the practice which his 500 monastics should observe.

1. Dear son Sāriputta, there are two things that a person of good birth who is pursuing path-knowledge, and who retires to a place of seclusion through fear of transient existence, ought to know: The way to live in peace and tranquillity and the practice to be cultivated. I will preach to you these two things as I know them from practical knowledge and not simply by inference.

2-3. Dear son Sāriputta, a person of intellect and mindfulness should not get frightened or be shaken when he comes into contact with five kinds of dangers, such as: Gadflies, mosquitoes, flies; snakes, scorpions, centipedes, mice; burglars and robbers; quadrupeds, such as lions, leopards and tigers; people outside of the teaching without faith in the Three Treasures who cause inconvenience by their annoying antagonistic views and questions. One should not get alarmed or frightened by those five kinds of terrible objects, just described. [622] Further, a noble monastic in striving for the attainment of Nibbāna by following a good true path should suppress the following five internal enemies in addition to those just described:

4. Disease, hunger, cold, heat, and, when the noble monastic experienced inconvenience through contact with any of these dangers, he must resist or put up with them, as such sensations and ailments are conducive to the arising of the ten modes of wrong conduct by deed, word and thought. He should protect himself by means of earnest effort (*sammappadhāna*).

> In answer to the question the Buddha mentioned these 5 kinds of internal enemies. Having dealt with these questions, the Buddha proceeded to deal with the rest of the questions in 9 verses as enumerated below.

5. A noble monastic must always refrain from stealing and lying; he must wish for the well-being of both those who still have taints of craving (*tasa*) and those who have already eradicated craving (*thāvara*). He must dispel all ten modes of wrong deeds, in short, the group of unwholesome deeds, as they are the associates of Māra.

> The four modes of moral conduct as prescribed in this verse are: Avoidance of stealing and lying, wishing for the well-being of all fellow men and abandoning of immoral conduct.

6. A noble monastic must not yield to anger (*kodha*) and unrestrained conceit (*atimāna*). The root causes of these two unwholesome factors are six in number: ignorance (*avijjā*), wrong attitude (*manasikāra*), self-conceit (*asmimāna*), lack of sense of conscience (*ahiri*), lack of concern over the evil consequences of misdeeds (*anottappa*), and distraction (*uddhacca*). These root causes must be up-rooted or extirpated. In addition, a sense of affection and hatred must be overcome by a state of balance of the mind or equanimity.

> By this, four practices are described: Anger and conceit must be discarded; the six root causes of these must be removed; and objects of affection and hatred must be avoided by means of equanimity.

A noble monastic is required to cultivate comprehension and develop the ten contemplations. With the force of joyful satisfaction (*pīti*) developed thereby, the aforesaid enemies, both internal and external must be abandoned.

> This is the Buddha's exhortation for the expulsion or destruction of internal and external enemies by means of the contemplation of the ten (*anussati*) recollections which are the ten contemplations or reflections on the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha, morality (*sīla*), charity (*cāga*), the gods (*Devatā*), death (*maraṇa*), the body (*kāyagatā*), the breath (*ānapāna*) and calm (*upasamana*).[211] Joy (*pīti*) arising from meditation should be utilized as a means of developing forbearance. This is a means of overcoming those forces of the enemy.

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[211] For details, see the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) chapters VII and VIII.

7. One should overcome disinterestedness in a hermitage of seclusion and through development of meditation by such means of expediency so as to ensure a full measure of success. Such means of expediency should also be adopted in defeating the four causes of lamentation enumerated below.

Four Causes of Lamentation

1. What kind of food shall I have to eat today: is it rice, or barley cake, or fish, or meat?
2. At what place will I have to eat: at the palace of the king, or the house of a Brahmin or of a rich man?
3. I had to sleep miserably last night: on a plank of wood, a coarse mattress, a piece of leather or a heap of grass.
4. In what kind of luxurious place shall I have to sleep tonight: on an ornamented bed, or a four-legged bedstead?

These four kinds of reflections or speculations are known as the four causes of [623] lamentation.

8. A monastic, cultivating the practice of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*), being free from the impediments (*paḷibodha*), such as an attachment to clan, sect, shelter and requisites, should abandon the worries connected with food and lodging. These four types of worries should be given up.

> A noble monastic is apt to lament under pressure of such anxieties or worries. He is therefore required to cut off all four impediments such as attachment to clan or supporter, members of his sect, dwelling place and requisites.

When a monastic acquires food and robe lawfully at proper times, he should have the sense of judgment or moderation in accepting and using them with a view to promoting the sense of contentment.

> As regards the matter of judgment or moderation, a monastic should take into consideration the quantity of objects for offering, the extent of the supporter's intention, and the extent of one's requirement. In case the quantity of objects outweighs the intention of the supporter, the recipient should be content with a limited amount of alms. When the amount of alms available is comparatively smaller than what the supporter has in

mind to offer, the recipient should still receive only limited amount of alms. Where the amount of alms is large enough to satisfy the wishes of the supporter to offer large amount of alms, the recipient should still receive just enough to meet his own requirements. Hence the term denoting receiving just the amount required: the utilization or consumption of the four requisites by way of retrospection is known as receiving by knowing the right measure (*paṭiggaha-mattaññutā*).

9. A noble monastic, having guarded himself against unwholesome states by observing the two sets of observance in respect of receiving and utilizing the four requisites, should enter the towns and villages with an agreeable deportment, and avoid the use of harsh words, even in dealing with those who have calumniated him.

It means that a noble monastic should receive and utilize alms in accordance with the two modes of moderation, should move about with proper deportment in towns and villages, and, should refrain from the use of harsh words even when one deals with those who had calumniated him.

10. A noble monastic should keep his eyes cast downwards, should not wander about. He should endeavour to attain the absorptions (*jhāna*) that have not been attained, to acquire the five kinds of mastery over the absorptions that have been attained; should sleep mindfully, only four hours a day and only in the middle watch of the night, and spend the rest of the day, sitting or walking while observing the precepts incumbent on a monastic. Through such activities, equanimity is developed by means of the fourth absorption. When the mind is well-composed, sensuous thoughts (*kāma-vitakka*), sensuous perceptions (*kāma-saññā*) and a restless movement of hands and feet through worry and scruples (*kukkucca*) are restrained.

11. Any instruction given by one's preceptor, such as: "This is not right and proper," should be noted, regarded with sincere delight and gratitude. Ill-will or an unfriendly attitude towards one's associates should not be entertained. It should be eradicated as a thorn is eradicated. Only faultless speech should be made, never talk beyond the scope of the discipline of morality, concentration and wisdom or beyond the limits of time.

One will be liable to be criticized and reproached for a breach of precepts and moral conduct, for wrong view and for a wrong mode of livelihood. It

is, therefore, necessary to refrain from such immoral conduct, even in thought, not to say in physical or verbal acts.

12. Dear Sāriputta, besides this, in this world, there are five kinds of stains: passion for visible forms (*rūpa-rāga*), passion for sounds (*sadda-rāga*) passion for smells (*gandha-rāga*), passion for tastes (*rasa-rāga*) and passion for touches (*phoṭṭhabba-rāga*). All such passions should be removed by the practice of morality, concentration and wisdom with mindfulness. Constant practice will enable the monastic to overcome these five stains.

The five kinds of stains should be done away with by observance of the three trainings [624]. Only those who observe these precepts can overcome these five kinds of stains, no one else can do so.

13. Once these five kinds of stains are done away with, the monastic will no longer take delight in the five objects of sensual pleasures. That monastic, having mindfulness and emancipated from the grip of the hindrances, contemplates at the appropriate time all that is conditioned as impermanent, unsatisfactory and unsubstantial with resolute steadfastness. His mind will become composed, and he will penetrate through the dark mass of defilements.

The Buddha thus answered the questions of Ven. Sāriputta with a view to pave the way stage by stages that invariably leads to the Arahat fruition stage. The 500 disciples of Ven. Sāriputta became Arahats at the conclusion of the discourse, and 300 million Devas and humans were emancipated through realization of the four noble truths.

25b: The 7th Year (Slander)

The Female Wanderer Ciñcā Māṇavikā

The Buddha, after emancipating the 500 disciples of Ven. Sāriputta and the 300 million Devas and humans through the realization of the four noble truths, proceeded to Sāvatthī to take up residence at the Jetavana monastery and to resume teaching the Dhamma to the sentient beings who went there.

It was at that time, a lowly, wily, female wandering ascetic by the name of Ciñcā Māṇavikā made a malicious, slanderous charge against the Buddha. The following is an account of that calumniatory attack.

During the first 20 years of his Dispensation, termed the first period after Awakening (*paṭhama-bodhi*) the number of disciples of the Buddha increased by leaps and bounds, like a rising tide. And the number of humans, Devas and Brahmas who attained the four stages of fruition (*ariya-bhūmi*) also increased with time; and the attributes of the Buddha, such as being worthy, spread right up to the roof of the world; the volume of offerings made to the Buddha and the Saṅgha grew so much the greater, while the power of the heretics waned and the offerings made to them dwindled to a vanishing point, just like the diminishing glow of fireflies as the sun rises up in the morning.

Sectarians stood at road junctions and made attempts to induce or court the people to make offerings to them, saying: “Devotees, the ascetic Gotama is not the only one who has become a Buddha; we have become Buddhas as well! Is merit gained by making offerings to the ascetic Gotama only? You can gain merit by making offerings to us as well!”

Their appeals were of no avail, and they therefore assembled for a secret meeting to devise ways and means to calumniate the ascetic Gotama, so that people might not make offerings to him through a lack of respect and esteem.

At that time, there lived in Sāvatthī, a wandering female ascetic by the name of Ciñcā Māṇavikā. She was so named because she was born of a moisture-laden tamarind (*ciñcā*) tree, and she was born in a Brahmin family, and was young (*māṇavikā*); hence she was popularly known as the Brahmin damsel who took conception in a tamarind tree, Ciñcā Māṇavikā. She was said to be as pretty and

gracious as a Devakaññā and her body emitted rays that spiralled around her body.

As the discussion was in progress, a cruel, stupid sectarian put forward a plot to slander the Buddha and bring about his destruction by employing Ciñcā Māṇavikā as an instrument to achieve their selfish ends. This plot was approved and accepted as an effective device for cutting off the flow of gifts to the ascetic Gotama.

When the wandering ascetic, Ciñcā Māṇavikā, went to their parks and stood before them in a worshipping posture, she was totally ignored by the heretics. She was anxious to know what was held against her. She, therefore, addressed them: "Good Sirs, I worshipped you three times, what wrong have I done to you? What is my offence? What is the cause of your silence?" [625]

This was their censorious reply: "Sister Ciñcā, don't you know that the ascetic Gotama has been going round and doing harm to us by depriving us of gifts?"

Whereupon, Ciñcā said: "What can I do for you in this matter?" They gave her this express reply: "Ciñcā, if you have our welfare at heart, you might calumniate the ascetic Gotama by using your personal charm as an instrument to destroy his fame, honour and gifts." She was thus charged with the task of performing a dirty job.

Ciñcā pledged boldly: "Very well, good sirs, you may rest assured that I will accomplish the task entrusted to me. Have no more worries over this matter," and she left the heretics' park. She then started to put her wily ways into action. She dressed herself in a costume that was as red as the colour of a flying insect and made her way towards Jetavana monastery with a bouquet in her hand, at about the time when people were leaving the monastery after hearing the discourses. People casually asked her: "Where are you headed for?" she replied: "What would you gain from knowing my destination?" arousing people's suspicion on her.

She actually went her way into the parks of the heretics in the proximity of Jetavana monastery and spent her nights there. At the time people were arriving from the city of Sāvatthī to pay homage to the Buddha early in the morning, she prepared herself to look as if she had spent the night at the Jetavana monastery and was making her way back to Sāvatthī. When asked as to where she had

passed the night, she gave a similar answer: “What would you gain from knowing where I slept last night?” to create suspicion in their minds.

She kept up the same routine everyday. After a lapse of one and a half months she began her campaign of imputation by replying: “I passed the night with the ascetic Gotama in his scented chamber.” That caused the ordinary people to wonder whether she might be speaking the truth. Some three or four months later, she pretended pregnancy by tying her abdomen with rags and covering herself with a red dress. And she started telling people that she got pregnant by the ascetic Gotama, an accusation wrongly believed by unthinking people.

After a lapse of eight or nine months, Ciñcā Māṇavikā tied a block of wood, which was cut into the shape of half a bowl, round her body and wore a red costume to assume the form of a pregnant woman. She struck her hands and feet with the jaw bones of a cow to appear like a worn-out and fatigued expectant mother. She then made her way one evening to where the Buddha was sitting on the Dhamma throne and teaching the four assemblies.

She stood right in front of the Buddha and made the following malicious accusation: “Ascetic, you have been calmly teaching the people with compressed lips! As for me, I have become an expectant mother through association with you. You have a heart to remain without thinking about the arrangements for confinement or for the collection of butter-oil. If you don’t care to do such things yourself, you should have charged King Kosala or Anāthapiṇḍika or Visākhā, the supporters of your monastery with the task to do the needful for me. You have been irresponsible and callous towards your own blood, but you know how to amuse yourself by sensual pleasures.”

Ciñcā thus levelled a malicious accusation against the Buddha in the presence of a huge congregation like a stupid woman trying to destroy the moon with a lump of faeces in her hand!

Whereupon, the Buddha suspended his teaching and, like a lion king, refuted her charge with a raised voice: “Sister Ciñcā, only you and I know whether what you have just said is true or false.”

Ciñcā was not to be daunted, she made another attack with these words: [626] “True enough, ascetic, this is a matter between you and I only, this advanced stage of pregnancy.”

Whereupon, the emerald throne of Sakka began to grow warm causing him to deliberate as to its cause; he perceived that: "Ciñcā had made a malicious allegation against the Buddha." Thinking: "I will go and sort out the matter myself in the presence of the people," he therefore descended to where the Buddha was teaching, accompanied by four Devas. These four Devas transformed themselves into four rats and bit off the strings on the wooden disc, and as the wind blew Ciñcā's clothes upwards, the wooden disc dropped right on top of her ten toes, breaking them off.

All those present condemned her and spat on her; holding stones, spears and sticks, they dragged her out of the precincts of the monastery. Once she was out of sight of the Buddha, the earth split into two to claim her body. She was soon wrapped up in the flaming tongues of the fires that covered her in the bottom of the great hell, Mahā Avīci.

When the people saw the heretics in their true colours, they made even less offerings to them, while the alms received by Buddha grew again without limitation.

On the following day, all the monastics assembled in the central hall and were discussing the topic of the day: "Friends, Ciñcā had been ruined for her false allegations against the most exalted Buddha, who is worthy of all homage that the world could make." The Buddha went to the hall and asked: "Monastics, what is the subject of your discussion?" On being informed by the monastics that they were discussing the fate of Ciñcā, the Buddha recounted her past story making reference to the Birth Story about Prince Mahā Paduma (*Mahā-paduma-jātaka*, Ja 472) saying: "This is not the first time that she had made false allegations against me and suffered in consequence thereof," and he proceeded to tell the story.

The Birth Story about Prince Mahā Paduma

Once upon a time, King Brahmadatta was ruling the country of Bārāṇasī when the Bodhisatta took conception in the womb of the queen. When he was born, he was named Prince Mahā Paduma, as his face resembled a newly blossomed Sacred Lotus (*paduma*) species.

When he came of age, he was sent to Takkasilā to learn the arts and crafts; and on completion of his studies, he returned to his country and found that his

mother had passed away and that his father had made another woman his Chief Queen. He was formally declared as the Crown Prince, and the sole heir to the throne.

Sometime later, the king had to go to the border areas to suppress some insurrections. He told the queen: "Chief Queen, I am going to the border areas to suppress insurrections and you shall remain in this royal palace with ease and comfort." Whereupon, the queen said: "I do not like to stay behind, I would like to accompany you to the front line." The king explained to her the dangers of battlefields: "Chief Queen, you had better stay in the royal palace until my return without any feeling of melancholy through lonesomeness; I will leave instructions with the Crown Prince to attend on you with due diligence."

The king then went to the disturbed areas, and returned after driving away the rebels, and rehabilitating the affected areas, but he did not immediately enter the city on arrival instead, he stayed in a temporary accommodation outside the city for a time, until the auspicious time for re-entering the city would come about.

When the Bodhisatta, Crown Prince Mahā Paduma, heard of the news of his father's return, he made arrangements to welcome his father by decorating the city and setting the palace in order. Having done all this, he entered the apartment of the Chief Queen all alone. On seeing the amazing beauty of the prince, the Chief Queen felt an intense attraction towards him. The prince paid his respects to the queen and asked: "Royal mother, how can I be of help to you?" The queen replied: "Don't you call me mother," and so saying she got up and held the prince by the hands and ordered him to get up on to [627] the bed, saying: "The two of us will enjoy sexual pleasures to the full before the king returns."

As one who treasured his morality, the prince gave a firm reply: "Royal Queen mother! You have become my mother ever since the demise of my own mother. You are a married woman, I have never in all my life looked at a woman with a legal husband with concupiscence, and how would a self-restrained person like me commit such a hideous crime in collusion with you?"

After making three or four vain attempts to make the prince yield to her temptations, the queen resorted to threatening him, asking: "Will you not obey my order?" – "No, I will not," replied the prince boldly and bluntly. Whereupon,

she made it plain to him: “I will lodge a false allegation against you with the king, so that he will break your head into pieces.” – “You may slander me as you like but I won’t yield to your temptations.” He left her chamber after putting her to shame.

The queen, being conscious of her own guilt, made up her mind to save her skin by lodging a false allegation against the prince with the king without delay, as her life was at stake, lest the prince might reveal her secret before she could see the king. She scratched her body all over with her own fingernails and lay on her bed without taking any food, feigning illness. She instructed her attendants how they should answer the king when he asked them about her in due course.

The king entered the city after circumambulating it and sat on the throne. When he could not see his queen, he enquired about her and her attendant reported that she was not well. He went to her chamber and asked: “My dear queen, what ails you?” She pretended not to hear his words two or three times and, at last, she made this reply: “King, what has made you to press for an answer that I am loath to give? Please keep silent and save me from shame. My case is quite different from those of other married women!” On hearing such an insinuation, the king asked her in a severe tone: “Do tell me at once who has done wrong to you and I will break the head of the criminal.”

In response to the king, she asked this question: “King, under whose charge was this city kept when you left?” – “It was left under the charge of my son, the Crown Prince,” replied the king. The queen then started to tell her fabricated story to calumniate the Crown Prince: “Your majesty, the very person you left in charge of the city, Prince Paduma, entered my room all alone and tried to make me yield to his temptations, and when I beseeched him meekly not to offend his mother, he retorted rudely: ‘Is there any other king than myself, I will keep you in house and enjoy sexual pleasures with you to the full.’ When I refused to yield to him, he pulled me by my hair, beat me all over my body and then, throwing me down on the floor, he outraged me and left my chamber.”

The King orders the Execution of Mahā Paduma

The king lost his sense of reasoning through anger, like a venomous cobra, and ordered the execution of the prince. The executioners entered the residence of the prince, beat him most severely, bound his hands at the back and brought him

out of his house with a ring of red-primrose round his neck, like a prisoner given the death sentence.

The prince knew that the queen was responsible for the whole affair, and he followed the executioners complaining: "Executors, I have done nothing against the king, I am innocent." The whole city was shocked and tense with fear, and the citizens exchanged views among themselves: "The king has misunderstood Prince Mahā Paduma, and ordered his execution on the strength of his wife's false allegation." They rallied round at the feet of the prince, crying and sobbing aloud: "Crown Prince, the kind of sentence passed upon you is not just and reasonable," and they wept and cried at the top of their voices around him.

When the executioners had brought the prince before him, the king, in a fit of temper, at once ordered the execution of the prince, by throwing him into a steep chasm which was the usual place where robbers were thrown with their heads down. In passing the order, the king remarked that the prince, though his own son, was guilty of impersonating him and offending the queen. Whereupon, the Crown Prince protested: "Royal father, I am not [628] guilty of such allegations, Please do not cause my destruction on the strength of your wife's allegation." But his appeal fell on the deaf ears of the king.

The citizens were not alone in weeping over the fate of the prince but 16,000 courtiers, also wept, muttering: "Darling son, Mahā Paduma, it is a great pity that such a punishment has been meted on you for no fault of your own."

All the princes, princesses, ministers, Brahmins, rich men, all rank and file made joint appeal to the king: "Your majesty, Mahā Paduma has a peerless character, he is a righteous heir to the throne, both by right and by tradition, do not cause the destruction of the heir to the throne on the strength of your wife's allegation, without investigating into the matter in the name of justice, this is our prayer." Their appeal was made in seven verses as follows:

1. Noble King, a ruler should not order the destruction of life and limbs of an accused person without personal knowledge; without investigation into the allegation against the accused.

In the time of Mahā Sammata, the one raised to the status of a supreme ruler by the people, there was no order or penalty exacting more than 100 pieces of money; no penalty demanding the destruction of life and limbs beyond corporeal punishment or banishment. Punishments of more severe

forms were adopted by cruel rulers in later times. Therefore, the ministers had made the above appeal with reference to the said precedence.

2. A noble king, who happened to cause the destruction of life and limbs of an accused without proper investigation being made into the allegation, is likened to a person born blind who swallowed a fly-contaminated, unwholesome food with attendant troubles; such an act is tantamount to partaking of food enmeshed with thorns.

3. A king who happened to punish an innocent person, who does not deserve any punishment, and has allowed a guilty person to escape unpunished, through power-intoxication, is considered to have taken an uneven path full of dangers, like a person born blind. He does not discriminate between the even path of the ten meritorious paths and the uneven path of demerit and is destined to be punished in the plane of misery.

4. A king who examines cases according to correct procedure, and adjudges or adjudicates the guilt or otherwise of cases, trivial or great, in the name of [629] justice, is a ruler invested with the qualifications expected of a king fit to rule over a domain or territory.

5. Noble King, it is not possible for anyone to remain forever in a position of responsibility when he always exercises extreme measures, either soft or rough. A ruler needs a carefully balanced judgement to discriminate between what requires gentle handling and what demands stern treatment.

6. Noble King, one who governs his people with kindly disposition is constantly open to contempt and disrespect from his subjects. On the other hand, a ruler who governs his subjects harshly and oppressively is liable to provoke hostility and hatred in the people he governs. A king should be able to discriminate between the two extremes and resort to the middle course in the interest of peace and tranquillity.

7. Noble King, one who is inflamed by passion may speak in many different ways; one who is inflamed by malice may also speak in many different ways. Therefore, there is no justification in causing the death of the Crown Prince without proper consideration and mainly on the strength of false accusations made by a woman acting under the influence of burning passion and malice.

The minister's submissions and solicitations failed to move the king. Prince Paduma himself tried several times for the revocation of the royal order in different ways, but to no avail. The king stood firm on his judgement and ordered: "All of you go to the chasm and throw down this ignorant blunderer forthwith."

> All the citizens took sides with the man of standing, the Crown Prince, and my Chief Queen is all alone, and in the circumstances, I will take the side of the queen. Go ye all to the chasm and get the traitor, Prince Paduma, thrown into the robbers' pit forthwith.

Upon hearing this summary order, the female members of the crowd could not help crying. All the people raised their arms in protest and shouted out as they followed the prince with their hair spread over their bodies in distress. The foolish king was under the impression that the people would stand in the way of throwing the prince into the pit; so he went along with the weeping crowd under escort right up to the pit. He caused the prince to be borne with his head down and the feet up and flung cruelly into the [630] pit in his very presence.

The Bodhisatta's Loving-Kindness

Under the influence of the Bodhisatta's loving-kindness (*mettā*), the guardian deity of the mountain made himself visible and consoled the prince: "Prince Paduma, don't worry," and he held him in his arms close to his chest, so that the prince might be comforted by the pervading warmth of the deity. He then descended the cliff and placed the prince on the expanded hood of a Nāga King who was dwelling at the foot of the mountain.

The Nāga King took the prince to the Nāga kingdom and shared with him the ease and comfort in the country of the Nāgas. Having stayed in the company of Nāgas for a whole year, the Bodhisatta intimated his desire to leave: "I am going to the world of humans." The Nāga King asked: "To which place do you intend going?" – "To the Himālayas," was the reply. The Nāga King took the prince to the Himālayas and after providing him with the requisites of recluses and ascetics, he returned to his country. The Bodhisatta spent his days as a recluse developing absorption and the super knowledges (*jhāna-abhiññā*) and living on herbs, fruits and roots.

After some time, a hunter of the city of Bārāṇasī came upon the abode of the recluse and recognized that he was the Crown Prince. He asked the recluse: "Noble Prince, are you not Prince Mahā Paduma?" – "Yes, I am, my dear man," was the reply. The hunter paid homage to the Bodhisatta and stayed with him for a few days before he returned to the city of Bārāṇasī. On arrival, he went to the king and reported: "Your majesty, your son, Prince Mahā Paduma is living in the forest in the Himālayas as a recluse. I have seen him and stayed with him for a few days." Whereupon, the king asked: "Have you seen him personally?" – "Yes, your majesty, I have," was the hunter's response.

The king proceeded to the place in the company of a great number of army personnel and halted at the edge of the forest in a temporary shed hoping to see his son. When he met face to face with the recluse sitting in front of his hut, like a golden image, he paid his respects and sat in a suitable spot. The ministers exchanged greetings with the recluse. The Bodhisatta presented the king with fruits and exchanged greetings in an amicable manner.

The king began to ask, by means of a verse:

> *Aneka-tāle narake, gambhīre ca suduttare,*
> *pātito giri-duggasmiṁ, kena tvaṁ tattha nāmari?*
>
> Dear son, how did you manage to survive after you had been thrown upside down into a precipice with a depth of several lengths of palm trees that was difficult to escape?

Then a dialogue between the father and the son ensured:

> *Nāgo jāta-phaṇo tattha, thāmavā giri-sānujo,*
> *paccaggahi maṁ bhogehi, tenāhaṁ tattha nāmariṁ.*
>
> Royal father, a powerful Nāga that sprang into being on the sides of the mountain valleys received me on its expanded hood from the hands of a guardian deity of that locality. That was how I escaped from the danger of being smashed to death after I had been thrown into the precipice of unfathomable depth.

The royal father was greatly delighted by the Bodhisatta's reply and said solemnly: "I am a vile person to have offended a righteous son like you at the instigation of my wife. I humbly plead for favour and your pardon for my blundering offence against you," with his head bent at the feet of the Bodhisatta.

Whereupon, the Bodhisatta convinced his father: [631] "Your majesty, please do get up, I forbear all your offences, and my sincere wish is that you avoid becoming such a person again, behaving blindly without consideration and investigation." The king said in reply: "Dear son, your acceptance of kingship with all its glories over the territories alone will signify your forbearance towards me."

Ehi taṁ paṭinessāmi, rāja-putta sakaṁ gharaṁ,
rajjaṁ kārehi bhaddante, kiṁ araññe karissasi?

My royal son, Prince Mahā Paduma, I am taking you back as the rightful heir to the throne of the kingdom of Bārāṇasī. May you reign with glory and greatness. Can you accept the kingship and sovereignty over the domains? How will you promote the welfare and prosperity of the citizens in such a wilderness cut off from civilization?

The following is the prince's reply in verse:

Yathā gilitvā baḷisaṁ, uddhareyya salohitaṁ,
uddharitvā sukhī assa, evaṁ passāmi attanaṁ.

O king father, just like a man who had accidently swallowed a hook brought it out immediately together with the blood before it went far enough to reach the vital heart, so that he might keep his mind and body in a state of peace and tranquillity, so I see myself as a person who had accidentally swallowed a hook but had removed it in time to live in peace and tranquillity.

Kiṁ nu tvaṁ baḷisaṁ brūsi? Kiṁ tvaṁ brūsi salohitaṁ?
Kiṁ nu tvaṁ ubbhataṁ brūsi? Taṁ me akkhāhi pucchito.

Dear son, what do you mean by hook? What do you mean by blood? What do you mean by removing? I beseech you to enlighten me by answering these questions for me!

Kāmāhaṁ baḷisaṁ brūmi, hatthi-assaṁ salohitaṁ,
cattāhaṁ ubbhataṁ brūmi, evaṁ jānāhi khattiya.

O royal father, I have seen, by way of wisdom, the five sensual pleasures as a hook; worldly wealth or possessions, such as elephants and horses as blood; renunciation of the five sensual pleasures as removing, try to understand these things discriminately by contemplative knowledge.

After he had given the above answer, he continued to give his father instructions for guidance in administering justice: "Noble King, as already mentioned above, I have nothing to do whatsoever with the kingship of Bārāṇasī, and what I wish to commend to you is to rule by strict adherence to the ten codes of conduct for a ruling monarch, without [632] the influence of four wrong courses of actions.

> The ten codes of conduct of a king: alms giving, morality, charity, straightness, gentleness, self-restraint, non-anger, forbearance, austerity and non-opposition. The wrong courses of action are those dominated by desire, ill-will, delusion and fear.

The King punished the Queen

The king, after several vain attempts to persuade his son to return to his country, made his way back to his capital, crying and weeping all along the route. In the course of his journey, he questioned his ministers: "Who is responsible for the severance of my son from me?" They all unanimously replied: "You have sustained the loss of such a worthy and honourable son through your Chief Queen." On his arrival at the city, he immediately caused the queen to be flung over the precipice upside down before he entered the royal palace. He ruled over the country and the people wisely and justly ever after.

The Buddha, after teaching the above discourse, proceeded to say: "Monks, in this manner Ciñcā had decried me by abusive language in a previous existence also."

> *Ciñcā-māṇavikā mātā, Devadatto ca me pitā,*
> *Ānando paṇḍito nāgo, Sāriputto ca devatā,*
> *rāja-putto ahaṁ āsiṁ, evaṁ dhāretha Jātakaṁ.*
>
> Monks, Ciñcā was then the queen, the stepmother; my brother-in-law Devadatta was then the king; Ānanda was then the wise Nāga; Sāriputta was then the guardian deity of the mountain, and I was then Prince Mahā Paduma, remember the Birth Story (*Jātaka*) thus.

The Birth Story was brought to a close with this verse. The Buddha proceeded to reveal the fact that there is no immoral act that a liar dare not commit: "Monks, one who has abandoned the course of telling the truth and pursued the course of telling lies, has also forsaken the advantages of the attainment of Nibbāna and rebirth in the worlds of Devas and humans, and as such, there is no immoral act that they loath to perform!"

Ekaṁ dhammaṁ atītassa, musā-vādissa jantuno,
vitiṇṇa-para-lokassa, natthi pāpaṁ akāriyaṁ.

Monks, one who has breached the course of not telling lies has also forsaken the advantages of Nibbāna and rebirths in the realms of Devas and humans, and as such, there is no immoral act that these people, destined for planes of woes, will not dare to perform.

At the conclusion of the discourse, a large multitude of beings attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*) and other noble states.

The following is an exposition of the original cause that actuated wicked Ciñcā to make the accusation: Prior to an infinite period of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons before the definite prophecy of Awakening had been made, the Bodhisatta was a person of distracted mind, with wrong attitudes through constant association with bad people of the most hopeless type. On one occasion, he chanced to slander an Arahat named Nanda, a disciple of Buddha Sabbābhibhū, by accusing him of having unlawful association with a woman. This was a very grave offence of slandering a noble person (*ariya*). [633]

As a result of such a false accusation against a noble person (*ariyūpavāda*), he had to suffer in the plane of misery for many a year, and once released from it and reborn in the world of humans, he was subjected to false accusations, existence after existence, and in the last existence as a Buddha, he was accused by the wicked Ciñcā Māṇavikā in the presence of the four assemblies.

Apadāna 39.10 gives a full account on this matter as expounded by the Buddha himself.

The Female Wanderer Sundarī

As stated above, heretics outside the teaching, because of a paucity of offerings being made to them, had the wicked woman Ciñcā slander the Buddha. They made another attempt to slander the Buddha by a similar ruse when they engaged a good looking sectarian woman named Sundarī at a time when the Buddha was residing in Sāvatthī (*Sundarī-sutta*, Ud 4.8).

While the Buddha was residing at Jetavana monastery, all humans, Devas and Brahmas paid homage to him and the Saṅgha; they revered, honoured and made offerings to them. The four requisites of robes, food, accommodation and medicine were always in ample supply for them. For the Buddha and the Saṅgha,

their accumulation of meritorious deeds in the past was immense and also their practice of the true path in the present existence was productive of merit. The beneficial results from these two wholesome sources, combined together to produce an incessant flow of requisites and offerings for them, just like the huge volume of water pouring forth from the confluence of two big rivers.

In sharp contrast, the heretics suffered from a deficiency of the four requisites and other offerings. This is attributed to their lack of meritorious deeds in the past and the wrong practice they followed in the present.

At that time, there lived in Sāvatthī a young heretic maiden who was in her most impressive youth excelling others in comely appearance; hence she was named Sundarī which means Lovely, though her behaviour by deed, word and thought were not lovely, but deplorable.

The heretics gathered together to devise ways and means to slander the Buddha and the Saṅgha out of covetousness. They all took part in the discussions with that end in view: “Dear sirs, we have been ruined beyond redemption since the coming of the ascetic Gotama and we have suffered much from a paucity of gifts, because people have almost forgotten about our existence. What has prompted the people to make such wonderful offerings to the ascetic Gotama with such profound respect and enthusiasm?”

One of the heretics present at the meeting offered his opinion: “Dear sirs, the ascetic Gotama is a direct descendant of the noble Mahā Sammata, through an uninterrupted royal lineage in the pure Sakya clan. That must be the reason why people have honoured him and made offerings so profusely.” Another heretic had this to say: “It is because of a variety of miraculous events that took place at the time of his birth.”

Likewise many heretic leaders presented their individual views: “It is because, when his father, King Suddhodana made him pay homage by raising his two hands in a worshipping gesture towards the recluse Asita, just after his birth, the baby’s feet miraculously flew aloft and rested on the matted hair of the ascetic. And when his parents placed him under the cool shade of a rose-apple tree during the ploughing ceremony, while the shades of many other trees moved with the sun, the shade of the rose-apple tree under which the prince reposed stood unchanged even after noon-tide.”

"It is because he is extraordinarily handsome," said another, while yet another speculated: "It might be because he had forsaken the throne of the Universal Monarch with all its glories and renounced the world through seeing the four great signs, that the people have been paying homage and making offerings in greater volumes."

They went about speculating, but without finding the real cause of the immense respect being paid to the Buddha by the people because they were totally ignorant of the Buddha's [634] incomparable attributes of the perfections (*pāramī*), charity (*cāga*) and good conduct (*cariyā*).

After an exchange of fruitless discussions, one of the fiercest heretics came forward with a plot to destroy the fame and gains of Gotama with the aid of a woman, saying: "Dear sirs, there is no one in this world who is immune from the desire for sexual pleasures derived from a woman and the ascetic Gotama, being young and good looking like a Deva, will certainly get entangled with a maiden of his own age and appearance, if and when available. Even when he cannot be completely tempted, people will begin to have doubt about his moral uprightness. Come let us send the wandering woman Sundarī on a mission to bring ruin to the ascetic Gotama's reputation throughout the land."

Upon hearing this suggestion, all the heretics spoke in support of him: "Your plan is excellent, indeed. This will bring about the downfall of the ascetic Gotama. He will have no alternative but to run away with his head hanging down." They all decided to turn the resolution into action and went in a group to Sundarī.

On seeing the heretics, Sundarī asked: "Why have you all come here in a group?" They went to a corner and sat there without giving her any reply. She approached them in a submissive manner and asked them again and again: "Have I done any thing wrong and, if so, what is my offence?"

At last, they gave this reply: "We have not given you any reply since you have neglected us when we have been oppressed by someone." Sundarī asked them: "Who has oppressed you?" Whereupon, they revealed their case: "Don't you see the ascetic Gotama wandering around and depriving us of offerings, to our great disadvantage?" – "Good Sirs, in this matter, how can I be of assistance?" They replied: "Sister, can you really work for the good of your own relatives?" They tried to tie her to a commitment.

> They had employed the word "relatives" to win her over, though there was no blood relationship. The heretics are indeed very terrible in their deception.

Whereupon, Sundarī said: "Good Sirs, what should I do for you, there is nothing that I cannot do. I am prepared to sacrifice my own life to do anything that would be of advantage to relatives like you."

> She had thus pledged herself to fulfil their wishes and she could not shrink back, like a deer that had got itself entangled in a bush.

The heretics told her: "Sister, you have pledged to do anything that would be of advantage to us. As you are in your most impressive youth, at the first stage of life, do anything to the best of your ability that will ruin the ascetic Gotama by means of your own irresistable personality." Thus encouraging her vanity, they sent her away on a mission with a hint that she should pay constant visits to the Jetavana monastery.

Foolish Sundarī, like a person who wishes to dance with a ring of flowers on the teeth of a saw; like one who attempts to catch a bull elephant in musk by its trunk; like one who extends a warm welcome to the king of death by bowing the head besmeared herself with sweet scents and bedecked herself with flowers, and went her way towards the Jetavana monastery, at the time when people were coming out of the precincts of the monastery after hearing the discourses. When asked, she said: "I am going to the ascetic Gotama with whom I usually stay together in his own chamber." But she dared not enter the monastery and instead, made her way to the nearby hermitage of the heretics. She returned by the same route to the city when people were going to the monastery in the morning. When asked, she told them that she had just come out of the chamber of the Buddha with whom she had stayed the night, giving him sexual gratification.

After a few days the heretics, being satisfied with the part played by Sundarī, bribed some villains and instigated them to kill Sundarī and to conceal her body under heaps of decayed flowers in a ditch adjacent to the Buddha's chamber. The drunkards carried out their instructions. The heretics then spread the news that Sundarī was missing, and went to King Kosala and reported that their female disciple, Sundarī, was missing and could not be found. The king asked them if there was any place held in suspicion. They informed him that they

suspected she was located in the Jetavana monastery. The king then ordered for a search [635] to be made in the Jetavana monastery.

The heretics went with their disciples to the Jetavana monastery and pretended to look for the wandering woman Sundarī. They found the dead body of Sundarī beneath the heaps of decayed flowers in a ditch and brought the corpse into the king's presence on a decorated bedstead. They made the king believe that the disciples of the Buddha had slain the young Sundarī and left her corpse beneath the heap of decayed flowers to conceal the evil deed of their master, ascetic Gotama. The thoughtless king passed a summary order without any formal investigation, to the effect that the corpse be carried and shown around the city, street by street, to make all the citizens aware of the case.

Encouraged by the ill-considered judgement of the king, the heretics carried the corpse of Sundarī on a decorated beir and went all over the city, from street to street, from one junction to another, announcing: "All men and women please know this. See for yourselves what the descendants of the Sakyan race have done. They are shameless; they are of evil nature, they have no morals; they are wont to tell lies; and they indulge in sexual intercourse, and, yet they make false claims pretending to be good monastics, saying without shame: 'We observe precepts, we are virtuous, we are of good conduct, of morality, developing noble practices, speaking only what is true.' But for these recluses there are no more precepts; noble precepts are a thing of the past, how can there be any element of virtue in them? How can there be noble practice? They are bereft of precepts, bereft of noble practices. Why has someone slain a person of the fair sex after ravishing her?"

They also made the citizens of Sāvatthī make similar slanderous charges. When the citizens saw the monastics, they made accusations against them as instigated by the heretics: "These monastic-princes of the Sakyan race are shameless, without virtue, stupid and liars. They indulge in sexual practices, pretend to be virtuous, righteous, straightforward, noble, truthful and moderate persons. In actual fact, they are without virtue, without precepts, the precepts for monastics are no more than things of the past. How can there be any noble precepts or elements of virtue in them? They have no noble qualities whatsoever. Why should a man slay a woman after he has enjoyed sex with her?" The citizens thus condemned the monastics when they were seen in the city, using vulgar language and humiliated them in an aggressive manner.

On their return from Sāvatthī, after the regular rounds for alms food, the monastics went to the Buddha and addressed him: "Most exalted lord, when the people of Sāvatthī saw the monastics they accused them, saying in vulgar language: "These monastics of Sakyan race are shameless, without virtue and liars. They indulge in sexual practices, and they pretend to be virtuous, righteous, straightforward, noble, truthful and moderate persons. But they are, in fact, without virtue, without precepts, without noble practices or habits, the precepts for monastics are no more than things of the past. How can there be any precepts or noble qualities whatsoever? Why has someone killed a woman after he has ravished her?"

Thus the monastics told the Buddha how they had been calumniated, reviled, abused, oppressed in very harsh language not fit for the ears of noble people. The Buddha explained to them that these people will reap as they sow, by offending the monastics and said: "Monastics, such voices of slander will last only for seven days and they are bound to disappear after seven days. You should refute these people who have calumniated, reviled, abused and oppressed you in very harsh language not fit for the ears of noble people by uttering the following verse:

> *Abhūta-vādī Nirayaṁ upeti,* [636]
> *yo vāpi katvā na karomi cāha,*
> *ubho pi te pecca samā bhavanti,*
> *nihīna-kammā manujā paratthā.*

> A person who is in the habit of speaking falsehood by saying, I have seen it, I have heard it, I have met with it, I know about it, though he has not personally seen it, heard it, though he has no knowledge of it; and a person who denies commission of his own offence are equally guilty. Both of these vile people who have done low, base deeds are liable to be reborn in the plane of misery after death.

The monastics learnt the verse from the Buddha and uttered it in the presence of those citizens by way of refutation. On hearing the verse of refutation uttered by the monastics, it dawned on the citizens: "The monastics, belonging to the Sakyan race, have not committed the murder as charged by the heretics through proclamation all over the city. There is one thing that deserves consideration: These noble persons did not care to take any steps whatsoever to retaliate upon

us for abusing, reviling and slandering them by using vulgar language not fit for their ears. Instead, they are seen to have put up with false allegations and have thus shown forbearance (*khanti*) by gently, meekly carrying on with their wholesome deeds (*soracca*). And, above all, they simply taught to us and explained to us, who have blindly and inconsiderately slandered them, reviled them, the evil consequences of lying and denying commission of one's own offence, to prove that they are innocent, by way of an avowal of truth (*sacca-kiriya*).

The citizens had thus regained their senses and became reasonable once again. After hearing the verse, it dawned on them: "We have not personally witnessed the fatal event and what we have heard may or may not be true. And there is one point that calls for special consideration: These heretics are bent only on wishing ill to the monastics, wanting their undoing and ruination. We should not make one-sided statements believing in the words of the heretics. We really do not know the truth about these monastics." They began to have a sense of detestation and repentance for their conduct towards the monastics. The scandalous accusations did not last long, after seven days died away completely.

The Murder of Sundarī Exposed

King Kosala had a squad of secret service personnel, who were spread throughout the city, to find those responsible for the death of Sundarī and to bring them to justice.

On one occasion, the murderers were drunk on the liquor which they bought with the money they received from the heretics for slaying Sundarī. Two murderers quarrelled with one another and started making accusations and one of them shouted at the other: "So you are enjoying drinks with the money you got from the heretics for killing Sundarī and keeping her dead body under the heap of decayed flowers." The secret police arrested them and brought them to King Pasenadi Kosala.

The King asked: "Did you kill Sundarī?" They admitted it, saying: "Yes we did your majesty." The king went on to ask: "Who instigated you to commit the crime?" They replied: "At the instigation of those heretics from outside the Buddha's teaching." The heretics were sent for and a formal investigation was made. The heretics admitted their guilt.

The king passed judgment, ordering the heretics to go round the city and proclaim: "We engaged the murderers to kill Sundarī with the sole purpose of bringing about the ruination of the ascetic Gotama. Ascetic Gotama is innocent; his disciples are also absolutely faultless. We are solely responsible for the killing of Sundarī." You must go all over the city and get this message announced by word of mouth.

In obedience to the order of the king, the heretics did as they were bid. The citizens lost their [637] respect for them and were disgusted with them. The heretics had to undergo punishment on the charge of murder. The citizens honoured, revered and esteemed the Buddha and his Saṅgha more than ever before. They made offerings to the Buddha and the Saṅgha with even greater faith.

Buddha's Utterance of Joy

Then a great number of monastics approached the Buddha and sat in a suitable place after paying obeisance to him. They then addressed him: "Most exalted lord, it is indeed an unprecedented event deserving of praise by the snapping of the fingers. Most exalted Buddha, your prophecy that those voices would not last long; that they would last only for seven days and would disappear after a period of seven days has proved to be true, the voices are no more."

The Buddha was well aware of the fact that there never was a case where a wise, virtuous person could not tolerate even the most heinous accusation by lowly, stupid persons. This feeling of supreme confidence led to repeated development of joy and satisfaction so much so that it reached the point of bursting forth in an utterance of an exalted utterance (Ud 4.8):

> *Tudanti vācāya janā asaññatā,*
> *sarehi saṅgāma-gataṁ va kuñjaraṁ,*
> *sutvāna vākyaṁ pharusaṁ udīritaṁ,*
> *adhivāsaye bhikkhu aduṭṭha-citto.*

Monks, a monastic who has renounced the world for fear of the evil consequences of transient existence should overcome evil forces by toleration, like a war elephant that resists and repulses the arrows from the side of its foe in a battlefield, when attacked by those lowly, stupid persons without any restraint in deed, word and thought, who employ

stupid abusing, slandering and accusing, as if attacking you with a double edged sword.

Here a question might arise as to why the Buddha had not revealed the fact that the heretics were at the bottom of the whole affair, though he had full knowledge of this case of conspiracy? The answer is as follows: there is no point in telling this to noble persons (*ariya-puggala*). The noble persons have, from the outset, complete faith in the nobility of the Buddha and the Saṅgha. And there might be certain persons amongst the ordinary worldlings who would not accept the words of the Buddha when he was revealing the facts of the case. Disbelief in the Buddha amounts to an unwholesome act in thought, which may cause them untold harm and suffering for a long time to come, hence the Buddha's reticence at the time.

In other words, it was not a natural law (*dhammatā-aciṇṇa*) to foretell the events and their related sequences. They are not wont to point out a particular person as a culprit in a criminal case. They deal with such matters only in an objective way as in the verse for refutation mentioned above. They were not in a position to deter the misfortune that was destined to befall them either. They had, therefore, taken up an indifferent attitude towards accusations by the people, and of Sundarī's assassination, which formed the cause of those accusations.

And, there is yet another question that may be asked as to the origin of this unwholesome fate of being accused in this most disgraceful manner, when there was a tremendous amount of merit to the credit of the Buddha for incalculable wholesome deeds done throughout 4 immeasurables and 100,000 aeons!

This is the answer: The Buddha was once a habitual drunkard, named Murāli, in a previous existence, at the earlier stage of life as a Bodhisatta. He moved about in the company of immoral, wicked persons and eventually acquired an unwholesome mental attitude. One day, he noticed a Paccekabuddha, known as Surabhi, in the act of rearranging his robes, preparing to enter [638] the town for alms round. Incidentally, a woman was seen to have gone past the Paccekabuddha. Murāli, with a habitual wrong frame of mind happened to make a casual remark: "This monastic indulges in sexual pleasure."

He suffered in the realms of woes for several 100,000s of years for that offence; and he had to pay for the remnant of his past misdeed by being maliciously

accused by the people of having indulged in sexual intercourse with the heretic Sundarī, even after attainment to the most exalted state of an Awakened Buddha.

> There are twelve kinds of similar retributions in which the Buddha had to suffer for his past misdeeds in previous existences. These are laid down in Apadāna 39.10 and its commentary. [639]

26a: The 8th Rains Retreat (Prince Bodhi)

As stated before, the Buddha observed the seventh Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) on the emerald stone slab at Tāvatiṁsa and taught the Abhidhamma throughout. At the conclusion of that Rains Retreat, the Buddha descended to the human world by the triple stairway and taught the Discourse where Sāriputta asked Questions (*Sāriputta-sutta*, Snp 4.16),and so on, at the base of the stairway, near the gate of the city of Saṅkassa, for the benefit of humans, Devas and Brahmas present. The Buddha then observed the eighth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in the forest of Bhesakaḷā near the town of Susumāragiri in Bhagga province.

> The country of Bhagga, where the Buddha observed the eighth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), was one of the sixteen historic countries in the Middle Country (*Majjhima-desa*). Susumāragiri was named after a big crocodile that raised its voice from the river at the moment of laying the foundation-stone of the town. The forest where the Buddha observed the eighth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) was named after the location of what was once the abode of a Yakkha by the name of Bhesakaḷā. The forest was a sanctuary.
>
> [The original had a very short account here of the Buddha's meeting with Nakulapitu and Nakulamātā, who had been his relatives in previous lives. I have removed it as the full story is told in the chapter chapter 45a.]

The Story of Prince Bodhi

> The story of Prince Bodhi is given here based on two treatises: the Discourse to Prince Bodhi (*Bodhi-rāja-kumāra-sutta*, MN 85) and Dhp 157 and their commentaries. We deal with this story in abridged form.

Prince Bodhi was the son of King Udena. He learnt the art of managing elephants and wielding the iron hook for controlling them from his royal father. As such, he became an expert in elephant taming.

During the reign of King Parantapa, in the country of Kosambī, the queen was one day taking a sun bath with the king in an open space. She was at an advanced stage of pregnancy and was wearing a red blanket. Suddenly a big monster bird came sweeping down and snatched away the queen, mistaking her for a piece of meat. The queen made no attempt [640] to call for help lest it might drop her at the cost of her life.

The bird dropped her at the fork of a tree, its usual place of feasting. Then the queen shouted at the top of her voice, clapping her hands at the same time, with the result that the huge bird flew away from fright. The queen gave birth to a child at the fork of the same tree. She clad herself in the red blanket due to a constant shower of rain all night.

There was a recluse living in the vicinity of the tree. The recluse went to the base of the tree at dawn, as he had heard the voice of the queen the night before and asked her about her race and birth. Once he knew all about it, he made a ladder for her to come down, and took her to his hermitage. The boy baby was named Udena as he was born in a moist (*uda*) atmosphere of rains and in a mountainous region.

One day, as she received the recluse on his return from the forest, she tempted him to yield to her feminine charms as she was anxious about her own future. As a result, both lived together as man and wife. Years rolled by and King Parantapa of Kosambī passed away. The ex-recluse discovered the king's death by means of his astrological knowledge and intimated the matter to the ex-queen: "Your king had passed away. Do you want your son to stay on in this forest or to return to Kosambī and claim the throne of his father and remain there as a ruler?" The ex-queen acquainted her son with the true aspect of his life to ascertain his attitude. When she learnt of her son's desire to become a king, she confided to the ex-recluse.

The recluse was well versed in incantation that had the power of wielding influence upon elephants. He learnt it from Sakka, who once came and asked the recluse: "Is there anything that causes you to feel worried?" The recluse replied: "Yes, we have been facing the danger of annoying elephants." Sakka taught him incantations and gave him a harp to overcome his trouble. His instructions were that when the recluse wanted the elephants to go away, he should tune the harp in a certain way and recite a certain verse and when he wanted the elephant to come, he should tune the harp in a different way and recite a different verse. The ex-recluse taught the prince how to make use of the harp and to utter the incantation in case of emergency. The prince climbed up in a banyan tree to see for himself how the incantation worked. When he saw the elephants coming towards him, he struck the right chord of the harp and uttered the appropriate incantation and, sure enough, the elephants ran away through fright.

On the following day, he caused the elephants to come, by playing the harp and uttering the incantation as instructed. The elephants came running to him in response to his command. The elephant king lowered its shoulder for the prince to step on it. Riding the elephant, the prince selected young, stout and strong elephants capable of engagement in a battle field. He requested for the red blanket of his mother and her ring to serve as evidence of his lineage. Then paying homage to his parents, he left the forest. He stopped at every village in his attempt to build up an army by announcing: "I am the legal son of the late King Parantapa; anyone wishing wealth and prosperity may join me."

Surrounding the city with his army, he laid claim to his father's throne: "I am the legal son of the late King Parantapa. Hand over the throne to his rightful successor." To support his claim, he showed the red blanket and the ring of his mother to those who seemed to have doubt about his claim. In this manner, he was able to ascend the throne without let or hindrance.

King Udena was very much fond of capturing elephants. He would go without hesitation to any place to capture elephants on being told about the presence of fine elephants. King Candapajjota, a rival of King Udena, was desirous of learning the art of managing elephants from King Udena. He caused the construction of a wooden elephant and kept trained soldiers inside of the sham elephant which served as a trap to catch King Udena as and when he came out to catch elephants. His plan succeeded and King Udena was taken prisoner.

King Caṇḍapojjota sent his daughter, Vāsuladattā, to King Udena to learn the art of elephant management and the two eventually fell in love with each other. King Udena eloped with Princess Vāsuladattā and lived in the town of Susumāragiri in the province of Bhagga. Princess Vāsuladattā gave birth to Prince Bodhi, who learnt from his father, King Udena, the art of elephant management and became an expert in it. [641]

Prince Bodhi builds the Kokanada Palace

Prince Bodhi caused the construction of a palace with a turreted roof known as the Kokanada (Red Lotus). The turret was of peculiar and unprecedented design and won the admiration of the people. The prince asked the master builder: "Have you constructed a turret of a similar design elsewhere or was it the first of its kind ever constructed by you?" He replied: "Your majesty, this is the first

of its kind I have ever constructed." Whereupon, Prince Bodhi was worried with the thought: "Should the carpenter build a similar turreted mansion for someone else, my palace would no longer be the object of praise and wonder by the people." An evil, cruel thought entered his head to plot the destruction of the architect and deprive others of having a similar palace built. He was thinking of doing away with the builder either by killing him, or by cutting off his hands and feet or extracting his eyes.

Prince Bodhi happened to confide his brutal plot against the carpenter to one of his close boyhood friends, named Sañjikaputta, who was of kindly disposition and considerate. Sañjikaputta felt certain Prince Bodhi meant what he said, but he was quite against the idea of destroying an innocent man of arts and crafts of such great prominence. He made up his mind to avert the imminent danger and so he went to the carpenter and asked: "Have you finished the work of constructing the turreted palace for Prince Bodhi, or is there anything still left to be done?" When the carpenter said: "All is complete," he confided, "Prince Bodhi wishes to do away with you, please be careful about your security."

The master carpenter replied with words of gratitude: "Dear Lord, you have, indeed, done very well by such kind words," and he told him: "I will do everything as demanded by the circumstances." When Prince Bodhi asked him: "Master carpenter, is there anything yet to be done in connection with the turret?" He said: "Your majesty, it is not completed yet, there is still lot to be done." Whereupon, the Prince asked: "What work is left to be done?" The carpenter said in reply: "Your majesty, details will be given later, just provide me with the necessary timber immediately." The prince demanded: "What kind of timber do you want me to supply?" – "Your majesty, just light wood, light and dry wood," was the reply. The prince, not suspecting anything, supplied him with light and dry wood as demanded.

The master carpenter subsequently asked the prince: "Your majesty, please do not visit my place of work forthwith, as the kind of job I am about to handle is very delicate, so much so that I will have no leisure to enter into conversation with anybody, excepting my wife who is charged with the task of conveying food." The prince gave his consent, saying: "Very well."

The master carpenter stayed in a work cabin and cut the soft wood to measurement and built a "Flying Vehicle" in the form of a Garuḍa bird. On

completion of the job, he asked his wife to turn their household property into hard cash and jewellery and to have the family kept in a state of readiness. Prince Bodhi posted security forces around the place where the turret was supposed to be under construction. When everything was ready, the master carpenter had his family gather together at the workshop and after taking their morning meal they went aboard the flying vehicle and flew away. The guards reported the matter to the prince: "Your royal highness, the master carpenter is gone." The carpenter and his family descended to a region of the Himālayas and settled there permanently. The new settlement developed into a city and he ruled the region as its king. He was known as King Kaṭṭhavāhana.

The Inauguration of the Turreted Palace

Prince Bodhi had in mind to invite the Buddha and his Saṅgha to the inauguration of his palace. Therefore, he caused it to be decorated and smeared profusely with sweet scents. Then he had a white carpet laid from the lowest rung of the ladder.

> The prince had no offspring. He thought that there was the chance of getting a son or a daughter should the Buddha care to tread on the white carpet; if not otherwise. That was the idea behind the laying of the white carpet. [642]

When the Buddha arrived at the palace door, the prince paid homage to him in a traditional manner and received his bowl with his hands, saying: "Exalted Buddha, please enter." But the Buddha would not enter the palace. The prince requested the Buddha three times in succession. At the third time, the Buddha turned round and looked at Ven. Ānanda who at once realized that the Buddha would not tread upon the white carpet. He therefore, turned to the prince and asked him to remove the white carpet since the Buddha would not tread upon it.

> Facts relating to Prince Bodhi's object of laying the white carpet and the Buddha's refusal to tread upon it are fully explained in the commentary to MN 85. Here we give an abridged form of the exposition.

The prince's object: Prince Bodhi had no offspring. He had heard that any handsome offerings made to the Buddha usually bring about fitting rewards. He, therefore, made the resolution that he would get an offspring should the Buddha care to tread on the white carpet; if not otherwise.

Prince Bodhi's former deeds: The prince was an inhabitant of a small island in one of his previous existences. He had a wife who had a similar frame of mind. They killed and ate helpless small birds by mutual consent. The Prince stood the chance of having children had he married a woman other than the wife just described. Since he and his wife were jointly responsible for the destruction of the young birds in the past, they were equally guilty of taking the life of the infant birds. The Buddha was well aware of all this and hence his refusal to tread upon the white carpet that had been purposely laid on that occasion.

There are still some other points to ponder here: The prince was predestined not to get any offspring due to previous actions, and nothing could interfere with the course of cause and effect, even though the Buddha tread upon the carpet laid by the prince with an erroneous idea. He might, through ignorance, make an additional mistake by forming an idea that nothing could be gained by making offerings to a Buddha, notwithstanding the adage that every offering made to a Buddha brings about fitting rewards. He might be led to form such mistaken ideas on this aspect.

Such a practice might be a cause for complaint by members of other sects: "Those monastics are wandering around hither and thither and treading on the white carpets and there is nothing that they dare not do."

Amongst those monastics who might have occasions to tread on the white carpets during the lifetime of the Buddha, there are monastics replete with supernormal faculties that enabled them to know the mind of the people. Such monastics would tread on carpets as and when they should be tread upon. They would refuse to do so, when circumstance did not allow. Once the Buddha had passed away, the chances of attaining the paths and fruitions endowed with the knowledge of the future would be rare for sentient beings, if not remote. Their faculty of reasoning will deteriorate and they will not be able to decide whether the white carpets should be trod on with advantage or disadvantage. It would be well if they had enough foresight to decide as necessary. If not, the lay devotees might naturally form the idea that: "During the life time of the Buddha, offerings made to the Saṅgha invariably fulfilled their wishes, whereas nothing accrued from the offering made to the monastics of our time. Perhaps they are not devoted to the practise of the path nowadays." Such thoughts might make them unhappy.

It was for these reasons that the Buddha did not tread on the white carpet, and Ven. Ānanda also stated: "The Buddha did not tread on the white carpet in consideration of the facts stated above and because of concern for the monastics of the generations to come."

The Prince had the white carpet removed and conducted the Buddha to the mansion and offered him gruel, soft food and sweet meats. When the alms ceremony was over, the prince addressed the Buddha: "Most exalted Buddha, it occurred to me that the state [643] of peace and tranquillity can only be attained by strenuous effort." Whereupon, the Buddha replied: "Prince, I was also of the same idea when I was a Bodhisatta," and explained to him the part of his life from the time of taking up austere practices to the time of teaching the Discourse about the Characteristics of Non-Self (*Anatta-lakkhaṇa-sutta*, SN 22.59) to the Group-of-Five monks, who consequently became Arahats.

Prince Bodhi takes Refuge in the Three Treasures

When the Buddha had taught the discourse dealing with the establishment of the Group-of-Five monks in the Arahat fruition, Prince Bodhi asked him: "Most exalted Buddha, for one who has a teacher such as you, how long has he to work for the attainment of the Arahat fruition and thereafter enjoy peace and tranquillity?" The Buddha replied: "Prince, in this connection I would ask you a question and you may answer as you deem fit and proper: 'Aren't you skilful in managing elephants and the wielding of the goad?' " The prince replied: "Yes Lord, I am skilful in elephant management and the wielding of the goad."

The Buddha went on to ask the prince: "Prince, supposing a person, knowing that you are skilful in the art of elephant management and the wielding of the goad, came to learn the art of elephant management under you and he had these defects, he was: Lacking in confidence, he had not enough confidence to attain the desired standard or goal; he was suffering from a disease bad enough to prevent him from attaining the desired goal; he made false pretence or put on vain and boastful airs, that deterred him from attaining the desired goal; he was lacking in earnest effort to attain the desired goal; he was not intelligent enough to attain the desired goal. Would that person he able to learn the art of elephant management and the wielding of the goad from you?"

The prince replied: "Most exalted Buddha, it will not be possible to train a person with any one of the five defects to attain the desired goal, let alone the question of training one with all those five defects."

Again, the Buddha put a set of alternative questions: "Prince supposing the person who comes to you to learn the art of elephant management and wielding of the goad has the following qualifications: He had has enough confidence that enabled him to reach the desired objective; he was free from any disease, and was one with sound enough health to enable him to reach the desired objective; he did not make false pretence, or he is one with an honest mind that enables him to attain the desired objective; he was one with earnest effort that enabled him to reach the desired objective; he was a man of intelligence capable of attaining the objective. Will it be possible for you to train a person with such qualifications to achieve the desired objective?"

Prince Bodhi replied: "Most exalted Buddha, it will be quite possible for me to train a person to achieve the desired objective even when he has only one out of the five qualifications, the more so if he is one with all the five qualities."

The Five Elements of Effort

The Buddha then proceeded to teach: [644] "Prince in a similar manner, there are five qualities to be striven after by one who practises meditation:

1. In this Dispensation, a monastic has complete confidence in the Arahat path-knowledge (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) and the omniscience of the Buddha, with the understanding that the Fully Self-Awakened Buddha is replete with the nine attributes.[212]
2. He is free from disease, and possesses an equable frame of mind and body, and is endowed with a gastrointestinal system (*pācaka-tejo*) which can digest food easily, which is conducive to the practice of meditation.
3. He is free from pretensions and deceptions, presenting himself as he is to the Buddha or to his associates.

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[212] [For the nine attributes see chapter 42.]

4. He is diligent in the work of doing away with what is bad and striving after what is good. He is energetic and steadfast in his effort. He possesses unrelenting zeal to perform deeds of merit, free from fault.

5. He is possessed of wisdom and is one with penetrative knowledge or path-insight into the state of "rising and falling" of the conditioned, (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*) that eradicates the suffering of the round of rebirths.

Prince, as already stated, a person who has these five qualities (*padhāniyaṅga*): faith, freedom from illness, honesty, diligence, and knowledge of the rising and falling of the conditioned, is capable of realizing the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) within seven years under the guidance of a teacher like the Buddha and can thereafter live happily.

Prince, if a period of seven years be considered to be too long, a person who has these five qualities can realize the Arahat fruition within six, five, four, three, two, one year under the guidance of a teacher like the Buddha and can thereafter live happily.

Prince, should a period of one year be considered too long, one possessed of these five qualities can realize the Arahat fruition within seven months under the guidance of a teacher like the Buddha and can thereafter live happily.

Prince, should a period of seven months be considered to be too long, one endowed with these five qualities can realize the Arahat fruition within six, five, four, three, two, one month, half a month, under the guidance of a teacher like the Buddha and can thereafter live happily.

Prince, should a period of 15 days be considered too long, one endowed with these five qualities can realize the Arahat fruition within seven days, six days, five, four, three, two, one day under the guidance of a teacher like the Buddha and thereafter live happily.

Prince, should a period of one day is considered to be too long, one endowed with these five qualities can realize the Arahat fruition within half a day, that is, one endowed with these five qualities and instructed by the Buddha in the evening can realize the Arahat fruition in the morning; or, when instructed in the morning he can realize the Arahat fruition in the evening. This was the answer given in response to the question by Prince Bodhi.

Here are some points connected with the five factors (*padhāniyaṅga*) from a verse written by Ledi Sayādaw, which can be learnt by heart:

> Faith, health, honesty, diligence, insight into the state of flux, are the qualities to be striven after, [645] to attain the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*)!

Of these five mundane factors, confidence or faith (*saddhā*) may be divided into four classes:

1. The faith of Bodhisattas that has remained unshaken since the time of making the resolution to become a Buddha (*āgama-saddhā*).
2. The faith of noble persons (*ariya-puggala*) that remains unshaken since the time of the realization of path-knowledge (*adhigama-saddhā*).
3. The faith in the Buddha as one who is perfectly Self-Awakened; in the Dhamma which has been well-taught; in the Saṅgha for its uprightness (*okappana-saddhā*).
4. A simple adoration through respect for the moral virtues of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha (*pasāda-saddhā*).

Of these four modes of faith, the faith in the Buddha (*okappana-saddhā*) should be considered as the factor forming a constituent of the effort factors (*padhāniyaṅga*).

When Prince Bodhi had heard of the practical and personal knowledge of the Dhamma taught by the Buddha, he said these words of adoration and praise: "One who practises as taught by the Buddha in the evening is able to attain path and fruition in the morning; one who practises as taught by the Buddha in the morning is able to attain path and fruition in the evening. The Buddha is wonderful, the Dhamma is wonderful, the way of teaching the Dhamma, which is good in the beginning, good in the middle and good in the end, is wonderful, indeed." This the prince said in praise of the way in which the Buddha had taught the Dhamma.

When the youth, Sañjikaputta, heard of Prince Bodhi's address of appreciation of the discourse, he spoke against the prince: "This Prince Bodhi has said that Buddha is wonderful, the Dhamma is wonderful and that it is is good in the beginning, good in the middle and good in the end, and he also praised the way

in which the Dhamma was taught. With all that, the prince does not seem to have taken refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha."

Whereupon, the prince explained to him in detail: "My dear Sañjikaputta, please do not say so; please do not say so, please take note of certain facts which I am about to tell you now, that I had heard from my mother in the past: When the Buddha took up residence at Ghositārāma monastery in the country of Kosambī, my mother respectfully approached the Buddha and made a solemn request: 'Most exalted Buddha, please be so kind as to do honour to my coming child, a son or a daughter, whom I am bearing now, and who takes refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, by accepting them as a lay devotee, male or female as the case may be, from the time of their birth to the time of their death.'

My dear Sañjikaputta, when the Buddha took up residence in this very sanctuary of Bhesakaḷā forest in the province of Bhagga, my governess approached the Buddha carrying me in her arms and made a request: 'Most exalted Buddha, this Prince Bodhi takes refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, please be so kind as to regard this prince as a lay devotee from today till he breathes his last.'

My dear Sañjikaputta, in addition to the two requests made by my mother and my governess, I do hereby for the third time take refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. The most exalted Buddha, may you regard me as a devout lay devotee from today forward for the rest of my life!"

> A question might arise as to the effectiveness or otherwise of the requests made by his mother and his governess on his behalf. Strictly speaking, they were not effective due to a lack of volition (*cetanā*) on the part of the person concerned. There is no such thing as taking refuge in the Three Treasures without volition.
>
> Does it mean that the two previous requests were null and void? As a matter of fact, [646] they were not valueless, they served as a stepping stone to devotional faith and placed the prince in good stead. He became aware of the attributes of the Three Treasures when his parents acquainted him with what they had done for him in anticipation of his birth. He virtually became a confirmed lay devotee the moment he was aware of the attributes of the Three Treasures and placed confidence in them.

Prince Bodhi attains Stream-Entry

After that, Prince Bodhi sat at a place free from the six faults and addressed the Buddha: "Most exalted Buddha! I am one of your devotees. My mother requested for the first time the favour of your accepting me as a lay devotee before I was born and my governess repeated a similar request for the second time holding me in her arms when I was a baby. I have also renewed the request for the third time now I have come of age. Even so you refuse to tread on the white carpet laid by a devotee like me, may I know the reason?"

Whereupon the Buddha asked him: "Prince, what was your object of laying that white carpet?" – "Exalted Buddha, I did it with the thought and wish that if I was to be bestowed with a son or a daughter, you would tread on it," was his admission.

The Buddha said in response: "That was the reason why I did not tread upon it." The prince again asked: "Exalted Buddha, am I destined to go without any offspring, a son or a daughter?" – "Aye, prince," replied the Buddha.

The prince asked: "What was the cause of it?" the Buddha gave him a hint: "This is because you had been forgetful and had indulged in the five sensual pleasures in association with your wife, as a partner, in a past existence!" The prince requested the Buddha to enlighten him as to when and in what existence had he been forgetful and indulgent in the five sensual pleasures.

The following is the Buddha's reply to his request: "Once upon a time, hundreds of people went across the ocean by means of a big boat. The boat was wrecked in the middle of the journey and all the travellers perished with the exception of a couple who managed to land on an island by means of a plank.

The island was inhabited by quite a large number of birds, and the couple, being pressed by hunger, managed to satisfy their hunger by baking the eggs of the birds for their meals. When they found that eggs alone would not do, they killed young birds for their meals, throughout their first, second, and third stages of their lives. They did not realize at all that their indulgence in pursuit of luxurious living constituted a wrong deed."

Having revealed their past immoral deeds, the Buddha proceeded to evaluate their guilt, saying: "Prince, had you and your wife realized your wrong deeds at a certain stage of life, you might have stood a chance of getting offspring at a

corresponding stage of your present existence. Had either of you realized the wrong deed, there is a chance of getting offspring on that score. Prince, one who holds oneself dear, will always be aware of the advantages of moral acts in all stages of life, failing which, he might guard himself against wrong deeds at one or the other stage of his life." The Buddha then went on to teach (Dhp 157):

> *Attānañ-ce piyaṁ jaññā, rakkheyya naṁ surakkhitaṁ,*
> *tiṇṇaṁ aññataraṁ yāmaṁ, paṭijaggeyya paṇḍito.* *[647]*

Prince, a wise person who holds himself dear, guards himself from any shortcomings, in his own interests for both the present and future existences. One should see to it that he cleans the dust of the ten wrong deeds from himself, in his own interests in one or the other of the three stages of life.

The passage: "A wise person who holds himself dear, guards himself," should be understood clearly: In the case of an ordinary devotee, he should not consider himself to be well protected by simply shutting himself in the topmost chamber of a mansion with its doors and windows securely fastened and security guards well posted on the outside. In a similar manner, a monastic should not consider himself safe in a cave with its doors and windows securely fastened.

A lay devotee guards himself well only by giving alms and observing the precepts as far as possible. A monastic guards himself by performing his routine duties towards his associates and the elderly monastics, and striving to learn the teaching and practise meditation in the interests of their progress and security.

The passage that reads: "One should see to it that he cleans the dust of the ten wrong deeds from himself, in his own interests in one or the other of the three stages of life" means; it is imperative that a monastic or a lay person should strive to gain merit by observance of the precepts of his own prescribed standard in all stages of life, or failing which, at one of the stages of life.

When one cannot perform meritorious deeds at a young age, he should do it at the second stage of life. Failing which, due to the burden of a household life, he should do it at the last stage of life without fail. Such a person is considered to have worked for his self-purification. One who fails to work for his own purification, is considered to be one who does not "hold himself dear" and to be paving his way to the plane of misery.

> In a case where a monastic fails to observe the monastic precepts and practise meditation at the first stage due to pressure of work and studies, he should do so at the second stage. When he could not find time to observe the monastic precepts and practise meditation due to a heavy burden of advanced studies at the second stage, he should, on no account, fail to do it at the third and final stage of life. Only then could he be considered to be a person who works out his own purification, one who holds oneself dear and who would be free of bitter regret. This is the correct interpretation of the lines under consideration.

At the conclusion of the discourse, Prince Bodhi attained the fruition stage of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*), and the discourse proved to be beneficial to those present on that occasion.

26b: The 8th Rains Retreat (Mahā Moggallāna)

Māra enters the Belly of Ven. Moggallāna

Once upon a time, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna took up residence at a monastery in the Bhesakaḷā forest sanctuary, near the town of Susumāragiri in the province of Bhagga. While he was taking a walk in an open space, Māra, the evil one, chanced to enter his belly and sat on top of the large intestine. Ven. Mahā Moggallāna felt that his belly weighed heavy like a mass of stone. The belly was tight and weighty as though it was full of cooked gram or a bag full of damp and watery gram. He considered that should the heaviness in his stomach be due to indigestion, it would not be proper to keep on walking in the open. He eventually retired to the chamber and sat on a reserved seat.

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna deliberated as to the cause of the trouble in a normal way. Had he made any attempt to rub his stomach after contemplating on the purity of his morality (*sīla*) and making a will to do away with all the pain caused by indigestion or disturbances of his internal system, the stupid Māra would have been torn into pieces. But he did not make any attempt to allay his pain in that way, instead, he simply deliberated on its cause in a normal manner.

After scrutinizing the cause of his stomach pain, he noticed that the evil Māra was [648] sitting on top of his large intestine, and he said: "Wicked Māra, get out, don't you give trouble to the Realised One! Don't bring trouble upon yourself and suffer the consequences for a long time."

> Ven. Mahā Moggallāna said this because any attempt to give trouble to the children means giving trouble to the parents. In a like manner, to give trouble to the disciples amounts to giving trouble to the master. That was what Ven. Mahā Moggallāna meant when he said: "Don't you give trouble to the Realised One."

Māra thought Ven. Mahā Moggallāna was saying: "Wicked Māra, get out, don't you give trouble to the Realised One! Don't you try to give trouble to the disciple of the Realised One; don't bring trouble upon yourself and suffer the consequences for a long time, without seeing me at all." He was also of the impression that even the Buddha would not have the power to notice him, let alone his disciple. Whereupon, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna made it plain to Māra: "Wicked Māra, I know you and I know what is going on in your mind, don't you

think that I have no power to know about your thoughts. You are the evil Māra, you are presently thinking I know nothing about you, when I said: 'Get out evil Māra, don't try to give trouble to the Realised One; don't you try to bring trouble to the disciple of the Realised One! Don't you try to give trouble to the disciple of the Realised One. Don't bring trouble upon yourself and suffer the consequences for a long time.' You have been thinking that even the Realised One would not have the power to notice you, leave alone a disciple like me. Isn't that what was going on in your mind?"

Māra came to realize that the elder had actually noticed him and knew his thought, and so he came out of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna's stomach and hid himself outside the door. When Ven. Mahā Moggallāna noticed him standing outside the door, he said to him: "Wicked Māra, I see where you are at present. Don't think I can't see you. I see you standing outside the door."

Then it occurred to Ven. Mahā Moggallāna: "Odour emitted from the human body can cause inconvenience to celestial beings 100 leagues away in the sky, Māra belongs to the Paranimmitavasavatti realm which is inhabited by powerful Devas who are noted for their purity and delicate body. But, since Māra had placed himself on top of a filthy intestine, it may be assumed that he is out to do me harm and cause my destruction. For a being with such a frame of mind, there is no immoral act that he would be loath to do! He does not seem to have any sense of conscience or concern about the consequences of his evil deeds. It would, therefore, be wise, in the circumstances, to let him know that we were relatives by blood and to make him meek and sober so he can be persuaded to leave."

With this end in view, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna acquainted Māra with the fact that he was his nephew by revealing the course of his own unwholesome life in a previous existence.

Unwholesome Deeds in the Past

"Wicked Māra, there was an event of interest that occurred in the time of Buddha Kakusandha. I was a Māra by the name of Dūsī and my sister was Kāḷī and you were then the son of my sister. Thus you were my nephew then."

> In this connection, Mahā Moggallāna recounted a succession of paternal and maternal relatives from knowledge handed down from generation to generation. In the case of human beings, a son ascended the throne of his

> father by inheritance, but this is not the case with beings of the celestial world. A celestial being springs into life to take the place of another celestial being as and when his predecessor dies, according to his merits. The present Vasavatti Māra was a nephew of Dūsī Māra. After passing away from that existence, he performed good deeds and consequently became Vasavatti Māra, according to his merits. It was not that Dūsī Māra's nephew was still remaining in existence in that realm. [649]

Having acquainted Māra with how they were related by blood in a previous existence, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna went on to reveal the fact that he, in the capacity of Dūsī Māra, had committed a heinous act, and he had to suffer in the plane of miseries for a long time (*Māra-tajjanīya-sutta*, MN 50 and its commentary).

"Wicked Māra, I was Dūsī Māra during the time of Buddha Kakusandha, whose chief disciples were Vidhura and Sañjīva. The chief disciple, Vidhura, excelled the rest in matters concerning the Dhamma hence he was named Vidhura, meaning a wise elder. Ven. Sañjīva would abide in the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*) with ease wherever he might be, either in a forest, at the base of a tree, or at a secluded place. Once it so happened that cowherds, farmers and passers-by mistook him for a dead monastic in a sitting posture, while he was actually enjoying the attainment of cessation. They all collected fire-wood, dried grass and cowdung and placed them on his body, and wanting to cremate him, they set it alight and departed."

> Non-returners and Arahats wishing to enjoy the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*) perform four preliminary functions of willing: 1) That such possessions of his as are not on his person, may not be destroyed by the five enemies, such as fire, water, etc.; 2) that he may rise up even before a messenger arrives and be ready when his services are required by the Saṅgha; 3) that he may rise up even before the messenger arrives and be ready when called or sent for by the Buddha; 4) that he will not pass away while he is still absorbed in the attainment which is achieved by preliminary ascertainment of the time of expiry of his life-continuum. It is not necessary to will for the safety of what he is wearing, and so on, as not a single thread of his robe could be affected by any danger, including the fire caused by the cowherds and others.

"Wicked Māra, on the following morning, Sañjīva emerged from his attainment, and came out treading on the burning red hot cinders, shaking off dust from the

robe, and entered the village for alms round. Cow herders, farmers and passers-by who had cremated him the day before, were struck with wonder when they noticed the great elder on his alms round. They spoke among themselves: 'This is a sort of miracle which has never occurred before; the monastic was seen to have died in the sitting posture the other day, and now he is miraculously back to life again.' Wicked Māra, all those people therefore called the great elder by the name of Sañjīva because he sprang back to life again.

Wicked Māra, Dūsī Māra hit upon a plan to create a situation that would agitate the minds of the good natured monastics by cruel means. He thought to himself: 'I have no knowledge of whence those virtuous, righteous monastics come from and where they are bound for; I will incite the Brahmin householders to decry those monastics who are reputed to be virtuous and righteous, to speak evil of those monastics among themselves, using abusive language, despising, condemning, decrying, and deriding the monastics. Such behaviour on the part of the Brahmin householders will disturb and derange them, thereby creating a chance for me to cause harm to them.'

Wicked Māra, that Dūsī Māra went ahead to incite the Brahmin householders to act according to his instructions by calumniating and humiliating the monastics, with the result that Brahmin householders started to speak ill of the monastics through that misunderstanding: 'Those monastics with foul means of livelihood, those shavelings of dirty, low castes, born of the arched upper part of a Brahma's foot, sitting down lazily, gloomily pretending to be enjoying absorption (*jhāna*), with bent necks and faces drooping down. They may be likened to an owl lying in wait for rats in the foliage of a tree, a fox looking slyly for fish along the banks of a river, like a cat lying in wait for its prey at the mouth of a drainage pipe or at a garbage container, like an ass, with a hole in [650] its back, moping near a garbage dump at a corner in the fencing; those monastic shavelings of dirty, low castes, born of the arched upper part of a Brahma's foot, sitting down lazily, gloomily pretending to be enjoying absorption (*jhāna*), with bent necks and faces drooping down.' "

They thus abused the monastics by using abusive and harsh words, they calumniated the monastics according to the instruction of Dūsī Māra, through that misunderstanding. Most of those people were reborn in the planes of woe, such as Niraya, the animal worlds, the worlds of the Petas and Asuras, according to their guilt.

We should consider the following points with reference to this passage: "Most of those people were reborn in the four planes of woe," in order to arrive at a correct view of the case.

If those people were possessed by Dūsī Māra and were made to abuse the monastics as his agents, they were not guilty of an offence because of lack of intent or volition on their part in doing so. Dūsī Māra was solely responsible for this immoral act and it follows that those people were not liable to be reborn in the planes of misery on that score.

What actually happened was this: Dūsī Māra did not attempt to possess them and use them as his agents, but he created a situation that compelled them to turn against the monastics through a misunderstanding. He created scenes that showed the presence of women in the vicinity of the monks; scenes that showed the presence of men in the vicinity of female monastics; monastics in the act of fishing with traps and nets, of catching birds with traps, of hunting with hordes of hounds in the forest, enjoying drinks in the company of women at the liquor shops, dancing and singing; women lingering in the vicinity of monastics and young men in the vicinity of the residence of the female monastics at dusk. These were the tactics adopted by Dūsī Māra.

People noticed such incompatible, discordant scenes whenever they went to the forests, to the parks and to the monasteries, so much so that they were thoroughly disgusted with the monastics and agreed among themselves not to make any further offerings to them saying: "These monastics indulge in acts inappropriate for them. How would we gain merit by making offerings to such base persons?"

They reviled the monastics whenever they saw them and they were thus reborn in the planes of misery for their unwholesome deeds toward monastics.

"Wicked Māra, when Buddha Kakusandha came to know that his monastics had been outraged by the people under the undue influence of Dūsī Māra, he urged his disciples to cultivate the four sublime abodes (*Brahma-vihāra*): 1) loving-kindness (*mettā*), 2) compassion (*karuṇā*), 3) altruistic joy (*muditā*), 4) equanimity (*upekkhā*). The monastics cultivated the four sublime abodes, with due diligence as instructed by the Buddha.

When Dūsī Māra found out that such a tactic could not influence the minds of the monastics, whose past existences and future destinations were beyond his

range of intelligence, he decided, once again, to reverse the mode of his tactics by influencing the people to pay homage and make offerings, with an ulterior motive to disturb and derange the monastics, thus giving him an opportunity to harm them.

Wicked Māra, those Brahmins did as they were bid, paying homage and offering alms to the monastics. Wicked Māra, most of those people were reborn in the celestial planes of happiness for such deeds of merit."

> Some points of interest with regard to the attainment of the people to the planes of happiness: Just as Dūsī Māra created unpleasant scenes on the previous occasion, so he created pleasant and agreeable scenes to promote devotional faith of the people in the monastics; [651] he created scenes depicting the monastics in different postures; some were flying in the sky, some standing or sitting with crossed-legs, some stitching robes, others teaching or learning the canonical literature, and spreading robes over their bodies in the sky as well as young novices plucking flowers in the sky.
>
> When the people noticed the monastics engaged in such activities wherever they went, in the forests, in the gardens or in the monasteries, they told the people in the town their own experience saying, "These monastics, even young novices are of great glory and powers and worthy of offering. It is greatly beneficial to make offerings to such glorious, worthy monastics."
>
> People then made offerings to the monastics in the form of robes, food, monasteries and medicine and earned great merit; they were reborn in the celestial planes of happiness after death for such deeds of merit!

"Wicked Māra, this is how Dūsī Māra used his undue influence on the people to pay homage and make offerings to the monastics once again."

After revealing this part of that fateful event to Māra, Buddha Kakusandha turned to the monastics and urged them to practice meditation: "Come monastics, abide practising meditation by contemplation on the unpleasantness of the physical body (*asubha*); the repulsiveness of material food (*ahāre paṭikūla*); the unpleasant, undelightful, unsatisfactory nature of the world (*anabhirati*), the insubstantial and impermanent nature of conditioned phenomena (*anicca*). Wicked Māra, in obedience to the exhortation of Buddha Kakusandha, all the monastics meditated on these subjects in the forests or

secluded corners and at the base of the trees, with the result that they became Arahats in due course."

> Buddha Kakusandha visited all the residential places of the monastics in the world, regardless of the number of monastics at one place, and urged them to take up meditation. The monastics practised these four kinds of meditation as the foundation of their spiritual work and went on to cultivate insight meditation, ultimately gaining the Arahat fruition.

"Wicked Māra, sometime afterwards, Buddha Kakusandha went on alms round, attended by his right-hand chief disciple, Ven. Vidhura, and Dūsī Māra, failing to get an opportunity to harm the monastics by instigating the householders to revile them or also to honour them, made his last bid to destroy the Saṅgha. He took possession of a youngster and threw a handful of stones at Ven. Vidhura. The stones hit the elder's head cutting the skin and bruising the skull, as the result of his assault.

Wicked Māra, the elder Vidhura followed behind Buddha Kakusandha with streams of blood running down his head, unmoved or unshaken by the incident. Thereupon, Buddha Kakusandha turned around bodily to look at him, with the look of an elephant and condemned the offender: 'This foolish Dūsī Māra does not know his limits,' and at that very moment Dūsī Māra passed away from the world of the Devas, and was reborn in the plane of misery."

> Herein, the passage: "With the look of an elephant" should be understood. When an elephant turns to look at an object, it does not turn its head only, it actually turns its body right round.
>
> The bones of ordinary people are joined together with their edges touching one another; in the case of Paccekabuddhas their bones are joined together by hooks at the end of each joint, in the case of Buddhas their bones are joined together by rings on either side of the joints. It is for this reason that Buddha Kakusandha had to make a complete turn of the body before he could look at the object behind his back, like a golden figure turning round mechanically. Buddha Kakusandha thus turned round and made that remark: "This Dūsī Māra does not know his own limits. He has done an extremely heinous act."
>
> In connection with the passage: "At this moment Dūsī Māra passed away from the world of [652] Devas and was reborn in the planes of misery," it should be understood that Devas of the celestial planes usually die in their

respective planes at the expiry of their terms of life. It should not be taken, therefore, that Dūsī Māra died in the world of humans. It should be understood that he went back to the celestial plane and passed away from there to be reborn in the plane of misery.

It should be borne in mind that although Dūsī Māra died the moment Buddha Kakusandha turned round to look at the scene of crime, it does not mean that he lost his life on that score. As a matter of fact, his life term was cut off as if by a huge axe because of his atrocious offence against a Buddha's chief disciple who was possessed of great virtue and had vast attributes.

"Wicked Māra, Dūsī Māra had to serve his term of punishment in the Great Hell (Mahā Niraya) also called the Hell of the Six Contacts (*Chaphassāyatanika*), the Hell of being Pounded by Stakes (*Saṅku-samāhata*) and the Hell that is Personally Experienced (*Paccatta-vedanīya*)."

The denizens in the Hell of the Six Contacts type of hell had their sense-organs: eye, ear, nose, tongue and body pierced by tapered iron-rods, and, as a result, they were constantly subject to excessive pain at the site of each sense organ, which is termed "pain through contact." That plane of misery is accordingly known as the Hell of the Six Contacts plane of misery.

The same hell is also known as the Hell of being Pounded by Stakes plane of misery because it has abundant supply of tapered iron-rods to punish the denizens.

Another name for it is the Hell that is Personally Experienced, because of its nature of self-infliction even without anyone to impose the suffering.

"Wicked Māra, warders of this Great Hell used to come at regular intervals, and told me that when two javelins had come together at my chest it would mark the completion of 1,000 years."

The passage: "When the two javelins have come together," needs to be explained. The denizens of this type of hell measure three miles in size. The executioners, in two groups, started to punish them by piercing and lacerating his body from the chest with javelins, saying: "This is the spot where your thoughts arose to do evil."

Each javelin was of the size of a palm tree in diameter; each party of executioners comprised 50 in number. One group went from the chest towards the head causing severe pain by lacerating with javelins all the

> way along. The other group made their way towards the feet from the chest in a like manner. Each party took 500 years to reach to the head or to the feet, or 1,000 years to make a complete round trip when the two groups come together again at the chest.

"Wicked Māra, I had to suffer torment in that Great Hell for hundreds of thousands of years, and on being released, I had to pass through a sub-section of that hell, named Ussāda, where I was subjected to punishment more severe than in the Great Hell, for 10,000 years before final release.

Wicked Māra, I had the body of human beings and the head of a fish throughout the time I was being tormented in that hell.

> The head of man is round and on it the javelins are liable to slip off whereas the head of fish is long and flat and serves as a good target.

After recounting the events of the past, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna proceeded to preach to Māra in 21 verses to make him repent his own follies:

> "The hell where Dūsī Māra was punished for offending the Arahat Vidhura, the disciple of the Buddha, as well as the Buddha himself, has the nature of being tormented by piercing with iron javelins; these javelins give punishment automatically, even without executioners to wield them. Wicked Māra, you are liable to be tormented in such a hell for offending the disciple of the Buddha, who has understood the cause and effect of any deed.
>
> There are certain abodes situated in the middle of the ocean. They have the pleasant appearance of gems with brilliant colours. A great number of Devakaññā can be seen singing and dancing in those abodes. Wicked Māra, you have offended the chief disciple of the Buddha, who is fully [653] aware of these abodes, and the pleasures enjoyed by those celestial maids, and the causal conditions of those pleasures.
>
> That monastic caused the Eastern Monastery, donated by Visākhā, mother of the rich man Migara, to be shaken, even while being watched by the company of the Saṅgha at the instance of the Buddha. Wicked Māra, you will have to suffer the consequences of your offence against the monastics accomplished in supernormal power (*abhiññā*) and wisdom (*paññā*).
>
> That monastic caused Sakka's Vejayanta palace to be shaken with his big toe, with the aid of his supernormal power, thereby frightening all the

Devas. Wicked Māra, you will have to suffer the consequences of your offence against the monastic accomplished in supernormal power and wisdom.

That monastic went to the Vejayanta palace of Sakka and asked him this question: "Sakka, do you know the emancipation that is void of all forms of desires?" Sakka, on being asked thus gave the right answer. Stupid Māra, you will have to suffer the consequences of your offence against a disciple of the Buddha, who is accomplished in supernormal power and wisdom and who was able to ask such a question.

That monastic asked the Brahma a question near the Sudhamma Dhamma hall: "Dear lay devotee, are you still of the erroneous view that there is no powerful monastic or recluse capable of coming to the realms of the Brahmas? Have you ever seen the overwhelming radiance of the Buddha that excels those of the illuminations of the Brahmas, of their mansions and of their costumes?" The Brahma answered: "I no longer hold the old erroneous views. I see the radiance of the Buddha that surpasses the illuminations of the Brahmas and of their mansions and of their costumes. Why should I insist anymore that I am a permanent, or an immortal, being?" Wicked Māra, you will have to suffer the consequence of the offence against the disciple of the Buddha, who is accomplished in supernormal power and wisdom that he was enabled him to ask such a question.

That monastic contacted through supernormal power (*abhiññā*) based on the freedom-absorption (*vimokkha-jhāna*), the summit of Great Meru and the four islands continents, east, west, south and north, at the time of suppressing the Nāga King, Nandopananda.

> Ven. Mahā Moggallāna had covered the Great Meru and the four islands continents through the agency of a created Nāga at that time.

"Wicked Māra, you will have to suffer the consequences of your offence against the disciple of the Buddha, who is accomplished in such supernormal power and wisdom that he was enabled to ask such a question."

> In dealing with Māra, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna was referring to himself as if he was another monastic. Such a mode of teaching is termed the method having reference to another (*añña-padesa*).

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna managed to subdue Māra by exhibition of his supernormal power (*abhiññā*) in seven ways from:

1. With reference to the Discourse Rebuking Māra (*Māratajjanīya-sutta*, MN 50).
2. With reference to his supernormal power to go on teaching tours as in the Stories about Heavenly Mansions (*Vimāna-vatthu*) and the Stories about Petas (*Peta-vatthu*).
3. With reference to the exposition of the Discourse concerning Mahā Moggallāna (*Mahā-moggallāna-sutta*, SN 51.14).

4-5. With reference to the Short Discourse on the Destruction of Craving (*Cūḷa-taṇhā-saṅkhāya-sutta*, MN 37).

6. With reference to the Discourse about a Certain Brahmin (*Aññatara-brahma-sutta*, SN 6.5).
7. With reference to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) on the suppression of the Nāga King. [654]
8. Fire does not make any effort to burn the foolish person. It is the foolish person that gets burnt by touching the fire. Just as the foolish person gets burnt by touching the fire, so will you be burnt by offending the Buddha.
9. Māra, you have done sinful acts by offending the chief disciple of the Buddha. Do you think that your sinful act will not produce a fitting result?
10. Wicked Māra, the amount of unwholesome deeds standing against you increases with the progress of time. Wicked Māra, have you not got tired of doing harm to the Buddha? You should have taken your lesson from the evil deeds of your uncle Dūsī Māra who had to suffer in the realms of misery. You should at once cease harming the disciples of the Buddha.

Citing examples Ven. Mahā Moggallāna thus exhorted Māra so as to cause him to repent his follies and to dread the consequences for a long period in the forest sanctuary of Bhesakaḷā, with the result that Māra, with a heavy heart, disappeared on the spot.

26c: The 8th Year (Pañcaggadāyaka)

After observing the eighth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) and emancipating sentient beings, who were worthy of emancipation, by teaching the Discourse to Prince Bodhi (*Bodhi-rāja-kumāra-sutta*, MN 85) and other discourses in the Bhesakaḷā forest sanctuary, near the town of Susumāragiri, the Buddha left for Sāvatthī to take up residence in the Jetavana monastery.

> The following story is drawn from the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*) commentary, in its exposition of the Discourse about the Perfected One (*Muni-sutta*, Snp 1.12), which, however, is not in agreement with the exposition in the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 367) commentary.

There was a Brahmin lay devotee by the name of Pañcaggadāyaka. He was so named because of his habit of offering the five kinds of foods that came first and foremost in the process of production:

1. He used to offer the first ears of corns, barley or oats from his fields to the Buddha and the Saṅgha in the form of gruel prepared with milk, in the belief that offering the first products will yield early benefits. This is the offering made of the first crop from the field.

2. When the grain was mature and ripe, he had the grains put in a heap after threshing and winnowing and prepared them into meals and offered them first to the Buddha and the Saṅgha. This is the offering made of the grains from the first part of the harvest.

3. After storing the harvested crops in many granaries, when the first granary was opened, he had some grains from the first lot taken out and prepared them as meals for offering to the Buddha and his Saṅgha. This is the offering made of the grains from the granaries.

4. The cooked food collected from each and every cooking pot was first offered to the monastics. Until such an offering had been made to the Saṅgha, no one was permitted to partake of the food from the pots. This is the first offering made from the cooking pots.

5. He never took his breakfast before collecting a certain amount for offering to the Buddha and his Saṅgha in the morning. In the afternoon he collected a certain amount from his dining table for offering to the

> poor, in whose absence, the collected food stuff was given to the dogs. This is the offering made before he took his meals.

Thus he came to be known as Pañcaggadāyaka, "one who made offerings of five kinds on the first occasions."

One early morning, the Buddha looked into the world with the knowledge of underlying tendencies (*āsayānusaya-ñāṇa*) and the knowledge of others' dispositions (*indriya-paro-pariyatta-ñāṇa*) and perceived the supporting conditions of Pañcaggadāyaka and his wife to be established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*), and so he had himself tidied up and he stayed in his chamber on that particular morning. [655]

> All the monastics in the monastery used to assemble at the Buddha's chamber at the time of going for alms round every morning. They always went for receiving alms in the town with the Buddha leading. But the Buddha used to remain in the chamber behind closed doors whenever he wanted to be all alone. On such occasions, monastics went on alms round all by themselves after circumambulating the scented chamber with the tacit understanding that the Buddha would not go with them for reasons known only to himself.

On that day the Buddha remained in his chamber, behind closed doors, at the time of going for receiving food. He came out only when it was time for Pañcaggadāyaka to have his meal.

He entered the city of Sāvatthī all by himself and the citizens knew that someone would be blessed by him that day, and so they did not come out as usual to invite him for alms offering.

The Buddha went along the route from door to door, and stopped at the door of Pañcaggadāyaka at the time when the Brahmin was holding a bowl of food to be eaten and his wife was in a state of preparedness to fan her husband while he was enjoying the food. His wife was the first person to notice the Buddha standing in front of their house. She tried to keep the Buddha out of sight of her husband by keeping the fan in between the Buddha and her husband. She knew that if her husband saw the Buddha, he would offer all the food in his bowl to the Buddha, thereby requiring her to make a fresh preparation of food for her husband.

At the same time, she was assailed with confusion and irreverence. The Buddha knew all about it and directed the radiance from his body towards the couple. When the husband saw the golden coloured radiance, he asked her: "What's this?" He looked around and he saw the Buddha standing at the door of the house. Whereupon, the wife dropped the fan, hastened to the Buddha and paid homage and worshipped him, in accordance with the time-honoured tradition. The Buddha uttered a verse in praise of her while she was in the act of standing up, as warranted by the favourable circumstance (Dhp 367):

> *Sabbaso nāma-rūpasmiṁ, yassa natthi mamāyitaṁ,*
> *asatā ca na socati, sa ve bhikkhū ti vuccati.*
>
> One who has cut off clinging to mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*) without holding the erroneous views of I, my own, he or she is free from sorrow and lamentation. Because of the cessation of mind and matter, he has penetrated the dark mass of defilements and deserves to be regarded as a holy, noble monastic.

The wife of the Brahmin was established in the fruition stage of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*) at the conclusion of this verse.

The Buddha was invited by the Brahmin into his house and offered a seat. He then offered him his share of the food, pouring water as a token of dedicating food to the Fortunate One, and saying: "Most exalted Buddha, you are the most Arahat person in the world with its Devas and humans. May you receive my offer of food with the alms bowl." The Fortunate One fulfilled his request by receiving the food offered in his bowl and partaking of it. The Fortunate One then uttered the following verse after his meal, noting that the time was appropriate (Snp 219):

> *Yad-aggato majjhato sesato vā,*
> *piṇḍaṁ labhetha para-dattūpajīvī,*
> *nālaṁ thutuṁ no pi nipacca-vādī,*
> *taṁ vāpi dhīrā muni vedayanti.*
>
> A monastic lives on food enthusiastically offered by supporters, either from the [656] first portion or the middle portion or the last portion of the pot, as his means of livelihood. A monastic gratefully accepts the food regardless of which part of the pot that morsel of food comes from. He is not over-pleased to receive the first portion of food nor is he disturbed by

being offered the leftovers. He has abandoned likes and dislikes. Such a person, who is regarded only by wise people as one who has eradicated the pollutants (*āsava*), is indifferent to the world and worldly incidents.

Pañcaggadāyaka attained the fruition stage of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*) at the conclusion of the discourse.

26d: The Buddha's visits to Śrī Laṅkā

The Buddha's First Visit to Śrī Laṅkā

This is an account of the Buddha's three visits to the Island of Śrī Laṅkā, in the first, fifth and eighth year after Awakening, in abridged form, drawn from the Great Chronicle (*Mahā-vaṁsa*).

The Buddha observed the first Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) after becoming a Buddha in the Deer Park at Isipatana, near Bārāṇasī. From there he proceeded to the forest of Uruvelā to emancipate the recluse Uruvelā Kassapa by an exhibition of miracles. At that time, the citizens of Aṅga and Magadha were going to pay their annual homage to the recluse with gifts. The recluse did not wish the Buddha to come to the great festival offering. His thoughts were known to the Fortunate One. So on that very day the Buddha went to Uttarakuru to receive an offering of food, and from thence he returned to Lake Anotatta to have his meal, and at night-fall in the ninth month of Awakening he went to Śrī Laṅkā.

His visit coincided with the conference of Yakkhas held at a spot which is the location of the garden of Mahānāgavana of today, measuring three leagues in length by one league in breath in the central part of the Island, along the bank of a river. The Buddha went to the place where the Yakkhas were holding the conference and while standing directly above their heads, on the spot where the Mahīyaṅgana Cetiya stands today, he caused heavy rain to fall and strong winds to blow and darkness to descend to frighten them.

The Yakkhas were very much frightened and they beseeched the Buddha to grant them a place of refuge, free from danger. The Buddha consoled them by telling them that he would relieve them of their anxieties and troubles, if he was offered a place on the Island to stay. Whereupon, they replied: "Lord of peace and tranquillity, we hereby offer you this very spot and we beseech you to give refuge to all our kind on this Island."

The Buddha restored peace and calmed the fears of the Yakkhas by causing the rain, storm and blackout to cease and descended to earth and, spreading a leather rug, sat upon it. When the Buddha spread the leather rug over the place, Yakkhas ran away to escape from the unbearable heat emanating from the blazing carpet and took refuge in the remote areas of the Island. The Buddha caused the Island of Giridīpa to come close to Śrī Laṅkā to accommodate the

restless Yakkhas. Once all the Yakkhas had settled there, he caused the Island to move back to its original site.

The blazing leather rug was removed as soon as Śrī Laṅkā was rid of all Yakkhas. Then all the good Devas assembled on the Island and held a conference among themselves. The Fortunate One taught the Dhamma to them with the result that millions of beings realized the four noble truths and a countless number of Devas took refuge in the Three Treasures with strong faith.

The Buddha's Relics

Mahā Sumana Deva, a resident of the Sumanakūṭa Mountain, attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*) by hearing the Dhamma at the conference, just mentioned above. He requested the Buddha for an object of worship. The Buddha rubbed his head with his fingers to collect a handful of hair and gave it to Mahā Sumana. After that, the Buddha returned to Uruvelā forest.

Mahā Sumana brought the handful of hair in a gold casket and kept it at a spot that [657] was strewn with a variety of jewellery; it was where Mahīyaṅgana Cetiya is standing today. The gold casket containing the handful of hair was enshrined in a small relic shrine (*stūpa*) built of amethyst.

In course of time, Ven. Sāriputta's disciple, named Ven. Sarabhu, after the Buddha's passing brought the neck-bone of the Buddha from the cremation by his supernormal power to this place. He sanctified it by enshrining it in the original shrine of small dimension and raised its height to twelve cubits, assisted by a company of monastics. Ven. Sarabhu then returned after reconstruction of the shrine.

Years rolled by and Prince Uddha Cūḷābhaya, younger brother of King Devānampiyatissa rebuilt the old shrine to a height of 30 cubits, enveloping the smaller shrine. Later, King Duṭṭhagāmaṇi again reconstructed that shrine, making it 80 cubits high. Thus, Mahīyaṅgana Cetiya grew to a great height by successive modifications through the years.

The Buddha's Second Visit to Śrī Laṅkā

At a time when the Buddha was residing at Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī, during the fifth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), there was a battle being fought, involving huge armies for the possession of an emerald throne between two Nāgas,

Mahodara and his nephew Cūḷodara. When the Buddha perceived this unhappy state of affairs, he woke up early and taking his robe and alms bowl, he went to theatre of war, which was the Island of Nāgadīpa, to save the Nāgas from destruction.

Mahodara was a powerful king who claimed sovereignty over the Nāga country, with an area of 500 leagues in that part of the ocean. Mahodara gave away his sister, Kaṇhā, in marriage to another Nāga King who was ruling over the Vaḍḍhamāna mountain region. In due time, they produced a son named Cūḷodara.

Cūḷodara's maternal grandmother gave her emerald throne to Cūḷodara's mother before her death. Consequently a war broke out over the possession of the throne between King Mahodara and his nephew Cūḷodara. These inhabitants of the mountain region were also powerful rulers in their own region with their own big army.

There was a Deva, named Samiddhi Sumana, living in the Rājāyatana tree near the arched entrance to Jetavana monastery. He accompanied the Fortunate One all the way to Nāgadīpa, carrying the Rājāyatana tree as an umbrella, to protect the Fortunate One from the weather, with the permission of the Fortunate One.

This will be further clarified: Samiddhi Sumana was a human being living in Nāgadīpa in his previous existence. Once, he noticed a Paccekabuddha having his meal at the spot where the Rājāyatana Cetiya is standing today. He offered the Paccekabuddha, out of reverence, a bunch of branches for use in washing and cleaning the bowl after his meal.

For this deed of merit, he became a Tree Deva of the Rājāyatana tree near the arched entrance to the garden of Jetavana, owned by Prince Jeta. The Rājāyatana tree stood outside the monastery since the time of its construction. The Buddha brought Sumiddhi Sumana together with the Rājāyatana tree which was for his own benefit and in the interest of the Island.

The Buddha, on arrival at the Island, sat in the sky above the middle of the battle grounds and caused complete darkness in the area to frighten the combatants in the battle. Then he caused the area to become bright and clear again to relieve the Nāgas of fear and anxiety. The Nāgas, on seeing him, felt happy and rallied around him and worshipped at his feet with profound respect.

When the Buddha taught the Dhamma to them in the interest of peace and tranquillity, [658] the two rival Nāga kings were very much delighted and they were interested in the teaching, so much so that they made an offering of the emerald throne to him by their mutual agreement.

Then the Buddha came down and sat on the throne and partook of the delicious food offered by the Nāgas and taught the Dhamma to them again, with the result that 800 million Nāgas, both of land and water, took refuge in the Three Treasures with great faith. These events marked the first visit to Śrī Laṅkā by the Buddha.

Maṇi-akkhika, the Nāga King of Kalyāṇi region, a maternal uncle of Mahodara, also arrived at Nāgadīpa to take part in the war. He had already taken refuge in the Three Treasures at the time of the Buddha's first visit to Śrī Laṅkā. He made a solemn request to the Buddha: "Exalted lord, you have, indeed, done a great deed of kindness to us by your exhortations. Had you not come to this place, by now we would have been reduced to ashes. Our ardent wish is that, out of compassion, you do honour to the place of my dwelling, Kalyāṇi, by your visit when you come to Śrī Laṅkā on the next occasion." The Buddha kept silent to signify his acceptance of the invitation.

Then the Fortunate One urged them to build Rājayatana Cetiya on that spot as a memorial to the happy occasion. He presented the Rājayatana tree to them and returned the emerald throne with instructions to hold them as sacred objects of veneration: "Nāga lords, these two objects should be held in high reverence as relics of my utensils (*paribhoga-cetiya*) in your own interest and for your continued prosperity." The Buddha, after leaving those instructions, returned to Jetavana monastery at Sāvatthī. These events marked the second visit to Śrī Laṅkā by the Buddha.

The Buddha's Third Visit to Śrī Laṅkā

Three years later, Maṇi-akkhika, the Nāga King, went to Sāvatthī to invite the Buddha cordially to Śrī Laṅkā, while he was in residence at Jetavana monastery. It was on a full moon day of May (*Vesākha*), during the eighth year after the Buddha's attainment to Buddhahood, and one day after Maṇi-akkhika's arrival. The Buddha, on being informed of the time for the meal, put on his robe and went across to Śrī Laṅkā, together with 500 monastics.

The Nāga King Maṇi-akkhika, accompanied by his Nāgas, conducted the Buddha and his monastics to a jewelled pandal near the site where Kalyāṇi Cetiya is now situated and offered delicious celestial food to him and the monastics with profound respect.

After teaching Maṇi-akkhika and all the Nāgas, the Buddha travelled through the sky to the Sumanakūṭa hill and left an impression of his foot, in order that future generations might hold it as a sacred place (*pāda-cetiya*). He went to the base of the hill in the company of monastics to spend the day and proceeded to Dīghavāpī.

During his sojourn at Dīghavāpī, he and the monastics enjoyed fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) on the spot where the Dīghavāpī Cetiya is standing today. This is one of the sacred places held in high reverence by the people from the days of yore. From here, the Buddha proceeded to the Garden of Mahā Meghavana.

On arrival at Meghavana garden, together with the 500 monastics, the Buddha sat and enjoyed fruition-attainment together with the monastics. On the spot where the Buddha sat a sapling of the original Mahā Bodhi tree was planted.

From there, they proceeded to the location of the Mahā Cetiya and together they enjoyed fruition-attainment. Rising from this attainment, they proceeded to the present location of Thūpārāma Cetiya and enjoyed fruition-attainment together again.

Rising from this fruition-attainment, they went to Silā Cetiya, which still [659] stands today, and taught the Dhamma to all the Devas who happened to be gathered there at that time. After which, together with his 500 monastics, the Buddha returned to Jetavana monastery. These events marked the Buddha's third visit to Śrī Laṅkā, and so this concludes the account of the Buddha's three visits to Śrī Laṅkā. [660]

27a: The 9th Rains Retreat (Ghosaka and Māgaṇḍiya)

The Rich Man Ghosaka

This short account of the rich man of Kosambī has been compiled from the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 21) commentary, and the Numerical commentary (*Khujjuttarā-sāmāvatī-vatthu*, AN 1.14.7, PTS 1.420), where fuller accounts are given.

Prior to the appearance of the Fully Self-Awakened Buddha, a deadly infectious disease (*ahi-vātaka*) broke out in the country of Allakappa, and the toll of this plague affected anything from 10-20 in a family at a time. Those who evacuated to other countries escaped death. One of the citizens left Allakappa together with his wife and a baby son. But they suffered from a shortage of food in the middle of crossing a barren land and were in a state of exhaustion. The parents took turns to carry the baby for some time.

The husband was of the idea that crossing the desert would not be possible with the extra load of the baby on their shoulder. So he kept himself a bit behind the wife by slowing down his speed as though pressed by the call of nature. He placed the child on the ground in a sitting posture and resumed his journey. When the wife did not see her son in his hands, she enquired about the child, asking: "My lord, where is my baby?" The husband replied: "What good will he be under such stress and strain. We could produce many children so long as we are alive!" The wife screamed in anger: "Such a brute you are, I will not go along with a cruel person like you." The husband confessed his inconsiderate act and apologized to her: "Please pardon me for my fault." They continued their journey again after picking up the child.

The fatigued couple, with the baby to carry, managed to cross the sandy plain with great difficulty. By evening, they reached the cowherds' hut where they had cooked rice with pure milk for their own consumption. When they saw the couple and the child, they at once realized that the strangers were hunger-stricken, and offered them a big pot full of rich milk gruel. The wife was moderate in eating and so she ate just the right measure of food while the greedy husband ate very much, beyond his limit, so much so, that he died of indigestion the next morning. As he was very much attached to the people in the cowherds hut before his death, he took conception in the womb of a dog who lived there.

The dog gave birth to a lovely puppy in due time. It was well looked after by the cowherd as though it was his own child. The two were very much attached to each other and the puppy followed the cowherd wherever he went.

One morning, a Paccekabuddha stopped at the door of the cowherd to receive alms food. The cowherd paid respect and offered food and requested the Paccekabuddha to stay and the cowherd would provide him the requisites. The Paccekabuddha took up residence in a grove not far from his dwelling. The cowherd used to take the puppy along with him whenever he went to visit the Paccekabuddha. He used to strike the boulders and dry stumps with a stout staff, on the way to the dwelling of the Paccekabuddha, to frighten away the beasts of prey. The puppy took careful note of his master's activities.

On one occasion, the cowherd made it plain to the Paccekabuddha that he might not attend on him personally everyday for one reason or other. He assured the Paccekabuddha that the little dog would come to his dwelling to accompany him to and from his hut, on his behalf, in case of his failure to do it himself.

One day, the cowherd sent his little dog to accompany the Paccekabuddha from the forest to his hut. The little dog went there, and, on arrival, lay on its belly stretched at the feet of the Paccekabuddha. The Paccekabuddha realized that the little dog was sent to fetch him. Hence, he took his robe and alms bowl. Being desirous of testing the intelligence of the dog, he deliberately went in a wrong direction. Whereupon, the little dog went in front of him and blocked his way. It gave way only when the Paccekabuddha resumed the right [661] direction. He barked aloud at the same spots where his master used to strike the boulders and dried stumps with a stout staff to frighten away the beasts of prey. The Paccekabuddha used to give it a big lump of food out of his own bowl every day. The dog was very much attached to the Paccekabuddha for showing such kindness to him.

At the end of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), the cowherd offered a piece of cloth to the Paccekabuddha for making robes and said: "Reverend Sir, the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) has come to a close and I would leave it to you to stay on at the same place or go to any place of your own choice, as pleases you." As the Paccekabuddha appeared to have a desire to leave for another place, the cowherd accompanied him to a certain distance and returned to his hut. When

the little dog discovered that the Paccekabuddha had left for good, it died of a broken heart and was reborn in the Deva realm of Tāvatiṁsa.

He was endowed with a voice that excelled that of the other Devas of the celestial world, as a reward for barking aloud and frightening the beasts of prey as he passed through the forest in the company of the Paccekabuddha in his previous existence. He was therefore known as Ghosaka Deva for having a voice that covered the whole of Deva realm.

While Ghosaka was enjoying the luxurious life of a Deva in Tāvatiṁsa, Udena was the King of Kosambī in the world of humans.[213] Then Ghosaka Deva died and was conceived in the womb of a courtesan in Kosambī, during the reign of Udena. When the courtesan came to know that she had given birth to a son, she had the newly born babe cast on the garbage dump.

One of the supervisors of workmen, in the employment of the rich man of Kosambī, noticed the child in the middle of a flock of crows, on his way to his master's house. He was impressed by the look of the lovely child and thought there was a bright future for the child. Therefore, he picked up the baby and sent him to his house, under the care of one of his workmen while he continued his way to his master's house.

That morning the rich man of Kosambī met a wise man on his way to the palace of the King Udena. The rich man asked the wise men: "Master, have you studied the astrological signs of the stars and their trends?" The astrologer examined the movements and behaviour of the planets on the spot and replied: "Anyone born today is destined to become a rich man in Kosambī, as he is born in conjunction with such and such stars and planets."

On hearing the prediction of the astrologer, the rich man of Kosambī turned to his attendants and gave instructions: "My dear men, the prediction of this wise man are always axiomatic and determinate. My wife is an expectant mother, and, you better go to my house and find out if she has given birth to a child." The attendants rushed to his house and hurried back to tell him that his wife has not yet given birth to a child. He sent his men out again to find if there is any child born in the city on this day.

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[213] The life of Udena has been dealt with elsewhere in this treatise, see chapter 45b.

The attendants went all over the town to find out if there was any child born on that day. They discovered that there was a newly born babe in the house of his own supervisor. When this was brought to his notice, the rich man sent for the supervisor, and on his arrival, asked him a few questions.

Rich Man: Is it true that there is a baby in your house who is born today?

Supervisor: Yes, Master.

Rich Man: Can you give me that child?

Supervisor: I can't give, Master.

Rich Man: Take 1,000 pieces of money in exchange for the baby!

The supervisor tried to speculate mentally: "This baby may or may not live long, the question of life and death is beyond my power of decision." In view of this matter of uncertainty, he decided to accept the money in exchange for the baby.

The rich man conceived an idea: "Should my wife give birth to a girl, he would be treated [662] as my own son; should she give birth to a boy, he would be killed." After a few days, the wife of the rich man gave birth to a boy.

The Brutal Acts of the Rich Man of Kosambī

He thought of placing the adopted son Ghosaka, the son of a courtesan, in the cow-shed to be killed by being trodden on by oxen. He accordingly asked his servants to place the babe at the gate of the cowshed. The boy was placed at the exit of the cow-shed, as instructed by the rich man.

A big bull, the chief of the herd was the first to come out of the compound and finding the baby lying helplessly on the ground, it shielded him from the imminent danger of being trodden on by standing over him with its four legs placed around him like a fence. On seeing Ghosaka, the cowherds expressed this opinion among themselves: "This child must be a favoured child of fortune, even animals seem to know of his attributes," and so with mutual consent they took him to their house to be looked after

The rich man enquired as to the fate of the baby and was told that he was safe, under the care of the cowherds. He regained possession of the baby by giving the cowherds 1,000 pieces of money in exchange for him. He then commanded his men to throw the baby away at the cemetery.

The baby was abandoned in the cemetery at a time when the rich man's goat-herd was tending a herd of goats there. A milking she-goat caught sight of the baby and left the herd to put herself in such a posture as to afford an opportunity for the baby to suck her milk. She left the baby only after feeding him in the manner just described. On departure from the pasture in the evening, she went to feed the baby again, in the same manner. The goat-herd's attention was drawn by the strange movements of that she-goat on that day, and he saw for himself that the she-goat was feeding the baby as if it was her own babe. The goat-herd thought to himself: "This baby must be a favoured child of fortune, even animals seem to know his attributes," and so he brought the baby to be looked after in his own house.

On the next morning, the rich man sent his men to find out what had happened to the baby. When he was told that the baby was safe under the care of a goat-herder, he sent his men to redeem the baby in exchange for 1,000 pieces of money and commanded them to place the baby on the cart-track, in the busy part of the town, so that he might be killed by being trodden by the carts of a passing trader on the following day.

His servants did as they were told. A train of carts came into the town as expected but the oxen that drew the first cart saw the baby in their track, so they stood still with their legs fixed like four pillars. The leader of the traders saw the strange spectacle and was greatly moved by it, so much so that he picked up the babe and looked after him himself, as the baby appeared to be a favoured child of fortune with a bright future.

The rich man sent out his men to find out if the baby had been killed, by being trodden on by the carts of the traders, and was told that the boy was safe under the care of the leader of the traders. He again asked them to redeem the child in exchange for 1,000 pieces of money and to throw the baby down a steep cliff at a distance from the town.

The baby was thrown upside down by the servants, but the child fell right on top of a workshop of those who manufactured mats from reeds. The mats made of reeds proved to be as soft as cotton that had been ginned 1,000 times due to his deeds of merits in the past. The leading workman opined that the baby was a favoured child of fortune with a bright future, and so he brought the child to his house for adoption.

The rich man sent out his men again to enquire into the state of the child. When he came to know all about the babe, he asked his servants to recover the baby in exchange for 1,000 pieces of money, and to bring him to his house.

In due course the rich man's own son and Ghosaka came of age. The rich man [663] again made a plot to kill the lad in a conspiracy with his trusted potter. He therefore went to the potter and confided to him that there was a stupid son in his house whom he wanted to do away with secretly by hook or by crook. The potter said: "Rich man, you shouldn't have said such a thing, speaking a speech is so full of evil."

The rich man thought that the potter would not do something for nothing, and so he paid him 1,000 pieces of money to make him yield to his persuasions. He was successful because there is no one who cannot be corrupted by bribery. The potter accepted the money and told the rich man: "I will arrange for the pot-kilns to be kept ready on such and such a day, and you might send the boy to me on that date by appointment."

The rich man marked time and on the day of the appointment, he asked the youthful Ghosaka: "My dear son, I require many pots and I have arranged with our potter to supply them by certain date, you might go now to the potter and ask him to do as he was bid by me, without any delay." Ghosaka replied: "Very well," and left the house.

On seeing Ghosaka on the road, the rich man's own son came running to him and asked for help: "Elder brother, I've lost many marbles while playing a game with my playmates. I do pray that you try to recover the loss I've sustained." Whereupon, Ghosaka said: "I can't do it now, because our father has sent me on an errand." The rich man's own son made another request: "If so, just play for me and recover the lost balls. I will go on the errand on your behalf." Whereupon, Ghosaka said: "In that case, you might go to the potter's place and convey the message of your father to the potter in detail while I play with the boys to recover the marbles you lost to them."

The rich man's son went and conveyed his father's message to the potter, on behalf of Ghosaka as agreed. The potter said he would carry out his father's orders. He took the boy into his house and hacked him into pieces with an axe and put the pieces of the dead boy's body into a mud pot which was later kept along with the unbaked mud-pots in the kiln.

Ghosaka won quite a lot of marbles and he waited for the return of his younger brother for a time. When the younger boy failed to turn up, he went to the potter's place to look for him and returned home when no trace of his younger brother could be found.

The rich man was astonished to see the return of Ghosaka at a distance and was at a loss to know what had happened. He got up before Ghosaka could even take a seat to explain the matter. "Dear son, did you not go to the potter's place?" The youth replied: "No, father, I didn't go." He asked him again: "Why did you not go?" The youth explained the reason why he did not go and why the younger brother went there on his behalf, in detail.

The rich man felt as if he was reeling under the weight of the great earth and scolded him: "My dear son, what do you mean by that?" and so saying he hurried to the place of the potter with a greatly agitated mind. When he got to the house of the potter, he could not tell the full facts of the tragedy and so he simply uttered: "Look, my man, look my man." But the potter gave him a stiff reply: "Rich man, what do you mean by that, when it is too late!" The rich man had to return home without any further ado. He was reduced to a mental wreck from that time.

The rich man of Kosambī did not take his meal together with Ghosaka from that time onwards, and deliberated as to how to do away with his son's rival. He wrote a note and asked Ghosaka to deliver it to one of his supervisors at a certain village and to tell him verbally that the contents of the note must be translated into action at once. He also instructed the lad to contact one of his boyhood friends, a rich man of Gāmaka, and stop at his home for the meals on the way to his destination. Ghosaka had come of age by that time.

Ghosaka paid respect to the rich man and left. On arrival at the village of Gāmaka, he found his way to the rich man's house and stood worshipping in front of him. The local rich man was shaving his beard by the side of a window. When he noticed the lad, he asked: "Young man [664] from where have you come?" He replied with due respect: "Father, I am the son of a rich man of Kosambī." The Gāmaka rich man was delighted to see the son of his boyhood friend.

By that time, one of the maids of the daughter of the rich man was on her way to the market to fetch some flowers for her mistress. She stopped by the rich man

who asked her: “Maid, tarry a little, you might wash and brush the feet of Ghosaka and arrange for the provision of a bed for him.” The maid did as she was bid and then went to the market to fetch some flowers as usual.

On seeing the maid with a collection of flowers, the daughter of the rich man scolded her: “You have loitered on the road today, what on earth had made you take such a long time in fetching the flowers?”

Whereupon, the servant girl replied: “Mistress, I’ve never seen such a beautiful youth before. He is said to be the son of your father’s boyhood friend. It is beyond my power to express his handsomeness and graciousness. Your father asked me to wash his feet and provide a bed when I was on my way to the market to fetch flowers for you, hence the delay.”

> The daughter of the rich man of Gāmaka happened to be the wife of the lad Ghosaka four existences ago. On hearing about the youth, she was assailed by uncontrollable affection for him.

The daughter of the Gāmaka rich man, accompanied by her maid, went to the bedroom and found Ghosaka sound asleep. She noticed a note tied to the edge of his waist-cloth and, out of curiosity, detached it quietly and read it. She discovered that the youth had brought a note that would cause the loss of his own life. She had it torn into pieces and wrote another one in substitution for the original one, before the lad woke up: “Dear supervisor, I am sending my son to you. My boyhood friend, Gāmaka, the rich man, has a daughter who has attained the age of puberty. I want you to collect all the yields accrued from our own estates and regroup them into lots of 100 of each kind for presentation at the matrimonial ceremony between the daughter of the Gāmaka rich man and my own son, and I wish you to act as my duly accredited representative on that happy occasion.” I also wish you to give me an account of the matrimonial ceremony with a statement of expenditure incurred in connection with the marriage, in due course. And it was signed by the rich man of Kosambī.

She had the fresh note nicely stamped with a fabricated seal and tied it to the edge of the waist-cloth of the lad as though nothing untoward had happened to it during his sound sleep.

Ghosaka spent a day in that house and resumed his journey after taking leave from the rich man. On arrival at the place of the supervisor, he promptly handed over the note with the information that the contents of the note should be

translated into action at once. The supervisor, after reading the note, summoned all the villagers and addressed the gathering: “My dear men, although you do not seem to care much about me, my own master, the rich man of Kosambī, has entrusted me with the responsibility of arranging, on his behalf, a matrimonial ceremony for his son, Ghosaka, and the daughter of the rich man of Gāmaka. It asks that all the products issued from this area should be collected and grouped into lots of 100 of each kind for presentation to the couple as his gifts.

When everything was set, he arranged for the matrimonial ceremony to be performed in a traditional manner and sent a report to the rich man of Kosambī, to the effect that the [665] matrimonial ceremony had been conducted and that everything had been done in compliance with his instructions, with a detailed statement of the accounts attached thereto.

On hearing the news, the rich man of Kosambī felt like one suffering from burns and uttered: “Alas! I have been ruined beyond redemption.” He suffered both physical and mental agony and was eventually attacked with acute dysentery, and, yet he had not given up the idea of denying the estate to Ghosaka by hook or by crook. He, therefore, wrote a note with an ulterior motive and sent it to the lad. The note read: “Why have you, my son, stayed there long after your marriage. I want you to come back home urgently.”

Upon receipt of the letter, simple-minded Ghosaka made preparations for the return journey. The daughter of the Gāmaka rich man perceived that the simpleton Ghosaka never knew that it was she who was responsible for his present luxurious life. So she tried to detain him by her own clever tactics. She convinced him by saying: “My dear man, don’t be so hasty. One should make the necessary arrangements before one goes to one’s relatives.” She delayed his early departure for good reasons.

The rich man of Kosambī, with an undaunted will, sent another note stating that he had broken down in health through an acute attack of deadly dysentery and that he was in a state of hopelessness and the situation warranted Ghosaka’s immediate return. The daughter of the Gāmaka rich man could not help worrying that, by that time, the truth connected with their union and other things was at stake.

“My dear man, the rich man of Kosambī is not your own father, though you have all along regarded him as your father. He had sent you to his supervisor

with a note containing express instructions to kill you right away. I personally destroyed that fateful note and substituted it with a fresh one of my own design that brought about our union. He did not call you for nothing but to expose that you are not his successor. You should wait until his death."

Soon afterwards a rumour that the Kosambī rich man had died was afloat and the couple made preparations to go there with attendants. The intelligent wife warned her husband to enter the building with great caution and to post escorts around the house beforehand. She accompanied her husband as he entered the house, raising her hands and crying as if lamenting. She found her way to the rich man who was lying in a dark corner and struck his chest with her head, as if in great sorrow sending the dying man already weak with ailment to an early death.

After the cremation of the corporeal relics (*sarīra-jhāpana*) of the rich man of Kosambī, Ghosaka, by generous bribing, induced the intimate servants of the deceased to tell outsiders that he was the son of the late old man.

Title of Rich Man of Kosambī

Seven days after the death of the rich man of Kosambī, King Udena considered that he had to find a person to succeed him, one with the desirable qualifications who would earn the title: "The Rich Man of Kosambī (*Kosambī-seṭṭhi*)." He ordered his royal servants to find out if the late rich man had a son or not. All the intimate servants of the late rich man unanimously reported that he had a son by the name of Ghosaka, who was worthy of succeeding his father. King Udena then conferred the title of "The Rich Man of Kosambī" on Ghosaka complete with insignia of office.

When Ghosaka became The Rich Man of Kosambī, his wise and intelligent wife said: "My dear lord, although we are of lowly origins, we have become great and glorious by virtue of our meritorious deeds of the past, and let us, therefore, maintain it by performing meritorious deeds with redoubled zeal and enthusiasm." Her husband readily accepted her good proposals, and the couple mutually agreed to spend 1,000 pieces of money every day in unbroken generosity (*nibaddha-dāna*), without any breach or breakage throughout their lives. [666]

The Recluses of Kosambī

There were three distinguished rich men in Kosambī country before the time of the Fully Self-Awakened Buddha. They were Ghosaka, Kukkuṭa and Pāvārika who were boyhood friends. They looked upon 500 recluses as their teachers in the absence of the Buddha and looked after them well. All the recluses used to take up residence at Kosambī during the rainy season, which lasted for four months, and retreated to the forests of the Himālayas in the summer and winter seasons, lasting eight months.

Years rolled by, and one day, the recluses felt exhausted after crossing a vast barren land without water on their way from the Himālayas to Kosambī. They eventually came upon a huge banyan tree and naturally entertained the hope that from the look of the banyan tree, there would be a guardian deity powerful enough to provide them with water.

The guardian deity of the banyan tree thought it would be well to fulfil the need of the recluses, and he caused a stream of water, about six inches in volume, to flow from the fork of the tree. When the recluses saw the silvery water, they received it with their cups and quenched their thirst, and then they began to think that it would be a good thing if the guardian deity could also provide them with food, since they happened to be in the thick of a forest far away from the villages. Whereupon, the guardian deity offered them celestial gruel, which was suitable for the recluses.

The recluses thought, since the guardian deity had provided them with food and water, they now had a desire to see him in person. The recluses asked him: "Deva, you are enjoying such pleasure; therefore, we wonder what kind of deeds of merit you did in your previous existence?" The deity replied: "I observed the eight precepts for half a day in my previous existence."

This will be further explained: This guardian deity of the banyan tree was one of the servants of Anāthapiṇḍika in his previous life. It was customary amongst the occupants of the house of Anāthapiṇḍika that everyone should observe the precepts on every holy day. One early morning of an Observance Day a workman was required to go to the place of work to perform his duties. When Anāthapiṇḍika took a list of the recipients of food for that day, he discovered that the workman was the only one who had gone to the forest for work that day. So he allowed the cook to draw food for the evening, just enough for that

workman. The cooking woman drew the allotted ration and kept it ready prepared for him. On his return, the cook gave him the share of food reserved for him.

When the workman found that the whole house was unusually quiet that day, he enquired about the unusual silence and the empty mess room from the cook. "It is an Observance Day, so all the occupants of the house are observing the precepts," was her reply. He asked her again: "Is it true, Mother?" She nodded her head, saying: "Yes, it is." – "Dear mother, please enquire from the rich man if one could keep precepts for the remaining part of the day."

The cook obliged him by putting his question to the rich man, who replied: "It is tantamount to keeping observance of precepts for half a day but not for a full day. On hearing the words of the rich man, the workman washed his mouth and made a formal vow to observe the precepts and went to his place and kept the precepts till he fell asleep. He died of exhaustion on the following morning and was reborn as a guardian deity of a huge banyan tree on the fringe of a forest.

On hearing the full account of his previous existence, the recluses asked the deity: "You have spoken about the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, which we have never heard of before. Is it true that a fully Self-Awakened Buddha has appeared?" When the deity answered in the affirmative, the recluses asked: "Where is that Buddha residing at presently?" The deity said: "The Realised One is residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī."

The recluses left, saying: "Dear Deva of the banyan tree, we are going to pay homage to [667] the Buddha! They arrived at Kosambī on the way to Sāvatthī. The three rich men extended cordial reception to the recluses and invited them to receive food on the following morning. There was a festival on a grand scale on that day.

As soon as they had taken their meal, the recluses said as a token of courtesy: "We are going." Surprised by such words, the rich men asked: "Revered sirs, it is quite unusual that you uttered such words when you have stayed only for a day on this occasion, though you have usually stayed for one, two, three or four months on previous occasions; we pray that you enlighten us as to the reason why you depart so early in the day?" Whereupon, the recluses replied: "Rich men, you have, indeed, spoken truly. The Fully Self-Awakened Buddha has appeared already, and death is certain, though we know not how or when.

Therefore, we are in great haste to go to the Buddha." The rich men asked for permission to go along with them.

The recluses said a few words of encouragement in response to their request: "You might stay behind and come afterwards as you all are saddled with worldly affairs which restrict your movements. We will go ahead of you." They left Kosambī and found their way to Sāvatthī without stopping too long on the way. On their arrival at Sāvatthī, they went immediately to the Buddha who fed them with the sweet elixir of Dhamma. The recluses became Arahats through path-knowledge acquired by hearing the teaching of the Buddha.

The Three Rich Men attain Stream-Entry

The three rich men left Kosambī, each with 500 carts fully loaded with gifts of all sorts for offering, arrived at Sāvatthī eventually. They stayed at a spot in the vicinity of Jetavana and erected temporary alms booths before they went to pay homage to the Buddha. On their arrival at the feet of the Buddha, they sat in suitable places. The Buddha then taught discourses in harmony with their dispositions, with the result that the three of them attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*). They made offerings of gifts on a large scale for fifteen days in succession. They cordially requested the Buddha to do them the honour of visiting Kosambī. The Buddha said in response: "Buddhas naturally prefer places of seclusion!"

They enthusiastically replied: "This is understood, exalted lord!" and added, "kindly honour us by your visit, on receipt of our formal invitation in due time," and after making three rounds keeping the Buddha on the right side, they went their way home, building resting centres at every one league's distance between Sāvatthī and Kosambī. On arrival at Kosambī they publicised the appearance of the Fully Self-Awakened Buddha far and wide. Each rich man constructed big monasteries in their own garden lands at great costs, in anticipation of the arrival of the Buddha.

The three monasteries were named after their supporters, so that the one donated by Ghosaka was called Ghositārāma, the one by Kukkuṭa was called Kukkuṭārāma, the one by Pāvārika in his mango garden was called Pāvārikambavana. When everything was ready, the three rich men despatched a cordial address of invitation to the Buddha, through a special messenger.

Brahmin Māgaṇḍiya and his Wife

[What follows is based on the Discourse to Māgaṇḍiya (*Māgaṇḍiya-sutta*, Snp 4.9, and its commentaries.]

The Buddha, on his way to Kosambī, in the company of many monastics, perceived that Brahmin Māgaṇḍiya and his wife were destined to attain the Arahat fruition. He, therefore, diverted his route from the main road towards the direction of the market-town of Kammāsadamma in Kuru country.

Brahmin Māgaṇḍiya returned early after spending almost all night outside the village in offering lights, according to their custom. On his way to the village to receive food in the morning, the Buddha noticed Māgaṇḍiya coming from the opposite direction at a distance. He grasped the opportunity of making his presence known to the old Brahmin. On seeing him, Māgaṇḍiya thought to himself: "I have all along been looking for a suitable bridegroom for my daughter, who is as charming as she is, who has a golden body and has assumed the form of a recluse. [668] This recluse is charming and good looking, he is a match to my daughter." With this idea, he went straight back to his house.

There was a link in the chain of Māgaṇḍiya's births, being a recluse in one of his existences. Therefore he had a natural inclination towards a recluse.

Old Māgaṇḍiya told his wife: "Dear one, I've never seen such a recluse before. The one whom I've seen has a golden colour. He has the appearance of the Great Brahma. He is really a match to my daughter Māgaṇḍiyā. Get my daughter Māgaṇḍiyā dressed up hurriedly." As they were busy with dressing up their daughter, the Buddha left a pair of footprints (*pada-cetiya*) at the spot where he had first seen the old Brahmin, and entered the town to receive alms food.

The impression of footprints of the Buddha stands on the spot of his own choice but not on any other place. At the same time, his footprints are visible only by privileged persons and nothing could stand in their way of seeing them: no bull elephant, no torrential rain, no violent destructive storm could destroy these foot prints (see the commentary to Dhp 21).

The old Brahmin, his wife and daughter went to the place where he had caught sight of the Buddha, but they could not see him as he had gone into the village by that time. The old Brahmin grumbled at the way in which his wife had taken so long in dressing their daughter that the recluse had gone away. The wife

asked the Brahmin: “Let him be gone, but do tell me in which direction he has gone.” The old Brahmin retorted: “He’s gone that way,” and eventually they found the footprints of the Buddha. The old man said: “Here are his footprints, he must have gone in that direction.”

On seeing the footprints, the old Brahmin’s wife thought: “This Brahmin is really ignorant. He is not intelligent enough to know the intricacies of the treatises in the Veda,” and to ridicule her husband, she made this caustic remark: “Brahmin, you are such a fool as to have said that you would give away our daughter to this person whose footprints are quite different from those of worldlings, who have the stains of passion (*rāga*), malice (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*). Brahmin, look at his footprints which characterize those of a Fully Self-Awakened Buddha, who has broken open the enveloping dome of the defilements; just look at those footprints with care.”

> *Rattassa hi ukkuṭikaṁ padaṁ bhave,*
> *duṭṭhassa hoti saha-sānupīḷitaṁ,*
> *mūḷhassa hoti avakaḍḍhitaṁ padaṁ,*
> *vivaṭṭa-chadassa idam-īdisaṁ padaṁ.*
>
> The footprint of one with strong lust does not touch the ground in the middle; the footprint of one with a great amount of anger is more marked at the heels; the footprint of one with a great amount of delusion is marked by the impression of its toes and heels. The footprint, we are seeing, is free from all these and therefore it is evident that it belongs to the omniscient one who had done away with all forms of defilements.

The old Brahmin felt uneasy in his mind because of his wife’s caustic remarks and complained: “Woman, you are rude and aggressive.” While they were thus engaged in arguing, the Buddha had taken his meal in the company of the monks and he made his appearance at a place where the Brahmin could easily see him.

When Brahmin Māgaṇḍiya saw the Buddha coming from a distance, he scolded his wife and said: “The person whom I spoke of is here,” and so saying he approached the Buddha and made things plain to him: [669] “Recluse! I have been looking for you all over the place since earlier in the day. There is no one in the whole world who is as pretty as my daughter, and there is no one in the world as handsome as yourself. I wish to give you my daughter to attend upon you as a housewife.”

The old Brahmin spoke directly and simply. Whereupon, the Buddha said, in response to his offer: "Brahmin, I had no desire whatsoever for the three charming daughters of Māra of the celestial plane of Vasavatti, who stood by my side and wooed and tempted me with talk of love-making full of sweet charms. So you might imagine how I would not have any desire for your daughter, Māgaṇḍiyā!" and he recited the following verse (Snp 4.9):

> *Disvāna Taṇhaṁ Aratiṁ Ragañ-ca,*
> *nāhosi chando api methunasmiṁ,*
> *kim-evidaṁ mutta-karīsa-puṇṇaṁ,*
> *pādā pi naṁ samphusituṁ na icche.*

> Although the three charming daughters of Māra: Taṇhā, Aratī, and Ragā approached me under the Goatherder's banyan tree with firm determination to tempt me to enjoy sensual pleasure by mutual co-operation with them, I had not the least desire to yield to their wishes nor was there the slightest taint of sensual passion in me. In the same way, I have not the slightest taint of sensual desire on seeing this young Māgaṇḍiyā whose physical body is full of filth such as excreta and urine. I have not the slightest desire to touch her, even with my feet.

The Buddha uttered this verse as though he was communicating not with the Brahmin but with a different person. Māgaṇḍiyā, the daughter of Brahmin Māgaṇḍiya, haboured resentment towards the Buddha for insulting her by saying her body was full of fifth such as excreta and urine and what not. "He should have rejected me in a simple manner that does not affect my dignity. I will revenge this insult, as and when opportunity occurs, hereafter." Thus Māgaṇḍiyā sowed the seed of enmity against the Buddha.

Māgaṇḍiya and his Wife become Arahats

The Buddha did not give any heed to the resentment harboured by the young lady, Māgaṇḍiyā, and proceeded to preach the Dhamma to the old Brahmin, Māgaṇḍiya, in harmony with his disposition. Māgaṇḍiya and his wife became noble Non-returners (*Anāgāmī*) at the conclusion of the discourse. In due time, the couple considered that no useful purpose will be served by continuing to live the household life after attainment to the exalted state of Non-returner for any length of time, and they entrusted their young daughter, Māgaṇḍiyā, to her paternal uncle, Cūḷa Māgaṇḍiya, before they received ordination. They both

became Arahats free from the pollutants (*āsava*) after ordination. After emancipating Māgaṇḍiya and his wife, the Buddha resumed his journey to the country of Kosambī and arrived there eventually.

Buddha accepts Three Monasteries

When the three rich men heard of the arrival of the Buddha in the company of monastics, they arranged for his reception on a grand scale and conducted him to the monasteries. On arrival at the monasteries, they sat at appropriate places and after paying their respects, addressed the Buddha: "Most exalted Buddha, the three monasteries which have been built, are intended to be offered to all the members of the noble Saṅgha. We humbly request the favour of your acceptance of the three monasteries for use by the Saṅgha who arrive [670] from the four quarters of the compass." The Buddha was pleased to accept them, as requested by the supporters. The three rich men then invited the Buddha for the performance of ceremonies at the feast the next day and then they made their departure. The Buddha stayed in the monasteries donated by the three rich men and observed the ninth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in the country of Kosambī.

> As a matter of course, the facts connected with the slave girl Khujjuttarā, Queen Sāmāvatī, and Queen Māgaṇḍiyā need to be included here to complete the picture. But facts connected with Khujjatarā and Sāmāvatī will be given when we come to the "Saṅgha Jewel" later on, see chapter 45b. A full account of Māgaṇḍiyā may be had by reference to the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) commentary on Dhp 21. It is proposed to deal here only with certain pertinent facts that warrant inclusion at this place.

Māgaṇḍiyā's Evil Acts

At the time the Buddha was observing the ninth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in Kosambī, the young woman Māgaṇḍiyā had become the Chief Queen of King Udena. This is how it happened: Māgaṇḍiyā was left by her parents to the care of her paternal uncle, Cūḷa Māgaṇḍiya, before they received ordination. King Udena made her his queen after consultation with her uncle Cūḷa Māgaṇḍiya. A separate chamber with 500 maids of honour was allotted to her by the king. Māgaṇḍiyā was thus a Queen of King Udena by the time the Buddha kept the ninth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at Kosambī.

Having come to understand that the Buddha had arrived at Kosambī, she caused all the reckless, starving drunkards to be summoned, and she bribed and

instigated them to call the Buddha by derogatory names as taught by her. When the Buddha entered the city on the following day, in response to the invitation of the three rich men to a feasting ceremony, the reckless drunkards reviled the Buddha by calling him the names taught by Māgaṇḍiyā.

Ven. Ānanda implored the Buddha to leave the place: "Most exalted Buddha, let us not continue our stay at a town where we have been abused. Let us go to another town!" Whereupon, the Buddha replied: "Dear Ānanda, Buddhas are totally indifferent to the eight worldly vicissitudes and all those boisterous and abusive noises are bound to die off within a period of seven days and no more. The abusers are liable to pay for their own demerit. You need not fret and bother yourself by their shortcomings!"

> This is an abridged form of the exposition in the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) commentary to Khujjuttara and Sāmāvatī's stories in AN 1.14.7; the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) commentary to Dhp 320-322 gives a more detailed exposition.

Extraordinary Volitional Efforts of the Three Rich Men

The three rich men invited the Buddha into the city and made offerings of all kinds on a large scale. The Buddha took residence at their monasteries in rotation and received offerings in the same manner. In other words, when the Buddha occupied Ghositārāma monastery on a certain day, he would receive alms food from Ghosita's house on the following day. In the same manner the Buddha received alms food from Kukkuṭa and Pāvārika, in order of succession.

After a lapse of one month, it dawned on the three rich men: "Buddhas have appeared for the purpose of safeguarding sentient beings and promoting their well-being; we should see to it that all the citizens should also take a share in the meritorious deeds."

They accordingly afforded an opportunity to all the citizens to participate in the meritorious deeds, with the result that all the citizens made offerings in their respective streets, quarters or by formation of charitable societies at that time.

27b: The 9th Rains Retreat (Schism)

A Great Dispute within the Saṅgha

When the Buddha was residing in the Ghositārāma monastery, there arose a dispute [671] between a monastic who was versed in the discipline (*vinaya*) and another monastic who was versed in the discourses (*sutta*), both were living in the same monastery.

One day, the one versed in the discourses entered the privy and came out, leaving a certain amount of water in the cup which was usually kept in the privy for common use. The monastic versed in the discipline, on entering the privy after him, saw the amount of water that was left in the cup, came out and asked the one versed in the discourses: "Friend, did you leave some water remaining in this cup?" The one versed in the discourses replied: "Friend, yes, I did," with all sincerity. The one versed in the discipline complained: "Well, friend, don't you know that such an act is tantamount to commission of an offence (*āpatti*)?" The one versed in the discourses replied: "No, I didn't know, my friend." Then the one versed in the discipline explained: "Friend, to leave any amount of water in the cup is an offence (*āpatti*)."

The monastic versed in the discourses said: "If I am guilty of an offence, I am prepared to remove the offence by confessing." Whereupon, the monastic versed in the discipline explained: "Friend, if such an act was committed through forgetfulness and without any volition there lies no fault." On hearing this, the monastic versed in the discourses formed the idea that he had not committed the offence of leaving behind some water in the cup.

> The monastic versed in the discipline had thought that such an offence as leaving the remaining amount of water in the cup does not amount to an offence (*āpatti*) by reason of absence of mind, which is devoid of volition. As a matter of fact, such an offence is tantamount to an offence (*dukkaṭa-āpatti*) no matter whether such an act was committed through forgetfulness or without volition.

The monastic versed in the discipline told his disciples that the monastic versed in the discourses did not know when he was guilty of an offence, in an attempt to decry the one versed in the discourses. And when the disciples of the monastic versed in the discipline met the disciples of the one versed in the discourses, the

former told the latter that their teacher had no knowledge of the guilt he had committed. When his disciples brought this news to his knowledge, the monastic versed in the discourses said: “That monastic versed in the discipline himself told me that I was not guilty of that offence, and now, he had changed his words and accused me of being guilty of that offence. He has told a lie.”

The disciples of the monastic versed in the discourses went and told the disciples of the monastic versed in the discipline: “Your teacher is a liar.” The quarrel thus began. The monastic versed in the discipline managed to obtain the support of his own associates and charged the monastic versed in the discourses with the offense of not seeing the fault as a fault (*āpattiyā adassane ukkhepanīyaṁ*) and suspended him with a formal resolution.

The monastic who was thus suspended, being well-informed and of social standing, approached his friends and associates and said: “This is a case where there was no fault, not a case where there is fault. I am unfallen, I have not fallen. I am unsuspended, I am not suspended. Although they have suspended me I am not guilty, I was suspended by a formal act which was not legally valid. I would beseech you to stand by me as my partisans on account of the rule, on account of the discipline (*Vinaya*). He thus gained many friends, supporters, and associates. A messenger was also sent to monastics in the villages and country to explain the situation. Thus the monastics in the country who were his associates also became his partisans.

The disciples of the suspended monastics versed in the discourses went to those who suspended them and complained by way of refutation: “Friends, that is a non-guilty case, it is not a case entailing any offence (*āpatti*). Wherefore, the monastic versed in the discourses was not guilty of any offence. He is unsuspended though he has been suspended by a formal act, because it was not legally valid.”

The monastics involved in suspending, in turn, told the suspended monastics that, it was a case of an offence (*āpatti*), it was not a non-offence case, the monastic versed in the discourses was, therefore, guilty of an offence; it was not that he was not guilty; therefore he deserved to be suspended by a formal act of suspension which was legally valid: “Friends, do not pursue this course, do not attend upon him any more.” But their appeals fell on the deaf ears of the

monastics versed in the discourses; they continued in attending upon the suspended monastic, [672] following him wherever he went.

The Buddha exhorts the Rival Factions

An unknown monastic approached the Buddha and reported with respect all that had happened. Whereupon, the Buddha uttered: "The Saṅgha is divided, the Saṅgha is divided," twice in succession and went to the monastics who had suspended the monastic versed in the discourses and addressed them from a prepared seat.

> Monastics had, by then, not actually been divided, but the Buddha had said it in anticipation of the imminent danger of a division in due course of time. For instance, one might have said: "The rice grains have ripened," when one noticed the break of rains ushering in the season for harvesting, although they were yet ripe; hence, the Buddha's utterance.

The Buddha said: "Monastics, you should not, through pride and vanity, think of suspending or expelling a monastic on account of a simple matter. Let us suppose that a certain monastic might be guilty of an offence (*āpatti*) though he did not think that it was an offence, on the one hand. On the other hand, there might be monastics who held it to be an offence (*āpatti*). Monastics, if those monastics know concerning that monastic: "This venerable one is well-informed and well versed in the Discourses and the Discipline (*Dhamma-Vinaya*) and the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*), intelligent and wise, experienced, conscientious, scrupulous and desirous of the three training practices; if we expel this monastic for not seeing the offence, if we do not carry out the Observance together with this monastic, and carry out the Observance without this monastic, by doing so, there will be dispute, strife, fighting, there will be a schism in the order, there will be an altercation in the order, dissension in the order, differences in the order." Monastics, knowing this, monastics should not suspend or expel a monastic for not seeing an offence to ward off schism and promote unity.

Monastics, you should not, through pride and vanity, think of suspending or expelling a monastic on account of a simple matter. Let us suppose that a certain monastic might be guilty of an offence (*āpatti*) though he did not think that it was an offence, on the one hand. On the other hand, there might be monastics who held it to be an offence (*āpatti*). Monastics, if those monastics know concerning that monastic: This venerable one is well informed and well versed

in the Discourses and the Discipline (*Dhamma-Vinaya*) and the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*), intelligent and wise, experienced, conscientious, scrupulous and desirous of the three training practices; if we expel this monastic for not seeing the offence, and do not perform the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*) ceremony inviting one another for pardon together with this monastic, if we perform the Invitation without this monastic; if we do not carry out a formal act of the order (*Saṅgha-kamma*) together with this monastic, if we will carry out a formal act of the order without this monastic; if we do not sit on a seat together with this monastic, if we sit on a seat without this monastic; if we do not sit to drink gruel together with this monastic, if we sit to drink gruel without this monastic; if we do not sit in a refectory together with this monastic, if we sit in a refectory without this monastic; if we do not dwell under the same roof with this monastic, if we dwell under one roof without him; if we do not pay respect according to seniority, greet or worship with joined palms, together with this monastic, if we will pay respect according to seniority, greet or worship with joined palms without this monastic; by doing so, there will be dispute, strife, fighting, there will be schism in the order, there will be an altercation in the order, dissension in the order, differences in the order. Monastics, knowing this, monastics should not suspend or expel such a monastic for not seeing an offence to ward off schism and promote unity."

After teaching the above discourse on the need for unity in the Saṅgha to the monastics who had suspended the monastic, the Buddha went over to the disciples of the suspended monastic who was well-versed in the discourses and delivered this discourse: "Monastics, when you have committed an offence, you should not think that amends should not be made for the offence, thinking: 'We have not committed an [673] offence.'

Monastics, supposing a certain monastic might be guilty of an offence (*āpatti*), though he did not think it was an offence, on one hand; and on the other hand, there might be monastics who held it to be an offence (*āpatti*). Monastics, if that monastic, who thinks he has not committed an offence, knows concerning those monastics: These venerable ones are well informed and well versed in the Discourses and the Discipline (*Dhamma-Vinaya*) and the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*), intelligent and wise, conscientious, scrupulous and desirous of the three training practices. Either because of me or because of anyone else, these

monastics should not take a wrong action through selfish desire, ill-will, through ignorance, through fear.

If these monastics suspend me for not seeing an offence and if they do not carry out the Observance together with me, if they carry out the Observance without me; if these monastics do not perform the Invitation ceremony together with me, if they perform the Invitation ceremony without me; if they do not carry out a formal act of the order (*Saṅgha-kamma*) together with me, if they will carry out a formal act of the order without me; if they do not sit on a seat together with me, if they sit on a seat without me; if they do not sit to drink gruel together with me, if they sit to drink gruel without me; if they do not sit in a refectory together with me, if they sit in a refectory without me; if they do not dwell under the same roof with me, if they dwell under one roof without me; if they do not pay respect according to seniority, greet or worship with joined palms, together with me, if they will pay respect according to seniority, greet or worship with joined palms without me; by doing so, there will be dispute, strife, fighting, there will be schism in the order, there will be altercation in the order, dissension in the order, differences in the order. Monastics, knowing this, the monastic, should confess the guilt even out of faith in the Saṅgha to ward off schism and promote unity."

After delivering this discourse for unity of Saṅgha, the Buddha rose from the seat and departed.

> The monastic versed in the discourses had honestly expressed his desire to confess and to ask for pardon, if he had committed an offence when the monastic versed in the discipline made a complaint at first. When he was told subsequently that any offence committed through thoughtlessness and without volition does not amount to offence or a wrong act he sincerely thought he was free from guilt.

Had the Buddha decided to blame those versed in the discipline for suspending the monastics versed in the discourses on such grounds, they would have accused him of taking sides with their opponents, thus exposing themselves to the risk of committing an offence against him, a demerit that could direct them to the realms of misery.

Again, the monastic versed in the discourses had knowingly left a certain amount of water in the cup and as such, he was guilty of an infringement of a

light offence (*dukkaṭa-āpatti*). His disciples had expressed their opinion that such a judgment was legally invalid, through attachment to their teacher.

Had the Buddha decided to approve the judgment of those versed in the discipline on such grounds, the disciples of the monastic, who was versed in the discourses, would naturally accuse him of taking sides with their opponents thus exposing themselves to the risk of committing an offence against him, a demerit that could direct them to realms of misery.

> It should be borne in mind therefore, that the Buddha had thus refrained from putting blame on either of the rival groups in the interest of peace and tranquillity and after delivering discourses for the unity of the Saṅgha, made his departure from that place. [674]

Exposition on being in Communion

Now at that time, monastics who had been suspended carried out the Observance (*Uposatha*) and performed the formal legal acts (*Saṅgha-kamma*) in the boundary hall (*sīma*) of the same monastery; whereas those who had expelled the former, carried out the Observance and performed the formal legal acts by having gone outside the monastery.

One of the monastics of the latter group approached the Buddha with profound respect and addressed him: “Most exalted Buddha, those monastics who had been suspended carried out the Observance and performed the formal legal acts in the boundary hall (*sīma*) of the same monastery; whereas those who expelled the former carried out the Observance and performed the formal legal acts by having gone outside the monastery.”

Whereupon the Buddha gave the following answer to that monastic: “Monks, in case those suspended monastics carry out the Observance and perform other legal acts in accordance with the procedure for a motion and proclamation (*ñatti-kamma-vācā*) laid down by me, in the boundary hall (*sīma*) of the monastery, their performances must be held to be quite in order and legally valid.

In the same way, if you, the suspending monastics, who have suspended the former, carried out the observance and performed other legal acts in accordance with the procedure for a motion and proclamation (*ñatti-kamma-vācā*), laid

down by me, in the boundary hall (*sīma*) of the monastery, your performances also must be held to be quite in order and legally valid.

Monks, what is the reason for this? The suspended monastics belong to a different communion from yours, they are not associated with you and you belong to a different communion from theirs through not associating with them.

Monks, there are two grounds for belonging to a different communion (*ñāṇa-saṁvāsa*): 1) One's own effort; one makes oneself belong to a different communion; and 2) being suspended by the Saṅgha for not seeing an offence (*apatti*), for not making amends, for not abandoning a wrong view. Thus there are these two grounds for belonging to a different communion.

Monks, there are two grounds for belonging to the same communion (*samāna-saṁvāsa*): 1) One's own effort, one makes oneself belong to the same communion; and 2) the whole Saṅgha lifts the suspension and restores (*osaraṇīya-kamma*) the monastic who was suspended (*ukkhepanīya-kamma*).

There are two grounds for being in a different communion (*ñāṇa-saṁvāsa*) and two grounds for being in the same communion (*samāna-saṁvāsa*), as explained by the Buddha.

> There are two groups or two types of monastics: 1) Lawful monastics (*Dhamma-vādi*) who suspended the guilty monastics; and 2) unlawful monastics who are suspended for being guilty of one or the other offence (*adhamma-vādi*). Should a monastic, residing with one group or the other, decide, after scrutinizing the views of both groups of monastics, that the monastics who are suspended are unlawful monastics, and the monastics, who suspended them are lawful ones, he himself has made himself of different communion from the suspended monastics and of the same communion with the suspending monastics.

Conduct of the Monastics in the Dispute

Now, at that time, monastics fell into dispute, quarrelling and causing strife at the refectories in the villages. They behaved unsuitably towards one another in action and in speech. They came to blows. People looked down upon them, criticized them. Well conducted and modest monastics reported this unhappy state of affairs to the Buddha who [675] sent for the disputing monastics.

Having made enquiries and having rebuked them, the Buddha gave an appropriate talk and addressed them thus: "Monastics, when the Saṅgha is divided, and if it is not behaving according to the rules, if there is discord, you should sit down separately, thinking: 'At the very least we must not behave unsuitably towards one another in physical action and in speech. We cannot come to blows.' Monastics, when the Saṅgha is divided, if it is behaving according to rule and if there is friendliness, you may sit down next to one another." These are the guidelines given to the rival monastics for observance, whenever there is dissension amongst the Saṅgha.

The two rival groups of monastics went on quarrelling, making strife, and falling into disputes in the midst of the Saṅgha, wounding one another with the weapon of the tongue. The Saṅgha was unable to quell the dispute.

Then a certain monastic approached the Buddha, having paid respects to him, he stood at a suitable distance and reported the matter and requested him to approach the quarrelling monastics.

Whereupon, the Buddha went to the monastics and exhorted them: "Monastics, it is not at all right and proper for you to be quarrelling, fighting and opposing one another. Enough! No disputes, no quarrelling, no contentions."

Whereupon, a monastic of the suspended group, who had the welfare of the Buddha at heart, said: "Most exalted Buddha, let the lord of the Dhamma wait, let the Fortunate One remain unconcerned, intent on abiding in peace for the present. We will be responsible for these disputes, quarrels and strife." This was his appeal to the Buddha. The Buddha exhorted them twice in the same strain, and the monastic of the suspended group repeated his appeal for two times in succession.

> The suspended monastic was a well-wisher of the Buddha. He took pains to appeal to him not to trouble himself about the matter at a time when the flame of anger was at its peak.

But the Buddha perceived that the two rival groups would come back to their senses once the anger was removed, and so out of compassion for these monastics, he delivered a discourse on the life story of Dīghāvu with that objective in view.

The Story of Dīghāvu

This story has been compiled from the story about the Chapter about the Monks from Kosambī (*Kosambakakkhandhaka*, Mv 10). For further particulars, refer to the Birth Story about King Dīghiti of Kosala (*Dīghīti-kosala-jātaka*, Ja 371), and the Birth Story at Kosambī (*Kosambī-jātaka*, Ja 428).

Once, there was a king of Benares by the name of King Kāsi, who had a great amount of wealth, a big army consisting of war chariots, elephants, horses, infantry, a vast expanse of land, a big treasury and fully stocked granaries. The King of Kosala, by the name of Dīghīti, was poor, having only a small amount of wealth, a small army, a limited number of war chariots, elephants, horses and infantry, a small treasury and granaries. Monastics, King Brahmadatta, alias King Kāsi, prepared for war against King Dīghīti, and marched towards Kosala with a great army comprised of war chariots, elephants, horses and infantry.

On hearing the alarming news, King Dīghīti of Kosala weighed in his mind: "King Brahmadatta of Kāsi is rich, he owns an enormous amount of wealth, has a great army, comprised of war chariots, elephants, horses and infantry, a big treasury, a vast expanse of land and granaries, whereas, I am comparatively poor, having a small amount of wealth, a small army and I am sure to be defeated by the first attack launched by that king. As such, it would be wiser to evacuate than to be defeated." Therefore, taking his queen, he fled from his city long before the enemy reached it.

Monastics, King Brahmadatta took possession of King Dīghīti's troops, chariots, territory, [676] treasuries and granaries, and reigned over his newly conquered land. Dīghīti, the king and his queen arrived at Benares in due course, and took refuge at a potter's house, on the fringes of the city, in the guise of wandering ascetics.

The Queen conceives a Child

Monastics, after some time, the Queen of King Dīghīti became pregnant and developed a strong desire for a certain particular thing, such as to see at sunrise a fourfold army, fully arrayed, fully equipped, standing on level ground and to drink the water used in the washings of swords. The queen made it known to her husband, King Dīghīti of Kosala, that she had conceived a child and that she had

a strong desire to see a fully equipped army at sunrise, and to drink water used in the washing of swords.

Whereupon, the King of Kosala said: "Dear queen, how will it be possible for us to see a fully equipped army and to get water used for the washing of swords, when we are in a humble condition!" The queen replied: "Your majesty, I will die if my wishes are not fulfilled."

At that time, King Dīghīti's boyhood friend was the Brahmin priest of Brahmadatta, King of Kāsi. Monastics, Dīghīti, King of Kosala went to see his boyhood friend, the Brahmin priest and told him: "My dear friend, my queen is pregnant, and she has a strong desire to see a fully equipped army standing on a vast and level plain, and to drink the water used in the washing of swords."

Whereupon, the Brahmin said: "Your majesty, in that case, I should like to see the queen." Monastics, the queen went to see the Brahmin priest. When the Brahmin noticed the queen coming from a distance, he got up and arranging his upper garment over one shoulder and with his hands clasped announced joyously: "Indeed, a king of Kosala is in your womb," for three times in succession. And he assured the queen: "Be happy, good queen, you will get a chance at sunrise to see the fully equipped fourfold army arrayed on a level ground and drink the washing of swords."

Monastics, the Brahmin priest went to King Brahmadatta of Kāsi and addressed him, saying: "Your majesty, the signs which I can see are such that a fully equipped army must appear on a vast plain at sunrise and the royal swords are to be washed then." The king ordered his courtiers to carry out the instructions given by the Brahmin priest.

Dīghāvu is Born

The queen of King Dīghīti had her strong desires fulfilled as arranged by the Brahmin; she had seen a fully equipped army standing on a vast plain and drunk the water used in washing the swords. Monastics, she gave birth to a baby son in due time and he was named Dīghāvu.

Monastics, when Prince Dīghāvu had grown to an age of discretion, it occurred to King Dīghīti: "The King Brahmadatta of Kāsi had hitherto done much harm to us; he had seized our army, war chariots, elephants, horses, and territories including small villages; deprived us of our treasuries and granaries. He would

do away with the three of us at once if he found out our whereabouts; it would be safer for our son, Dīghāvu, to stay outside the city. He accordingly arranged for Dīghāvu to stay aloof from them at a place outside the boundaries of the city. Monastics, Prince Dīghāvu learnt various arts and sciences at that time during the period of his exile.

Monastics, a barber of King Dīghīti of Kosala had free access to the palace of the King of Kāsi. Monastics, when the barber saw the king and queen of Kosala taking refuge in an old hut of the potter under the guise of ascetics on the outskirts of the city, he went to King Brahmadatta of Kāsi and reported: "Your majesty, King Dīghīti and his queen have been taking refuge in a hut of a potter under the guise of ascetics on the outskirts of the city." Monastics, King Brahmadatta ordered his attendants to bring the king and queen of Kosala to him. The attendants did as they were bid.

Monastics, King Brahamadatta of Kāsi gave orders to his servants: "Courtiers, fasten [677] the hands of King Dīghīti and his queen at their backs tightly, shave their heads with a razor, beat a drum that produces harsh and broken sound, take them from street to street, from crossroads to crossroads, beating them all along the way, and finally take them out of the city by the southern gate to be cut up into four pieces. Their remains must be discarded to the four quarters." The executioners did as they were ordered by the king.

King Kosala's Doctrine of Peace

At that time, Prince Dīghāvu had a longing to see his parents. He thought to himself: "It is quite a long time since I have seen my parents, I had better go and see them now." He therefore entered the town and came face to face with his ill-fated parents, with their hands fastened tight at their backs, their heads shaved, being beaten up and paraded from street to street, from crossroads to crossroads to the unbearable sounds of the drums. He was greatly shocked and choked with a deep sense of sorrow, but he managed to go to his parents, even with strained emotions.

Monastics, when King Dīghīti saw his son, Dīghāvu coming from a distance, he uttered these words of advice meant for his son: "My dear son, Dīghāvu, do not look far and do not look close either; my dear son, Dīghāvu, revenge does not promote peace; my dear son, Dīghāvu, only non-resentment gives peace."

When King Dīghīti uttered such words of advice, the courtiers misunderstood him and said: "This King Dīghīti of Kosala had lost his head; where is his son, Dīghāvu? Whom is he addressing as: 'My dear son, Dīghāvu, do not look far and do not look close either; my dear son, Dīghāvu, revenge does not promote peace; my dear son, Dīghāvu, only non-resentment gives peace?' "

When King Dīghīti heard their remarks, he retorted: "My dear men, I am not speaking thus through loss of mind, only wise men will understand the meaning of what I said."

King Dīghīti uttered the same words of advice three times and the executioners made the same comments three times. King Dīghīti gave the same explanation to them, to show that he was mentally sound and that it was meant for wise men who would understand the meaning.

Monastics, the executioners went on punishing the royal couple all along the route and finally took them out of the city via the south gate, as instructed by their king. King Dīghīti and his queen were cut into four pieces and their severed limbs discarded to the four quarters. The executioners went back into the city after posting guards at the place of execution.

Monastics, Prince Dīghāvu went into the city and came out with some liquor for presentation to the guards, who soon got drunk and fell into deep slumber. Dīghāvu collected a pile of firewood and placed the remains of his royal parents on top of the pile and cremated them in the traditional way. He raised his clasped hands in a respectful manner and circumambulted about the bonfire.

At that time, King Brahmadatta was in the upper chamber of his palace. He caught sight of Dīghāvu through the window, in the act of circumambulating the funeral pyre three times with his palms joined and raised toward it. It at once occurred to him: "That man must be one of the near relatives or kinsmen of Dīghīti, and the one who would certainly do something against me." He was greatly annoyed that no one was thoughtful enough to bring such a case to his notice. [678]

Prince Dīghāvu serves as Elephant Keeper

Monastics, Prince Dīghāvu went into the jungle and mourned over the loss of his royal parents, weeping for a long while and then he re-entered the city. He went

to the elephant stable near the palace and requested the royal elephant master to employ him as a trainee. His request was readily granted.

Monastics, Prince Dīghāvu used to get up early and sing sweet songs and play the harp harmoniously at the elephant shed every morning. On hearing the singing and playing of the harp, King Brahamadatta asked his couriers as to who was the singer who played on the harp early in the morning every day. The courtiers gave the king a full description of the singer who played the harp. The king then ordered his men to bring the singing lad who played the harp so well.

When the couriers brought Dīghāvu before the king, he was asked: "Boy, is it you who sings sweet songs and plays the harp so well at the elephant stable early in the morning everyday?" The prince gave his answer in the affirmative. Then the king ordered him to sing and to play his harp in his presence.

Monastics, Prince Dīghāvu sang songs sweetly in harmony with the tuning of the harp, in compliance with the royal orders. The king was greatly delighted with his performance and ordered the boy to serve him as one of the attendants. The prince undertook to serve as an attendant to the king. In due course, he was upgraded to a confidential position of trust in consideration of the five qualities that he possessed: 1) Getting up earlier than the king; 2) going to bed after the king; 3) always being alert and willing to serve; 4) doing all that would please the king; and 5) being in the habit of speaking well and affectionately.

Prince Dīghāvu honours his Father's Words

Monastics, one day, King Brahmadatta of Kāsi ordered Prince Dīghāvu to harness the royal chariot: "Dear lad, harness the chariot, we will go into the deer forest." The prince replied: "Very well, your majesty," and when everything was set, he reported the matter to the king: "Your majesty, the chariot is ready, and it is up to your majesty to decide when to leave." The king started off hunting for big game in the forest followed by a company of his army.

Prince Dīghāvu drove away the royal chariot at such a great speed that it eventually got cut off from the royal followers. When they had gone far enough, King Brahmadatta ordered Prince Dīghāvu: "Boy, we have been cut off from the party, I am tired and you might unharness the chariot, so that I might take some rest." The prince unharnessed the royal chariot and sat cross-legged on the

ground. The king lay down to relax with his head resting on the lap of the young lad. He soon fell into a slumber through tiredness.

Monastics, when the king was sound asleep, Prince Dīghāvu's mind began to work: "This King Brahmadatta of the Kāsi country has done much harm to us. He had forcibly seized our army, elephants, horses, chariots, territories, treasuries and granaries. It was he who has killed my parents; the opportunity for revenge upon him has presented itself now."

He drew his sword out, monastics, but his father's advice crossed his mind: "My dear son, do not look far and do not look close either; my dear son, Dīghāvu, revenge does not promote peace; my dear son, Dīghāvu, only non-resentment gives peace." Thinking "It would not be right for me to go against my father's advice," he replaced the sword in its sheath.

For a second time, for a third time, Prince Dīghāvu drew his sword out to wreak vengeance on his old enemy and for the second and third time he replaced his sword in its sheath, remembering the advice given by his royal father. [679]

Then Brahmadatta, the King of Kāsi, frightened and agitated, alarmed, unsteadily got up all of a sudden from his sleep. Whereupon, Prince Dīghāvu asked him: "Your majesty, what has caused you to get frightened, agitated and alarmed?" The king replied: "Boy, I dreamt in my sleep that I was running away for my life through fright, running from the son of the King of Kosala who was chasing me with a sword."

Monastics, then Prince Dīghāvu held the head of King Brahmadatta with his left hand and drew out the sword with his right hand and said: "Your majesty, the son of the late King of Kosala is no one other than myself. You have done much harm to us, you have forcibly seized our army, elephants, horse, chariots, territories, treasuries and granaries. It was you who killed my royal parents. Now, it is my turn for revenge on you!"

Whereupon, King Brahmadatta touched Prince Dīghāvu's feet with his head and entreated him for mercy by granting him life: "Dear Dīghāvu, please grant me life." He thus entreated for mercy three times in succession. Then the prince replied: "How will it be possible for me to grant life to a king! It is a king who should grant me life." – "Well then, dear Dīghāvu, you grant me life and I will grant you life."

Monastics, Brahmadatta, the King of Kāsi and Prince Dīghāvu granted life to one another, and they took hold of one another's hands. They vowed to do no harm to one another. Then the king asked Dīghāvu: "My dear son, please get the royal chariot which is waiting and let us return." The prince said: "Very well, your majesty." When everything was set, he reported that everything was ready and it was up to his majesty to leave as and when he so wished.

Monastics, once the king had mounted the chariot, Prince Dīghāvu drove the chariot with accelerated speed and they caught up with the army in no time. King Brahmadatta of Kāsi, accompanied by his troops then returned to the city. On arrival at the royal palace, the king had the councillors and ministers assembled and addressed them: "Good sirs, what would you do if Dīghāvu, the son of King Dīghīti, could be found now?"

Then some said: "We would cut his hands off." Others said: "We would cut off his feet," again others said: "We would cut off his hands and feet, ears, nose, ears and tongue; we would cut off his head." The king pointing his finger, said: "This is Prince Dīghāvu, son of the late King Dīghīti of Kosala. Nothing should be done against him now. Just as he has granted me life, so also have I granted him life." Thus King Brahmadatta of Kāsi made this proclamation.

Prince Dīghāvu's Doctrine of Peace

King Brahamadatta of Kāsi than asked Prince Dīghāvu: "My dear son, your father is believed to have spoken four phrases to you: 'My dear son, Dīghāvu, do not look far and do not look close either; my dear son, Dīghāvu, revenge does not promote peace; my dear son, Dīghāvu, only non-resentment gives peace.' My dear son, Dīghāvu, what did your father mean?"

Prince Dīghāvu gave the following reply in response to the king's query: Your majesty, my father advised me: "Not to look far." This should be understood to mean: "One should not be at enmity with other people for any length of time." Your majesty, my father advised me: "Not to look close, either." This should be understood to mean: "Do not shorten the term of friendship, but strengthen and prolong ties of friendship."

Your majesty, my father advised me: "My dear son, enmity could not be brought to an end by any act of revenge." You can only do away with enmity by [680] avoidance of revenge. Your majesty, in case I assassinated you for killing my

parents, your well-wishers would undoubtedly try to kill me. That would not end the chain of events, for my well-wishers would turn against your well-wishers, and the endless chain of events would go on for ever and ever!

Now that your majesty had granted me life and I have done likewise, the question of enmity or revenge should no more arise and so my good father said: "My son, revenge does not pay, harbour no resentment and be happy," with that end in view. Thus Prince Dīghāvu interpreted the meaning of his father's advice on the end of strife. To this objective, the wise men of olden days had also left the following lines for our guidance:

1. Don't prolong the cause of enmity.
2. Don't shorten the term of friendship.
3. Friendliness eliminates enmity.
4. Resentment begets revenge.

Monastics, when Prince Dīghāvu had explained the underlying meaning of his father's advice, King Brahmadatta of Kāsi said: "My dear men, it is indeed wonderful, such a marvellous thing has never occurred before. This Prince Dīghāvu is so wise that he could explain to us at length, what his father had uttered in abridged form!" Thus the King of Kāsi spoke highly of Prince Dīghāvu and formally returned the possessions of his father, the late King Dīghīti of Kosala, comprising the army, elephants, horses, chariots, territories, treasuries and granaries, and above all, he gave his daughter, who had come of age, to Prince Dīghāvu."

Buddha's Exhortation

"Monastics, it will be seen that, even those kings in arms could come to friendly terms through forbearance and kindly disposition! Monastics, when those of you who have become members of the Saṅgha within the domain of my instructions that are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good at the end, cannot forgive and act in a friendly way, how can you expect to uphold the dignity and maintain the nobility and purity of my teaching?"

Then the Buddha repeated, for the third time, the exhortation he had given before: "Monastics, it is not at all right and proper for you to be quarrelling, fighting and opposing one another. Enough! No disputes, no quarrelling, no

contentions." At this last exhortation also, the monastic who belonged to the suspended group addressed the Buddha as before: "Most exalted Buddha, let the lord of the Dhamma wait, let the Fortunate One remain unconcerned, intent on abiding in peace for the present. We will be responsible for these disputes, quarrels and strife." The Buddha then considered: "These useless people, without hope of achieving the paths and fruitions, are really incorrigible. It's not easy to bring them to their senses," and he departed from that place.

The Buddha entered Kosambī early in the morning for alms food and after his meal returned to the monastery. He then had his lodging kept in order and carrying his robe and the alms bowl he stood in the midst of the monastics and gave the following exhortations in ten verses (*Kosambiya-jātaka*, Ja 428):

> *Puthu-saddo samajano, [681] na bālo koci maññatha,*
> *Saṅghasmiṁ bhijjamānasmiṁ, nāññaṁ bhiyyo amaññaruṁ.*

Those monastics, with foul mouths and rude manners, have boisterous, cheerless voices; they are the same type of persons as those with impure hearts; there is no one amongst them who knows his own folly or foolishness. Above all, none of these monastics has realized that dissension amongst the members of Saṅgha has arisen because of his own conduct.

> *Parimuṭṭhā paṇḍitābhāsā, vācā-gocara-bhāṇino,*
> *yāvicchanti mukhā-yāmaṁ, yena nītā na taṁ vidū.*

Those monastics, with foul mouths and rude manners, are greatly infatuated by delusion, intent upon quarrelling and under the guise of wise and intelligent persons. They do not dwell in contemplative mood. They open their mouths wide and utter abusive language without any sense of shame or dread of blame. None of them keep silent as a gesture of regard and respect for the Saṅgha. They are ignorant of the fact that such quarrels and conflicts invariably lead to a state of shamefulness. They do not perceive that ill-will leads them on to such shameful acts.

> *Akkocchi maṁ avadhi maṁ, ajini maṁ ahāsi me,*
> *ye ca taṁ upanayhanti, veraṁ tesaṁ na sammati.*

If you harbour resentment against a person for having abused you, tormented you, overpowered you, robbed or deprived you of your property; and if you do not care to forbear against that aggressor in the

interest of peace and tranquillity, the flame of enmity will not die down, but it will keep on burning up to the time of dissolution of a world-element.

Akkocchi maṁ avadhi maṁ, ajini maṁ ahāsi me,
ye ca taṁ nupanayhanti, veraṁ tesūpasammati.

If you do not harbour any resentment against a person who has abused you, who has tormented you, who has overpowered you, who has robbed or deprived you of your property, through forbearance and equanimity, the flame of enmity is bound to dwindle to a vanishing point for lack of fresh fuel!

Na hi verena verāni, sammantīdha kudācanaṁ,
averena ca sammanti, esa Dhammo sanantano.

In this world, the flame of animosity cannot be extinguished by harbouring resentment and taking revenge on one another. To wash ordure by means of ordure will not be of any avail! Ordure could only be cleaned by means of pure [682] water. In the same manner, the flame of animosity could only be extinguished, and peace and tranquillity restored, by forbearance and loving-kindness. This is the path that all the Buddhas and Paccekabuddhas have hitherto followed.

Pare ca na vijānanti, mayam-ettha yamāmase,
ye ca tattha vijānanti, tato sammanti medhagā.

Amongst the masses of monastics, the unintelligent and quarrelsome monastics are ignorant of the fact that they are on their march towards the kingdom of death, with the movement of time! Whereas, those intelligent and thoughtful monastics, amongst the masses of monastics, are fully alive to the fact that all conditioned things are getting closer to the jaws of death with the progress of time. Consequently, quarrel and conflicts are extinguished and peace and tranquillity prevail.

Aṭṭhicchinnā pāṇa-harā, gavāssa-dhana-hārino,
raṭṭhaṁ vilum-pamānānaṁ, tesam-pi hoti saṅgati.

When friendships could be fostered and tranquillity established by peaceful means with the kings, who had mercilessly broken the bones and limbs of our parents through malice, assassinated them, robbed us of our cattle and the worldly possessions of our parents by brute force, I

personally do not know why you monastics, my own beloved sons, cannot foster brotherly feeling among yourselves, and re-establish a state of tranquillity and stability among yourselves! It is certainly possible!

Sace labhetha nipakaṁ sahāyaṁ,
saddhiṁ-caraṁ sādhu-vihāri dhīraṁ,
abhibhuyya sabbāni parissayāni,
careyya tenattamano satīmā.

When a mindful person obtains a friend in the Dhamma, who is accomplished in the three training practices (*sikkha*), who is self-composed, prudent and wise, he should take delight in associating with him, and strive to overcome external enemies, such as elephants, leopards and tigers, and extirpate the internal foes, such as greed, hatred and delusion, leaving an ascetic life in search of truth.

No ce labhetha nipakaṁ sahāyaṁ,
saddhiṁ caraṁ sādhu-vihāri dhīraṁ,
rājā va raṭṭhaṁ vijitaṁ pahāya,
eko care mātaṅgaraññeva nāgo.

Should a mindful person fail to obtain a friend in the Dhamma who is accomplished in the three training practices (*sikkha*), who is self-composed, prudent and wise, he should strive after the ultimate truth all alone, by way of the ascetic life, after the manner of those ancient monarchs who abdicated their thrones, abandoned their countries and renounced the world, such as, Mahā Janaka and Arindama, or like a bull elephant of Mataṅga breed which roams the forest all alone. [683]

Ekassa caritaṁ seyyo, natthi bāle sahāyatā,
Eko care na ca pāpāni kayirā,
appossukko mātaṅgaraññeva nāgo.

To wander all alone, leading the life of an ascetic, and striving after the ultimate truth, deserves praise and admiration. There is no prospect whatsoever for the acquisition of faith and insight or development of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*), through association with lowly ignorant persons. One should strive, single handed, after the ultimate goal, like a bull elephant wandering all over the forests without any cares of the world! No evil deeds should be performed.

The Buddha delivered this discourse in ten verses, while standing in the midst of the members of the Saṅgha (*Saṅgha*), after which, he proceeded all alone to the village of Bālakaloṇaka. [684]

28: The 10th Rains Retreat (Pāḷileyyaka)

Bālakaloṇaka was the feudal village of the wealthy Upāli. The Buddha went to that village without telling either his chief disciple or any great disciple, not even Ven. Ānanda. Like a bull elephant that leaves his herd, he went there all by himself, taking his bowl and robe.

For there would be no living being whom the Buddha was to enlighten during the coming tenth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*). His lone departure from Kosambī city was a device to admonish the contentious and quarrelsome monks. He set off to Pāḷileyyaka forest and on his way, as he wanted to gladden and bolster up the elder Bhagu, who was then staying in solitude in a forest-dwelling with Bālakaloṇaka village as the resort for alms.

When the Buddha thus went alone, 500 monks said to Ven. Ānanda: "Ven. Ānanda, the Buddha has set out by himself. Let us follow him!" Ānanda then replied: "Brethren, when the Fortunate One packs up his beddings, takes his bowl and robe and sets out alone without any attendant monk and without asking the Saṅgha for leave, then it is his wish to go unaccompanied. A disciple should act in accordance with the will of his teacher. Therefore, these days you should not follow the Master." Thus Ven. Ānanda did not let them go, nor did he himself follow the Master, knowing the Buddha's wish.

When Ven. Bhagu saw from afar the Buddha coming alone to Bālakaloṇaka village, he prepared the seat, kept the water ready for the Buddha to wash his feet, and the board to wash his feet on and the potsherd to rub them with. He welcomed the Buddha and took his bowl and robe. Sitting on the seat prepared by Ven. Bhagu, the Buddha washed his feet and asked Ven. Bhagu, who was seated in a reverent posture at a suitable distance: "Are you fit and well, monk? Do you have enough food? Do you get alms without hardship?" – "Venerable sir, I am alright. I have enough food. I get alms without hardship." The Buddha then gave a talk on the benefit of living in solitude and then he proceeded to the Eastern Bamboo Grove.

Anuruddha, Nandiya and Kimila

At that time, the three venerables: Anuruddha, Nandiya and Kimila were living in the Eastern Bamboo Grove. When the watchman of the grove saw from a distance the Buddha approaching, he mistook him for an ordinary monk and

tried to block the way saying: "Monk, do not enter this grove. Three noble clansmen, who are bent on their own welfare, reside in this grove. Do not cause discomfort to them."

> Just as a hungry man longs for food, a thirsty man longs for drinking water, a man oppressed by cold longs for heat, a man oppressed by heat longs for cold, or a sad man longs for happiness, even so the Buddha, being weary of the disunited and contentious Kosambī monks, pondered as to who the virtuous men living there could be. While so doing, there appeared in his vision these three noble clansmen. Wishing to encourage them, he considered thus: "If I do so, this would be a good way to admonish the Kosambī monks." Hence he made his visit to the Eastern Bamboo Grove, the abode of the said three good monks.
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> The grove where Ven. Anuruddha and others were dwelling was fenced, guarded and conserved by its owners so that the fruit, flowers, gum and wooden buildings in it might be safe from depredation by all sorts of people. [685]
>
> When the watchman saw from afar the Buddha coming, he thought: "Here in this grove are the three worthy people still living in harmony. Quarrels and disputes tend to arise at any place where another person resides. Such a person might move about, attacking and destroying like a wild bull with sharp horns and such destruction could bring about dissension that makes it impossible for two persons to get along together. This visiting monk might create discord at one time or another and destroy the united and happy stay of the three noble people. He seems impressive, he has golden colour and looks like one who is fond of good food. From the time he arrives here, by praising his lay followers, who would offer him good meals, and by doing this and that, he might undermine the mindful monastic life led by the three good monks.
>
> Besides, there is accommodation only for the three: There are only three lodges, three walks, three day retreats, three couches and three boards. There is nothing extra. This big monk, a newcomer, has a bulky body; perhaps he could be a recluse of long standing. He might displace the present occupants at an improper time, thereby making them unhappy in every respect." Thus thinking, he forbade the Buddha's entry into the grove saying: "Do not disturb their comfort!" as he totally did not want the unhappiness of the worthy monks.

> It may be questioned: Did the watchman try to stop the master knowing that he was the Buddha or did he do so unknowingly? The answer is: he did so unknowingly. When the Buddha went about with the splendour of a Buddha in the company of monks, everybody recognized him without asking: "Who is this man?" But now as he went to the Eastern Bamboo Grove wishing: "Let nobody know of my being a Buddha," he covered his radiance and other Buddha glories by means of his supernormal powers as if he had hidden them all under a drapery and he moved along incognito as the big full moon that is covered by clouds, personally taking his bowl and robe. The watchman stopped the Buddha because of his ignorance of the Awakened One.

While staying at his day retreat, Ven. Anuruddha overheard the watchman's word: "Monk, do not enter this grove!" and thought to himself: "Only we three are dwelling in this grove; there is no other resident here. The watchman was speaking as though he were communicating with a monk. Who could that monk be?" He then rose and standing at the door he looked over the road and saw the Buddha.

On the part of the Buddha, as soon as he caught a glimpse of Ven. Anuruddha, he emitted the radiance of his body. Splendid with the various major and minor marks, the body gave out light that was glorious like a strip of golden cloth spread out. Then it occurred to Ven. Anuruddha: "Like a man who stretches his hand to grasp by the neck a cobra with its hood erected, the poor man does not know that it is the Buddha whom he is dealing with, the foremost personality in the world. He speaks as if he were dealing with an insignificant monk." So he commanded his man saying: "Watchman, do not stop the Buddha! Here comes our master, the Fortunate One!"

Ven. Anuruddha did not welcome the Buddha alone, for he considered: "We three are staying here in harmony at present. If I alone were to welcome the Buddha, it would not make for harmonious living. I will bring my friends and do the welcoming together with them. My friends too adore the Buddha just as I do." Wishing to meet the Buddha with his two friends, he went to their day retreats and called out to them. "Come, brethren! Come, brethren! Our master, the Fortunate One, has arrived!" Then the three venerables extended their welcome to the Buddha in unison, one taking his bowl and robe, another preparing the seat and the third keeping the water, the board and the potsherd ready so that he might wash his feet.

> Herein with his hands red like a newly blossomed lotus, the Buddha took [686] some crystal-clear water and poured it over his golden coloured insteps, and washed his feet rubbing one with the other. It may be asked: Why did the Buddha wash his feet even though his body was free from dust and dirt? The answer is: He washed his feet in order to cool his body as well as to gladden the three venerables. To make the latter reason more explicit: By thus washing his feet, the Buddha could make the venerables immensely delighted with the thought: "With the water brought by us, the master cleansed his feet and thus made use of it." Hence the Buddha's washing of his feet despite the fact that his body had no stains whatever.

After respectfully doing obeisance to the Buddha, the three venerables took their proper seats. Then the Buddha asked: "How are you, my dear Anuruddhas? Are you all fit and well? Do you have enough food? Are you free from hardship in getting food?"

Ven. Anuruddha replied: "Fortunate One, we are fit and well. We have enough food. It is not hard for us to get food."

> Herein, of the three monks Ven. Anuruddha was the most senior. If honour be shown to Anuruddha, the senior-most venerable, it follows that honour was shown to the juniors as well. That was why the Buddha addressed Ven. Anuruddha by name. Alternatively, in the Pāḷi text the name Anuruddha has a plural case-ending literally meaning: "My dear Anuruddhas," in his address the Buddha used what is known as the elliptical method (*virūpeka-sesa*) covering also the remaining two venerables.

Again, the Buddha asked: "In living together, do you have harmony and happiness, Anuruddhas, without dispute, and like milk and water do you mix well, looking upon one another with amiable eyes?" – "We really have harmony and happiness, knowing no disputes," Anuruddha answered, "And we mix well like milk and water, looking upon one another with the eyes of amity." – "How do you manage to do so, Anuruddha?" the Buddha asked further.

This Ven. Anuruddha explained: "Fortunate One, living in this grove, I consider thus: 'Great indeed is my gain! I have attained a great fortune, for I am sharing this dwelling with these co-residents of such good nature! Fortunate One, towards these two friends I perform physical acts, verbal acts, and mental acts with loving-kindness (*mettā*), both in their presence as well as in their absence. Fortunate One, thinking: "If I practise setting aside my will, and act according

to theirs, that will be good," and so I practise giving priority to their will over my own. Fortunate One, though we three are of different bodies, we are, as it were, of one and the same mentality.' " Thereafter Ven. Nandiya and Ven. Kimila spoke to the Buddha in the same way.

> Herein with reference to the words said of the performance of physical, verbal and mental acts with loving-kindness, whether in the presence or in the absence of others, the physical and the verbal acts in the others' presence took place while living together; the same two acts in the others' absence took place while living apart; the mental acts, however, happened while living together or while living apart.
>
> To elaborate: When a fellow monk saw a couch, a board, a wooden article or an earthenware misplaced by another monk, he did not ask insolently: "Who has used this?" Instead he picked it up and restored it to its proper place as though he himself had misplaced it. Moreover, he cleaned any place that needed cleaning. Thus the physical act performed by one was performed with loving-kindness in the presence of others.
>
> When one of the co-resident monks went away, either of the remaining monks similarly restored the monastic articles left behind in disorder by the departed monk. He cleaned any place that needed cleaning. The physical act thus performed was that performed with loving-kindness in the absence of others. [687]
>
> Living together with other venerables, one spoke with them sweet and delightful words, appealing words, words worthy of lifelong remembrance, words of the Dhamma; one gave an audible talk on the Dhamma, discussed the Dhamma, and put questions and gave answers to them. Any of these varied verbal acts and others of his, was performed with loving-kindness in the presence of others.
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> When the others left for another place, the remaining monk, Ven. Anuruddha, for instance, extolled their virtues saying: "My dear friend Ven. Nandiya or Ven. Kimila is endowed with such moral virtues and practical virtues." His verbal act of this kind was that performed with loving-kindness in the absence of others.
>
> "May my friend Ven. Nandiya or Ven. Kimila be free from harm! May he be free from any hatred and ill-will that are perverse and destructive! May he be happy both physically and mentally!" Such a mental act of focusing

> his thoughts of goodwill towards others in their presence as well as in their absence was performed with loving-kindness on both occasions.
>
> How did each of the three venerables put aside his own idea and act in accordance with that of the others? Suppose one's bowl should show wear, another's robe should get dirty and the third's meditation cell was littered and needed tidying, while these three things should happen simultaneously, if the owner of the bowl said first: "My bowl has been worn; I have to make a new bowl by baking," then the others would not say: "My robe is dirty and I have to wash it," or "I have to remove the litter from my meditation cell." Instead, they would enter the forest and the other two would lend a hand in baking the bowl. Only after finishing the task of baking would they wash the robe or tidy the cell. If the second monk said first: "I have to wash my robe," or the third said first: "I have to remove the litter," the others would similarly attend to it and only after getting it done would they turn to their own business. This was the way how one fulfilled the others' wishes, leaving aside one's own.

Having thus asked about the value of the unity (*sāmaggi-rasa*) of the three persons and having known thus of the full value of their unity, the Buddha desired again to question them about the signs of their heedfulness (*appamāda-lakkhaṇa*) and asked: "Anuruddhas, how is it; do you abide inclined towards Nibbāna by putting in great effort and without negligence?" – "Fortunate One," answered Ven. Anuruddha, "We do indeed abide inclined towards Nibbāna by putting in great effort and without negligence." Again the Buddha asked: "How do you abide inclined towards Nibbāna by putting in great effort and without negligence?"

Ven. Anuruddha replied: "Fortunate One, one resident in this grove, after coming back before others from the alms round in the village, prepares seats, keeps the water and board ready for washing the feet, and places the potsherds for rubbing them with; he sets the vessels ready for placing the first portions of food; he fetches the water for drinking and the water for other purposes.

The monk, who returns later from the alms round in the village, partakes of the remaining food, in case he desires. If he does not, he disposes of it at a place where there is no green grass or plants; or he throws it into the water that has no small creatures; he folds up the seat; he restores the water, the board and potsherds to their proper places; he does so with regard to the vessels after

washing them; he stows away the water pot for drinking and those for other purposes; he sweeps the mess-room.

If he finds any water pot empty, whether for drinking, or for general use or for the bathroom, he fills it. If it is heavy, he calls another monk by giving him a signal with his hand and the two carry it with their joined hands. Fortunate One, we do not utter a word for the purpose of carrying the water pot. Fortunate One, once in every five days we pass the time fruitfully by discussing the Dhamma throughout the night. [688] Fortunate One, in the aforesaid manner do we abide inclined towards Nibbāna by putting in great effort and without negligence."

> Herein, a remarkable thing was that these venerables did not go together on alms round; as they delighted in fruition attainment (*phala-samāpatti*), they rose, did early ablution, fulfilled their duties, retired to their respective meditation cells and engaged in fruition attainment for a certain resolved period.
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> Of the three venerables, the one who rose from the fruition attainment for the resolved period before the others went out ahead of them for alms. On his return, he came to know that: "The other two are late; I have come back early," he then covered his bowl, prepared the seat and did other things. If he had food in his bowl just enough for himself, he simply sat down and ate it. If the food was more than enough, he put the first portion into the vessel, covered it and ate his portion. Having eaten, he washed the bowl, dried it, put it into its bag and, taking his bowl and robe, he went to his day retreat.
>
> When a second monk came to the dining room, he perceived: "One has come ahead of me; the other is later than me." If he saw enough food in his bowl, he simply sat down and ate it. If the food was less than enough, he took some food left behind by the first monk from the vessel. If the food in his bowl was more than enough, he first put the surplus portion into the vessel and ate his meal just to sustain himself and, like the earlier monk, went to his day retreat.
>
> When the third one came to the dining room, he understood: "The other two have come and gone before me, I am the last." And he partook of his meal in the manner of the second one, after finishing his meal, he washed the bowl, dried it and put it into its bag and stowed the seat away. He threw away the remaining water from the drinking water pot and also that from the pot for general use and kept the pots upside down. If there was

any leftover food in the vessel, he discarded it on the ground where there was no green grass or into water free from tiny living creatures and washed the bowl and stowed it away. After sweeping the mess-room, he removed the dust and kept the broom at a place free from termites and, taking the bowl with him, he retired to his day retreat. Such was the daily routine of the venerables at the dining hall outside the dwelling in the forest.

Fetching water for drinking and for general purpose was a duty done in the dwelling place. If one of the three noble venerables saw a water pot empty, he carried the pot to the pond, washed it both inside and out, filled it with water through a filter, and, if the pot proved too heavy for him, he placed it near the pond and called another person by gesture. In seeking a helping hand, he never made a sound by mentioning or without mentioning the other person's name.

Because if he were to cry for help by mentioning somebody else's name, it would be a disturbance to the meditation of the monk concerned. That was why he never cried out the name. Should he make a sound calling somebody without mentioning his name, both monks would come out from their meditation cells, vying each other to get to the caller first. In that case, since it was a job that could be done only by two, the third one would find himself unwanted and his meditation engagement would be interrupted unnecessarily. For this reason the caller did not make a sound without mentioning the name.

If he were not to make a sound, how did he try to get help? After filling the pot through a filter, he approached the day retreat of another monk, making no sound with his footsteps; seeing him he called him by a hand gesture that attracted him. Thereafter the two monks joined their hands, carried the pot together and kept the water for drinking or for general use.

With reference to the words: "Once in every five days we would pass the time fruitfully by discussing the Dhamma throughout the night," the fourteenth, the fifteenth, and the eighth of the bright or the dark fortnight, these three days served as the three occasions on which the Dhamma was usually heard. Without disrupting [689] these three days of Dhamma talks, once in every five days, did both venerables, Nandiya and Kimila, bathed not long after noon and went to Ven. Anuruddha. At his place they met and exchanged questions and answers on any of the Three Baskets. While they were thus doing, the day dawned. Thus far did Ven. Anuruddha, who was asked by the Buddha as to the signs of heedfulness, reply that they

were not negligent even on the occasions that normally cause negligence to others.

A further explanation: For other monks, the time of their going on alms round, leaving the dwelling for alms, adjusting the lower garment, putting on the upper robe, making a round, teaching the Dhamma, expressing their appreciation of the alms giving, partaking of alms food on return from the town or the village, washing the bowl, putting the bowl into the bag, and stowing away the bowl and robe, these were the eleven occasions on which they prolonged their talks that had nothing to do with heedfulness and thereby they became negligent of their meditation duties.

Ven. Anuruddha, therefore, meant to say: "As for us, even on these occasions which cause others to indulge in loose talk, opposed to meditation, never have we done such a thing as prolongation of speech that is opposed to meditation and that is outside meditation though we may be physically free from engagement as practical meditation (*vihāra-samāpatti*) was uncalled for on these occasions." He thereby explained the signs of their heedfulness at its height even at times when others were negligent. By these words, he further meant to indicate that there was no negligence at all on their part by not being absorbed in practical meditation on the occasions other than the aforesaid eleven.

Pāḷileyyaka Forest

As has been said above, the Buddha, having explained the advantages of living in solitude to Ven. Bhagu at the village of Bālakaloṇaka for half a day and the whole night, entered the village of Bālakaloṇaka for alms the following day with Ven. Bhagu as his companion. After sending him back from that very place, the Buddha went alone to the Eastern Bamboo Grove with the thought: "I shall meet the three clansmen who are living in harmony." He talked to Vens. Anuruddha, Nandiya and Kimila about the benefits of living in harmony, and having asked them to remain there at the Eastern Bamboo Grove, he proceeded alone and arrived at Pāḷileyyaka village.[214]

The villagers welcomed the Buddha and made offerings to him. Having constructed a dwelling for him in the forest, named Rakkhita, near the village,

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[214] The following account is drawn from the Vinaya the Great Division (*Mahā-vagga*) commentary and sub-commentary.

they requested him: "May the Fortunate One stay here at this Rakkhita forest-dwelling." In the Rakkhita forest there was a huge Sāla tree named the Auspicious Sāla (*Bhadda-sāla*) near the Buddha's dwelling place. The Buddha stayed near that tree having his dwelling in the forest with Pāḷileyyaka village as his alms resort.

Then it occurred to him as he was staying in solitude: "I could not live at ease, being with the Kosambī monks who indulge in disputes under my eyes or in my absence and created quarrels in the Saṅgha. Now that I am alone and unaccompanied, away from those disputing and quarrelling monks, my stay is happy."

Pāḷileyyaka Elephant

At that time, there was a certain full grown male elephant, the leader of a herd, living still with young males, females, courting males and sucklings. Living in this manner, he had to feed on the grass without tender tips; all the branches and twigs brought down from the trees by him were eaten up by other elephants. He also had to drink muddy water. Besides, when he rose from the ford, females went past him, and knocked against him.

Then it occurred to him: "Living with such members of my herd compels me to eat [690] the grass that has lost the tender tips as they have been eaten earlier by others. Whatever I have brought down from the trees is being devoured by them. It is the turbid water that I have to drink. Female elephants jostle my body when I come up from the water. It were well if I would live away from the herd!" So thinking, he left the herd and happened to go to the Buddha near the huge Sāla tree in the Pāḷileyyaka Rakkhita forest.

> Herein Pāḷileyyaka was originally the name of the village. The original name of the forest was Rakkhita. Since the Rakkhita forest was near the village of Pāḷileyyaka, it was also called Pāḷileyyaka, because it was close to the village. The elephant that had come to that forest was also referred to as the Pāḷileyyaka elephant-king.

When the elephant was sick of living with the herd and entered the forest he saw the Buddha seated at the foot of the Sāla tree. On seeing him, he felt calm, like a man who has his grief allayed by the water from 1,000 pots. With devotion in his heart, he was attracted to the Buddha and stood near him. From that time onwards, as his daily routine, he swept the ground around the Auspicious Sāla

tree and the Buddha's dwelling place with a twig so that the ground might be cleared of grass and plants, he brought water to the Buddha for washing his face, he fetched water for his bathing, he offered a small twig to be used as a tooth-cleaner, he brought sweet, delicious fruits of different sizes and offered them to the Buddha, who took them for food.

> With his trunk, the elephant brought firewood. By rubbing the fire sticks with one another, he produced fire, into which he put stones to bake them. When the stones became hot, he rolled them down into a stone basin by means of a stick; then he tried to ascertain whether the water was hot enough or not; if he knew it was, he approached the Buddha and stood near him. Perceiving that the elephant wanted him to bathe, the Buddha went to the stone basin and bathed. In the same way did the elephant also keep the drinking water. What should be taken as remarkable from this is that the Buddha drank boiled water that had been cooled.

When the Buddha[215] entered the village for alms food, the Pāḷileyyaka elephant carried his bowl and robe on his head and went along with him. When the Buddha reached the edge of the village, he said to the elephant: "Pāḷileyyaka, it is not fit for you to follow me beyond this point. Get me my bowl and robe!" Thus he let the elephant put down his requisites from his head, and, carrying them by himself, he entered the village.

The elephant waited at the same spot until the Buddha returned and when the latter came back, he greeted him and in the previous manner, he took his bowl and robe. On arriving home in the forest dwelling, he placed them in their proper place; and waiting on the master, he fanned him with a twig. When night fell, thinking: "I will give protection to the Buddha," he held a big stick with his trunk and roamed in the forest till dawn to ward off any danger from lions, tigers and leopards.

> From that time onwards, the huge forest came to be known as Pāḷileyyaka Rakkhita Forest, for it was guarded by the Pāḷileyyaka elephant.

He performed in like manner all his duties beginning with offering of the water for the Buddha to wash the face at daybreak. In this way the Buddha spent the

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[215] The following is based on the commentary to Dhp 6 (DhpA 5, *Kosambaka-vatthu*).

tenth Rains Retreat period in the Pāḷileyyaka forest, receiving service rendered by the Pāḷileyyaka elephant.

Criticism of the Kosambī Monks

While the Buddha was thus spending the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in the Pāḷileyyaka forest, the wealthy [691] Ghosaka and other lay devotees and supporters, residents of Kosambī, went to the Ghositārāma monastery and not seeing him, they inquired: "Venerable sirs, where is the master staying?" To this, the monks give a sad answer saying: "Supporters, the master has gone to the Pāḷileyyaka forest." – "Why?" asked the lay devotees. "The master tried to restore unity in us as we were disunited," said the monks. "Having developed hatred among ourselves we refused to be united, hence the master's departure to the Pāḷileyyaka forest." – "How is this, sirs?" asked the lay people: "Despite your ordination from the Buddha's hand, and despite his attempt to restore your unity, do you remain disunited?" The monks admitted that it was true.

Many male and female devotees, citizens of Kosambī, agreed saying among themselves: "These Kosambī monks, who have been ordained by the Fortunate One, are not united in spite of his efforts to unite them. On account of them, we have long been deprived of the chance to behold the master. We will give no seats to them, nor will we pay respects!" From that time onwards, the quarrelsome and contentious monks of Kosambī were no longer treated with respect much less with the four requisites.

Because of the scarcity of food and starvation, the monks became emaciated day by day and came to their senses after a few days. They confessed their faults and apologized to one another with salutations; they also begged the laity's pardon, saying: "We have become united, supporters, please treat us as before!" – "Have you tendered your apology to the master?" asked the lay people. "No, supporters, I have not, not yet." – "Then you had better do so. After doing so, we will treat you, sirs, as before," replied the lay people tactfully. Since it was a Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period, the monks did not dare to visit the Buddha and had to pass the three months of the Rains Retreat miserably.

The Monkey inspired by Pāḷileyyaka Elephant

Enjoying the service of Pāḷileyyaka elephant the Buddha stayed happily in the Pāḷileyyaka forest for the three Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) months. At that time, a

monkey, seeing the daily duties performed actively and energetically by the Pāḷileyyaka elephant, became inspired and thought to himself: "I too will do some deeds of merit towards the master." One day, while roaming about, he found a tree-branch with a honeycomb devoid of bees, broke it and brought it with the broken branch to the Buddha. He then cut a plantain leaf, on which he placed the honeycomb and offered it to the Buddha. The Buddha accepted it.

The monkey watched to see whether the Buddha would enjoy it or not, and he saw him remaining in his seat and just holding the honeycomb without eating it. The monkey investigated, wondering why. He took the honeycomb by its edge and turned it round, only to see the bee-eggs, which he slowly and gently removed and offered it again to the Buddha. Then only did he eat it.

So elated was the monkey that he joyously danced about, moving from one tree branch to another. While so doing, both the branches, which he was holding with his hand and which he was treading on, broke off and fell on a tree stump. With his body pierced by the stump but with his mind devoted to the Buddha, he died and was reborn in a golden mansion measuring 30 leagues in the Deva abode of Tāvatiṁsa. He was known as Makkaṭa Deva, the monkey god, having 1,000 female celestials as his retinue.

Pāḷileyyaka Elephant's Thought

To Pāḷileyyaka elephant, who had been fulfilling his daily duties to the Buddha in the aforesaid manner, it occurred thus: "Associated with young males, females, courting males and sucklings, I could not live in peace formerly. I had to feed on the grass without sprouts; all the branches and twigs brought down from trees were devoured by the others. I had to drink unclean water. What is more, female elephants showed no regard for me and I was rudely jostled by them when I came up from the water. Now that I have departed from them, I can live alone in peace." [692]

Knowing his own peaceful life away from his companions and knowing also the thought of Pāḷileyyaka elephant, the Buddha breathed forth this exalted utterance (*udāna*):

> *Etaṁ nāgassa nāgena, īsādantassa hatthino,*
> *sameti cittaṁ cittena, yad-eko ramatī mano.*

> Being alone in this forest named Rakkhita I, the teacher of the three classes of beings, humans, Devas and Brahmas, take delight. In the same way, this elephant, named Pāḷileyyaka, delights being alone in this very forest. Therefore, the thought of Pāḷileyyaka elephant, who possesses the pole-like tusks, is the same as mine, who has been named the Buddha-nāga, the elephant-like Buddha, living in the seclusion of the forest.

Ven. Ānanda's Entreaty to the Buddha

The Buddha, observing Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in the forest of Pāḷileyyaka, enjoying the service rendered by Pāḷileyyaka elephant, became well-known throughout the whole of Jambūdīpa. The wealthy Anāthapiṇḍika, the monastery supporter Visākhā and other high-born residents of Sāvatthī sent messages to Ven. Ānanda saying: "Venerable sir, kindly help us to get an opportunity to see the Fortunate One!"

Five hundred monastics who had been staying all over the place approached Ānanda at the end of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) and made a request to him with these words: "Friend Ānanda, it has been long since we last heard a discourse from the master. Friend Ānanda, we beg you. We would like to have a chance again to listen to the Fortunate One."

Then Ven. Ānanda went to the Pāḷileyyaka forest leading the 500 monks, but he thought that it would not be nice to draw near the Buddha together with such a large crowd, as the Buddha had been living a solitary life for the whole Rains Retreat (*Vassa*). He, therefore, left the monks somewhere else and approached the Buddha by himself.

On seeing Ven. Ānanda, Pāḷileyyaka elephant rushed to him carrying a stick in the grip of his trunk, for he mistook him for an enemy. When the Buddha saw this, he stopped the elephant saying: "Go away, Pāḷileyyaka, go away! Do not block his way. This monk is my attendant." The elephant then dropped the stick and made a gesture to express his desire to take Ven. Ānanda's bowl and robe. But Ven. Ānanda refused to hand them to him.

Then the elephant thought: "If this monk were conversant with the rules of an attendant, he would not put his requisites on the stone slab which is the seat of the master." Ven. Ānanda laid down his bowl and robe on the ground.

> Never does a well conducted person or a man versed in duties place his belongings on the seat or the bed of the respected teacher.

After paying obeisance to the Buddha, Ven. Ānanda sat down in a blameless place. "Dear son, Ānanda, did you come alone?" asked the Buddha. When informed that he came together with 500 monks, the Buddha inquired further: "Where are those 500 monks now?" – "I came, having left them somewhere else, as I did not know the inclination of the Fortunate One," replied Ven. Ānanda. "Bring them here, dear Ānanda," the Buddha ordered.

As had been ordered by the Buddha, Ven. Ānanda called the 500 monks who came and paid respects to the Buddha and took their appropriate seats. When the Buddha had exchanged friendly greetings with them, the monks said to the Buddha: "You, Fortunate One, are gentle partly because you have become a Buddha and partly because you come of an aristocratic family. You have done a difficult thing by living all by yourself for the whole Rains Retreat (*Vassa*). It seems that you have had no one to attend to your needs, nobody to bring you the water for washing your face and so on." – "Monks," said the Buddha, "Pāḷileyyaka elephant has fulfilled all the duties due to me. In fact, one who has a good companion of such a nature should live with that companion. In the absence of such a companion only a solitary life is praiseworthy. He then gave the following three verses [693] (Dhp 328-330).

> *Sace labhetha nipakaṁ sahāyaṁ,*
> *saddhiṁ caraṁ sādhu-vihāri-dhīraṁ,*
> *abhibhuyya sabbāni parissayāni,*
> *careyya tenattamano satīmā.*

When a mindful person obtains a friend in the Dhamma, who is accomplished in the three training practices (*sikkha*), who is self-composed, prudent and wise, he should take delight in associating with him, and strive to overcome the external enemies, such as elephants, leopards and tigers, and extirpate the internal foes, such as greed, hatred and delusion, leaving an ascetic life in search of truth.

> *No ce labhetha nipakaṁ sahāyaṁ,*
> *saddhiṁ caraṁ sādhu-vihāri-dhīraṁ,*
> *ājā va raṭṭhaṁ vijitaṁ pahāya,*
> *eko care mātaṅgaraṅ-ñeva nāgo.*

> Should a mindful person fail to obtain a friend in the Dhamma who is accomplished in the three training practices (*sikkha*), who is self-composed, prudent and wise, he should strive after the ultimate truth all alone, by way of the ascetic life, after the manner of those ancient monarchs who abdicated their thrones, abandoned their countries and renounced the world, such as Mahā Janaka and Arindama, or like a bull elephant of Mataṅga breed which roams the forest all alone.
>
> *Ekassa caritaṁ seyyo, natthi bāle sahāyatā,*
> *eko care na ca pāpāni kayirā,*
> *appossukko mātaṅgaraññ-ñeva nāgo.*
>
> To wander all alone, leading the life of an ascetic, and striving after the ultimate truth, deserves praise and admiration. There is no prospect whatsoever for the acquisition of faith and insight or development of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*), in association with lowly, ignorant persons. One should strive, single handed, after the ultimate goal, like a bull elephant wandering all over the forests without any care in the world! No evil deeds should be performed.

At the end of the verses the 500 monks became established in the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*).

Then Ven. Ānanda conveyed the messages of the wealthy Anāthapiṇḍika and the monastery supporter Visākhā and all, saying: "Fortunate One, the five billion noble supporters, laymen and women, citizens of Sāvatthī, headed by Anāthapiṇḍika the merchant, are waiting in great hopes for your coming." – "In that case, dear Ānanda, bring my bowl and robe," so saying the Buddha set out from the Pāḷileyyaka forest.

At that time Pāḷileyyaka elephant came and lay across the path that was to be taken by the Buddha and the assembly of monastics. When the monastics asked: "Fortunate One, what is the elephant doing?" the Buddha replied: "Monks, this elephant is desirous of offering alms food to you. In fact, this elephant has specially rendered service to me for a long time, for which I am grateful. He ought not to be disappointed. Let us turn back, monks!" With these words, the Buddha turned back, leading the monks.

Pāḷileyyaka went into the forest and gathered various edible fruits, such as jack fruit, bananas and so on; he brought them, kept them in heaps for offering to the

monks the following day. There were so many even 500 monks could not eat them all.

When the meal was over, the Buddha had his bowl and robe brought and left the forest. Pāḷileyyaka elephant made his way through the monks and stood across right in front of the Buddha again. "Fortunate One, what is the matter with the elephant?" the monks asked. "This elephant wants me to turn back and to send you, dear sons, away," answered the Buddha, who also said to the elephant: "This time I am going, without turning back. With this body of yours it is not possible for you to attain absorption (*jhāna*), insight (*vipassanā*), the paths and fruitions. Stay behind!" On hearing these words, the elephant, putting his trunk into his mouth and weeping, followed the assembly of monks headed by the Buddha. Indeed, if he were able to make the Buddha return, for his whole life he would serve the master just as he previously did.

On reaching the outskirts of the Pāḷileyyaka village, the Buddha addressed his last words to the elephant: "Pāḷileyyaka, beyond this point is no habitat of yours. A human abode is dangerous. You had better remain here!" The elephant stood lamenting with his eyes set upon the Buddha as far as he could see, and when he lost sight of the Buddha he died of a broken heart at that very spot. By virtue of his meritorious state of devotion to the Buddha, he was reborn as a Deva with a retinue of 1,000 celestials in a golden mansion, 30 leagues wide; he bore the famous name of Pāḷileyyaka Deva.

Kosambī Monks' Apology to the Buddha

The Buddha journeyed on and eventually arrived at Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī. Getting the news that the Fortunate One has come to Sāvatthī, the monks of Kosambī [694] headed for Sāvatthī to apologize to the Buddha.

> The following is from the Vinaya story about the Chapter about the Monks from Kosambī (*Kosambakakkhandhaka*, Mv 10).

At that time Ven. Sāriputta, the General of the Dhamma, hearing of the arrival of the Kosambī monks, approached the Buddha, paid respects to him and sat down in a faultless place. He then said to the Buddha: "It is said, exalted Buddha, that the quarrelsome and contentious Kosambī monks are coming to Sāvatthī. Exalted Buddha, how should we deal with them?"

The Buddha replied: "Dear son Sāriputta, in that case you should abide by the Dhamma." – "How could we know, exalted Buddha, what is the Dhamma and what is not?" asked Ven. Sāriputta. This led to the Buddha's instruction of the following eighteen characteristics of unrighteousness (*adhamma*) and the other eighteen characteristics of righteousness (*Dhamma*).

Eighteen Characteristics of Unrighteousness

"Dear son Sāriputta, an unrighteous person should be known by eighteen characteristics. Here in this Dispensation, a monk indicates:

1. What is not Dhamma as Dhamma.
2. What is Dhamma as not Dhamma.
3. What is not Vinaya as Vinaya.
4. What is Vinaya as not Vinaya.
5. What the Buddha does not teach as the teaching of Buddha.
6. What the Buddha teaches as not the teaching of the Buddha.
7. What the Buddha does not practise as the practice of the Buddha.
8. What the Buddha practises as not the practice of the Buddha.
9. What the Buddha does not prescribe as the rule of the Buddha.
10. What the Buddha prescribes as not the rule of the Buddha.
11. What is not an offence as an offence.
12. What is an offence as not an offence.
13. What is a minor offence as a major offence.
14. What is a major offence as a minor offence.
15. What is an expiable offence as inexpiable.
16. What is not an inexpiable offence as expiable.
17. What is a gross offence as not a gross offence.
18. What is not a gross offence as a gross offence.

Dear son Sāriputta, by these eighteen characteristics should an unrighteous person be known."

Eighteen Characteristics of Righteousness

"My son Sāriputta, a righteous person should be known by eighteen characteristics. Here in this Dispensation, a monk indicates:

1. What is not Dhamma as not Dhamma.
2. What is Dhamma as Dhamma.
3. What is not Vinaya as not Vinaya. [695]
4. What is Vinaya as Vinaya.
5. What the Buddha does not teach as not the teaching of the Buddha.
6. What the Buddha teaches as the teaching of the Buddha.
7. What the Buddha does not practise as not the practice of the Buddha.
8. What the Buddha practises as the practice of the Buddha.
9. What the Buddha does not prescribe as not a rule of the Buddha.
10. What the Buddha does prescribe as the rule of the Buddha.
11. What is a not an offence as no offence.
12. What is an offence as an offence.
13. What is a minor offence as a minor offence.
14. What is a major offence as a major offence.
15. What is an expiable offence as an expiable offence.
16. What is an inexpiable offence as an inexpiable offence.
17. What is a gross offence as a gross offence.
18. What is not a gross offence as not a gross offence.

Dear son Sāriputta, by these eighteen characteristics should a righteous person be known." Thus taught the Buddha.

> Herein, this is an instruction given by using the method of teaching with reference to individuals (*puggala-diṭṭha-dhamma-desanā*); the eighteen items, such as indicating what is not Dhamma as Dhamma, indicating what is Dhamma as not Dhamma, indication of a gross offence as not a gross offence, and indication of what is not a gross offence as a gross offence,

are called the eighteen characteristics of unrighteousness (*adhamma-vatthu*). They are also called the eighteen causes of schism in the Saṅgha (*bheda-kara-vatthu*). He who possesses any of these eighteen characteristics is to be known as an unrighteous person (*adhamma-vādī*).

Similarly, on the side of righteousness, the eighteen items, such as indicating what is not Dhamma as not Dhamma, indicating what is Dhamma as Dhamma, indicating a gross offence as a gross offence, and indicating what is not a gross offence as not a gross offence, are called the eighteen characteristics of righteousness (*Dhamma-vatthu*). He who possesses any of these characteristics is to be known as a righteous person (*Dhamma-vādī*). Thus the purport of the Buddha's instruction should be understood briefly.

The distinction between positive and negative items:

The following explanation is taken from the commentary to the Chapter about Schism in the Saṅgha (*Saṅgha-bhedakakkhandhaka*, Vin Cv 7):

Of these two sets of eighteen items, by way of the discourses (*suttanta*), the ten wholesome actions (*kusala-kamma-patha*) are the Dhamma; the ten unwholesome actions (*akusala-kamma-patha*) are not Dhamma. Likewise, the 37 constituents of Awakening (*Bodhi-pakkhiya-dhamma*): the four foundations of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), the four right efforts (*sammappadhāna*), etc. are Dhamma.

Wrongly enumerated aggregates of the above constituents: the *three*[216] foundations of mindfulness, the *three* right efforts, the *three* bases of psychic powers (*iddhi-pāda*), the *six* faculties (*indriya*), the *six* mental powers (*bala*), the *eight* factors of Awakening (*bojjhaṅga*), the *nine* constituents of the path (*maggaṅga*); as well as the four attachments (*upādāna*), the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*), the seven latent desires (*anusaya*) and the eight wrong views (*micchā-diṭṭhi*), these and other aggregates are not Dhamma.

If someone, after taking any of these false aggregates which are not Dhamma, and after discussing with others and coming to an agreement with them saying: "We shall indicate and speak of this group of what is not Dhamma as Dhamma, if we do so, we shall belong to the higher class of

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[216] [There are four foundations of mindfulness, not three, so it is wrong. Same with the others, which are all one constituent short].

teaching families and we ourselves shall become well-known in society," and then declares: "This indeed is Dhamma!" he indicates what is not Dhamma as Dhamma. [696]

Likewise, if he, taking any of these true aggregates, declares: "This indeed is not Dhamma," he indicates what is Dhamma as not Dhamma.

In terms of Vinaya, if a person questions another's offence, makes him realize it and takes action correctly in accordance with the latter's confession, that is a righteous action (*dhamma-kamma*). If a person, without questioning, without making him realize it and without bringing about his confession, takes action incorrectly, that is an unrighteous action (*adhamma-kamma*). If one speaks of a righteous action as unrighteous, then one indicates Dhamma as not Dhamma.

By way of the dicourses, the elimination of lust (*raga*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*), the fivefold restraint (*saṁvara*): restraint by precepts (*sīla-saṁvara*), restraint by mindfulness (*sati-saṁvara*), restraint by knowledge (*ñāṇa-saṁvara*), restraint by forbearance (*khanti-saṁvara*), restraint by energy (*viriya-saṁvara*); the fivefold abandoning (*pahāna*): abandoning of evil through right view (*tad-aṅga-pahāna*), abandoning through mental concentration (*samādhi-pahāna*), abandoning by cutting off (*samuccheda-pahāna*), abandoning through being peaceful (*paṭippassaddhi-pahāna*), and abandoning through attainment of Nibbāna (*nissaraṇa-pahāna*), and reflection so that there can be no lust, hate and delusion.

These aggregates of elimination, restraint, abandoning and reflection, form discipline; or, in reverse form, the aggregates of non-elimination, non-restraint, non-abandoning, and non-reflection on lust, etc. form what is not discipline.

In terms of Vinaya, completeness of the five factors: candidate (*vatthu*), boundary hall (*sīma*), assembly (*parisā*), annoucement (*ñatti*), and formal text (*kamma-vācā*) is discipline; incompleteness or defectiveness of these five is not discipline.

By way of the discourses, the four foundations of mindfulness, the four right efforts, the four bases of psychic powers, the five faculties, and the eight constituents of the path, these doctrinal aggregates are what the Buddha teaches; never does the Buddha teach that there are three foundations of mindfulness, three right efforts, three bases of psychic

powers, six faculties, six psychic powers, eight factors of Awakening, and nine constituents of the path.

In terms of Vinaya, there are four expulsion (*pārājika*)[217] rules, thirteen rules needing a meeting of the Saṅgha (*Saṅghādisesa*),[218] two undeclared (*aniyata*)[219] rules, 30 forteiture and confession (*nissaggiya-pācittiya*)[220] rules, etc. These are taught by the Buddha; never does the Buddha teach that there are three expulsion rules, fourteen rules needing a meeting of the Saṅgha, three undeclared rules, 31 forteiture rules, etc. The set of rules taught implies the set of rules prescribed.

By way of the discourses, everyday absorption in fruition attainment (*phala-samāpatti*), absorption in attainment of great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā-samāpatti*), survey of the world of sentient beings through the Buddha-eye (*Buddha-cakkhu*) consisting in both the knowledge of underlying tendencies (*āsayānusaya-ñāṇa*) and the knowledge of others' dispositions (*indriya-paro-pariyatta-ñāṇa*),[221] delivery of relevant

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[217] Expulsion (*Pārājika*): Any transgressor of these rules is defeated in his purpose in being a monastic. The four offences of this kind are: l) Indulgence in sexual intercourse; 2) taking with intention to steal what is not given; 3) intentional deprivation of a human life; and 4) making claim to attainments which he does not really possess.

[218] The rules needing a meeting of the Saṅgha (*Saṅghādisesa*): An offence of this kind entails a formal meeting of the Saṅgha to decide the case, and the action to be taken against the offender of the rule. The first of these offences is intentional emission of semen.

[219] Undeclared (*Aniyata*): The nature of such offence is to be determined whether it is Expulsion (*Pārājika*), Requiring a meeting of the Saṅgha (*Saṅghādisesa*) or a confession (*pācittiya*) offence, as in the case of a monk who sits in a place secluded, unseen and convenient for an immoral purpose. The other case is when he does so in a place seen and inconvenient for an immoral purpose but convenient for talking immorally to the woman.

[220] Forteiture and confession (*nissaggiya-pācittiya*): Offences of this kind involve forfeit and confession, the first of them occurs when a bhikkhu keeps more than permissible number of robes: he has then to surrender the extra ones and confess his offence. See U Ko Lay, Guide to Tipitaka, pp. 11-12, Burma Piṭaka Association Rangoon. 1986.

[221] The knowledge of the dullness and keeness of facultics such as, confidence, mindfullness, concentration, energy and wisdom; see Nārada Mahāthera, The Buddha and His Teaching, BPS, Kandy 1980.

discourses and [697] relation of pertinent stories as demanded by the occasion, these doings form the practice of the Buddha. No absorption in fruition attainment, no absorption in attainment of great compassion, etc., do not form a practice of his.

In terms of the Discipline (*Vinaya*), observance of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) residence in a certain town or a village at the request of the devotees concerned, a journey at the end of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period after informing the devotees concerned, or after performing the Invitation (*Pavāraṇa*); greeting visiting monks with the words: "Are you keeping fit, dear friends? Are you faring well?" and so on; doings of these and other things form the practice of the Buddha. Not doing of such things do not form a practice of his.

In certain Vinaya rules, there are such lines as: "He who unknowingly commits an offence is not guilty; he who commits without intent to steal is not guilty; he who commits without intent to cause death is not guilty," and so on. The set of rules like these is the collocation of non-offences. "He who knowingly commits an offence is guilty; he who commits with intent to steal is guilty; he who commits with intent to cause death is guilty," and so on. The set of rules like these is the set of offences.

Of the seven kinds of offences: expulsion (*pārājika*) offences, offences needing a meeting of the Saṅgha (*Saṅghādisesa*), heavy (*thullaccaya*) offences, confession (*pācittiya*) offences, ackowledgement (*pāṭidesanīya*) offences, wrong-doing (*dukkaṭa*) offences and wrong speech (*dubbhāsī*) offences, the latter five are minor and not gross while the former two expulsion and offences needing a meeting of the Saṅgha are major and gross.

Of these seven kinds of offences, the last six are expiable (*sāvasesa*) offences as the offender's monkhood still remains. That is to say, if he commits any of the latter six kinds, his state of monkhood is still valid even though he is guilty. The expulsion offence is inexpiable. This is to say, if he violates an expulsion rule he totally loses that validity leaving no traces whatever of monkhood in him.

In this way the nine pairs of Dhamma and what is not Dhamma, etc. should be understood.

Like Ven. Sāriputta, Vens. Mahā Moggallāna, Mahā Kassapa, Mahā Kaccāyana, Mahā Koṭṭhika, Mahā Kappina, Mahā Cunda, Anuruddha, Revata, Upāli, Ānanda and Rāhula, also heard of the coming of the Kosambī monks to Sāvatthī.

They approached the Buddha and asked him, as Ven. Sāriputta did. Then also did the Buddha teach them the eighteen ways of righteousness and the eighteen ways of unrighteousness just as he had taught Ven. Sāriputta.

The Buddha's aunt, Ven. Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī, learnt of the coming of the Kosambī monks and she visited the Buddha. She paid him obeisance, stood at a proper place and put the same question as Ven. Sāriputta. The Buddha then told Ven. Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī thus: "In that case, Gotamī, listen to the sayings of both groups of monks. Having listened, you should prefer the view, wish, liking, and accept the righteous of the two parties. All that is to be expected from the community of monastics by the community of female monastics should be desirable only from the righteous."

On receiving the news, the wealthy Anāthapiṇḍika, supporter of the Jetavana monastery and Visākhā, the supporter of the Eastern Monastery, also went to the Buddha and reported the matter. To them the Buddha said: "Anāthapiṇḍika and Visākhā, in that case give alms to both parties! Having given alms, listen to the sermons from both! Having listened, you should prefer the view, wish, liking and accept the righteous monks!" [698]

> The following, however, is from the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) commentary:

On hearing the news that the quarrelsome Kosambī monks were coming to the city of Sāvatthī, King Pasenadi Kosala approached the Buddha and said: "Fortunate One, I would not like to grant permission to those Kosambī monks to enter my kingdom." To this the Buddha replied: "Your majesty, those Kosambī monks are virtuous. It was only on account of a dispute that they took no heed of what I said. Now they are coming to apologize to me. Let them come!" – "Fortunate One, I would not like to let them come into the monastery," said the king. As the Buddha rejected his desire as before, the king kept quiet.

When the Kosambī monks arrived in Sāvatthī, the Buddha made a special effort to keep the monks quiet and to provide them with accommodation at the outlying parts of the monastery. Not only did the other monks shun their company but all visiting monks of modesty asked the Buddha: "Who are the quarrelsome and contentious Kosambī monastics, Fortunate One?" the Buddha pointed out the monks, saying: "They are these monks!" The virtuous visitors said: "We are told that they are the quarrelsome and contentious Kosambī

monks. We are told that they are the Kosambī monks who defy the Buddha's words!" They pointed their fingers at them, and the Kosambī monks felt so ashamed that they dared not raise their heads but threw themselves at the feet of the Buddha and begged his pardon.

Then the Buddha said: "Monks, you became monastics under an omniscient Buddha, and although I tried to bring about harmony, you disobeyed me which was indeed a grave mistake on your part. A good wise Bodhisatta of ancient times once listened to the advice of his parents, who were about to be killed and following their advice, secured the kingship of two great countries later on, though the parents had been put to death."

The Buddha then related the Birth Story at Kosambi (*Kosambiya-jātaka*, Ja 428), the story of Dīghāvu related above in detail. The Buddha added: "In this way, monks, although his parents were killed, the Bodhisatta Prince Dīghāvu gave heed to the advice of his parents and eventually won the daughter of King Brahamadatta and became ruler of the two great kingdoms of Kāsi and Kosala. You, dear sons, however, did not follow my word and committed so great a wrongdoing." The Buddha then uttered the following verse (Dhp 6):

> *Pare ca na vijānanti, mayam-ettha yamāmase,*
> *ye ca tattha vijānanti, tato sammanti medhagā.*
>
> Here in the midst of the crowded assembly of monks, those who are foolish and quarrelsome do not realize that we are drawing near the king of death every minute, as they lack the eye of wisdom. In that very assembly, the wise monks who were brilliant, however, realized that they are approaching death from moment-to-moment. On account of that realization, quarrels and disputes completely cease through right practice.

At the end of the verse, the monks who had assembled there became established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) and higher states. By means of these sermons the Buddha saved and converted humans, Devas and Brahmas in the Pāḷileyyaka forest for the whole period, beginning from the end of the tenth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) up to the beginning of the 11th. [699]

29: The 11th Rains Retreat (Kasibhāradvāja)

The Buddha's Daily Activities

After staying at Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī for as long as there were beings to be converted, the Buddha journeyed again and eventually reached the Brahmin village named Ekanāḷa, in the district of Dakkhiṇāgiri, so named because it lay to the south of the hill that stood near the city of Rājagaha in Magadha country. There he observed the 11th Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) with the Brahmin village as his resort for alms.

While dwelling in the monastery named Dakkhiṇāgiri, as usual the Buddha did two series of activities: Before the meal, or morning, activities (*pure-bhatta-kicca*) and after the meal activities (*pacchā-bhatta-kicca*). Having finished the morning activities, he did the after the meal activities which were of four kinds. At the end of the fourth, he surveyed the world of sentient beings with his Buddha-eye (*Buddha-cakkhu*) that consists of the knowledge of underlying tendencies (*āsayānusaya-ñāṇa*) and the knowledge of others' dispositions (*indriya-paro-pariyatta-ñāṇa*), and saw in his vision Brahmin Kasibhāradvāja who had the potential to become an Arahat because of his past meritorious deeds.

The Buddha came to know this: "On my visit to the Brahmin's lands, my conversation with him will take place. When the conversation is over, the Brahmin, having listened to my discourse, will become an Arahat."

> The Buddha therefore went to the Brahmin's farm, conversed with him and gave him a discourse called the Discourse to Kasibhāradvāja (*Kasi-bhāradvāja-sutta*, SN 7.11, Snp 1.4). The discourse in the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*) and its commentary is the basis for the following narration.

With reference to the Buddha's activities, the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*) commentary and others enumerate five series of activities, whereas the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*) commentary combines the latter four, give only two: the morning activities and the after the meal activities. The idea, however, is the same. Hence two series according to the Anthology of Discourses commentary and five series according to the other commentaries, which add the activities in the first watch of the night (*purima-yāma-kicca*), the activities in the middle watch (*majjhima-yāma-kicca*) and the

activities in the last watch (*pacchima-yāma-kicca*). These five series of activities will be described in serial order so that readers might develop their devotion.

1. The Buddha's morning activities (*pure-bhatta-buddha-kicca*).

The Buddha rose early in the morning and, in order to honour his attendant monk with merit, as well as to see to his own physical well-being, he cleaned his body by washing his face first and then spent the rest of the time engaged in fruition attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) in quietude till the time for going on alms round. Then he adjusted his lower garment, girded his waist, put on his robe, took his bowl and entered the village, sometimes alone and at other times in the company of monks. His entry into the village took place sometimes in a natural manner and at other times attended by miracles.

For instance: When he went on alms round, gentle breezes blew, cleaning the ground before him. Clouds repeatedly dropped water, putting the dust to rest along the way, and followed the Buddha like a canopy above him. The winds also blew, bringing the blossoms from all places and scattering them to make a bed of flowers all the way along. The naturally high ground lowered itself and became even. So did the naturally low ground become high and level with other parts of the ground automatically. Stones, pebbles, potsherds, stumps and thorns moved away on their own accord. When the Buddha put down his foot on the ground, the surface became even; or the lotus flowers, which were as big as carriage wheels, and which provided a delightful touch, arose under the feet for ready support. [700]

As soon as the Buddha laid his right foot on the threshold at the entrance of a town or a village, the six-hued radiance streamed out from his body as though they poured liquid of gold on the edifices, including square-roofed and pinnacled houses, or as though they covered them with exquisite drapery. The radiance rushed from place to place making them all luminous with brilliant lights. Horses, elephants, birds and other animals made agreeable sounds while remaining in their respective places. Similarly, drums, harps and other musical instruments produced pleasant music, even without players. Ornaments, such as necklaces, earrings, bangles, arm-bands, etc., which were worn by the people, sounded sweet automatically. From these signs they knew: "Today the Fortunate One comes into our town or village for alms food!"

Well-dressed and well-robed people came out of their houses with scents, flowers and other offerings in their hands. They gathered on the main road in the town-centre and paid respects with their offerings respectfully. They asked for monks, as many as they could afford, to provide meals, saying: "Venerable sirs, give us ten monks," "Give us 20," "Give us 100," and so on. They also took the alms bowl of the Buddha and placed the seats and treated the monks to meals.

After partaking of his food, the Buddha instructed the devotees according to their inclinations so that some might be established in the three refuges, others in the five precepts, others in the monkhood, still others in one of the fruitions of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*), Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmī*) and Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*) and the rest became Arahats. In this way, he uplifted the multitudes spiritually by teaching them the Dhamma and finally he returned to the monastery.

On arrival at the monastery, the Fortunate One sat on his Buddha-seat, ready made in the round fragrant pavilion and waited until the monks had eaten their meals. When they had finished eating, the attendant monk would inform the Buddha. Then only did he go into the scented chamber.

All these were the Buddha's activities in the morning. There were still others done in detail but not described here. These were recorded in the Discourse concerning Brahmāyu (*Brahmāyu-sutta*, MN 91).

2. The Buddha's after the meal activities (*pacchā-bhatta-buddha-kicca*).

After the meal, the Buddha sat on the seat prepared by the attendant monk near the scented chamber, at the meeting place of the monks and washed his feet. Then standing on the washing-board, he exhorted the monks thus: "Monks, work out the completion of the threefold training with diligence. Rare indeed is it to live in the time of the appearance of a Buddha in the world. Rare indeed is it to have human life. Rare indeed is it to have faith. Rare indeed is it to become a monastic. Rare indeed is it to have an opportunity of listening to the Dhamma."

At such meetings, some monks asked the Buddha about meditation. To them, he instructed on meditation methods according to their inclinations. They then paid respects to him and retired to their respective day-resorts or night-resorts, some going to the forest, some to the foot of a tree, some to certain places up in the hills while others went to the celestial realms of the Catumahārājika, Tāvatiṁsa, Yāma, Tusita, Nimmāṇarati or Paranimmitavasavattī Devas.

Thereafter, the Buddha entered the fragrant chamber and lay down on his right side, if he wished for a moment, without abandoning mindfulness. With his body eased, he rose and surveyed the world of sentient beings during the second period of the day. During the third period, however, as he was to live depending upon the village-resort for alms, residents of towns or villages, who had given morning alms, nicely dressed and robed, gathered in the monastery, bearing scents and flowers and other offerings, to listen to the Buddha's discourse in the afternoon. Then the Buddha arrived in a miraculous way agreeable to the audience and sat down on his sacred Buddha-seat, which was prepared in the Dhamma hall where sermons were delivered. Then he gave a talk on the Dhamma which was appropriate to the length of the time available and dismissed the audience when he knew the time was up. The people, having saluted him, then left. [701]

3. The Buddha's activities in the first watch of the night (*purima-yāma-buddha-kicca*).

Having finished his daytime activities after the meal, the Buddha, if he wanted to bathe, rose from his Buddha-seat and went to the place where the attendant monk had fetched the water for his bath. Taking the bath-robe from his attendant's hand, he entered the bathroom.

While the Buddha was bathing, the attendant monk brought a seat for him and placed it somewhere in the fragrant chamber. Having bathed, he put on the well-dyed and double folded robe, girding his waist, with his upper robe under the right arm and over the left shoulder, he then sat alone in the Buddha-seat, which was prepared in the fragrant chamber for a moment of quiet.

After a while, monks would arrive from their respective day-resorts and night-resorts to wait upon him. At such meetings, some monks presented their problems, some asked about meditation subjects, while others made requests for a discourse. To them all, the Buddha gave his help by fulfilling their wishes and thereby spending the early hours of the night.

4. The Buddha's activities in the middle watch of the night (*majjhima-yāma-buddha-kicca*).

When the monks departed, after paying their salutations to the Buddha as the Buddha's activities were over, Devas and Brahmas, from all over the 10,000 world-element, took the opportunity of approaching him to ask questions which

had arisen in their thoughts. The questions asked were extensive and covered a wide range of topics but the Buddha answered them, leaving none unanswered. Thus, he let the hours around midnight pass.

5. The Buddha's activities in the last watch of the night (*pacchima-yāma buddha-kicca*).

The last watch of the night near to daybreak was divided into three parts: The first part was used for walking up and down in order to ease the strain due to his sitting posture since dawn; the second part was taken up by his lying down on his right side without losing his mindfulness in the fragrant chamber; and in the third part, he rose from lying, sat cross-legged, surveying the world of sentient beings through his twofold Buddha-eye: The knowledge of underlying tendencies (*āsayānusaya-ñāṇa*) and the knowledge of others' dispositions (*indriya-paro-pariyatta-ñāṇa*), to find out individuals, who had in their past lives done meritorious (*adhikāra*) deeds, such as generosity (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*), etc., in the presence of former Buddhas. This is the exposition given in the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*) and the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*) commentaries and other works.

The exposition of the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*) commentary, reads as follows: The morning time was divided into four periods; in the first period the Buddha walked to and fro; in the second period, he lay down on his right side in the fragrant chamber without losing mindfulness, which was noble lying; the third period was spent engaged in the absorptions (*jhāna*) on fruition attainment (*phala-samāpatti*). In the fourth period, he was absorbed in the absorption of great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā-samāpatti*) and he surveyed the world of sentient beings by the aforesaid twofold Buddha-eye so that he could see what beings had less dust on their eyes, what beings had more dust, and so on.

Thus it was customary for the Buddha to carry out diligently the five kinds of activities daily wherever he stayed. In accordance with that practice, when the Buddha was now dwelling, during the 11th Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), at the Dakkhiṇāgiri monastery, he also performed these duties. One day, when he made a survey of the world of sentient beings through his Buddha-eye, which was one of his activities during the last watch of the night, he saw in his vision, by his omniscience, the Brahmin Kasibhāradvāja who was endowed with great merit (*adhikāra*) that would contribute to his becoming am Arahat. On [702]

further reflection, he foresaw thus: "This Brahmin will today hold the ploughing ceremony. When I get to his ploughing field, my conversation with him will take place. At the end of my conversation, on listening to my discourse, he will don the robe and become an Arahat." The Buddha then remained at Dakkhiṇāgiri monastery waiting for the moment.

Kasibhāradvāja's Ploughing Ceremony

That day witnessed the ploughing ceremony of Kasibhāradvāja Brahmin, a native of Ekanāḷa village. The Brahmin was so named because he was a farmer (*kasi*) of the Bhārādvāja clan.

The Brahmin's programme for the first day of the ploughing and sowing festival was as follows: 3,000 bulls of draught were kept in readiness; all their horns were dressed beautifully in gold sheaths and so were their hoofs in silver sheaths. All of them were adorned with white flowers and the scented prints of the five fingers. They possessed the mark of the best breed, each with a splendid head and four legs. Some had the dark-brown colour of collyrium stones, some had crystal white colour, some coral red while others were splotchy like the cat's-eye stone (*masāra-galla*).

Likewise, 500 farm workers, in white garments and bedecked with fragrant flowers, their right shoulders bearing large floral wreaths, were shining as they were besmeared with orpiment and realgar all over their bodies. When they set forth, they did so in groups, each having ten ploughs. The front of the ploughs, the yokes and the goads were covered with gold plates. Of the 500 ploughs, the very first had eight bullocks harnessed to it; each of the remaining ones had four bullocks. The rest of the bullocks were brought as reserves to replace those which were tired. To each group of ten ploughs was attached a cartload of seeds. The ploughing was done by each farm-worker in turn. In this way the sowing was accomplished.

The landlord, Brahmin Kasibhāradvāja himself, had his beard and moustache groomed early in the morning, he had also bathed, applied paste of great fragrance to his body, put on his garment worth 500 pieces and placed an upper robe worth 1,000 on his left shoulder, each of his fingers had two rings, thus making 20 rings all together, his two ears wore ear-plugs with the design of the lion's mouth; his head had a turban like that of Brahma, a gold ornament with a

pattern of flowers was worn at his neck. Surrounded by a host of Brahmins, he supervised the work.

Thereafter the Brahmin's wife had many pots of milk food cooked and brought by carts. She bathed with scented water, fully dressed herself and went to the farm in the company of other Brahmin women.

In the Brahmin's house everything was perfumed. Parched rice was strewn everywhere. Pots filled with water, banana-trees, flags, banners and streamers were used for decoration. And, with scents, flowers, etc., worship was done. In the field, cylinder-shaped and flat flags were hoisted everywhere. Assistants, workers, and those who assembled there numbered 2,500. Everyone was in new clothes and milk rice had been prepared for them.

When everything was ready for the occasion at the farm, the Brahmin had his golden bowl, which was normally used for his own eating, cleansed and filled with milk rice flavoured with butter, honey and molasses. He then had it offered in sacrifice to the god of the plough. The Brahmin's wife had bowls of gold, silver, white copper and red copper distributed among the 500 farm workers, and she herself fed them by pouring the milk rice into their bowls, one after another, with a cup-like ladle. After finishing the offerings to deities, however, wearing his sandals with red straps and holding a red walking-stick of gold, the Brahmin went from place to place to oversee things as required, and to say: "Pour milk-rice into this man's bowl! Put butter into this man's bowl! Ladle out molasses into his bowl!" This was how the ploughing ceremony of the Brahmin landlord Kasibhāradvāja was held.

The Buddha visits the Ploughing Ceremony

At that time, while staying at the fragrant chamber, the Buddha knew that the [703] milk rice feast was going on and decided that the time has come to exhort the Brahmin. Hence, he adjusted his lower robe, girded his waist, put on his upper robe, took his alms bowl, and went alone to the place where the ploughing ceremony was in progress.

> Herein whenever the Buddha wished to collect alms food, the stone alms bowl in blue (*inda-nīla*) that had been presented by the Four Great Kings appeared automatically in the Buddha's hands; it was not necessary for

him to go elsewhere and bring it. As the bee comes to a variety of flowers, so the bowl presented itself to him.

One may ask: "Why did the monks not follow the Buddha?" The answer is: When the Buddha was desirous of going alone, he entered the fragrant chamber at the time of collecting food in the morning and remained there after closing the door. From that hint the monks knew: "Today the master wants to go alone into the town or the village. Surely the master must have seen in his vision somebody to convert." Knowing thus, they took their respective alms bowls and went on their rounds after circumambulating the fragrant chamber. On that day too the Buddha did this. That was the reason why the monks did not go with the Buddha.

At the time of the Buddha's visit, the Brahmin Kasibhāradvāja was still presiding at the milk-rice feast for the members of his retinue. The Buddha then reached the site of the feast and stood at a suitable distance.

The Buddha's going to and standing on the feasting ground was just to grant his blessing to the Brahmin. In fact, he went there not because he wanted to partake of his share like a destitute. To elaborate: The Buddha had relatives numbering 160,000 which comprised 80,000 maternal relatives and 80,000 paternal relatives. These relatives could afford to provide permanent sustenance by their wealth. Indeed the Buddha donned the robe not for food. Truly, he became an ascetic with the determination: "For countless aeons I had given the five great gifts and fulfilled the perfections. Thereafter, having liberated myself from Saṁsāra, I will liberate beings worthy of liberating, as much as I am liberated. Having tamed myself with the restraint of the six senses, I will tame beings worthy of taming, as much as I am tamed. Having calmed myself with the extinction of all the heat of the moral defilements, I will calm beings worthy of calming, as much as I am calm. Having attained myself the element of peace with regard to the body and defilements, I will teach beings worthy of attaining the element of peace with regard to the body and defilements, as much as I do."

Therefore, it was because he wanted to liberate these beings as much as he had liberated himself from Saṁsāra; it was because he wanted to tame those beings as much as he had tamed himself with the restraint of the six senses; it was because he wanted to calm those beings as much as he had calmed himself with the extinction of all the heat of the defilements; it was because he wanted those beings to attain the element of peace with

> regard to the body and moral defilements that he wandered about the world. In his present wandering, he went and stood there on the ground, where the feast of milk rice was in full swing, in order to show his favour to the Brahmin Kasibhāradvāja.

The Buddha, having stood at a place high enough for him to be seen and to be heard by Kasibhāradvāja, emitted his bodily-radiance in a colour like a mixture of gold liquid and yellow orpiment. Far brighter than the light of 1,000 suns and 1,000 moons, the radiance reached up to the distance of 80 cubits. Enveloped on all sides by the Buddha's body light, the walls of the Brahmin's workshop, the trees around and the lumps of turned-over earth and other objects looked like solid gold.

At that time the people who were helping themselves to the milk rice saw the peerless Buddha with the glowing Buddha-splendour. Accordingly, they washed their hands and feet and, with their joined hands raised in adoration, they stood surrounding the Buddha. When the Brahmin saw the Buddha being surrounded by the people, he became unhappy, [704] thinking: "My work has been purposely disrupted!" Noticing the major and minor marks, the Brahmin wrongly remarked: "This monk Gotama, only if he were to work for his material progress he would have achieved something like the ruby hairpin worn on their heads by all the people in the whole of Jambudīpa. He could have accomplished any sort of well-being! Yet, being lazy, he does nothing but eats the food that he gets at ploughing ceremonies and other functions. He goes about giving priority to the maintenance of his physical frame."

Because of his unhappiness and misapprehension, the Brahmin spoke to the Buddha contemptuously as follows: "Monk, I do the ploughing and sowing, by doing so I make a living. Though I possess no marks like yours, my work is not adversely affected. O monk, you too should plough and sow like me, by doing so, live a happy life as I do. To you who are endowed with the signs of greatness, what benefit will fail to accrue?"

> The Brahmin had already learnt: "The glorious Prince Siddhattha has come into being at the palace of the Sakyans, in the city of Kapilavatthu! That prince has become an ascetic after renouncing the luxurious life of a Universal Monarch!" He therefore recognized that Prince Siddhattha was this monk. He spoke to the Buddha in the above manner because he meant to censure him, saying: "Having given up the luxuries of a world-king,

should you, who have now become a monk, feel weary?" Or, as the Brahmin was of sharp intelligence, he said so not because he wanted to denounce him but because he personally had witnessed the Buddha's attractive frame, and desired to extol his wisdom and lead him into a dialogue.

Then as the Brahmin farmer Kasibhāradvāja was somebody worthy of conversation with, the Buddha wanted to instruct him in accordance with his inclinations. Revealing himself as the top cultivator in the world of sentient beings, with its Devas and Brahmas, in order to give a Dhamma talk the Buddha said: "Brahmin, like you I too plough the field and sow the seeds and live happily thereby."

Then it occurred to Kasibhāradvāja: "This monk Gotama says: 'I too plough the field and sow the seeds,' but I do not see his farming implements such as a yoke, goad, etc. Is he telling me a lie or is he not?" Then the Brahmin looked at the Buddha and examined him from the feet to the top of his hair and saw clearly that he was fully endowed with the marks of a great man. He therefore pondered: "There is no reason for a man endowed with these marks to say what is untrue." At that moment there arose in him a sense of adoration for the Buddha and he abandoned such a rude mode of address as 'ascetic,' and called him by his clan name, and said: "We do not see venerable Gotama's yoke, plough, ploughshare, goad and bullocks. Even though you asserted: 'Brahmin, like you I too plough the field and sow the seeds and live happily thereby.' " The Brahmin then asked in verse (Snp 76):

Kassako paṭijānāsi, na ca passāma te kasiṁ,
kasiṁ no pucchito brūhi, yathā jānemu te kasiṁ.

Gotama, you declare that you are a farmer. But I do not see your implements, a yoke, plough and others things that are required for farming. As you are now asked, please tell us in such a way that we might know these farming implements of yours, Gotama.

To the question put forth by the Brahmin, the Buddha gave a complete reply in four verses, three containing the answers themselves and the fourth the conclusion. The text of the verses and their translations are as follows (Snp 77-80):

Saddhā bījaṁ tapo vuṭṭhi, paññā me yuga-naṅgalaṁ,
hirī īsā mano yottaṁ, sati me phāla-pācanaṁ.

"Brahmin Bhāradvāja! My faith is the seed, a faith which is of four kinds: faith inspired by the determination to become a Buddha (*āgama*); faith inspired by the attainment of path and fruition (*adhigama*); faith inspired by the understanding of the attributes of the Three Treasures (*okappana*); and faith inspired by the sight and sound of what is pleasing to the heart (*pasāda*).[222] My restraint of the six senses is the rainfall that contributes to the development of the plants. My insight wisdom (*vipassanā-paññā*) and the fourfold path-wisdom (*magga-paññā*) are the yoke and the log of the plough. My conscience (*hirī*) and concern (*ottappa*) regarding evil deeds are the twin shafts of the plough. My mind generating concentration (*samādhi*) is the ropes which are of three kinds, one for tying, another for harnessing and a third for linking. My mindfulness (*sati*) accompanied by insight-wisdom, and that accompanied by path-wisdom are the plough-teeth and the goad.

The Brahmin asked exclusively about the yoke, plough and other implements. But the Buddha answered by adding essential facts omitted in the question. He did so because of the analogy between the two root-causes of faith and seeds. Such a way of teaching is an asset of every Awakened One. The Buddha, desirous of teaching by disclosing that asset, and by supplying the other required factors of the same analogy, said that his faith formed the seeds.

What is meant by the analogy between the two root-causes? Did not the Brahmin ask only with reference to the implements such as a yoke, plough and the like? Then why did the Buddha talk about his faith by comparing it to the seeds and by bringing it into his answer though not mentioned in the Brahmin's question? If an answer contains something not asked about, is it not irrelevant to the questions? Although the Brahmin confined his questions to farm implements, such as the yoke, plough and the like, why did the Buddha touch upon extra things as well in his answers such as faith equalling the seeds and so on? Did not this render his answer irrelevant? Such queries might crop up. The answer is: never did the Buddha speak

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[222] For these four, read the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*) commentary and others works.

without relevance. It was customary for the Buddhas to teach by introducing new facts by way of analogy.

Here references should be noted as follows: The Brahmin Kasibhāradvāja asked about farming with reference to the yoke, plough and other implements. But the Buddha, who was thus asked, did not leave out anything at all from his answer saying: "Oh, this was not asked by the Brahmin." Such regard, on the part of the Buddha, indicated the care taken for the Brahmin out of compassion. The Buddha spoke of farming from the very beginning so that the Brahmin might understand the whole business, together with the four points of: 1) Root-cause (*mūla*); 2) support (*upakāra*); 3) accumulation (*sambhāra*); and 4) result (*phala*) that were excluded from his questions. Though the Brahmin failed to ask fully because his knowledge and wisdom were not deep enough, the Buddha answered all the unasked, but essential points as well in his answer because his compassion was so great.

Seeds are the basic requirement for farming. If there are no seeds, there is no farming. The quantity of seeds determines the amount of farm work. There is no farm work done more than what is demanded by the seeds. Hence the seeds are the [706] principal root-cause of farming. On account of this, the Buddha desired to describe the task of farming beginning from that root-cause. Because the seed was the root-cause of the secular farming theme of the Brahmin's question, it was analogous to the root-cause of the spiritual farming of the Buddha, and so he also wished to add the very analogy. Hence his said: "My faith is the seed." As has been said above, the analogy between the root-cause of secular farming, i.e. seeds, and the root-cause of spiritual farming, i.e. faith. Thus the profound significance of this statement should be understood.

Again, it may be argued: "What the Brahmin asked should have been answered first. Why did the Buddha answer at the beginning and not later what was not asked by the Brahmin?"

The answer in brief: 1) Though the seed-like faith should be answered later, the Buddha answered it first because it would benefit the Brahmin much; 2) the rainfall-like sense-restraint and the seed-like faith are related to each other as cause and effect; hence the rainfall-like sense-restraint was spoken of immediately after the seed-like faith, though it should have been done so later on.

To expand on the answer: 1) The Brahmin was intelligent. But as he was born in a family of wrong views, his faith was very weak. One who is strong in intelligence but weak in faith, does not believe others, not even his teachers. He does not practise what should be practised and is likely to fail thereby to attain the extraordinary paths and fruitions. Kasibhāradvāja's faith, free from mental defilement, was weak because of his birth in a family of wrong views. Therefore his weak faith combined with strong intelligence could not earn him the paths and fruitions. The combination is somewhat like a bullock yoked together with an elephant. It was the faith that would lead the Brahmin to the spiritual attainment. Therefore, in order to establish him in faith which was required, the Buddha, incomparably skilful in teaching, taught faith first though it should come later.

Rainfall is immensely beneficial to the seeds. The relationship between cause and effect could be fully appreciated only if the Buddha spoke of rainfall immediately after his reference to the seeds. Hence his answer concerning rainfall, which should have followed later, was given next to the answer concerning the seed-like faith.

Not only the rainfall, but the Buddha spoke of the shafts of the plough, ropes, etc. at their respective and appropriate places in the sequence. The characteristics and other particulars of faith may be learned from the texts concerned.

The analogy between faith and seeds is this, the natural seeds, the basic cause of the farming of the Brahmin, did two things: shooting roots downwards and developing sprouts upwards. Similarly, the seed-like faith, the basic cause of the spiritual farming by the Buddha, performed two things: shooting the roots of morality (*sīla*) downwards and developing the sprouts of tranquillity (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*) upwards.

Just as the natural seeds absorb the nutritious elements of the soil as well as of the water through the roots and grow to bring maturity to the crop through their stems, even so the seed-like faith absorbs the elements of tranquillity and insight through the roots of morality and grows to bring maturity to the crop of noble fruition (*ariya-phala*) through the stem of the noble path (*ariya-magga*).

Just as the natural seeds that lie in fertile soil attain development with their roots, sprouts, stems and ears, producing sap and paddy crop full of grains, even so the seed-like faith that lies in the fertile soil of the mental

process attains development with moral purity (*sīla-visuddhi*), producing the sap of the noble path (*ariya-magga*) and the crop of the Arahat fruition full of analytical knowledge (*paṭisambhidā*) and the super knowledges (*abhiññā*). Hence the Buddha's saying: "My faith is the seeds."

With reference to the saying: "My restraint of the six senses is the rainfall." Just as the Brahmin's paddy seeds and the paddy-plants that had come out from the [707] seeds always grew abundantly without withering because they received the help of the rainfall, even so the Buddha's morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*), that had their immediate cause in the seed-like faith, constantly develop without weakening.

By this saying the Buddha pointed out the profound meaning as follows: "Brahmin, if it rains after you have sown the seeds, that is all right. If not, you have to provide water by yourself. As for me, I attach the yoke and plough of insight wisdom (*vipassanā-paññā*) and path-wisdom (*magga-paññā*) to the plough of conscience (*hirī*) and concern (*ottappa*) by means of the rope of concentration (*samādhi*); then harnessing the draught-bullocks of energy (*viriya*) I prick and drive them with the goad of mindfulness (*sati*); thus I plough the fertile field of my mental processes and sow the seed-like faith. Never has there been a time when the seed-like faith is deprived of rain water. Rain in the form of restraint of the six senses is always falling on the fertile field of my mental processes."

With reference to the Buddha's saying: "My insight wisdom and path-wisdom are the yoke and the plough." The Brahmin's yoke and plough are analogous to the Buddha's insight-wisdom and path-wisdom. The yoke is the support for the plough shafts. It lies before the latter, to which it is connected. It is also something on which the ropes depend. It serves by making the draught-bullocks move together. Likewise, wisdom is the chief support of faultless virtues led by conscience and concern. It is also the head and forerunner of faultless virtues. As it cannot exist without the shaft-like conscience and concern, the latter should be bound up with the yoke of wisdom. As it is something on which the rope of concentration depends, it gives support to the latter. As wisdom checks both excessive and meagre exertions, it serves it by regulating the movement in unison of the draught-bullocks of energy.

When ploughing is done, the log fitted with plough-teeth breaks up the soil. It also destroys big and small roots. Similarly, the Buddha's log of wisdom fitted with the plough-teeth of mindfulness breaks up the four masses (*ghāna*): the mass of continuity (*santati*); the mass of composition

(*samūha*); the mass of function (*kicca*); and the mass of sense objects (*ārammaṇa*). It also destroys all the big and small roots of the mental defilements (*kilesa*). Hence the Buddha's saying: "My insight-wisdom and path-wisdom are the yoke and the plough."

With reference to the saying: "My conscience and concern are the twin shafts of the plough." Conscience and concern are born together and exist together. When conscience is experienced, concern also is then experienced. Hence the translation: "My conscience (*hirī*) and concern (*ottappa*) regarding evil are the twin shafts of the plough."

Just as the Brahmin's plough shafts hold on the yoke and the log, even so the Buddha's twin shafts of conscience and concern hold onto the yoke and the log of mundane insight wisdom (*lokiya-vipassanā-paññā*) and supermundane path wisdom (*lokuttara-magga-paññā*), as the existence of these two kinds of wisdom depends on conscience and concern regarding evil. The yoke and the log do their respective jobs as has been mentioned before only when they are bound up with the shafts. Only then are they neither shaky nor loose but remain tight and fastened. In the same way, the aforesaid two kinds of wisdom perform their respective duties only when they are bound up with the twin shafts of conscience and concern. Only then are they neither slack nor weak but remain tight and fastened and unmixed with unwholesome things that may arise from lack of conscience (*ahirīka*) and lack of concern (*anottappa*). Hence the Buddha's saying: "My conscience and concern of evil deeds are the twin shafts of the ploughs."

With reference to the saying: "My mind is the ropes," the key word "mind" here means "concentration." Hence the translation: "My mind generating concentration is the ropes, which are of three kinds: one for tying, another for harnessing and the third for linking."

There are three kinds of ropes, one for tying, i.e. tying the shafts and yoke; [708] another for harnessing, i.e. harnessing the draught bullocks to the yoke, and the remaining one for linking, i.e. linking the driver with the bullocks. Just as the Brahmin's three ropes kept the shaft, the yoke and the bullocks together and made them accomplish their respective tasks, even so the Buddha's rope of concentration helped him focus the shafts of conscience and concern, the yoke of wisdom and the bullocks of energy on a single sense object and made all these carry out their respective functions. Hence the Buddha's saying: "My mind generating my concentration is the ropes."

With reference to the saying: "My mindfulness accompanied by insight wisdom and that accompanied by path wisdom are the plough-teeth of the plough and the goad." Just as the natural plough-teeth guard and lead the plough pole, even so mindfulness guards wisdom by exploring the perspective of wholesome things and bringing them into focus. In many Pāḷi texts therefore the Buddha teaches mindfulness to be the protector. By never being negligent, the plough-teeth of mindfulness precede the plough-pole of wisdom. Indeed the factors that have been investigated by the preceding mindfulness are penetrated by the following wisdom.

Just as the natural goad, warning the bullocks of the danger of being pricked or beaten, gives them no chance of retreating and stopping, but checks their going astray, even so the goad of mindfulness, warning the bullock-like energy of the danger of falling into suffering states, gives it no chance of idling, retreating and stopping, and checks thereby its mental wandering in undesirable sensual pleasures; fastening it to meditation practice, it also deters the bullock-like energy from following the wrong path. Hence the Buddha's saying: "My mindfulness accompanied by insight-wisdom and that accompanied my path-wisdom are the plough-teeth and the goad."

Kāya-gutto vacī-gutto, āhāre udare yato,
saccaṁ karomi niddānaṁ, soraccaṁ me pamocanaṁ.

Brahmin Bhāradvāja! Just as you make your field secure by fences, even so I, the teacher of the three classes of beings, make the field of my mental process secure by the fences of the threefold wholesome physical conduct and fourfold wholesome verbal conduct. By this is taught the moral restraint under the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara-sīla*). With regard to the use of the four requisites, I restrain myself well to avoid the 21 unlawful ways of acquisition. By this is taught the moral practice of gaining a pure livelihood (*ājīva-pārisuddhi-sīla*). With regard to the stomach, I restrain myself well by eating moderately. By this is taught the moral practice of depending on requisites (*paccaya-sannissita-sīla*), represented by knowledge of moderation concerning food (*bhojane mattaññutā*). Through the eightfold noble speech (*ariya-vohāra*) with truthful words, I uproot the weeds of the eightfold ignoble speech (*anariya-vohāra*), the weeds of falsehood. Being an Arahat, delighting in the state called Nibbāna, means the outright removal of the plough, the

complete giving up of the field and the perpetual retirement belonging to me, the teacher of the three classes of beings.

The meaning here is: "Brahmin, just as you make, after sowing the seeds, a barrier of thorns, a barrier of trees, a barrier of logs or a barrier of bamboos, so that cattle, buffalos and deer have no access and cannot destroy the crop; even so I, after sowing the seeds of faith, build the three big walls of moral restraint under the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*), the moral practice of living a life of purity and the moral practice of depending on requisites, so that cattle, buffalos and deer in the form of the defilements, such as passion, hatred, delusion, etc, could have no access and destroy the crop of the various meritorious deeds that I, who am a great farmer, possess. [709]

Paraphrase: Brahmin, just as you, after doing the external (*bāhira*) work of ploughing, with the hands or with the sickle, pull out and get rid of the weeds, which are damaging to the crop, even so I, after doing the internal (*ajjhattika*) work of spiritual ploughing, pull out and get rid of the following eightfold ignoble speech, the weeds of falsehood:

1. To say "I see" when not seeing.
2. To say "I hear" when not hearing.
3. To say "I attain" when not attaining.
4. To say "I know" when not knowing.
5. To say "I see not" when seeing.
6. To say "I hear not" when hearing.
7. To say "I do not attain" when attaining.
8. To say "I do not know" when knowing.

On this eightfold ignoble speech, the weeds of falsehood, do I perform the pulling out, cutting off and eradicating with the hands or the sickle of the eightfold noble speech, the truthful words, such as:

1. To say "I see not" when seeing not.
2. To say "I hear not" when hearing not.
3. To say "I do not attain" when not attaining.

4. To say “I do not knownot” when not knowing.
5. To say “I see” when seeing.
6. To say “I hear” when hearing.
7. To say “I attain” when attaining.
8. To say “I know” when knowing.

Brahmin, your removal of the plough, your giving up of the field and your retirement is not forever since you have to do the job of ploughing again in the evening, next week or next year. My removal of the plough, my giving up the field and my retirement is not like yours. Indeed, Brahmin, until I became an Arahat, I knew no such thing as the removal of the plough, the giving up of the field and retirement. I will explain further, Brahmin, since the lifetime of Buddha Dīpaṅkara I have not removed the plough, given up the field and retired until I attained the wisdom of the path to omniscience. For the whole period of four immeasurable periods (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and 100,000 aeons (*kappa*), I had to do the internal work of spiritual farming by harnessing the four big bullocks of right exertion to the plough of wisdom.

Brahmin, after restlessly doing the spiritual farming for the aforesaid period of four immeasurables and 100,000 aeons, only when I became an Arahat that is encircled by all the attributes of a Buddha, sitting on the golden throne that is undefeated (*aparājita*) under the Mahā Bodhi tree, which indeed is peace, the end of all worries, did I take off the bullocks of energy from the plough of wisdom, give up the field of mental processes and retire once and for all by engaging as long as time permitted in the Arahat fruition. Now I have nothing at all to do with the work of farming again.”

> *Viriyaṁ me dhura-dhorayhaṁ, yogakkhemādhivāhanaṁ,*
> *gacchati anivattantaṁ, yattha gantvā na socati.*

Brahmin Bhāradvāja! My two kinds of energy (*viriya*), physical (*kāyika*) and mental (*cetasika*), form a pair of draught bullocks that are harnessed to the plough at the front; or, my four kinds of right exertion (*sammappadhāna*) are the two pairs of draught bullocks. That pair of two bullocks of physical and mental energy of mine or those two [710] pairs of bullocks of right exertion of mine are able to lead me to Nibbāna that is free from the torment caused by the four bonds, the bonds of sensual

pleasure (*kāma-yoga*) and so on. Having gone to Nibbāna where a farmer like me would not grieve at all, to that Nibbāna, free from grief, did I attain without returning through the power of wisdom and knowledge.

> Just as the Brahmin's plough-pole drawn by a pair of draught bullocks harnessed at the front crushed earth-masses and destroyed big and small tree roots, even so the Buddha's log of wisdom, drawn forcefully by the twin bullocks of physical and mental energy, crushed the fourfold earth-mass: the mass of continuity (*santati*), the mass of composition (*samūha*), the mass of function (*kicca*) and the mass of sense objects (*ārammaṇa*). I also got rid of the big and small tree-roots of mental defilements.
>
> Alternatively, just as there were two pairs of bullocks for the Brahmin's plough, four bullocks in all, one pair attached to the first yoke and the other attached to the next, even so there were at the Buddha's Dhamma-plough the fourfold right exertion corresponding to the Brahmin's two pairs of bullocks; just as the Brahmin's two pairs of bullocks attached to his plough struggle energetically and accomplished two functions: the function of destroying the weeds that had grown, as well as the weeds that would grow, and the function of generating the paddy plants, even so the Buddha's fourfold exertion corresponding to the Brahmin's two pairs of bullocks energetically struggled and accomplished two functions: the function of removing unwholesomeness that had arisen as well as unwholesomeness that would arise, and the function of generating wholesomeness.

Paraphrase: "Brahmin, just as your two pairs of draught bullocks move in the direction of the east, in the direction of the west and so on as you drive them, even so the bullocks – my two pairs of right exertion – move straight to Nibbāna as I drive them in that direction; the difference between your moving and mine is this: when your two pairs of bullocks reach the edge of the field they turn back. But my two pairs of bullocks, my right exertion, have been moving towards Nibbāna without turning away since the lifetime of Buddha Dīpaṅkara.

Your two pairs of bullocks could not manage to reach the place where a farmer like you is free from sorrow. As for my two pairs of bullocks, in the form of right exertion, they have managed to reach the place of Nibbāna free from sorrow of a farmer like me."

> *Evam-esā kasī kaṭṭhā, sā hoti amatapphalā,*
> *etaṁ kasiṁ kasitvāna, sabba-dukkhā pamuccati.*

> Brahmin Bhāradvāja! I, the teacher of the three classes of beings, have done the Dhamma-ploughing in my person without interruption for four immeasurables and 100,000 aeons. That Dhamma-ploughing of mine bears the fruit of Nibbāna with the rich taste of peace. It bears that tasty fruit of Nibbāna not only for me, but for anyone, be he a human, a Deva or a Brahma when the harnessing of the bullocks of right exertion and the Dhamma-ploughing is done in one's person without interruption one could be free from all suffering and attain Nibbāna.

In this way, the Buddha, in delivering the discourse to Brahmin Kasibhāradvāja, concluded it by fixing it with the pinnacle of the Arahat fruition and leading it up to the height of Nibbāna.

Having listened to this profound teaching, the Brahmin Kasibhāradvāja came to a good understanding: "Despite my eating of the crop obtained from my ploughing, I feel hungry next day as usual. The Dhamma-ploughing of venerable Gotama, however, produces the fruit of deathlessness called Nibbāna. Having partaken of that fruit of deathlessness from the Dhamma-ploughing, one could liberate oneself from suffering once and for all." [711]

Thus the Brahmin developed devotion, understood clearly and was desirous of doing what every devotee would do: He poured milk rice into the golden bowl, which was meant for his own use and worth 100,000 pieces of money, then he added butter, honey, molasses, etc., to it so that it looked attractive. Finally he covered the golden bowl with a white cloth and took it himself and offered it respectfully to the Buddha with these words: "May venerable Gotama have the milk rice! Venerable Gotama is indeed a ploughman, for he has done the Dhamma-ploughing which produces the crop of Nibbāna!" Then the Buddha delivered these two verses to the Brahmin:

> *Gāthābhigītaṁ me abhojaneyyaṁ,*
> *sampassataṁ brāhmaṇa nesa Dhammo,*
> *gāthābhigītaṁ panudanti Buddhā,*
> *Dhamme satī brāhmaṇa vutti-r-esā.*

> Brahmin Bhāradvāja! The food obtained by uttering verses ought not to be enjoyed at all by me. Enjoyment of such food thus obtained is not the custom of Buddhas, those who observe purity in livelihood. Therefore they reject the food obtained by uttering verses. Brahmin Bharadvāja!

When one observes purity of livelihood, one seeks the four requisites lawfully without being attached to any family just like stretching one's hand in space. Such is the way of making a pure living by all the Buddhas.

Herein a question may arise: did the Buddha utter the verses to get the milk rice, for mention is made of the food obtained by uttering verses? The answer is: No, the Buddha did not utter the verses to get the food. In fact, he did not receive even a ladleful of food though he stood near the field since early that morning; yet he uttered the three verses clearly describing how he performed the Dhamma-farming and thereby explaining fully the attributes of a Buddha. And the food thus received happened to be like something acquired by dancers by dancing and singing. Hence the food obtained by uttering verses. Such food is not worthy, nor to be eaten by the Buddhas. Hence it ought not to be enjoyed at all.

The verse contains four lines: The first three lines point out the purity of the discourse by absolving the Buddha from any blame and accusation by the unwise, who would say: "By singing this song the monk Gotama made the unfaithful and displeased Brahmin desire to give, and thereby accepted the food. This discourse of the monk Gotama was intended to attract the material offering of the food." The fourth line indicates the purity of the Buddha's livelihood.

When the Buddha uttered this the Brahmin Bhāradvāja became sad, thinking: "Venerable Gotama has rejected my milk rice. He said it was not worth eating. I am so unfortunate! I have been deprived of the opportunity of giving alms." He thought further: "If venerable Gotama does not accept my milk rice, it were well if he would accept something else from me." Then it occurred thus to the Buddha, who was aware of this: "After setting aside the hour for alms round I came here with the idea that I would arouse faith in the Brahmin within so limited a time. Now the Brahmin is dejected; should he form a wrong attitude towards me through dejection, he would not be able to attain the penetrative knowledge of supreme Nibbāna." Being desirous of fulfilling the Brahmin's wish so that he would cultivate faith in him, the Buddha uttered the following verse:

Aññena ca kevalinaṁ mahesiṁ,
khīṇāsavaṁ kukkucca-vūpasantaṁ,
annena pānena upaṭṭhahassu,
khettaṁ hi taṁ puñña-pekkhassa hoti.

> Brahmin Bhāradvāja! With food and drink, other than this, [712] attend upon the Arahat, who is free from the pollutants (*āsava*), endowed with all the attributes of a Buddha, the habitual seeker of such virtues as higher morality, whose scruples have been quenched.

Though the Buddha tried to arouse the desire in the Brahmin to give, he said only implicitly. He did not say directly: "Give it to me, bring it to me." Only a Buddha's Dispensation, with its eight marvellous characteristics, is the excellent great field of fertile soil for you, who have a bent on deeds of merit.

Then the Brahmin Kasibhāradvāja thought: "I have brought this milk rice for the sake of the Buddha. Therefore I should not give it to somebody else of my own accord," and asked: "Venerable Gotama, in that case, to whom should I offer this milk rice?"

The Buddha replied:

> Brahmin, neither in the world of celestial beings together with its Devas, Māras and Brahmas, nor in the world of human beings with its ascetics, and Brahmins, princes and commoners, do I see anybody, apart from me or my disciples, who can well digest that milk rice when eaten. Therefore, Brahmin, you should dump it in a place without green grass or in the water without insects.

> Herein why could nobody among Devas and human beings digest this milk rice? It could not be digested because this coarse human food was mixed with the soft and delicate ambrosia of Devas. When the Brahmin was pouring the food intended for the Buddha, the Devas added ambrosia to it. It could have been digestible if it were only pure ambrosia and eaten by Devas, and so would have been the unmixed milk rice eaten by men.
>
> The milk rice being coarse, even though mixed with the soft ambrosia, Devas could not digest it because they had delicate bodies and the food was indigestible for them. So was it for humans because it contained ambrosia and humans have coarse bodies.
>
> As for the Buddha, he could digest the milk rice mixed with ambrosia by virtue of his natural metabolism. Some teachers attribute this ability to the Buddha's physical and mental powers. For the Arahats, disciples of the Buddhas too, the food was digestible because of their power of concentration and their knowledge of how to eat it in moderation. This

was not possible for others, not even for those with psychic powers. Or, this should not be a matter for speculation, it concerns only Buddhas.

The Brahmin Kasibhāradvāja floated the milk rice in the insect-free water. It at once made a sizzling sound and there arose much vapour from all sides, just as a ploughshare that has been baked the whole day sizzles and produces much vapour all round when it is dumped into water.

Thereupon the Brahmin Kasibhāradvāja became afraid with his hair standing on end, and approached the Fortunate One. Touching the feet of the Fortunate One with his head, he said: "Venerable Gotama! Very delightful indeed is your teaching! Just as an object lying prone is turned upside down; or a covered object is uncovered; or a man who has lost his way is shown the right way; or a torch is lighted in darkness in order that people with eyes may see different objects; so also venerable Gotama has clearly taught the Dhamma to me in many ways. Venerable Gotama! I seek refuge in you, in the Dhamma and in the Saṅgha! Venerable Gotama! Let me be initiated! Let me be ordained under you!"

The Brahmin Kasibhāradvāja became a monk under the Fortunate One and not long after his ordination, Ven. Kasibhāradvāja retired alone to a quiet place. There he practised the Dhamma, exerting his effort vigilantly and vigorously with his mind bent on Nibbāna. Finally, he attained and became an Arahat. [713]

30: The 12th Rains Retreat (Famine)

Having thus spent the 11th Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at the Brahmin village of Ekanāḷa, giving discourses such as the Discourse to Kasibhāradvāja (*Kasi-bhāradvāja-sutta*, SN 7.11, Snp 1.4) and others to those who were worthy of conversion, the Buddha set out from the village at the end of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), distributing the cool medicinal water of the deathless among Devas and humans, and eventually reached the city of Verañjā. He then took up residence with 500 monks, who were of high, noble birth, in terms of virtue, near the margosa (*nimba*) tree, which was occupied by a demon, Naḷeru by name, near Verañjā city.

The following is based on the Section about Verañjā (*Verañja-kaṇḍa*, Vin Pār 1, PTS 3.1) and its commentary.

The Brahmin Verañja's Visit to the Buddha

Then the Brahmin Verañja heard the good news as follows: "Friends, the monk Gotama, the Sakyan Prince who has become an ascetic, is staying together with 500 highly virtuous monks near the margosa tree which is occupied by the demon Naḷeru near our city of Veranjā.

The good reputation of Ven. Gotama goes up to the top of the universe (*Bhavagga*), spreading all over thus: "That Buddha is called an Arahat because he is worthy of special honour; he is called Perfectly Self-Awakened One because he understands all phenomena perfectly by himself; he is called endowed with understanding and good conduct (*vijjā-caraṇa-sampaññā*), because of his wisdom and practice; he is called Well-gone (*Sugato*) because he speaks good words; he is called the one who understands the worlds (*loka-vidū*) because he knows the three worlds analytically; he is called the unsurpassed guide for those people who need taming (*anuttaro purisa-dammasārathi*) because of his power in training people; he is called the Teacher of gods and men (*Satthā-deva-manussānaṁ*) because these beings are taught by him; he is called Awakened (*Buddha*) because he realizes the four truths by himself and let others realize them; he is called Fortunate One (*Bhagavā*) because he is endowed with the sixfold glory.

That Fortunate One comprehends the world of space (*okāsa-loka*) with its Devas, Māras and Brahmas, as well as the world of sentient beings (*satta-loka*) with its

ascetics and Brahmins, princes and commoners, through his wisdom, and teaches them.

The Fortunate One proclaims the Dhamma that is good in all its three phases: the beginning, the middle and the end, and that is also complete with the letter and the spirit, meaning that nothing new is to be added. He taught the noble practice that is perfect and pure all round, meaning that there is no flaw to be taken out. The sight of such a sage, an Arahat, is indeed wonderful." This is what the Brahmin heard.

Thus the Brahmin Verañja visited the Buddha and exchanged words of joy with him. Having thus exchanged words of joy and words worthy of remembrance, the Brahmin took his seat, which was free from the sixfold faults; thereafter, he began to censure the Buddha: "Venerable Gotama, I have heard that the monk Gotama neither bows down, nor gives a welcome, nor extends an invitation to seats to old, aged, mature Brahmins of previous generations who are nearing the end of their lives. Venerable Gotama, what I have heard happens to be true. Indeed you, venerable Gotama, neither bow down, nor give a welcome, nor extend an invitation to seats to old, aged, mature Brahmins of previous generations who are nearing the end of their lives. Venerable Gotama, doing no reverential act, such as bowing, etc., is indeed outright unfair." [714]

Being untainted with the two defects of exalting oneself (*attukkaṁsana*) and humiliating others (*paravambhana*) but with his calm heart sprinkled with the clear water of great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā*), and desiring to dispel the Brahmin's ignorance and to point out the fairness on his part, the Buddha said: "Brahmin, in the world of space with its Devas, Māras and Brahmas and in the world of beings with its monks and Brahmins, princes and commoners, I see nobody to whom I should pay respect, welcome, or give an invitation to seats. Should I even casually pay respect, give a welcome or extend an invitation to seats to somebody, then his head will break into seven and fall to the ground."

Despite such a reply by the Buddha, Verāñja, being unwise, did not grasp that the Buddha was the greatest in the world; instead he became irritated at the words rightly uttered by the Buddha, so he accused: "Venerable Gotama is a man of tasteless nature!" In order to soften the Brahmin's heart, the Buddha did not give a directly opposite answer and, in order to show that there was reason for him to be called in a way: "A man of tasteless nature," he said: "Brahmin,

there is reason for saying of me, 'The monk Gotama is a man of tasteless nature.' The reason is this: Brahmin, pleasure in forms, pleasure in sounds, pleasure in odours, pleasure in tastes, and pleasure in touch – all these pleasures I have rejected. For this reason, let one speak of me, if one so desires: 'The monk Gotama is a man of tasteless nature.' But we Buddhas absolutely do not have the taste meant by you."

> Herein what the Brahmin meant was: "Bowing, welcoming, raising folded palms and paying respect in the world are styled the taste that creates harmony between people (*sāmaggi-rasa*). That taste of harmony (*sāmaggi-rasa*) was totally absent in venerable Gotama. That was why he accused the Buddha saying: "Venerable Gotama is a man of tasteless nature," meaning he is entirely devoid of the taste of harmony.
>
> On the other hand, the Buddha meant that pleasure in forms, pleasure in sounds, pleasure in odours, pleasure in tastes, pleasure in touches, each of these five can be called the taste of harmony, for each comes into being only when such factors as object, sense, etc., combine harmoniously. As all this taste of harmony had been uprooted by him, he was free from all these five kinds of taste of harmony. With that meaning in mind, one might label him a tasteless man if one so desires, so he declared: "We Buddhas do not absolutely have the taste meant by you."
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> In this connection, why did the Buddha assert: "We Buddhas do not absolutely have the taste meant by you?" Did this not amount to acknowledging the supposition that Buddhas should observe the taste of harmony, such as bowing, welcoming, etc., as meant by the Brahmin? Such a question may arise. The answer is that it did not. He who should, but did not, observe the taste of harmony by bowing, welcoming, etc., meant by the Brahmin, deserved the label: "A man without good taste," for he showed no taste of harmony though he was required to do so. As for the Buddha, he had nothing whatsoever to do with the taste of harmony meant by the Brahmin for he was the greatest in the three worlds. Therefore, in order to point out the fact clearly that he was above such an observance, the Buddha declared: "We do not absolutely have the taste meant by you."

Being unable to put the blame on the Buddha thus for his lack of the taste of harmony (*sāmaggi-rasa*) demanded by him, the Brahmin willingly brought another accusation:

"Venerable Gotama is a useless person!" [715] In order to show that there was a different reason for him to be called such, the Buddha said: "Brahmin! There is reason for speaking of me: 'The monk Gotama is useless.' The reason is this: Brahmin, use of forms, use of sounds, use of odours, use of tastes and use of touches, with lust and greed, all these uses I have rejected. Brahmin, for this reason, there is an absence of this sort of usage (*paribhoga*), use of the five sense objects with lust and greed, and so let one speak of me, if one so desires: 'The monk Gotama is a useless person.' But we Buddhas absolutely do not have the uses meant by you."

> Herein what the Brahmin meant was: Bowing and other acts of respect shown to one's elders are recognized in the world as used for harmony (*sāmaggi-paribhoga*); as there was no making of such use on the part of the Buddha, he was accused, saying: "The monk Gotama is a useless man."
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> According to the Buddha, he had done away with the use of the five sense objects: forms, sounds, odours, tastes and touches with lust and greed. As such, he was thus free from such enjoyment. With that meaning in mind he approved that one might speak of him as useless.

Being also unable to put the blame on the Buddha thus, the Brahmin willingly brought another accusation: "Venerable Gotama is a believer in non-action!" In order to show, as before, that there was a different reason for him to be called such, the Buddha said: "Brahmin! There is a reason for speaking of me thus: 'The monk Gotama is a believer in non-action!' The reason is this: Brahmin, I declare that the three physical wrong-doings, the four verbal wrong-doings, the three mental wrong-doings, and all the remaining unwholesome deeds should not be done. For this reason, let one speak of me, if one so desires: 'The monk Gotama is a believer in non-action.' But we Buddhas absolutely do not have the non-actions meant by you."

> Herein what the Brahmin meant was: All the people in the world have the practise of clansmen (*kula-cāritta*), such as bowing before one's elders and so on. As the Buddha did not practise that he was labelled: "A believer in non-action."
>
> The Buddha, however, meant that he taught that wrong deeds should not be committed, which might be taken as non-action (*akiriya-vāda*). He approved therefore that, with that meaning in mind, one might speak of him as: "A believer in non-action."

Being also unable to blame the Buddha thus, the Brahmin willingly brought another accusation: "Venerable Gotama is a believer in annihilationism!" In order to soften the Brahmin's heart, the Buddha desired, as in the previous explanations, to show that there was a reason for him to be called such, and said: "Brahmin, there is reason for speaking of me thus: 'The monk Gotama is a believer in annihilationism.' The reason is this: Brahmin, I give instructions to annihilate passion (*rāga*), to annihilate hatred (*dosa*), to annihilate delusion (*moha*) and also to annihilate other wrong deeds. Brahmin, for this reason, one may speak of me, if one so desires thus: 'The monk Gotama is a believer in annihilationism.' But we Buddhas absolutely do not have the annihilationism meant by you."

> Herein as the Brahmin did not see the Buddha's act of respect, such as bowing, welcoming, etc., shown to old people, he thought: "The worldly tradition of paying respect has [716] been destroyed on account of the monk Gotama," and labelled him: "An annihilationist."
>
> The Buddha, however, taught people to do away with greed, hatred and delusion and other evil deeds by means of their respective kinds of path-knowledge. He approved, therefore, that, with that meaning in mind, one might speak of him as: "An annihilationist."

Being also unable to put the blame on the Buddha thus, the Brahmin willingly brought another accusation: "Venerable Gotama is a man having the nature of loathing!" In order to show, as before, that there was a different reason for him to be called as such, the Buddha said: "Brahmin, there is a reason for speaking of me thus: 'The monk Gotama is a man having the nature of loathing.' The reason is this: Brahmin, I loathe three physical wrong-doings, the four verbal wrong-doings, the three mental wrong-doings and other wrong deeds. Brahmin, for this reason, one may speak of me if one so desired thus: 'The monk Gotama is a man having the nature of loathing.' But we Buddhas absolutely do not have the loathing meant by you."

> Herein the Brahmin thought that the Buddha did not follow the practice of clansmen (*kula-cāritta*), such as bowing before one's elders and so on, only because he loathed them. Therefore, the Brahmin labelled him: "A man having the nature of loathing."

> The Buddha, however, meant that he loathed wrong deeds and approved therefore that, with that meaning in mind, one might speak of him as: "A man having the nature of loathing."

Being also unable to put the blame on the Buddha thus, the Brahmin willingly brought another accusation: "Venerable Gotama is a destroyer!" In order to show, as before, that there was a different reason for him to be called such, the Buddha said: "Brahmin, there is reason for speaking of me thus: 'The monk Gotama is a destroyer.' The reason is this: Brahmin, I give instructions to destroy passion, to destroy hatred, to destroy delusion and also to destroy other evil deeds. Brahmin, for this reason, let one speak of me, if one so desires thus: 'The monk Gotama is a destroyer.' But we Buddhas absolutely do not have the kind of reason meant by you."

> Herein as the Brahmin did not see the Buddha's act of respect, such as bowing, welcoming, etc., shown to old people, he thought the Buddha was a destroyer of the great practice of paying respect to an elder (*vuddha-pacāyana*), and labelled him: "A destroyer."
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> The Buddha, however, taught people to remove and eliminate passion, hatred, delusion and the remaining wrong deeds. He approved therefore that, with that meaning in mind, one might speak of him as: "A destroyer."

Being also unable to put the blame on the Buddha thus, the Brahmin willingly brought another accusation: "Venerable Gotama is a tormentor!" In order to show, as before, that there was a different reason for him to be called as such, the Buddha said: "Brahmin, there is reason for speaking of me thus: 'The monk Gotama is a tormentor.' The reason is this: Brahmin, I [717] proclaim that the three physical evils, the four verbal evils, the three mental evils and all the remaining unwholesome deeds are tormenting things (*tāpanīya-dhamma*), things causing sorrow to all humans and other beings. Brahmin, I declare that one, who has eliminated these wrong-doings, is a tormentor of tormenting factors. Brahmin I, who am a good wayfarer like former Buddhas, have eliminated these evil deeds. Brahmin, for this reason, let one speak of me, if one so desires thus: 'The monk Gotama is a tormentor.' But we Buddhas absolutely do not have the tormenting meant by you."

> Herein what the Brahmin meant was this: Those who perform an act of respect, such as bowing, welcoming, etc., delight old people. Those who did not torment the hearts of the latter. The Buddha did not perform that.

> Therefore the Brahmin thought the monk Gotama was a tormentor of the aged and labelled him as such.
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> The Buddha, however, called evil deeds tormenting factors (*tapa-dhamma*), because they tend to torment the world of beings. The elimination of these evil deeds had been done on his part. "He who has done away with evil deeds is a tormentor (*tapassī*)," so goes the definition (*tape assī ti tapassī*). He therefore approved the label given to him as: "An eliminator of tormentors," or rather, "a tormentor of all evils' known as torments (*tapa*)."

Being also unable to put the blame on the Buddha thus, the Brahmin willingly brought the last accusation: "Venerable Gotama is a man far from rebirth in the Deva realm!" As the Buddha had got rid of all four forms of future rebirth, he desired to show, in a different manner, that he was free of rebirth (*apagabbha*), and said: "Brahmin, there is a reason for speaking of me thus: 'The monk Gotama is far from rebirth.' The reason is: Brahmin. I proclaim that an Arahat who has rejected the four ways of birth that would take place in the future is far from rebirth (*apagabbha*), one beyond rebirth. Brahmin I, who am a good wayfarer like former Buddhas, have utterly destroyed all these four ways of rebirth. Brahmin, for this reason, one may speak of me, if one so desires thus: 'The monk Gotama is far from rebirth (*apagabbha*), a man beyond rebirth.' But we Buddhas absolutely do not have the rebirth meant by you."

> Herein, what the Brahmin meant was this: Paying respect to one's elder, such as bowing, welcoming, etc., was a meritorious act that was conducive to rebirth in the divine abode. Believing thus, he labelled the Buddha: "A man far from rebirth in the Deva realm!" for he saw him doing none of those respectful gestures. Therefore, the Buddha had no chance to attain the celestial realm; instead he would abide in the womb of a mother in the human world in the future, which was disgusting.
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> The Buddha, however, meant that he had no future birth whatsoever. He therefore approved the label given to him: "A man far away from rebirth."

Though the Brahmin Verañja had thus condemned the Buddha with these eight accusations, such as saying he is: "A man of tasteless nature," and so on, but from the outset of his meeting him, the Buddha set both his eyes on him with tranquillity, out of compassion. Just as the round full moon rises in the cloudless sky, just as the sun shines high in autumn, even so the Buddha, being omniscient, became desirous of dispelling the darkness of ignorance that lay in the

Brahmin's heart. Thus, he had turned those charges made by the Brahmin into words of honour to him.

Now, the Buddha was to show the magnificence of his compassion and the earth-like mind that was unshaken by the eight conditions of the world and the calm heart, undisturbed however much others would abuse him, he reflected: "This Brahmin thoughtlessly believes that he is senior to me, the Buddha, only on account of the conventional marks of his old age, such as grey hair, [718] broken teeth, wrinkles of the skin, and the like. He knows not even a bit that he is being followed closely by the danger of rebirth, besieged by the danger of old age, overwhelmed by the danger of ill-health, threatened by the danger of death; nor does he realize that as a stump in Saṁsāra he could die today and would become a messenger of the King of Death, lying on its back, tomorrow. However, he came to me with great effort. Let his visit to me be a beneficial one."

In order to make clear that he was peerless, eldest, and foremost among beings, the Buddha elaborately delivered his discourse in the following manner: "Brahmin, suppose a hen has eight eggs, or ten, or twelve. Suppose the hen does her three jobs: She sits well on the eggs, provides them with heat, and imbues them well with her odour. Of all the chicks that lie in the eggs so treated one comes out first with ease after breaking the shell with its claws and beak. Would you call it senior or junior?" asked the Buddha. "Venerable Gotama, it should be called senior. Of all the chicks, the little one that has come out first after breaking the shell is the oldest, as its making of appearance is the earliest," answered the Brahmin.

Then the Buddha said: "Brahmin, in the same way, of all beings lying in the shell of ignorance (*avijjā*) and being wrapped up all round by the shell of ignorance, I am the first to have realized the unmatched, supreme path-knowledge of an Arahat with omniscience after breaking through the shell of ignorance. Brahmin, I therefore am the oldest of all those existing in the world of sentient beings."

> Herein an explanation of the simile may be made as follows. Now with reference to the part of the simile (*upamāna*), the second part of the comparison, which is the little chicks: the eggs do not rot because the mother-hen looks after them in three ways: by sitting on them, by providing heat to them and by imbuing them with her odour. The wet outer membranes then dry up. The egg-shells also become thinner and thinner day by day. The claws and the beak of the chicks grow bigger and

harder. The little birds get stronger. Since the shells become thinner and thinner as days go by, the light outside the shells penetrates them. Then the chicks think: "For a long time we have stayed in the confinement with our legs and wings cramped. The light appears outside. We shall live outside comfortably where the light is." Desirous of coming outside, they kick the shells with their legs. They also forcefully stretch out their necks. Therefore the eggs are broken. The chicks then emerge from the shells, flapping their small wings and chirping for the moment. Of all these chicks, the one which comes out first should be named as the senior-most.

With reference to what it is likened to (*upameyya*), the first member of the comparison which is the Buddha: The three forms of the hen's treatment: Sitting, heating and imbuing with her odour, may be likened to the Buddha's three acts of contemplation (*anupassanā*) on impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anatta*) under the Mahā Bodhi tree while still a Bodhisatta. The egg's being unrotten due to the hen's threefold treatment may be likened to the non-shrinkage of the Bodhisatta's insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) due to his threefold contemplation. The drying up of the wet outer membrane of the egg due to the hen's threefold treatment may be likened to the cessation of the Bodhisatta's craving (*nikanta-taṇhā*) for the three existences due to his threefold contemplation. The shell's gradual thinning day after day due to the hen's threefold treatment may be likened to the thinning of the shell of ignorance step by step on the part of the Bodhisatta due to his threefold contemplation. The growing bigger and harder of the claws and the beaks of the chicks due to the hen's threefold treatment may be likened to the growing sharper, firmer, clearer and more confident of the Bodhisatta's insight-wisdom due to his threefold contemplation. The time of the growth of the chick's claws and beak due to the hen's threefold treatment may be likened to the time of maturity, the time of development and the time of perfection of the Bodhisatta's insight knowledge which was due to his threefold contemplation. The moment of the happy emergence of [719] the chick, flapping its small wings after kicking the shell with its legs and striking the shell with its beak and thus breaking open the shell which was due to the hen's threefold treatment may be likened to the moment of the Bodhisatta's realization of the attributes of a Buddha with ease, after attaining the insight knowledge and breaking open the shell of ignorance by means of the path of an Arahat which was won eventually and flapping the wings of psychic powers, all this being due to his threefold contemplation.

Therefore, in order to continue to show that by this practical means, he had attained the stage of incomparable supremacy, the Buddha elaborately related how he endeavoured in meditation through the fourfold diligence at the Mahā Bodhi tree; how he gained, as a result, mundane (*lokiya*) absorptions (*jhānas*) how he acquired the super knowledges (*abhiññā*) such as remembrance of his former existences (*pubbe-nivāsa-ñāṇa*) as a result of meditation based on the mundane absorptions (*jhāna*) in the first watch of the night of the full moon of May (*Vesākha*), in the year 528 BCE, and was born first by noble birth (*ariya-jāti*), later, with the beak-like super knowledges breaking open the shell of ignorance that had concealed the series of his past bodies, how he had acquired the psychic power of the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu*) in the middle watch of that night and was born for a second time, by noble birth after with the beak-like super knowledges, breaking open the shell of the ignorance that had concealed his rebirths after death (*cuti-paṭisandhi*); how he had acquired the path-knowledge to become an Arahat, which was the third enlightening knowledge named destruction of the pollutants (*āsavakkhaya*) in the last watch of the same night and was born for a third time, by noble birth after the beak-like super knowledges broke open the shell of ignorance that had concealed the four noble truths.

In this way, when the Buddha, out of great compassion for the Brahmin Verañja, had thus related his being great by noble birth through the discourse, clearly describing the threefold knowledge, the Brahmin became rapturous both physically and mentally, and came to know the greatness of the Buddha and reproached himself: “I have wrongly accused the omniscient Buddha, who is supreme among the three worlds of individuals and endowed with all virtues, by saying that: He has failed to show respect to old people! Ignorance, friends, is disgusting indeed!”

Being convinced that: “This Gotama is the foremost, for he was born first by noble birth in the world; unique in all virtues, he is also the best,” the Brahmin supplicated the Buddha as follows: “The greatest in the world indeed is venerable Gotama! The best in the world indeed is venerable Gotama! It is very delightful indeed, Venerable Gotama! It is very delightful indeed, Venerable Gotama! To use a worldly simile, just as what was turned upside down has been turned upside up; just as what was covered has been uncovered; just as one following the wrong path has been told the right path; just as a torch has been

lighted in the dark so that those who have eyes will see a variety of things; even so venerable Gotama has taught me the Dhamma in many ways. I approach Venerable Gotama, and recognize venerable Gotama, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, as my shield, shelter and refuge. From today onwards, Venerable Gotama, kindly accept me as a lay devotee (*upāsaka*) established in the threefold refuge for life!"

Having taken refuge, the Brahmin begged him, saying: "May venerable Gotama observe the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) together with the community of monks in Verañjā, as an act of kindness done to me!" Keeping silent the Buddha agreed to do as requested by the Brahmin. Clever in behavioural studies, the Brahmin reflected: "If venerable Gotama does not accept my word, he should have rejected it by deed or by word, now that he assumes no appearance of refusal, but of consent, he must have accepted it in his heart." Having known the Buddha's acceptance, he stood up from his seat and paid respects to him from the four quarters and encircled him three times, keeping him at his right. Though he had accused [720] the Buddha, since his arrival, for showing no signs of reverence to elders, he was not content at all in repeatedly doing homage to him in all three manners – physically, verbally and mentally – now that he had analytically understood his virtues. Placing his folded hands on his head and facing in the direction of the Buddha as far as he could see, he withdrew, walking backward. It was only at the point where he lost sight of the Buddha that he finally made obeisance to his heart's content and departed. At the request of the Brahmin Verañja, the Buddha observed the twelfth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in the city of Verañjā with his 500 monks.

Famine in Verañjā City

At that time Verañjā was short of food. It was hard to make a living there. There were white bones all over the city. People had to draw lots for food rations. Therefore it was not easy for the monks to get enough food by going round with an alms bowl in their hands. The horse-merchants of the northern region (*Uttarā-patha*) were then staying with 500 horses in Verañjā to take shelter from showers of rain during the rainy season. At the horse-yards the merchants made a regular donation of one measure (*pattha*) of barley to each monk. When the monks entered the city in the morning for alms food and did not get any, they

went to the horse-yards and each received one measure of barley which they brought to the monastery and pounded it in small mortars and ate it.

> Travelling was impossible on account of heavy rains during the four months of the rainy season in Verañjā. Hence the horse-merchants stayed there to take shelter from the rains. They had lodges and stables built, and enclosures made on unflooded grounds outside the city for such a stay. These sites of the horse-merchants were known as horse-yards.
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> They brought the barley which they had steamed to make it last long and free from worm-holes and which they had husked so that they might use it as horse-food where grass and such fodder were not available. These merchants of the Uttarāpatha were not faithless like the people of the Dakkhiṇāpatha. They had faith and cherished the Three Treasures. One morning, when they went into the city on business, they found the monks in groups of seven or eight going about for alms but getting nothing. And so, they discussed among themselves: "These good monks are observing the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) depending on this Verañjā city. But there is famine here. Not getting a bit of food, they are immensely troubled. Since we are visitors, we are not capable of providing them with rice gruel and food daily, but our horses get food twice a day, once at night and once in daytime. It will be good to take one measure of barley out of the morning fodder of each horse and give it to each monk. If we do so the good monks will not be hard pressed; and the horses will still have enough food." They then went to the monks and informed them of their decision, they also requested them, saying: "Venerable sirs, please accept one measure of barley and make it into food in a befitting way and eat it." Hence they made a regular offering of one measure of barley to each monk every day.
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> When the monks entered Verañjā in the morning for alms food and went round the whole city, they did not get even a word of excuse, let alone food. When they reached the horse-yards outside the city, each of them was given one measure of barley and brought it to the monastery. Since there were no lay attendants to make gruel or food for them and as it was not proper to do the cooking by themselves, they formed groups of eight or ten and pounded the barley in small mortars. Each consumed his share after adding water to it, for they thought: "In this way we shall have a light livelihood (*sallahuka-vutti*) and be free from the wrongdoing of cooking by oneself (*sāmapāka-dukkaṭa-āpatti*). After having eaten, they engaged in ascetic practices without worry.

For the Buddha, however, the horse-merchants donated one measure of barley and the proportionate amount of butter, honey and molasses. Ven. Ānanda brought the offerings and ground the barley on a stone slab. Anything prepared by a man of merit and intelligence is naturally delightful. Having ground the barley, he mixed it with butter and so on [721] and offered it to the Buddha. Then Devas put ambrosia into the ground barley. That same ground barley the Buddha partook of and spent the time engaged in fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*). Since the arrival of the famine, the Buddha had not moved about for alms.

> Herein it may be asked whether Ven. Ānanda was an attendant (*upatthaka*) to the Buddha during the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period in Verañjā. Answer: he was, but he did not hold the post permanently yet. Explanation: During the first period after Awakening, the first 20 years of his ministry, the Buddha had no permanent personal attendant. Sometimes he was served by Ven. Nāgasamāla, sometimes by Ven. Nāgita, sometimes by Ven. Meghiya, sometimes by Ven. Upavana, sometimes by Ven. Sāgata, sometimes by Ven. Sunakkhatta, who was a Licchavī Prince before his ordination. These monks waited upon the Buddha of their own accord and left him when they so desired.
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> When the aforesaid monks were serving, Ven. Ānanda remained unconcerned, and he personally performed all his duties big and small on their departure. The Buddha also accepted him, for he thought: "This worthy relative of mine, Ānanda, is the best to serve me in all these matters of such a nature, though he has not secured the post of my personal attendant." Hence Ven. Ānanda's preparation and offering of the barley mixed with butter, honey and molasses as there were no other attendants in Verañjā during this Rains Retreat, and the Buddha's engagement in fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) took place after partaking of the food. In this connection, the following questions and answers should particularly be noted:
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> Question: Is it true that people normally tend to struggle much to do deeds of merit at a time when food is scarce? Is it true that they think they themselves should not enjoy things but give them to monks in generosity? Why then did none of these people offer even a ladleful of food while the Buddha was keeping Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in Verañjā? Why was the Brahmin Verañja not mindful of the Buddha's presence though he had very earnestly requested the Buddha to spend the rainy season there?

Answer: The negligence on the part of the Brahmin and the people was due to Māra's magical control and deception of them. Explanation: Māra possessed the Brahmin as soon as he left the Buddha. He also did the same thing to the citizens of Verañjā and the people in the environs of the city, the environs covering a distance of one league, within which, the monks on their morning alms round could move about, going and coming. Māra confused all these people and made them forget about the Buddha and the community of monks and went away. Nobody, therefore remembered even to show respect to the Buddha.

Question: Did the Buddha keep the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) without anticipating Māra's magical control?

Answer: No, not without anticipating, he kept it even though he foresaw Māra's act of magic.

Question: Despite his knowledge in anticipation, why did the Buddha keep the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) only in Verañjā, but not in Campā, Sāvatthī, Rājagaha, or in any other city?

Answer: In that very year, in that very period, even if the Buddha stayed in the northern continent of Uttarakuru or in the Tāvatiṁsa abode of Devas, the possession by Māra would take place all the same, let alone in Campā, Sāvatthī, Rājagaha or anywhere else. In that year Māra was overwhelmed with malice, ill-will and hatred against the Buddha. In the city of Verañjā, however, it was also foreseen by the Buddha that the horse-merchants would come to the monks' honour and relief. Hence he observed his Rains Retreat only in Verañjā.

Question: Was Māra not able to control the horse-merchants magically?

Answers: Yes, Māra was able to do so. But it was only after his attempt to control and deceive the citizens by magic that they arrived in Verañjā.

Question: Though they arrived only after Māra's attempt, why did he not come [722] back and exercise his magical influence on the merchants?

Answer: He did not because he was powerless to do so. Explanation: By no means can Māra do harm to three things meant for the Buddha: 1) The meal cooked and brought as an offering; 2) the offering of food decided to be a constant duty by those who think: We shall give the Buddha throughout such and such period; and 3) an object brought to the monastery and offered by word of mouth saying: "This is for the Buddha's use as part of the four requisites."

> Further explanation: The following are the four things that nobody can do harm to: 1) The food that is brought and about to be offered and the four requisites intended to be a permanent offering which are deposited for the Buddha; 2) the life of the Buddha that usually is four-fifths of the human lifespan of the period in which he appears. That is to say that no one could disrupt the life of our Buddha Gotama before he was 80 years old which was four-fifths of 100, the normal lifespan of people in his day; 3) the Buddha's major and minor marks and his bodily-radiance; in fact, the radiance of the moon, the sun, Devas or Brahmas disappears on coming to the place where the Buddha's marks and radiance shine; and 4) the Buddha's omniscience. Therefore it may be taken that the barley to which harm could not be done by Māra was consumed by the Buddha and his 500 monk disciples.

The Buddha's past deed (*kamma*) which caused him to meet with such famine along with his 500 monks in Verañjā was this: Ninety-two aeons (*kappa*) ago, during the Dispensation of the Buddha Phussa, the Bodhisatta became a man of bad character on account of his association with wicked friends. He then wrongfully uttered to Buddha Phussa's disciples such unwholesome words as: "You had better bite coarse barley food and eat it but do not eat any good rice (*sāli*)!" That evil past deed (*kamma*) was the reason for his encounter with famine as he was keeping the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in Verañjā (see Ap. 39.10).

The Buddha heard the pounding in small mortars.

Buddhas ask even though they know. They know and they do not ask, for there is nothing that they do not know. They know the opportune time and they ask. They know the opportune time and they do not ask. They ask what is connected with benefit; they do not ask what is not connected with benefit. What is not connected with benefit, they do away with through path-knowledge. They ask monks for two reasons, either to give a discourse or to lay down a rule for disciples.

The Buddha then asked Ven. Ānanda: "What, dear son Ānanda, does the sound from the small mortars mean?" Ven. Ānanda replied, stating what has been told above. At that moment the Buddha uttered: "Excellent, Ānanda excellent! You, Ānanda, who are of good moral character, have overcome rice cooked with meat by not yielding to scarcity of food, by not wanting and by not at all letting

yourself to be led astray by desire. The meaty rice that you have thus overcome will also be looked down upon by future generations."

Ven. Moggallāna's Bold Words

Ven. Moggallāna was one who had reached the height of perfection of knowledge as a disciple on the seventh day after he had become a monk. He was also placed by the Buddha as the foremost among those who possessed supernormal powers. [723]

Depending on his supernormal powers he thought: "Food is scarce in Verāñjā now. Monks are having much trouble. What if I were to turn over the earth and give for food the essence of the earth from the bottom layer." Then he continued to reflect: "As I am staying in the presence of the master, it does not befit me to do so without seeking his permission. Such an action would be tantamount to rivalry." So he went to the Buddha and bowed low before him and took his seat at an appropriate place.

Then Ven. Moggallāna addressed the Buddha thus: "Exalted Buddha, Verāñjā is short of food now. It is hard to stay there. There are white bones all over the city. Lots are drawn for making a living. It is not easy to get enough food by going round with an alms bowls in the hands. The bottom layer of the earth is pleasant for its sweetness, like honey that is free from bees and bee-eggs. Pray, exalted Buddha, let me turn up the soil of this great earth so that the monks may enjoy its essence from the bottom layer."

Then the Buddha asked: "Dear son Moggallāna, how would you treat the beings living on the earth?" Ven. Moggallāna answered: "Exalted Buddha, I will change my one hand into something like the earth. Then I will transfer the beings, from the natural earth on the hand that is changed into the earth. With the other hand, I will turn up this natural earth."

Then the Buddha uttered words of rejection: "No, dear son Moggallāna, it is not proper. Do not wish to turn up the earth. It may lead to misunderstanding among living beings."

> Herein what should be noted with regard to the words: "It may lead to misunderstanding among living beings," is this, famine occurs not only now, it will occur also in the future. From where can monks get a fellow monk endowed with supernatural power like you then? Though future

> monks may be Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*), Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmi*), Non-returners (*Anāgāmi*), dry-vision (*sukkha-vipassaka*) Arahats, or only those who have attained absorptions (*jhāna*) but not psychic powers, and even Arahats of analytical knowledge, yet as they lack supernormal powers, they will approach the house of their lay devotees for food. Then it may occur to the devotees thus: "Monks during the Dispensation of the Buddha were accomplished in the threefold training. In the Buddha's lifetime, they had the benefits of their super knowledges (*abhiññā*) and when there was famine they could turn up the earth and enjoy the earth's essence. Nowadays there are no monks who have fully undertaken the threefold training. If there were such monks, they would do the same as those of the Buddha's time did. They would not let us eat anything that is raw or cooked. They will give us only the earth's essence." This thought will make them misunderstand about the noble ones themselves that: "There are no noble ones!" Those, who condemn the noble ones on account of their misunderstanding will be reborn in suffering states. Hence the Buddha prohibited the turning up of the earth's soil.

At that time, as Ven. Moggallāna failed to get permission, he desired to change his request and said: "Pray, exalted Buddha, let all monks go to the northern continent!" the Buddha again forbade it as before: "Dear son Moggallāna, it is not proper. Do not desire to make them go to the northern continent!" These indeed were the bold words of Ven. Moggallāna.

> Herein though it was not said directly that: "It may lead to misunderstanding among living beings," it should be understood that the Buddha rejected the idea of going on alms round to the northern continent on those very grounds, for it had been explained before. Note should be taken as in the previous manner.
>
> What would he have done if the Buddha had given him permission? Through his supernormal powers he would have turned the great ocean into a small ditch that could be crossed over by a single stride and paved a new road straight from the Naḷeru margosa tree to the northern continent; he would also have created the continent like any village, which they have frequented for food, with streets for going and coming so that monks could go in and out conveniently. [724]

Ven. Sāriputta's Request

At that time Ven. Sāriputta, who was alone in seclusion, wondered: "Whose Dispensations among exalted Buddhas did not last long and whose Dispensations did?" With this query he emerged from his seclusion in the evening and approached the Buddha and bowed low before him and took his seat at an appropriate place. Then he asked the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, while I was staying in seclusion, I wondered: 'Whose Dispensations among exalted Buddhas did not last long and whose Dispensations did?' "

> Herein it may be argued: "Was not Ven. Sāriputta able to answer his own questions?" Answer: "He was able to do so in some cases and unable to do so in others." Explanation: he could decide: "The Dispensation of these Buddhas did not last long and the Dispensations of these Buddhas did." But he could not decide: "They did not last long for these reasons and they lasted long for these."
>
> Ven. Mahā Paduma, however, states: "It was not difficult for the chief disciple, who had reached the height of the sixteenfold wisdom and knowledge, to decide the reasons. But deciding by himself, though he was living with the Buddha, would be like discarding the balance and weighing something by the hand. Hence his question was put to the Buddha."
>
> At that time, being desirous of answering Ven. Sāriputta's question, the Buddha said: "Dear son Sāriputta, the Dispensations of the Buddhas Vipassī, Sikhī and Vessabhū did not last long through successive generations of disciples; but those of the Buddhas Kakusandha. Koṇāgamana, and Kassapa lasted long through successive generations of disciples."

Then Ven. Sāriputta asked: "Exalted Buddha, why did the Dispensations of the Buddhas Vipassī, Sikhī and Vessabhū not last long?"

The Buddha answered: "Dear son Sāriputta, the Buddhas Vipassī, Sikhī and Vessabhū did not bother to give discourses to their disciples elaborately. Their teachings of the nine divisions, such as Discourses (*Sutta*), Mixed Poems and Prose (*Geyya*), etc., were so few. Nor did they prescribe disciplinary rules for them. Nor did they recite the Authoritative Rules (*Pātimokkha*). When they passed away and when their immediate disciples passed away, the later generations of disciples, who were of diverse names, clans and births, let the Dispensations become extinct rapidly.

Dear son Sāriputta, just as flowers of different kinds placed on a wooden board without being strung are scattered, blown away and destroyed by the wind for the very reason that they are not strung; even so, when these Buddhas and their immediate disciples passed away, their teachings disappeared fast amongst later disciples of diverse names, clans and births. The other three Buddhas, knowing the intentions of their disciples with their minds, bothered to exhort them.

Dear son Sāriputta, there took place an incident in former times. In a certain terrible forest, Buddha Vessabhū knew the minds of his thousand monks with his mind and exhorted them: "Cultivate these three wholesome thoughts: The thought of renunciation (*nekkhamma-vitakka*), the thought of non-harming (*avyāpāda*), the thought of non-violence (*avihiṁsā*). Do not cultivate these unwholesome thoughts: the thought of sensual pleasure (*kāma-vitakka*), the thought of harming (*vyāpāda*), the thought of violence (*vihiṁsā*). Bear in mind that they are impermanent (*anicca*), unsatisfactory (*dukkha*), unsubstantial (*anatta*) and unpleasant (*asubha*). Do not bear in mind that they are permanent (*nicca*), satisfactory (*sukha*), substantial (*atta*) and pleasant (*subha*). Abandon unwholesome thoughts! Develop wholesome thoughts!" [725]

Dear son Sāriputta, the thousand monks who had thus been exhorted by Buddha Vessabhū became Arahats, free from the pollutants (*āsava*). The minds of these thousand monks, therefore, were entirely cut off from grasping of anything through craving and wrong view that: 'This am I, this is mine!' They were totally emancipated from the pollutants (*āsava*), had come to complete cessation, in the sense of not arising again. With regard to the terrible forest, the terror of the forest was such that those who were not free from passion generally had gooseflesh upon entering it. What has been said is the reason for the short-lived Dispensations of the Buddhas Vipassī, Sikhī and Vessabhū."

> With reference to the statement that the three Buddhas: "Did not bother to give discourses to their disciples elaborately." They did not do so, not because they were idle. In fact, there is no such thing as indolence or lack of industry on the part of Buddhas. Explanation: When Buddhas teach, they do so with the same degree of effort whether they are to teach a single person or two persons, or the whole universe full of beings. They do not reduce their energy when seeing that the audience is small; nor do they increase their effort when seeing that the audience is big. Just as the lion, king of animals, goes out in search of food after seven days spent in the

den, chases and catches his prey with the same speed, whether they are big or tiny, because he is resolved that his speed should not be inadequate, even so when Buddhas deliver their sermons to their listeners whether they form a multitude or only an inconsiderable gathering, they do so with equal industry, for they have a noble purpose not to decrease their respect for the Dhamma.

Unlike our Buddha, who taught in detail as though he were to fill the ocean, these three Buddhas, in fact, did not elaborate on their teachings. The reason was that, in those times, beings had little dust of defilements in their wisdom-eyes. Explanation: In the lifetimes of these three Buddhas, beings enjoyed longevity, and the amount of dust that covered their wisdom-eyes was also slight. Beings in those days were therefore instantly converted on listening to just one verse connected with the four truths. It was therefore not necessary to preach to them elaborately. Hence the teachings of these Buddhas in nine divisions were so meagre.

In the time of these three Buddhas, since their monastic disciples were wholly free from wrongdoings, no authoritative Monastic Rules (*āṇā-pātimokkha*) associated with the seven portions of offences had to be promulgated. Only the recitation of the Advisory Rules (*Ovāda-Pātimokkha*) was known to them. Even the Advisory Rules they did not recite fortnightly.[223]

These long-lived Buddhas had two generations of disciples to follow them: The immediate disciples and the later disciples who were monks ordained by those immediate disciples. At the time when the later disciples, under the second category emerged, since there had been no disciplinary rules from the outset and since the disciples, who were of diverse names, clans and births, did not feel obliged to protect and preserve the small amount of discourses but remained careless as though they shirked their duty, thinking: “Such and such a venerable will do it, such and such a venerable will do it,” they did nothing for safeguarding the teachings by holding Councils (*Saṅgāyana*). Hence, there was a rapid disappearance of their Dispensations.

With regard to the statement: “The Dispensations of the long-lived Buddhas did not last long,” it originally meant to say that their Dispensations did not last long for many generations of disciples. The life

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[223] The two kinds of Rules (*Pātimokkha*) have been dealt with in detail in chapter 25.

> of Buddha Vipassī, however, was 80,000 years 1ong; the lifespan of his immediate disciples also was 80,000 [726] years, so was the lifespan of the last generation of later disciples who were ordained by the immediate disciples. Therefore, the Dispensation with the two generations of disciples lasted for 160,000 years after the demise of the Buddha. In terms of generations of disciples, however, there were only two, and this small number of generations was meant, in speaking of the shortness of the Dispensation; it was spoken, one should particularly remember, not in terms of years, but of generations.

Having heard of the reasons for the short-lived Dispensations in terms of generations of the disciples of the three Buddhas: Vipassī, Sikhī and Vessabhū, the noble Sāriputta, being desirous of hearing the reasons for the long-lived Dispensations of the other three Buddhas: Kakusandha. Koṇāgamana and Kassapa, continued to ask the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, why did the Dispensations of the Buddhas Kakusandha, Koṇāgamana and Kassapa last long?"

The Buddha answered: "Dear son Sāriputta, the Buddhas Kakusandha, Koṇāgamana and Kassapa gave elaborate discourses to their disciples. Their teachings of the nine divisions, such as Discourses (*Sutta*), Mixed Poems and Prose (*Geyya*), etc., were numerous. They prescribed disciplinary rules for them, and recited the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*). When they passed away and when their immediate disciples passed away, therefore, the generations of their later disciples, who were of diverse names, clans and births, caused the Dispensations to last long.

Dear son Sāriputta, just as flowers of different kinds strung on a string and placed on a wooden board cannot be dispersed, blown away and destroyed by the wind for the very reason that they are strung, even so, when these Buddhas and their immediate disciples passed away, their teachings lasted long through the efforts of later generations of disciples of diverse names, clans and births.

Dear son Sāriputta, the aforesaid factors – elaborate teaching, a large number of discourses, the promulgation of the disciplinary rules and the recitation of the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) – together formed the reason for the long existence of the teachings of the three Buddhas: Kakusandha, Koṇāgamana and Kassapa."

> Herein, with regard to the long existence of the Dispensations of these three Buddhas, the lengthy duration in terms of both lifespan and

> generations of disciples should be noted. Explanation: The lifespan at the time of Buddha Kakusandha was 40,000 years; at the time of Buddha Koṇāgamana, 30,000 years; and at the time of Buddha Kassapa, 20,000 years. Many generations, one after another, of these immediate disciples nurtured and carried forward the Dispensation. In this way, the teachings of these three Buddhas long endured in terms of both lifespans and generations of disciples.
>
> As for our inestimable Lord of the Three Worlds, he should have been born when the lifespan was 10,000 years, which was half that of Buddha Kassapa; if not, he should have been born in the period of 5,000 years lifespan, 1,000 years or 500 years lifespan. But his wisdom was not mature enough then. It attained maturity only when the lifespan was 100 years, which is very short indeed. Therefore, it should be stated that although the Dispensation of our Buddha lasted long in terms of generations of disciples, it did not last as long as did the Dispensations of those former Buddhas in terms of years.

Having thus learnt the reason for the long existence of the Dispensations of the Buddhas Kakusandha, Koṇāgamana and Kassapa, Ven. Sāriputta came to the conclusion that the laying down of rules is the main cause for the perpetuity of the Dispensation of a Buddha. Wishing to ensure the perpetuity of the Dispensation of the present Buddha, he rose from his seat, adjusted his robe, covered the left shoulder, and raised his hands in [727] adoration towards the Buddha. He, then emphatically requested the master with these words: "May the exalted Buddha lay down disciplinary rules so that this Dispensation may last long! May he recite the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*)! Exalted Buddha, it is time to promulgate the rules vital to the long standing of the teaching, and to recite the rules! Exalted Gracious One, the time has come to lay down and to bring about the rules which are noted for the lasting endurance of the Dispensation!"

Being desirous of telling him that the time is not ripe yet for laying down rules, the Buddha said: "Wait, dear Sāriputta! Wait, dear Sāriputta! Only the Buddha knows the proper time for promulgating rules and reciting the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*)!

1. Dear Sāriputta, as long as there do not take place in the Saṅgha some wrongdoings which are the basis for the pollutants (*āsava*) in this Dispensation, the Buddha does not lay down rules for the disciples nor does he proclaim the Monastic Rules. Dear Sāriputta, when there take

place some wrongdoings in the Saṅgha which are the basis for the pollutants in this Dispensation, only then does he lay down the rules and proclaim the Monastic Rules, only for the benefit of eliminating those wrongdoings.

2. Dear Sāriputta, as long as the Saṅgha does not have a large number of monks of long standing, there do not take place some wrongdoings which are the basis for the pollutants in this Dispensation. Dear Sāriputta, when the Saṅgha has a large number of monks of long standing there take place in it some wrongdoings which are the basis for the pollutants in this Dispensation, then only for the benefit of eliminating those wrongdoings, which are the basis for the pollutants, does the Buddha lay down rules and proclaim the Monastic Rules.

3. Dear Sāriputta, as long as the Saṅgha does not thrive, there do not take place in it some wrongdoings which are the basis for the pollutants in this Dispensation. Dear Sāriputta, when the Saṅgha thrives, and there take place in it some wrongdoings which are the basis for the pollutants in this Dispensation, then only for the benefit of eliminating these wrongdoings, does the Buddha lay down rules and proclaim the Monastic Rules.

4. Dear Sāriputta, as long as the Saṅgha does not know many gains there do not take place in it some wrongdoings which are the basis for the pollutants in this Dispensation. Dear Sāriputta, when the Saṅgha knows many gains and there take place in it some wrongdoings which are the basis for the pollutants in this Dispensation, then only for the benefit of eliminating those wrongdoings, does the Buddha lay down rules and proclaim Monastic Rules.

5. Dear Sāriputta, as long as the Saṅgha does not have much knowledge there do not take place in it some wrongdoings which are the basis for the pollutants in this Dispensation. Dear Sāriputta, when the Saṅgha has much knowledge and there take place in it some wrongdoings which are the basis for the pollutants in this Dispensation, then only for the benefit of eliminating those wrongdoings, does the Buddha lay down rules and proclaim the Monastic Rules.

Dear Sāriputta, now the Saṅgha is free from immoral persons, free from blemishes, free from impurities, clean, and stands in the essence of such virtues as morality and the like. Dear Sāriputta, of these 500 monks, the lowest is a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), whose assured destination is the three higher stages of the path, for he will never be reborn in suffering abodes."

> Herein by the pollutants (*āsava*) is meant moral defilements and suffering such as accusations, killings, imprisonment, etc., by others in this life, and suffering through rebirth in the suffering states hereafter. Since such wrongdoings as sexual intercourse, stealing, killing human beings, etc., form the ground for the pollutants (*āsava*), they are called the bases for the pollutants (*āsavaṭṭhaniyā*). [728]
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> At the time when Ven. Sāriputta made the request for laying down the rules, transgression had not occurred at all. Had the rules such as the four Expulsion (*Pārājika*) rules and others been laid down before the actual taking place of transgressions, such an action would not have escaped private abuse, blame and public censure.
>
> How would such an action not have escaped? If rules were to be laid down in advance, all the necessary rules would have been done so, saying: "If a monk commits sexual intercourse," and so on. Laying down the rules before seeing the transgression, others would abuse, blame privately and censure publicly as follows: "Why does the monk Gotama bind us to these rules, taking for granted that the Saṅgha of monks adheres to him and follows his words? Why did he lay down the Expulsion rules? Have not these clansmen become monks after renouncing their great luxury, vast circles of relatives and princely wealth that they had in their possession? Are they not content with what is just enough for their food and what is just enough for their clothing, and do they not abide with extreme respect in the threefold training and without regard for their bodies and lives? Among such good men, who would indulge in such worldly practices (*loka-āmisa*) as sexual intercourse, stealing another's property, taking another's life, earning his living by falsely claiming attainments.
>
> Even if the four Expulsion rules were not laid down, has it not been made clear that sexual intercourse, stealing, etc., are not proper, not practicable, for even while as a novice one keeps the precepts, saying: 'I take upon myself the rule of staying away from taking life,' and so on?" Such would have incurred private abuse, blame and public censure.

Moreover, probably the Buddha's wisdom would not have been known to beings. The rules that had been laid down would have been destroyed. They would not have lasted. To use a worldly simile, a medical doctor lacking in skill sends for a man who has no ulcer yet but who would soon suffer from an ulcer and says: "Come, man, on this part of your body there will appear an ulcer, bringing no benefit but threatening your life. Get it treated early!" – "Very well, sir. Can you yourself give treatment to it?" Saying thus the man submits himself to the doctor, who then gives surgical treatment to that part of the man's body without an ulcer and causing the skin to become normal by taking out the blood, applying the medicine, dressing, cleaning, and so on. Thereafter, he asks the man saying: "I have cured your ulcer. Give me the cost of the medicine!"

The man who has been medically treated may then privately abuse, blame and openly censure the surgeon without skill in his presence, saying: "What is this foolish doctor talking about? Which disease of mine has been cured by this foolish doctor? As a matter of fact, has not the stupid surgeon caused trouble to me? Has he not removed part of my body?" The man may not feel grateful to the doctor.

In the same way, had the Buddha laid down the rules for his disciples before the actual wrongdoings happened, he would not have escaped private abuse, and so on. His wisdom might not have been known to beings. The rules that had been laid down would have been destroyed. They would not have lasted. Hence the Buddha said, in the negative: "Dear Sāriputta, as long as there do not take place wrongdoings in the Saṅgha, a Buddha does not lay down the rules for the disciples," and so on.

Herein, the time when wrongdoings have not taken place means the time which was not ripe yet for laying down rules. The time when wrongdoings have taken place means the time which is ripe for doing so. The laying down of rules at an inopportune time might bring about the aforesaid blame and censure. The same action, taken as required by the occurrence of wrongdoings, may be likened to a skilful medical doctor who gives the ulcer that has appeared curative treatment by operating on it, applying medicine, dressing, cleaning and so on and causes the recovery of the ulcer and the normalcy of the skin. The Buddha may be likened to him, who is not abused but honoured for his distinguished service in his medical profession, for he was similarly not abused and blamed privately or otherwise but [729] honoured for his distinguished efficiency in the matter

of his omniscience. The rules laid down would not then be impaired but would stand intact for long.

By the words in the first statement is shown the opportune and inopportune time for laying down rules. By the words in the second, third, fourth and fifth statements, is shown the time when wrongdoings occurred. The elaborate meaning of these words may be taken from the Section about Verañjā (*Verañja-kaṇḍa*, Vin Pār 1, PTS 3.1).

Taking Leave at the End of the Rains Retreat

After the Buddha had thus explained in detail the question of laying down the disciplinary rules to Ven. Sāriputta, the general of the Dhamma, he spent the whole Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at Verāñjā and performed the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*) on the Great Invitation Day, the full moon of November (*Assayuja*), at the end of the Rains Retreat. Then he called Ven. Ānanda and said: "Dear Ānanda, when the Buddhas have observed the Rains Retreat at the request of others, it is not their custom to depart without asking them for leave, or, they depart only after informing them. Come, Ānanda, let us go and seek permission from Brahmin Verañja." After finishing his meal, the Buddha, with Ven. Ānanda as his companion, visited Verañja's place in the afternoon, illuminating the city gates and all the roads and streets with his body radiance.

When the Buddha stood at the door of the Brahmin's house, the Brahmin's men, seeing the Buddha, reminded their master; only then did Verañja regain a sense of his responsibilities and get up from his seat excitedly to prepare a seat worthy of the noble one; he then welcomed and invited him respectfully saying: "Please come this way, exalted Buddha!" the Buddha walked along as had been invited by the Brahmin and sat down on the prepared seat. It was the time when Māra had withdrawn his spell. "Brahmin, we have observed the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at your invitation. Now we inform you that we want to go elsewhere!"

Verañjā replied to the Buddha: "Right, venerable Gotama. You have observed the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at our invitation. But I have not given alms yet. The reason for that is not because we have nothing to give, not because we do not want to give. People of household life have too many things to do. Where can they have a chance to give? May venerable Gotama accept, together with the company of monks, my food tomorrow."

The Brahmin did not know about the magical influence of Māra. He thought his absent-mindedness was due to the affairs and drawbacks of household life, hence his supplication to the Buddha.

It occurred then to the Buddha: "If l do not accept the Brahmin's invitation, demerit will develop for him, and to all the Verañjā citizens as well for that matter, who would think: 'The monk Gotama seems to be angry because he receives no alms for the whole period of the three Rains Retreat months. Therefore, he rejects even a single meal despite my request. The monk Gotama has no patience. He is not an omniscient one!' Let there be no development of demerit to them!" Out of compassion, the Buddha accepted the invitation by keeping silent. Thereafter, he made the Brahmin know the futility of being occupied with domestic affairs and their drawbacks. With a Dhamma talk appropriate at that moment, the Buddha showed the two benefits; one for this life and the other for the next. He also made him dedicated to good deeds, and enthusiastic about and happy with them. Then he rose from his seat and departed.

Verañja's Great Alms Giving

[This section has been added in here from its original placing at the beginning of chapter 31.]

After the departure of the Buddha, the Brahmin Verañja summoned all his family members and other inmates of the house to a meeting, at which he said: "Dear ones, I have not offered even a single day's meal to the Buddha though I invited him to stay here for the three months of the Rains Retreat. Let us now offer alms meant for the three months Rains Retreat period in a single day." Having given instructions thus, the Brahmin had excellent food cooked, and next morning he had his place decorated and seats worthy of noble ones prepared. After [730] setting up an exquisite offering of perfumes and flowers, he sent for the Buddha with the word: "It is meal time now, venerable Gotama, the food is ready!"

Accompanied by 100 monks, the Buddha arrived at Verañja's house and sat together with them on the seats prepared. Verañja personally served the Saṅgha of monks, headed by the Buddha, with delicious meals until they were satisfied and refused to take more.

30: The 12th Rains Retreat (Famine) – 1055

As the Buddha removed his hand from the alms bowl after finishing the meal, Verañja offered him a set of three robes which were worth 3,000. Each robe cost 1,000. To each monk too, he offered a set of two pieces of cloth to make robes. The value of each robe cloth was 500. Hence the amount of his donation made to the monks was 500 thousand.

> Only this much comes from the canoncial text, the commentarial account is as follows.

As he was not satisfied with this offering of robes worth 500,000, the Brahmin Verañja offered again a large number of rugs, bolts of cloth made in Pattunna country, each costing 7,000 or 8,000, so that they might be cut and made into garments of double layers, shoulder coverings, waistbands, water strainers, etc.

He also gave each monk jugs and bottles filled with medicinal ointment heated 100 or 1,000 times and worth 1,000. There was nothing left out from the four requisites he presented for their use. He gave away in generosity all the necessities to the monks.

Having done such a great alms giving, the Brahmin sat down together with his wife and children, respectfully paying respects to the Buddha. Owing to Māra's magic, he had lost the opportunity of enjoying the taste of immortality in the form of a discourse throughout the Rains Retreat. In order to make up the Brahmin's loss and to fulfil his wish, the Buddha let the rain of immortality fall heavily in a single day. He taught the double advantages for the present life and the next and established him in meritorious deeds. Finally, the Buddha made Verañja zealous and delighted in good deeds, and then he left the place.

Together with his wife, Verañja respectfully raised his hands in adoration towards the Buddha and his assembly of monks and followed them to see them off, requesting: "Exalted Buddha, kindly do us another favour by visiting us once again!" Then the Brahmin returned with tears trickling from his eyes.

After staying in Verañjā for as long as he wished, the Buddha left the city. Being desirous of reducing the great circular journey, he led the monks, who had been so tired and fatigued because of the scarcity of food during the whole Rains Retreat, along the direct route, bypassing Sorreyya, Saṅkassa, and Kaññakujja cities. On arriving at the crossing at Payāga, the Buddha crossed the Ganges and reached Bārāṇasī. At this city too he stayed for as long as he wished, and then he

headed for Vesālī. Having arrived at Vesālī the Buddha sojourned at Kūṭāgāra, the monastery with the gable, in the Great Wood.

> [This section previously stood at the beginning of chapter 31, it is brought back here for better homogeneity of the 31st chapter.]

Having stayed in the Great Wood in Vesālī, teaching those worthy of conversion, the Buddha left that city and eventually arrived in Sāvatthī and stayed at Jetavana monastery.

Vālodaka-jātaka (Ja 183)

An event then happened, leading to the relation of the Birth Story about the Sorry Drink (*Vālodaka-jātaka*, Ja 183) by the Buddha: Five hundred lay devotees in the city of Sāvatthī left their domestic undertakings, wandered in one group with their wives from place to place, listening to the discourses of the Buddha. Among them some were Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*), some were Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmi*) and the rest Non-returners (*Anāgāmi*). There was not a single worldling (*puthujjana*) amongst them. Those who extended an invitation to the Buddha included 500 lay devotees.

There lived also 500 young attendants who, while waiting upon the 500 devotees, ate what was leftover. After eating the leftover food at breakfast, they slept as [742] they had nothing more to do, and when they woke up they went to the river Aciravatī and wrestled among themselves on the banks of the river, shouting loudly. Their masters, the 500 lay devotees, however, did not shout at all but kept quiet and engaged in fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) in solitude.

When the Buddha heard the loud noises of the 500 eaters of leftover food, he asked Ven. Ānanda: “What are these noises, Ānanda?” – “These noises belong to the 500 eaters of leftover food, exalted Buddha,” replied Ven. Ānanda.

Then the Buddha said: “Ānanda, not only now do they eat leftover food and shout loudly, but in former times too they did the same thing. Not only now do these 500 devotees remain quiet, but in former times too they did so too.” Upon being requested by Ven. Ānanda, the Buddha related the past incident as follows:

"In ancient times when King Brahmadatta was reigning in Bārāṇasī, the Bodhisatta was born into the family of a noble man and when he came of age, he became a counsellor to the king.

One day, hearing of a rebellion in a border area, he harnessed 500 horses of Sindhava breed and went to the border with the fourfold army. After restoring peace there, he returned to Bārāṇasī and asked his officers to give the horses syrup made from grapes, saying: 'These horses are fatigued. Let them have a grape drink.' The officers did as they were told by the king.

The 500 horses then took the flavoured and tasty grape-drinks and went to their stables and stayed quietly in their respective places.

After giving the syrup to the horses, there was a lot of grapes remaining but without flavour and taste. The officers asked the king: 'What shall we do with the remains from the grapes?' – 'Comrades,' said the king, 'knead them in water and filter them with pieces of coarse cloth made of fibres from marsh date palms and give the water to the mules that carry the food for the horses.' The officers acted as they were ordered to by the king.

The mules, who carried the food loads, took the filtered secondary juice and became intoxicated with pride and they frolicked about braying, jumping and running in the courtyard. The king opened the palace window, and looking at the courtyard, he asked the Bodhisatta, the counsellor: "Look, wise man, after drinking the secondary grape juice, these 500 mules are intoxicated with pride and they frolick, braying, jumping and running about. But the Sindhava horses, after drinking the flavoured and delicious syrup of grapes made no sound, not showing any frolicsome behaviour, they keep quiet. What is the reason? So he put a question in the following verse (Ja 183):

Vālodakaṁ apparasaṁ nihīnaṁ,
pitvā mado jāyati gadrabhānaṁ,
imañ-ca pitvāna rasaṁ paṇītaṁ,
mado na sañjāyati sindhavānaṁ.

Wise man! The mules that have taken the secondary grape syrup of less taste and poor quality and filtered with a piece of cloth made of fibres from marsh date palms, are intoxicated with pride. Such intoxication has not happened to the Sindhava horses though they have taken the delicious grape juice. What is the reason?

In order to give his answer to the king, he uttered the following verse:

> *Appaṁ pivitvāna nihīna-jacco,*
> *so majjatī tena janinda puṭṭho,*
> *dhorayha-sīlī ca kulamhi jāto,*
> *na majjatī agga-rasaṁ pivitvā.*

> Your majesty! The lowly born mule that has been effected by its insignificant birth becomes intoxicated after drinking an inconsiderable [743] amount of secondary grape syrup. The Sindhava horses that strenuously renders service to the country, though he had taken the sweetest taste of the juice extracted from fresh grapes, is not intoxicated because of his birth in a high family.

> What the verse means to say is that because the mules are inferior by birth, they become intoxicated after drinking less tasty secondary juice. On the contrary the Sindhava steeds, on account of their superiority by birth, do not show conceit or are not intoxicated with conceit though they have taken the primary juice of best quality.

On hearing the Bodhisatta's saying, the king had the mules driven out from the courtyard. Taking the Bodhisatta's advice the king performed meritorious deeds, beginning with alms giving and passed away to another existence according to his deeds (*kamma*).

Having delivered the Birth Story about the Sorry Drink (*Vālodaka-jātaka*, Ja 183), the Buddha concluded the story thus: "The 500 mules then have now become the 500 attendants who eat the leftover food. The 500 Sindhava horses then have now become the 500 noble lay devotees. The King of Bārāṇasī then is now Ānanda. The wise counsellor then is now I myself, the Buddha."

31: The 12th Year (Rāhula)

[A section here on Sudiṇṇa and the events leading up to the laying down of the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) have been moved to the 20th Rains Retreat where they more properly belong, as that is when the Rules started to be propogated.]

The Advice to Rāhula (MN 62)

While the Buddha was staying at Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī, the Buddha's son, Rāhula, was then a novice of eighteen years of age. He had reached his 11th year as a novice (*sāmaṇera*). One day the Buddha entered the city of Sāvatthī in the morning for alms food, and the novice Rāhula followed the Buddha closely.

When the Buddha and Rāhula were thus walking, the latter close behind the former, the Buddha was as splendid looking as a grand bull elephant that marches out of a jungle to come upon the pleasant ground in a grove of Sāla tree in full bloom. Rāhula too was as splendid looking as a young elephant that comes close behind the bull elephant. The Buddha was as splendid looking as the lion king that marches out of his ruby cave to look for food in the evening. Rāhula too was as splendid as a young lion that comes close behind the great lion king. The Buddha was as splendid as the tiger king that marches out of his forest resembling a jade cave. Rāhula, too, was as splendid as a young tiger that comes close behind the tiger king.

The Buddha was as splendid as the Garuḷa king that emerges out of a forest of cotton trees while Rāhula was as splendid as a young Garuḷa that comes close behind the Garuḷa king. The Buddha was as splendid as the golden goose king that flies up to the sky from Cittakūṭa Mount while Rāhula was as splendid as a young golden goose that comes close behind the goose-king.

The Buddha was as splendid as a large golden boat that sails in Lake Chaddanta while Rāhula was as splendid as a smaller golden boat that comes behind the larger one. The Buddha was as splendid as the Universal Monarch who roams in the firmament by the power of his Wheel-Treasure while Rāhula was as splendid as the eldest royal son who comes close behind the monarch. The Buddha was as splendid as the moon, the lord of the stars that roams in the cloudless sky while Rāhula was as splendid as the morning star that comes along behind the moon.

31: The 12th Year (Rāhula) – 1060

The Buddha was born in the lineage of King Okkāka, a descendent from Mahā Sammata. So was the novice Rāhula. The Buddha belonged to the warrior class (*khattiya*), having a birth that was as pure as the milk poured into a conch. So was Rāhula. The Buddha's body was adorned with the 32 marks of a great person and was as attractive to the hearts of others as a jewel gatepost erected at the gate of a celestial city or as a coral tree is when it is in full bloom. So was Rāhula's body.

In this manner these two extraordinary men, noble ones, who had realized their unique aspirations of the past, who had become ascetics from out of the ruling class, who possessed royal gentleness, who had golden complexions, and who bore the marks of a Great [744] Man, walked along the same road, being resplendent as though they were to overcome by means of their own splendour, the splendour of two moons, two suns, and each pair of such deities as Sakka, Suyāma, Santusita, Sunimmita, Vasavattī, Mahā Brahma, and others.

While they were thus resplendent, Rāhula closely following the Buddha from behind, watched his father carefully from the surface of the soles up to the tip of the hair and saw his father's resplendence generated by the glory of a Buddha. Wonder-struck, he thought thus: "As his body frame is exquisite with the 32 major marks and surrounded by body lustre, he is resplendent as though he were amidst the drizzle of gold dust, as a golden mountain encircled by streaks of lightning, as a golden gatepost exquisite with the seven kinds of gems that are strung on mechanical threads, as a golden mountain screened by red rugs though he is attired in dark red rag-robes, as a golden gatepost inlaid and adorned with coral creepers, as a golden shrine honoured with vermilion powder, as a golden sacrificial post painted with lac, as the moon that rises all of a sudden from between red clouds. The Buddha's possession of splendour that is caused by the power of his perfections, 30 in all, is endlessly amazing!"

Thereafter he looked at his own self and developed craving associated with household life on account of his own frame: "I am of beauty, too. If the Buddha were a Universal Monarch, lord of the four continents, he would have appointed me chief (*parināyaka*), the position reserved for the eldest son. In that case, the whole of Jambudīpa would become splendid."

While the Buddha was walking ahead it occurred to him thus: "Now the body of my son Rāhula has grown full with flesh and blood. It is a time when one's mind

restlessly wanders about all the attractive objects such as sights, sounds, etc. I wonder with what thoughts he is occupied now while he passes away his time?"

While the Buddha was thus reflecting, he found out clearly his son's thoughts were accompanied by greed and craving towards the household life (*gehassita-taṇhā-lobha*), he found out Rāhula's thoughts as though he saw a moving fish in clear water, and as though he saw his own image in the round mirror. This led him to decide as follows: "While following behind me, my son, the novice Rāhula, had developed craving for the household life on account of his own body, thinking: "I am beautiful. My appearance is pure and clean. Landing not at a right path and following a wrong path, he directs his mind to unworthy sense objects. Like a travelling man who has lost his way, he is heading for a place which is not worth visiting. If the arising defilement of greed were to stay in him and be allowed to grow, this would not give him a chance to see clearly his own welfare, as well as that of others, in their true perspective. This will lead him to the four suffering states of purgatory, animals, Petas, and Asuras, and also to conception in a mother's cramped womb. Thus will he be thrown into the wheel of Saṁsāra that knows no beginning (*anamatagga*). In fact, this greed produces what is fruitless. It destroys the meritorious consciousness. Owing to it, a terrible danger may occur in one's mental continuum, which is not seen by men. One who has craving does not see the cause and its effect clearly.

When a being is overwhelmed by greed, complete darkness reigns. A big mechanized boat, fully loaded with treasures, is not to be neglected, even for a moment, if water is seeping in through the breakage of the planks, and as the breakage should be blocked up quickly, so the novice Rāhula should not be negligently left aside. Before the defilement of greed destroys the treasures of the virtuous, such as morality and the like, that have accrued to him, I shall subdue those moral defilements of his."

In such an event the Buddha used to look back by turning around his whole body like a bull elephant which is called the elephant-look (*nāga-vilokana*). The Buddha stood, after turning his whole body as though a golden statue was turning mechanically, and he addressed Rāhula: "Rāhula, there is matter (*rūpa*) of the past, matter of the future, and matter of the present; matter inside the body and matter outside the body; rough matter [745] and soft matter; bad matter and good matter; far matter and near matter. All this matter of these

eleven kinds is not mine, it is not I, it is not my self, thus must matter be contemplated as it really is through insight (*vipassanā*) knowledge and wisdom."

When Rāhula asked: "Exalted Buddha, must only matter be contemplated thus? Gracious One, must only matter be contemplated thus?" the Buddha answered: "Matter must be contemplated thus, Rāhula; sensation (*vedanā*) must be contemplated thus; perception (*saññā*) must be contemplated thus; volitions (*saṅkhāra*) must be contemplated thus; consciousness (*viññāṇa*) must be contemplated thus."

> Herein the reason for Rāhula's question: "Must only matter be contemplated thus?" was as follows. On hearing the Buddha's instruction that: "All this matter of eleven kinds is not mine, it is not I, it is not my self, thus this matter should be contemplated as it really is, through insight knowledge and wisdom," it occurred to Rāhula, who had developed skill in the application of methods (*naya-kusala-ñāṇa*), thus: "The Fortunate One said: 'All matter must be thus contemplated through insight knowledge and wisdom,' but how must the remaining four aggregates, such as sensation, perception, etc., be contemplated? It should follow that they must also be contemplated as in the case of the aggregate of matter!" Hence, his question was on the basis of his skill in the application of methods.
>
> Indeed, Ven. Rāhula possessed a high degree of intelligence. When taught just one thing saying: "This should not be done," he would then ponder that: "This too should not be done; this also should not be done," and penetratingly proceeded in hundreds of thousands of ways. Similarly, when instructed in just one thing, saying: "This should be done," he would then ponder: "This too should be done; this also should be done," and he was able to penetrate by hundreds of thousands of means.
>
> Besides, Ven. Rāhula cherished the threefold training. Early in the morning, in the precincts of the Buddha's scented chamber, he would scatter daily a measure (*pattha*)[224] of grains of sand and utter: "May I today get from the Fortunate One or from my preceptor Ven. Sāriputta words of advice as much as this sand."

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[224] Grains of rice measuring eight times a condensed milk tin is a *pattha* in Pāḷi and *pyi* in the Myanmar Language.

> He put forward his questions because he wished to practise fully as he possessed skill in the application of methods (*naya-kusala*) and cherished the three trainings.

On receiving the Buddha's reply Ven. Rāhula considered thus: "After knowing the craving that has its base in my body, the Fortunate One did not admonish me indirectly saying to the effect that: 'A monk should not have such an idea!' Neither did he send a messenger to me saying: 'Go, monk, ask him not to have such an idea!' In fact, he stood face to face with me and gave me a Buddha's instruction as though he seized a thief together with the stolen property, catching hold of his top knot. Hard it is to get a Buddha's advice even in the long duration of uncountable (*asaṅkhyeyya*) aeons! Who, on getting the instruction of a Buddha in person, would care to enter a town or a village for food if he were truly wise?"

Accordingly, Rāhula gave up his alms food round and turned back from the spot where he heard the Buddha's exhortation without following the Buddha further and sat down at the foot of a tree.

Though the Buddha saw Rāhula turning back, he did not forbid him by saying: "Rāhula, do not go back yet. This is the time for you to go on alms round," for he had conceived an idea: "Let Rāhula take the food of immortality of the body-related mindfulness (*kāya-gatā-sati*) for the day!" [746]

Ven. Sāriputta's Daily Duties

The duties of Ven. Sāriputta, while he was staying alone, were different from those when he was staying together with the Buddha. While the two chief disciples were staying alone they would sweep their residential ground early in the morning, wash themselves, engage in absorption (*jhāna*), sit quietly, and go on alms round, each according to his wish.

While they were staying with the Buddha, the two chief disciples would not do so. While they were thus staying with the Buddha, the Buddha, in the company of the monks, first went for alms food. When the Buddha had left thus for alms, Ven. Sāriputta would come out from his cell, and being aware that a residence of monks is a place which can sometimes be made pleasant by themselves or which cannot be done so at other times, he would go round the precincts and sweep the place that had not been swept, dispose of the rubbish that had not been disposed of, keep a drinking water pot at a suitable distance where there was

none. Visiting a sick monk, he would ask: "Friend, what food shall I bring for you? Which food do you want to have?" He would also go to those who had not observed even a single Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) and advise them: "Friends, be happy in the Buddha's Dispensation! But do not be indolent! The Buddha's teaching contains practice as its essence!" Having done all these, he would go on alms round following the other monastics.

For example, when the Universal Monarch, the lord of the four continents, desired to go to a certain place, he marched out first with the fourfold army, his eldest son, the vice-chief, followed him supervising the troops. In the same way, the Fortunate One, the Universal Monarch of the true law, who set in motion the Dhamma Wheel, went in the company of monks first; Ven. Sāriputta, the Buddha's eldest son and his vice-chief, the general of the Dhamma, went on alms round following all other monastics after performing all his duties mentioned above.

When Ven. Sāriputta, as the last person, went out for alms after finishing his work in the Jetavana monastery on that very day, he saw Ven. Rāhula seated cross-legged with his body upright, cultivating mindfulness and urged him with encouraging words to develop the meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath (*ānāpāṇa-sati-bhāvanā*): "Rāhula, develop the meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath! When the meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath is developed, when it is repeatedly developed, it will be of great benefit."

> Herein, it may be questioned as to why Ven. Sāriputta urged and encouraged Rāhula to develop the meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath.
>
> Answer: Because the meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath was agreeable to Rāhula's disposition.
>
> Explanation: Not being aware of the fact that the Buddha had taught Rāhula meditation on matter, he noticed that the way Rāhula was seated motionless would go best with the meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath. Hence his encouraging words.
>
> With reference to the words: "When the meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath is repeatedly developed, it will be of great benefit," the way the benefit accrues is as follows: A monastic who develops the meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath

> can become an Arahat in one sitting; even if he cannot become an Arahat, he can became an Arahat when nearing his death (*sama-sīsī*); if not, during his rebirth in a celestial abode, he can become an Arahat after listening to the Dhamma from a Deva; if not, he can become a Paccekabuddha at a time when there is no Perfect Buddha; if not, he can become an Arahat by quick super knowledge (*khippābhiññā*) like Ven. Bāhiya Dāruciya in the lifetime of a later Buddha. In this way the meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath is of great benefit.
>
> Discerning the great benefit thus, Ven. Sāriputta urged and encouraged Rāhula, who had taken him as preceptor and who was his co-resident pupil (*saddhi-vihārika*), to practise the meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath.

In this way, the Buddha and Ven. Sāriputta gave Rāhula meditation on matter and meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath respectively and went away. Rāhula remained at the monastery.

Although, knowing that Rāhula was left behind, the Buddha did not personally bring food for him, nor did he send food through Ven. Ānanda nor did he inform his male [747] and female supporters, such as King Pasenadi, Anāthapiṇḍika the wealthy merchant, etc., of the matter. Had they known of this, they would have pots of food conveyed by means of a carrying pole.

Like the Buddha, Ven. Sāriputta did nothing. For that very day Ven. Rāhula received no food at all and had none whatsoever. Despite his being deprived of provisions thus, he did not mind a bit, thinking: “Though the Fortunate One knows that I have been left behind at the monastery, he does not bring, in person, the food he obtained, nor does he send through somebody else, nor does he tell lay people of the matter. Though my preceptor also knows that I have remained behind at the monastery, he too does nothing for me.” How could there be a low or high opinion, contempt or admiration, in him on account of that? There was neither. In the morning as well as in the daytime, he engaged in meditation on the element of matter as taught by the Buddha: “It is true that matter is impermanent for such and such a reason, it is true that matter is suffering for such and such a reason; it is true that matter is unpleasant for such and such a reason; it is true that matter is insubstantial for such and such a reason.”

He reflected thus incessantly like a man who urgently kindles a fire, and in the evening he pondered: "I have been instructed by my preceptor to develop the meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath. I will take up his instruction. In fact, one who does not follow the advice of one's preceptor is one who is hard to exhort (*dubbaca*). There is no worse oppression for me than a censure by my fellow-monks saying: 'Rāhula is hard to exhort; he does not even follow his preceptor's advice!' "

Desiring to ask about the meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath, he came out from his cell, and approached the Buddha. Paying obeisance most respectfully, he sat down in a blameless place, and asked: "Exalted Buddha, how is the meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath developed? How is it repeatedly developed so that it becomes to be of great benefit?" Then the Buddha explained to Rāhula in detail:

1. How to develop meditation: On the 20 portions (*koṭṭhāsa*) of the earth element, on the twelve portions of the water element, on the four portions of the fire element, on the six portions of the wind element which altogether are the great elements (*mahā-bhūta*), on the space element which is a dependent matter (*upādā-rūpa*).
2. How to develop meditation on the unshakable signs (*tādi-bhava-lakkhaṇa*), the characteristics of which are similar to those of the elements of earth, water, fire, wind and space: On loving-kindness (*mettā*); on compassion (*karuṇā*); on altruistic joy (*muditā*); on equanimity (*upekkhā*); on unpleasantness (*asubha*); on the perception of impermanence (*anicca-saññā*); the Buddha gave a discourse which included the advantages urging him to practise all these forms of meditation.

On the meditation of mindfulness on the in-breath and out-breath, which formed the original question put forth by Rāhula; the Buddha explained it in detail, showing the benefit derived therefrom.

Discourses to Ven. Rāhula

Several discourses were delivered to Ven. Rāhula by the Buddha:

1. The Questions for a Novice (*Sāmaṇera-pañha*, Khp 4).

2. The Advice to Rāhula [748] given in Ambalaṭṭhika Park (*Ambalaṭṭhika-rāhulovāda-sutta*, MN 61).
3. The Continual Advice to Rāhula (*Abhiṇha-rāhulovāda-sutta*, Snp 2.13).
4. The Thematic Discourses connected with Rāhula (*Rāhula-saṁyutta*, SN 18).
5. The Long Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula (*Mahā-rāhulovāda-sutta*, MN 62).
6. The Short Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula (*Cūḷa-rāhulovāda-sutta*, MN 147).

The gist of these discourses is as follows: At the time when the Buddha visited the palace at Kapilavatthu for the first time and met Prince Rāhula who was then seven years old, the prince asked for his inheritance, grasping the edge of the Buddha's robe, and said: "Father, you whose defilements have all been put away! Please grant me my inheritance!" Accordingly the Buddha handed him over to Ven. Sāriputta to ordain him as a novice.

1. Thereafter the Buddha decided to make some exhortations to Rāhula, for he thought: "Children tend to speak of all kinds of things, proper as well as improper." He then summoned his son and said: "Rāhula, a novice should not indulge in animal talk (*tiracchāna-kathā*), such as those about princes and rulers and the like, which are not conducive to the paths and fruitions. Dear son, if you wish to talk, talk about such and such Dhamma." And the Buddha gave Rāhula a discourse, The Questions for a Novice by name, containing ten questions and 55 answers that are never left out by all Buddhas from their teaching.

2. Again the Buddha considered: "Children are liable to tell lies. They are likely to say: 'I see,' when they do not; or 'I do not see,' when they do see. Therefore I shall exhort Rāhula in advance." Hence, he taught the Advice to Rāhula given in Ambalaṭṭhika Park which enumerates seven examples in order: first, the four examples of water cups which can be easily seen by the eye, the two examples of an elephant in warfare, and one example of a mirror.

3. Besides these, the Buddha taught Rāhula another discourse which forbade the arising of craving for the four requisites, which removed desire, greed and craving for the five sensual pleasures, and explained the significant advantages of association with good friends.

4. The Thematic Discourses connected with Rāhula teach him not to develop craving and desire for the three kinds of existence wherever one is born.

5. The Long Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula was delivered in order not to cultivate the householder's lust (*gehassita-chanda-rāga*), thinking: "I am beautiful, my look is clear and serene," with reference to one's body.

6. After that when the Buddha was in his fourteenth year as an Awakened One when Rāhula was newly ordained as a monastic but had not yet completed a Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), the Short Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula was taught so that Rāhula might become an Arahat right away.

Of the above discourses, nothing can be said of the date of the deliverance of the Continual Advice to Rāhula. In fact, it was taught by the Buddha off and on.

1-2. The Questions for a Novice and the Advice to Rāhula given in Ambalaṭṭhika Park were delivered when Rāhula was a young novice of seven years old.

4. The Thematic Discourses connected with Rāhula was given occasionally during the period between Rāhula's novitiate which commenced when he was seven and his ordination as a young monastic who had not yet observed even a single Rains Retreat.

5. The teaching of the Long Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula took place when Rāhula was eighteen.

6. The teaching of the Short Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula took place when Rāhula had just become a monastic with no experience even for a Rains Retreat (*Vassa*).

Among these Discourses, the Continual Advice to Rāhula was given in order to exhort Rāhula incessantly:

1. The Questions for a Novice was taught to make Rāhula avoid talking about improper things.

2. The Advice to Rāhula [748] given in Ambalaṭṭhika Park was to instruct him not to tell lies knowingly.

3. The Thematic Discourses connected with Rāhula was given in order to let Rāhula [749] receive the doctrine concerning insight meditation (*vipassanā*).

4. The Long Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula was taught in order to eradicate the five sensual pleasures, the craving and greed for household life.

5. The Short Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula was given in order for Rāhula to become an Arahat when the fifteen maturities of freedom (*vimutti-paripācanīya*) had ripened in him while he was still just a freshman in the community of monastics.

With reference to this point, Ven. Rāhula, desirous of extolling the Buddha's virtues, spoke in the midst of monastics as follows:

> *Kikīva bījaṁ rakkheyya, cāmarī vālam-uttamaṁ,*
> *nipako sīla-sampanno, mamaṁ rakkhi Tathāgato.*
>
> As a female pheasant protects her egg, as a yak safeguards his precious tail, so the Fortunate One, my father, the apple of the eye to the three classes of beings, has sheltered me, his own flesh and blood, in the manner of which is comparable to that adopted by the pheasant or the yak, so that I might become an Arahat.

In this way, many discourses were delivered by the Buddha in connection with Ven. Rāhula. [750]

[For more about Ven Rāhula see chapter 32b and chapter 43.20 below.]

32a: The 13th Rains Retreat (Meghiya)

After staying at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī during the period after the twelfth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) and converting and exhorting such beings as humans, Devas and Brahmas through the Long Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula (*Mahā-rāhulovāda-sutta*, MN 62) and other discourses, the Buddha arrived eventually at the town of Cālika. Having arrived there, he took up residence at the monastery on the hill, named Cālika, and observed the thirteenth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*).

> Herein there was moving marshy soil all around the town except in the area of the town gate. As the marshland was unsteady, the town in the middle of that land gave the impression of being shaky to those who viewed it from afar; therefore, the town was called Cālika (Shaky).
>
> There stood a hill near the town. As the entire hill was white, it too looked shaky to those who saw it during the Observance (*Uposatha*) days of the dark fortnight. Hence its name also was Cālika.
>
> On the top of the hill was a big monastery built for the Buddha by his male and female supporters. The Buddha spent the thirteenth Rains Retreat at the Cālika monastery on Cālika Hill.

Discourse to Ven. Meghiya (Ud 4.1)

While the Buddha was thus observing the thirteenth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at the big monastery on the Cālika Hill, Meghiya was the temporary attendant fulfilling the major and minor duties to the Buddha.

Explanation: The Buddha had no permanent attendant (*upaṭṭhāka*) during the first 20 Rains Retreats (*Vassa*) called the first period after awakening (*paṭhama-bodhi*). Sometimes Ven. Nāgasamāla, sometimes Ven. Nāgita, sometimes Ven. Upavāṇa, sometimes the monk Sunakkhatta, a former Licchavī Prince, sometimes Ven. Cunda, a younger brother of Ven. Sāriputta, sometimes Ven. Sāgata, and sometimes Ven. Meghiya waited upon the Buddha. During the Buddha's thirteenth Rains Retreat at the big monastery on the Cālika Hill it was Ven. Meghiya who was serving the Buddha temporarily.

Then one day, Ven. Meghiya approached the Buddha, and fell at his feet in veneration. Then while standing, he said: "Exalted Buddha, I would like to enter

the village of Jantu on alms round." – "Meghiya," replied the Buddha, "You know the time for going," which means: "You may go as you wish."

So Ven. Meghiya entered the village of Jantu on alms round and after finishing his meal, he left Jantu for the bank of the river Kimikāḷā (Black Worm), where he took a leisure walk to and fro. While he was doing so, he saw a Mango Grove which was very appealing with its trees standing not very far from one another in green foliage, pleasant with its dark shade and excellent landscape, and delightful as it amused the hearts of those who happened to enter it.

Seeing thus, the following thought arose: "This Mango Grove is appealing, pleasant and delightful. It is a place proper for those clansmen who are desirous of practising meditation. If the exalted Buddha were to permit me, I should come back here for meditation practice."

> That Mango Grove was the place where he, as a monarch, had enjoyed kingly pleasures when he was reborn in his 500 former existences successively. That was why the desire to stay there arose in him as soon as he saw the grove.

Then Ven. Meghiya returned to the Buddha and paid homage to him. While sitting, he reported the matter in detail, beginning from his entry into the village for alms food to the occurrence of his idea to revisit the Mango Grove for meditation practice. He added this request: "Exalted Buddha, provided you give me permission, I would like to go back to the [751] Mango Grove to meditate there." Being requested thus, the Buddha prohibited his going there: "Wait, dear Meghiya! At the moment, I am alone, wait till someone else comes!"

> Herein as requested by Meghiya, the Buddha pondered and came to know that Meghiya's intelligence had not attained maturity yet. That was the reason for his prohibition. He said: "At the moment I am alone," because he thought: "If I tell him thus, and if his meditation ends in failure in the Mango Grove, he will come back entirely without embarrassment, but with love for me." The Buddha said so in order to soften his mind.

For a second time Meghiya made the request: "Exalted Buddha, as you have accomplished the sixteenfold task of the path, you have nothing else to accomplish, nor have you to develop what has been accomplished. As for me, exalted Buddha, I have yet to accomplish the sixteenfold task of the path completely. Also, I have yet to develop further what has been accomplished. If

the exalted Buddha gives me permission, I would like to go to the Mango Grove to meditate there." For the second time also the Buddha rejected Meghiya's request, saying as before: "Wait, dear Meghiya! At the moment I am alone, wait till someone else comes!"

For the third time Meghiya made the request. This time the Buddha did not bar him but said: "Dear Meghiya, how can we Buddhas prevent somebody who is asking for meditation? Dear Meghiya, do as you think fit." Then Ven. Meghiya rose from his seat, made obeisance to the Buddha and went to the Mango Grove. Having entered the grove, he sat at the foot of a tree to spend the day.

The stone slab at the foot of the tree where Meghiya was then sitting was the same one he had used as a seat, happily surrounded by various dancers, when he was a ruler in his 500 successive existences in the past.

The moment he sat, it appeared as though his monkhood had slipped away. He felt, as in a dream, that he had assumed kingship, being accompanied by dancers and sitting under a white umbrella and on the throne worthy of noble personages.

Then with his attachment to royal luxuries, there gradually arose in him unwholesome thoughts of sensuality (*kāma-vitakka*) connected with sensual objects (*vatthu-kāma*). At that moment, he saw as in a dream two thieves who had been caught red-handed were brought and placed before him. Thoughts of ill-will (*vyāpāda-vitakka*) gradually occurred to him as he had to pass a sentence to execute one of the thieves. Thoughts of violence (*vihiṁsā-vitakka*) gradually took place in him as he had to pass a sentence to imprison the other one.

In this way the three kinds of unwholesome thoughts: sensual thoughts, thoughts of ill-will and violent thoughts, besieged Meghiya, giving him no chance to escape, as a tree overwhelmingly entangled by creepers or as a honey-gathering man is overpowered when stung by bees.

Then Ven. Meghiya reflected: "Oh, how strange it is! Oh, how unusual it is! We are the ones who have renounced the world and joined the Saṅgha through faith (*saddhā*), yet we are overcome by the three wicked, unwholesome thoughts of sensuality, ill-will and violence!"

As Ven. Meghiya was seized by the three unwholesome thoughts from all sides, he was not able to do what was proper to meditation: "Certainly, it was only

after foreseeing this that the farsighted Fortunate One had prohibited me," he thought, and thinking further: "I must report this to the master," he rose from his seat and went to the Cālika Hill where the Buddha was. Having paid his respect, he sat at a proper place and related what had happened to him: "Exalted Buddha, these three wicked, unwholesome thoughts of sensuality, [752] ill-will, and violence repeatedly arose in me as I was staying in that Mango Grove. As these thoughts repeatedly arose in me I reflected: "Oh, how strange it is! Oh, how unusual it is! We are the ones who have renounced the world and joined the Saṅgha through faith (*saddhā*), yet we are overcome by the three wicked, unwholesome thoughts of sensuality, ill-will and violence!"

> Herein it may be asked: "Why did the Buddha permit Ven. Meghiya to go to the Mango Grove?" Because the Buddha knew Meghiya would go there even without his permission, leaving him alone anyway. If he were prevented, he would think wrongly and misunderstand, saying to himself: "The Buddha does not permit me because he desires just one thing, which is my service." The Buddha was also aware thus: "If Meghiya had this misunderstanding, it would have been a loss and long suffering to him," hence the Buddha gave permission.

When Ven. Meghiya had finished relating what had happened to him, he sat down, and while he was sitting down, the Buddha, being desirous of giving him an appropriate Dhamma talk, uttered the following: "Meghiya, there are five factors that would lead the mind's liberation from defilements to maturity," and so on.

Dear Meghiya, the following five factors help make immature mental liberation mature. These five are:

1. Association with good friends.
2. Having morality.
3. Listening to and reflection on the ten kinds of speech.

> Speech connected with less desire; speech connected with contentment; speech connected with quietude; speech connected with aloofness; speech connected with energy; speech connected with morality; speech connected with concentration; speech connected with wisdom; speech connected with the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna; and speech connected with reflective knowledge.

4. Having developed energy.

5. Having wisdom as to the arising and falling nature of things.

Only when one is associated with a good friend, which forms the first factor, can one acquire the remaining four.

Dear Meghiya, having established himself in the said five factors, an earnest practising (*yogāvacara*) monastic must go to the next stage, which is developing four things: He must develop notions of the loathsomeness of things (*asubha*) to eradicate lust (*rāga*); he must develop mindfulness of breathing in and out (*ānāpānassati*) to eradicate distracting thoughts (*vitakka*); and he must develop the perception of impermanence (*anicca-saññā*) to eradicate egoistic conceit (*māna*). True, Meghiya, to the one who perceives impermanence, perception of non-self (*anatta-saññā*) manifests, the one who perceives non-self can shed his egoistic conceit and realize Nibbāna even in the present life."

Knowing this the Buddha breathed forth the following two verses of exalted utterances (*Udāna 4.1*): [753]

> *Khuddā vitakkā sukhumā vitakkā,*
> *anuggatā manaso uppilāvā,*
> *ete avidvā manaso vitakke,*
> *hurāhuraṁ dhāvati bhanta-citto.*

Inferior thoughts and subtle thoughts follow the mind and make it frisky. He who does not understand these thoughts is not stable mentally and runs from one sense object to another.

> *Ete ca vidvā manaso vitakke,*
> *ātāpiyo saṁvaratī satīmā,*
> *anuggate manaso uppilāve,*
> *asesam-ete pajahāsi Buddho.*

Understanding these thoughts, the noble disciple (*suta-buddhā*), endowed with energy that can burn up mental defilements and who has mindfulness, is able to block the thoughts that follow the mind and make it frisky. The noble disciple, who understands the four truths, is able to abandon the thoughts of sensuality and others, completely.

To Ven. Meghiya, who had returned to the Buddha as he was entangled by the three wicked and unwholesome thoughts and could not meditate in that Mango

Grove, the Buddha said: "You have done something seriously wrong, for you left me alone although I begged you saying: 'Wait, dear Meghiya! At the moment I am alone; wait till someone else comes!' A monastic should not yield to the desire of the mind. The mind is light and quick. One should try only to keep it under one's control."

Then the Buddha uttered the following two verses (Dhp 33-34):

> *Phandanaṁ capalaṁ cittaṁ, dūrakkhaṁ dunnivārayaṁ,*
> *ujuṁ karoti medhāvī, usu-kāro va tejanaṁ.*
>
> Dear Meghiya, just as a proud, brave fletcher makes the curved arrow straight to his satisfaction by scorching it, even so a man with penetrative knowledge can make his mind upright by scorching it by means of energy, both physical and mental. The mind which is excitable by the six sense objects, such as form (*rūpa*), sound (*sadda*), etc., which is not stable but fickle in a single sense object, which cannot be fixed in a proper sense object and is thus difficult to control, can hardly be prevented from wandering about the improper sense objects.
>
> *Vārijo va thale khitto, okamokata-ubbhato,*
> *pariphandatidaṁ cittaṁ, māra-dheyyaṁ pahātave.*
>
> Dear Meghiya, just as the fish born in water, when taken out of its watery abode and thrown on land, restlessly jumps about, even so the mind in pursuit of the enjoyment of the five sense objects, when taken out from the vast watery expanse of sensual pleasure and kept on the land of insight meditation (*vipassanā*) in order to abandon the evil defilements within oneself in the manner of abandoning by cutting off (*samuccheda-pahāna*), restlessly hops about almost to death as it is away from the five water-like sense objects and heated by the four kinds of energy in the form of strenuous [754] meditation.

At the end of these Dhamma-verses, Ven. Meghiya was established in the fruition of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*). Many other people also became Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*) or noble ones.

32b: The 14th Rains Retreat (Rāhula)

After observing the thirteenth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at the big monastery on Cālika Hill, near Cālika Town and teaching worthy beings by means of the Dhamma talks, such as the Discourse to Meghiya (*Meghiya-sutta*, Ud 4.1) etc., as has been mentioned above and after remaining there for the post Rains Retreat period for as long as there existed beings to be enlightened, the Buddha set out from there, administering the cool water of elixir to humans, Devas and Brahmas. Eventually, he arrived in Sāvatthī and stayed at the Jetavana monastery to observe the fourteenth Rains Retreat.

Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Mahā Moggallāna

At that time, Ven. Sāriputta went with his follower monks to a certain big monastery in the district and spent the rainy season. The people of the district visited Ven. Sāriputta and promised to give him a large number of robes for the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*).

Having performed the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*) ceremony at the end of the Rains Retreat, Ven. Sāriputta, being desirous of visiting the Buddha even before the Rains Retreat robes were offered, said to the monks: "Friends, when the lay devotees bring Rains Retreat robes for the young monks and novices, accept them and send them to me. Or store them well and give the message to me." Having said thus, Ven. Sāriputta set out to visit the Buddha.

When he arrived in Sāvatthī, many monks whispered among themselves, saying: "Friends, still Ven. Sāriputta appears to have greed? That was why he came to the Fortunate One only after saying to the monks, who remain there: 'When the lay devotees bring Rains Retreat robes for the young monks and novices, accept them and send them to me. Or store them well and give the message to me.' "

When the Buddha came to the assembly of monks, he asked: "Monks, what are you talking about?" When the monks replied that they were talking about such and such a matter, the Buddha said: "Monks, in my eldest son, Sāriputta, there is not the slightest amount of greed. Indeed, he left word with his disciples because he thought to himself thus: 'Let the meritorious deeds of the devotees not decrease! Let the righteous acquisition of robes for the young monks and novices not decrease!' " Thereafter he uttered the following verse (Dhp 420):

Āsā yassa na vijjanti, asmiṁ loke paramhi ca,
nirāsāsaṁ visaṁyuttaṁ, tam-ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ.

O my dear sons, my dear monks! In the mental continuum of an Arahat, whose pollutants (*āsava*) are gone, craving that clings to things does not exist, not even the minutest part of it, in the present world as well as in the next, as it has been broken and uprooted through the fourfold path-knowledge in the manner of abandoning by cutting off (*samuccheda-pahāna*). The Arahat, whose pollutants (*āsava*) are gone, who is totally emancipated from the 108fold craving and who is dissociated from every kind of mental defilement, him naturally do I declare a true Brahmin!

By the end of the Dhamma talk, a large multitude of people attained the fruition of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*) and so on.

As Ven. Sāriputta was misunderstood by the monks who said that Ven. Sāriputta seemed to have greed, so was Ven. Moggallāna once misunderstood too. His incident was somewhat similar to that of Ven. Sāriputta. What was different in the case of Ven. Moggallāna was, after asserting that there was no greed in him, the Buddha [755] gave another verse as follows (Dhp 411):

Yassālayā na vijjanti, aññāya akathaṁkathī,
amatogadham-anuppattaṁ, tam-ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ.

O my dear sons, my dear monks! In the mental continuum of an Arahat whose pollutants (*āsava*) are gone, craving that clings to things does not exist, not even the slightest part of it, as it has been broken and uprooted through the fourfold knowledge in the manner of abandoning by cutting off (*samuccheda-pahāna*). Having analytically understood the Three Treasures, the triple training and the dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) wheel in their true nature, he is free from doubt. The Arahat whose pollutants (*āsava*) are gone, who has plunged wisely into the deathless Nibbāna and became an Arahat straight away, him naturally do I declare a true Brahmin.

By the end of this Dhamma talk a large multitude of people attained the fruition of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*) and so on.

Rāhula Attains Awakening

The Buddha was still staying at Jetavana, Sāvatthī, observing the fourteenth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in that city. At that time, Rāhula had completed 20 years of age and had become a newly ordained monk, and had not completed a Rains Retreat as a monastic.

One day, at daybreak, when the Buddha surveyed the world of beings, a thought arose in him: "The fifteen maturities of freedom (*vimutti-paripācanīya-dhamma*) have now ripened in Rāhula. What if I were to exhort and guide him so that he would take a step further towards the attainment of the paths and fruitions of Awakening!" Herein, the fifteen factors leading to Awakening are:

Three factors with reference to faith (*saddhā*):

1. Dissociation from faithless persons.
2. Association with faithful persons.
3. Reflection on discourses causing faith.

Three factors with reference to energy (*viriya*):

4. Dissociation from lazy persons.
5. Association with energetic persons.
6. Reflection on discourses causing energy.

Three factors with reference to mindfulness (*sati*):

7. Dissociation from unmindful persons.
8. Association with mindful persons.
9. Reflection on discourses causing mindfulness.

Three factors with reference to concentration (*samādhi*):

10. Dissociation from persons of unconcentrated mind.
11. Association with persons of concentrated mind.
12. Reflection on discourses causing absorption (*jhāna*) and emancipation (*vimokkha*).

Three factors with reference to wisdom (*paññā*):

13. Dissociation from unwise persons.

14. Association with wise persons.

15. Reflection on on the profound wisdom discourses.

Besides, the five faculties (*indriya*): faith (*saddhā*), energy (*viriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*); the five perceptions of weariness (*nibbedha-bhāgiya-saññā*): the perception of impermanence (*anicca-saññā*), suffering (*dukkha-saññā*), non-self (*anatta-saññā*), abandoning (*pahāna-saññā*) and freedom from lust (*virāga-saññā*); the five factors as contained in the Discourse to Meghiya[225] (Ud 4.1): association with good friends, having morality, listening to and reflection on the ten kinds of speech, having [756] developed energy, and having wisdom as to the arising and falling nature of things (*udayabbaya-saññā*); these also make the fifteen factors of emancipation (*vimutti*).

Having conceived this idea the Buddha entered Sāvatthī city in the morning for alms and after finishing his meal, he departed from the alms resort and said to Rāhula: "Bring a mat to sit on, Rāhula, and let us go to the Andhavana grove to spend the day there." – "Very well, exalted Buddha," he answered and followed the Buddha closely carrying the mat.

At that time, several thousands of Devas and Brahmas who had resolved to have certain spiritual attainments together with Pālita, the Nāga King, who was to become Rāhula, in the presence of the Buddha Padumuttara 100,000 aeons ago, also followed the Buddha in close succession with the belief that the Fortunate One would exhort and teach Rāhula so that he would take a step further towards the attainment of the paths and fruitions of Awakening.

> Herein, these several thousands of Devas and Brahmas, who had resolved spiritually 100,000 aeons ago and had been waiting, asked among themselves: "When will the Fortunate One's exhortation and guidance take place so that Rāhula would become an Arahat as a further step?" When the Buddha thought of exhorting and guiding Rāhula, as his faculties, such as faith, energy, etc., had finally grown, these several thousands of celestial beings, who had been longing all the time for that opportune moment of

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[225] [See the previous chapter.]

the Buddha's thinking, for they had shared the desire for spiritual growth, assembled in the Andhavana grove knowing that conditions were thus becoming favourable to them as well.

Yasorata and the Andhavana Grove

Herein a short account of the Andhavana Grove near Sāvatthī city will be reproduced from the exposition on the Discourse about the Anthill (*Vammika-sutta*, MN 23).

The grove was widely known as Andhavana in the time of two Buddhas, that is Buddha Kassapa and our Buddha Gotama. Explanation: The body relics of the Buddhas who are of short span of life do not become one mass. In accordance with their resolution, they disintegrate. Therefore, our Buddha, who was of short lifespan, considered thus: "I shall not exist long. As my lifespan is short, only a small number of beings will be able to see me. There are far more beings who have no chance to do so. They will carry my relics to different places to worship and attain celestial abodes." Consequently, he resolved immediately before his Parinibbāna: "May my bodily relics disintegrate!" hence, the breaking up of the relics of our Buddha.

The bodily relics of the long-lived Buddhas, however, remain as a mass like solid gold. As Buddha Kassapa, who appeared at a time when the people's lifespan was 20,000 years, was long lived, his relics remained, taking a solid form. Then the people discussed among themselves: "The relic remains in a solid form. It cannot be broken up. What shall we do with it?" After discussion, they agreed on constructing a solid shrine (*cetiya*), which was the one and only monument. They decided unanimously that its size should be one league in height as well as in circumference. When they discussed the bricks and cement, they made decisions to lay bricks of gold, each costing 100,000 on the outer side, while bricks of gold, each costing 50,000, on the inner side. For cement, realgar and orpiment powder and oil for liquid were used. There were to be four gates, of which one was the King's undertaking, another, for Prince Paṭhavindhara's, still another, the undertaking of the officials led by the general and the final one being that of the people led by the chief merchant.

Of these four groups, the first three were men of wealth; so they took their own gold and started their work at their respective gates. But there was delay in the work assigned to the last group as its members did not have sufficient wealth.

Then a lay devotee who was well-versed in the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*) and who was a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi*), named Yasorata, understanding the reason for the delay, prepared 500 carts and [757] went round the country, crying out to the citizens and urging them to participate in the act of merit: "People, countrymen! Buddha Kassapa has now attained Parinibbāna after existing like a great golden mountain for 20,000 years. A great jewelled shrine, one league in measurement, to house the only bodily relic of that Buddha, is under construction. Please contribute whatever you can afford, whether gold, silver, gems of the seven kinds, realgar or orpiment."

The people generously gave gold, silver and other materials as much as they could. Those, who could not afford, participated in the act of merit by giving rice, oil and the like. The Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*) lay devotee, Yasorata, had rice, oil, pulses, etc., sent as provisions for the workers. He bought gold with the remaining things on the barter system and had it sent. In this way, roaming all over Jambudīpa, he received donations and handed them over for the work.

When construction was finished, the executive elders from the work site of the shrine gave a letter to him saying: "The construction of the shrine has been finished. Please, master, come and pay homage to it!" Yasorata had also sent a letter with the message reading: "I have urged and made the whole of Jambudīpa take part in this meritorious act. Try to complete the shrine by using whatever is available." The two letters crossed midway. But the letter from the worksite reached him earlier.

Having read the letter, Yasorata thought: "I should pay homage to the shrine," and set out alone. On the way, 500 robbers were terrorizing travelers in a forest grove. Some of them saw the devotee and told the others: "This elderly man had collected gold and silver from the entire Jambudīpa. Pots of gold are rolling on and on," and they seized him.

Then Yasorata asked: "Young, men, why did you seize me?" The robbers replied: "You have collected all the gold and silver from the entire Jambudīpa. You must give us a little each out of that gold and silver."

"Do you know, young men, that Buddha Kassapa has attained Parinibbāna? A great shrine of one league in size for enshrining the body relic of that Buddha is being built. For that great edifice, I have tried to get the people involved in this act of merit, it is not for me. And whatever I received, I send to the work site

from the place of donation. I have nothing, not a single thing that is worthy, other than the clothes on my body." Then some robbers said: "What the gentleman told us is true. So let us set him free." But others asserted: "This man is honoured by the king as well as by the ministers. On seeing any of us in a street at town-centre, he would disclose the matter to them and bring misfortune to us," thus they spoke, representing those who did not want to free him.

Yasorata, the Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*) lay devotee, assured them saying: "Young men, I will not create trouble for you." He said so out of compassion for the robbers, but not because he had attachment for his life. Then a dispute arose among the robbers, one group willing to continue his detention and the other willing to let him go. Finally, the former group won more votes and Yasorata was slain.

At that very moment, as they committed a grave crime to the extent of slaying a highly virtuous man, a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*), the eyes of the robbers suddenly went blind, as the flame of an oil lamp is extinguished. The 500 robbers moved about touching this and that with their hands and each of them wailing: "Where are my eyes?" Some who had relatives were taken by their relatives to their respective homes. Others who had no kinsfolk had to live there miserably in leaf-roofed huts under the trees in the forest.

People, who came to the forest, took pity on the blind robbers and gave rice, meal packets and other kinds of food to them, as much as they could. Those who went there for gathering vegetables were asked on their return: "Friends, where have you been?" and they answered: "We have been to the Forest of the Blind (*Andhavana*)." [758]

In this way, the forest came to be known, far and wide, as Andhavana during the Dispensations of the two Buddhas. What was peculiar about it was its location near a deserted district during the Buddha Kassapa's ministry. During the ministry of our Buddha, however, it stood at the back of the Jetavana monastery, near the city of Sāvatthī, like a meditation centre where clansmen, wanting the calm of the five sense objects stay.

The Short Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula

[What follows is based on the Short Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula (*Cūḷa-rāhulovāda-sutta*, MN 147).]

The Buddha then entered the Andhavana and sat on the seat prepared under a certain tree nearby Ven. Rāhula, who, having done obeisance respectfully to the Buddha, took a seat. To Rāhula, who had thus taken his seat, the Buddha gave the following Dhamma talk.

Buddha: "My dear son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am going to ask you now? Is the sensitive matter called eye, permanent or impermanent?"

Rāhula: "Impermanent, venerable sir."

Buddha: "Is the impermanent sensitive matter called eye unsatisfactory or satisfactory?"

Rāhula: "Unsatisfactory, venerable sir."

Buddha: "Should the impermanent, unsatisfactory and changeable sensitive matter called eye be taken falsely through craving as mine (*etaṁ mama*), through conceit as I (*esohaṁ asmi*), and through wrong view as my self (*eso me atta*)?"

Rāhula: "No, venerable sir."

Buddha: "My dear son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am going to ask you now? Is this or that form called object, permanent or impermanent?"

Rāhula: "Impermanent, venerable sir."

Buddha: "Is this impermanent form called object unsatisfactory or satisfactory?"

Rāhula: "Unsatisfactory, venerable sir."

Buddha: "Should this or that impermanent, unsatisfactory and changeable form called object be taken falsely through craving as mine, through conceit as I, and through wrong view as my self?"

Rāhula: "No, venerable sir."

Buddha: "My dear son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am going to ask you now? Is eye consciousness (*cakkhu-viññāṇa*) the element of seeing, permanent or impermanent?"

Rāhula: "Impermanent, venerable sir."

Buddha: "Is the impermanent eye-consciousness unsatisfactory or satisfactory?"

Rāhula: "Unsatisfactory, venerable sir."

Buddha: “Should the impermanent, unsatisfactory and changeable eye-consciousness be taken falsely through craving as mine, through conceit as I, and through wrong view as my self?”

Rāhula: “No, venerable sir.”

Buddha: “My dear son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am going to ask you now? Is eye-contact (*cakkhu-samphassa*), permanent or impermanent?”

Rāhula: “Impermanent, venerable sir.”

Buddha: “Is the impermanent eye-contact unsatisfactory or satisfactory?”

Rāhula: “Unsatisfactory, venerable sir.” [759]

Buddha: “Should the impermanent, unsatisfactory and changeable eye-contact be taken falsely through craving as mine, through conceit as I, and through wrong view as my self?”

Rāhula: “No, venerable sir.”

Buddha: “My dear son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am going to ask you now? Are the four mental aggregates of feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), volitions (*saṅkhāra*) and particular consciousness (*viññāṇa*), depending on the contact of the eye, permanent or impermanent?”

Rāhula: “Impermanent, venerable sir.”

Buddha: “Should the four impermanent, unsatisfactory and changeable mental elements be taken falsely through craving as mine, through conceit as I, and through wrong view as my self?”

Rāhula: “No, venerable sir.”

Buddha: “My dear son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am going to ask you now? Is the sensitive matter called ear permanent or impermanent?”

Rāhula: “Impermanent, venerable sir.” etc.

This is the teaching on the five items concerning the ear (*sota-pañcaka*).

Buddha: “My dear son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am going to ask you now? Is the sensitive matter called nose permanent or impermanent?”

Rāhula: “Impermanent, venerable sir.” etc.

This is the teaching on the five items concerning the nose (*ghāna-pañcaka*).

Buddha: "My dear son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am going to ask you now? Is the sensitive matter called tongue permanent or impermanent?"

Rāhula: "Impermanent, venerable sir." etc.

This is the teaching on the five items concerning the tongue (*jivhā-pañcaka*).

Buddha: "My dear son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am going to ask you now? Is the sensitive matter called body permanent or impermanent?"

Rāhula: "Impermanent, venerable sir." etc.

This is the teaching on the five items concerning the body (*kāya-pañcaka*).

Buddha: "My dear son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am going to ask you now? Is the sensitive matter called mind permanent or impermanent?"

Rāhula: "Impermanent, venerable sir."

Buddha: "Is the impermanent sensitive element called mind unsatisfactory or satisfactory?"

Rāhula: "Unsatisfactory, venerable sir."

Buddha: "Should the impermanent, unsatisfactory and changeable sensitive element called mind be taken falsely through craving as mine, through conceit as I, and through wrong view as my self?"

Rāhula: "No, venerable sir."

Buddha: "My dear son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am going to ask you now? Is mind and matter called ideation (*dhammārammaṇa*) permanent or impermanent?

Rāhula: "Impermanent, venerable sir."

Buddha: "Is the impermanent mind and matter called ideation unsatisfactory or satisfactory?"

Rāhula: "Unsatisfactory, venerable sir." [760]

Buddha: "Should the impermanent, unsatisfactory and changeable mind and matter called ideation be taken falsely through craving as mine, through conceit as I, and through wrong view as my self?"

Rāhula: “No, venerable sir.”

Buddha: “My dear son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am going to ask you now? Is mind-consciousness (*māno-vinnāna*) permanent or impermanent?”

Rāhula: “Impermanent, venerable sir.”

Buddha: “Is the impermanent mind consciousness unsatisfactory or satisfactory?”

Rāhula: “Unsatisfactory, venerable sir.”

Buddha: “Should the impermanent, unsatisfactory and changeable mind consciousness be taken falsely through craving as mine, through conceit as I, and through wrong view as my self?”

Rāhula: “No, venerable sir.”

Buddha: “My dear son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am going to ask you now? Is mind contact (*mano-samphassa*) permanent or impermanent?”

Rāhula: “Impermanent, venerable sir.”

Buddha: “Is the impermanent mind contact unsatisfactory or satisfactory?”

Rāhula: “Unsatisfactory, venerable sir.”

Buddha: “Should the impermanent, unsatisfactory and changeable mind-contact be taken falsely through craving as mine, through conceit as I, and through wrong view as my self?”

Rāhula: “No, venerable sir.”

Buddha: “My dear son Rāhula, what do you think of what I am going to ask you now? Are the four mental aggregates, such as sensation (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), volitions (*saṅkhārā*) and consciousness (*viññāṇa*), arising from mind-contact (*mano-samphassa*), permanent or impermanent?”

Rāhula: “Impermanent, venerable sir.”

Buddha: “Are the four impermanent mental aggregates unsatisfactory or satisfactory?”

Rāhula: “Unsatisfactory, venerable sir.”

Buddha: "Should the four impermanent, unsatisfactory and changeable mental aggregates be taken falsely through craving as mine, through conceit as I, and through wrong view as my self?"

Rāhula: "No, venerable sir."

This is the teaching on the five items concerning the mind (*mano-pañcaka*).

> Such a discourse delivered by asking three times so that the three points of impermanence, suffering and non-self might become clear is called a Dhamma teaching turned three times (*teparivaṭṭa-dhamma-desanā*)."

"My dear son, Rāhula, when a knowledgeable disciple of mine views thus, he becomes weary of the sensitive matter called eye, he becomes weary of various forms and objects of seeing, he becomes weary of eye-consciousness, he becomes weary of eye-contact, he becomes weary of the four mental aggregates: sensation, perception, volitions and consciousness arising from eye-contact.

He becomes weary of the sensitive matter called ear; he becomes weary of various sounds and objects of hearing …

He becomes weary of the sensitive matter called nose; he becomes weary of various odours and objects of smelling …

He becomes weary of the sensitive matter called tongue; he becomes weary of various tastes and objects of savouring …

He becomes weary of the sensitive matter called body he becomes weary of various contacts and [761] objects of touching …

He becomes weary of the sensitive element called mind; he becomes weary of the objects of ideation. He becomes weary of cognition; he becomes weary of mind-contact; he becomes weary of the four mental aggregates: sensation, perception, volitions and consciousness arising from mind-contact. On becoming weary he is free from attachment, on being free from attachment, he is liberated from mental defilements; on being liberated from the mental defilements, he knows by reflection that he is liberated from the mental defilements.

He gains knowledge through successive reflections thus: Rebirth for me is over. The noble practice has been finished. The task for the path has been carried out. There is nothing more to be done for the path."

When the Buddha has delivered this Short Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula, Ven. Rāhula became established in Awakening. Among thousands of Devas and Brahmas, some become Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*), some Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmī*), and the rest Non-returners (*Anāgāmī*) and some Arahats according to their perfections (*pāramī*).

Māra's Threat to Ven. Rāhula

[The following is based on the commentary to the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 351-352.]

One day, when night fell, a large number of venerables went into the Jetavana monastery, visited Ven. Rāhula's place and took their seats. As Ven. Rāhula was a junior monk, he could not prevent senior venerables from taking his seat, so he then looked for another place and, finding none, had to lie down at the entrance to the fragrant chamber of the Buddha. At that time, the young Rāhula had just become an Arahat but he had not completed a Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) yet as a monastic.

From the celestial abode of Vasavatti, his residence, Māra saw Ven. Rāhula lying at the entrance of the Fragrant Chamber and conceived an idea: "The monk, Gotama's small finger, Rāhula, who will suffer when hurt, is sleeping outside the fragrant chamber. The monk Gotama himself is sleeping inside. If I hurt the small finger, it would mean that I hurt the monk Gotama as well."

So he assumed the appearance of a huge elephant, approached Ven. Rāhula and embraced Ven. Rāhula's head with his trunk; moreover he made a heron-like sound at a high pitch. Even while sitting in the Fragrant Chamber, the Buddha knew it was Māra and said: "Hey Māra, even 100,000 Māras, let alone you, are incapable of frightening my son Rāhula. In fact, my son has no fear at all. He is free from craving, very energetic and highly intelligent."

In order to stamp his word with the seal of Dhamma, the Buddha uttered the following two verses (Dhp 351-2):

Niṭṭhaṅgato asantāsī, vīta-taṇho anaṅgaṇo;
acchindi bhava-sallāni, antimoyaṁ samussayo.

Hey Māra, disturbing one! My son Rāhula is one who has realized the goal of the spiritual life (*brahma-cariya-pariyosāna*). He is absolutely free from fear, he is purified of the 108 kinds of craving; he is devoid of the

1,500 mental defilements; he has uprooted the thorns and spikes of all existences such as sensual (*kāma*), material (*rūpa*) and immaterial (*arūpa*) existences. The body of my son Rāhula in the present existence is his last body.

Vīta-taṇho anādāno, nirutti-pada-kovido,
akkharānaṁ sannipātaṁ, [762] jaññā pubbāparāni ca,
sa ve "antima-sārīro, mahā-paññho mahā-puriso" ti vuccati.

He who is purified of the 108 kinds of craving, has no attachment at all; he does not grasp the five aggregates of the body and the mind as "I," "mine" and "my self," he is clever in respect of the fourfold analytical knowledge of meaning, truth, wit and analysis; sees the combinations of letters known as natural speech (*sabhāva-nirutti*) as they really are; he clearly knows the preceding syllable from the following and the following syllable from the preceding.

If one knowing no natural speech says *phusso* wrongly with reference to the mental concomitant of *phassa*: he knows it is *phasso*, the correct word of the natural speech.

Of the three syllabic word *cetanā*, for instance, if the initial syllable alone is distinct, from it he correctly knows the indistinct middle and final ones: if the middle syllable alone is distinct, from it he correctly knows the indistinct initial and final in like manner; if the final syllable alone is distinct, from it he correctly knows the indistinct initial and middle in like manner. That person, having his final life, is indeed to be spoken of as a man of great wisdom, an extraordinary man free from the 1,500 moral defilements.

By the end of the discourse many attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) and so on. Aware of the fact that the Buddha came to know his identity, Māra disappeared from that very place.

The Discourse about the Yakkha Suciloma

The Discourse about the Yakkha Suciloma (*Suciloma-sutta*) is contained in the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*, Snp 2.5) and the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*, SN 10.3). Here the discourse will be retold according to the commentary.

32b: The 14th Rains Retreat (Rāhula) – 1090

One day when the Buddha emerged from the attainment of great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā-samāpatti*) immediately before dawn and surveyed the world of sentient beings with his Buddha-eye consisting in the knowledge of the inclinations and disposition of others (*āsayānusaya-ñāṇa*) and the knowledge of the thoughts and intentions of others (*indriya-paro-pariyatti-ñāṇa*), he saw the past deeds of merit belonging to the two Yakkha friends: Suciloma and Kharaloma, which would bring about their attainment of Stream-entry. Hence, he took his bowl and robe and set out, even at dawn, and sat on the lithic couch called Ṭaṅkita at the mansion of Suciloma near the village of Gayā.

> Ṭaṅkita lithic couch was a stone slab placed on four stones; it served as a seat.

At that time, the two Yakkha friends went out in search of food, wandering about the place somewhat near the Buddha. Of the two Yakkhas, one in his past life happened to have smeared his body with the oil belonging to the Saṅgha without seeking permission. For that unwholesome act, he suffered in hell and was reborn in a Yakkha family near the bank of the lake at Gayā. As a result of his wrong doing, his limbs were big and small and were frighteningly distorted. His skin was like a tiled roof with his skin resembling scales of a fish and terribly rough to touch. When he frightened others, his skin or scales became bloated. As he had a rough body surface, he was called Khara the Yakkha.

The other Yakkha was a supporting lay devotee during the lifetime of the Buddha Kassapa. He used to go to the monastery and listened to the discourse on every day a discourse was taught, which was eight days a month. One day, when the invitation for attendance to the discourse was being announced, he heard it from his farm where he was cleaning it. Without taking a bath lest it should take time, he entered the Observance (*Uposatha*) hall with his dirty body and lay on a very costly rug on [762] the ground, showing no care for it.

Because of this and other acts, he suffered in Niraya and became a member of a Yakkha family near the lake at Gayā. As a subsequent result of his bad deeds, he had a terribly ugly look. His body hair was sharp-pointed and pricking like needles. When he frightened other beings, he did so as though he were piercing them with needles. Because he had needle-like hair, he was given the name Suciloma.

Going out of their abode to look for food, the two Yakkha friends walked for some time and returned by the same way. While visiting another place, they happened to reach a place that was somewhere close to the Buddha. Then Kharaloma said to Suciloma what he honestly thought: "That man is a monk!" Suciloma replied: "That man is not a true monk; he is a false monk. I will investigate to find out for certain whether he is a true monk or not."

> Herein, on seeing the appearance of a monk, Kharaloma honestly said: "That man is a monk!" Suciloma was of opinion that: "If the man is fearful, he is not a true monk; he is a false monk," and wrongly thinking that the Buddha would be frightened, he hastily said: "That man is not a true monk; he is a false monk." Then he became desirous of making an investigation. Hence he added: "I will investigate to find out for certain whether he is a true monk or not."

Thereafter Suciloma went up to the Buddha and bent his big ugly, bristling body towards the Buddha. The Buddha suddenly moved his body to the other side. This prompted Suciloma to ask: "Are you frightened by me, monk?" – "Dear Yakkha," answered the Buddha, "I am not frightened by you. Your body contact is indeed rough and vile though!"

Seeing the Buddha without the slightest trace of fear, Suciloma thought: "Despite his experience of my body that was so rough, this man, though a real human, is not afraid. Now I shall present to him some problems worthy of an omniscient Buddha's sphere of wisdom (*Buddha-visaya*). He will not be able to tackle them fully. Then I shall torment him in so many ways." So he said rudely: "Monk, I shall ask you some questions. If you cannot give me a thorough answer, I shall drive you mad; or, I shall burst open your heart; or, I shall throw you to the other bank of the river by catching hold of your legs."

Then the Buddha with his face gladdened by great compassion said: "Friend Yakkha, the celestial world with its Devas, Māras and Brahmas, and the terrestrial world with its ascetics, Brahmins and princes, in either of these two worlds, I see none who is able to make me mad, or to burst open my heart, or to throw me to the other bank of the river by catching hold of my legs. Be that as it may, friend Yakkha, ask me whatever questions you want. I shall answer your questions without leaving out anything." When the Buddha invited the Yakkha's questions the way an omniscient Buddha would, Suciloma put his question thus in verse (Snp 273):

Rāgo ca doso ca kuto-nidānā,
aratī ratī loma-haṁso kutojā,
kuto samuṭṭhāya mano-vitakkā,
kumārakā dhaṅkam-ivossajanti.

Monk! Where do lust and hate have their source? Displeasure in the wholesome things of a quiet forest monastery, pleasure in the five sense objects, and goose flesh (*cittutrāsa-dhamma*) the sign of a terrified mind, from what do these three kinds of emotion arise? As village children throw up a crow for fun after tying its feet with a rope, from where do the ninefold thoughts appear and overthrow wholesome consciousness?

Then the Buddha gave his answer and taught Suciloma Yakkha with the following verses (Snp 274-275):

Rāgo ca doso ca ito-nidānā,
aratī ratī loma-haṁso itojā,
ito samuṭṭhāya mano-vitakkā, [764]
kumārakā dhaṅkam-ivossajanti.

Dear Yakkha! Lust and hate have their source in this body. These three kinds of emotion: Displeasure in the wholesome things of a quiet forest monastery, pleasure in the five sense objects, and goose flesh arise from this body. As village children throw up a crow for fun after tying its feet with a rope, so the ninefold thoughts appear from this very body and overthrow wholesome consciousness.

Snehajā atta-sambhūtā, nigrodhasseva khandhajā,
puthū visattā kāmesu, māluvā va vitatāvane.

Friend Yakkha! As shoots of a banyan tree appear on its trunk, so do lust, hate and the like caused by the sap of craving appear on this very body; just as creepers in the forest wrap up the tree that they cling around, so innumerable moral defilements attach themselves in a strange manner to the sense objects and pleasures.

Ye naṁ pajānanti yato-nidānaṁ,
te naṁ vinodenti suṇohi Yakkha,
te duttaraṁ ogham-imaṁ taranti,
atiṇṇa-pubbaṁ apunabbhavāyā.

> Listen, friend Yakkha! Certain persons know thoroughly that the physical frame, which is the embodiment of the five aggregates, and which forms the truth of suffering, has its source in craving and greed, which forms the truth of the cause of suffering; they drive away that craving and greed, the truth of the cause of suffering, by means of the truth of the eightfold path leading to the cessation of suffering. These noble ones, who have thus driven away craving and greed, the cause of suffering, cross over this fourfold torrential flood of moral defilements, the flood which is difficult to overcome, which has not been crossed over in their past existences in Saṁsāra, not even in a dream, for the non-arising of rebirth, which is the truth of the cessation of suffering.

When the two Yakkha friends had heard these Dhamma verses, both of them attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) as the verses came to an end. As soon as the two friends become noble Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*), their original ugliness and bad looks disappeared. With a bright golden complexion and bedecked in Deva ornaments, they assumed an appearance that was pleasant to beholders. [765]

33a: The 15th Rains Retreat (Sakyans)

After staying in Sāvatthī for the fourteenth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), the Buddha remained in that city, after the end of the Rains Retreat, for as long as there were beings worthy of teaching. Thereafter, he set out to administer the medicinal Dhamma to all beings: humans, Devas and Brahmas, and he eventually arrived in the city of Kapilavatthu and observed, together with a host of monks, the 15th Rains Retreat at Nigrodhārāma, which was built and given to him on his first visit by the Sakyan Prince Nigrodha, and which had been named after him as Nigrodhārāma.

The Discourse to Mahānāma

[The following is retold from the Discourse to Mahānāma (*Mahānāma-sutta*, SN 55.37) and its commentary.]

While the Buddha was thus staying at Nigrodhārāma of Kapilavatthu in the Sakyan country, Prince Mahānāma paid a visit to him, did obeisance and sat down at a proper place. Then the prince asked the Buddha: "By doing what, exalted Buddha, does one become a lay devotee (*upāsaka*)?"

Buddha: "Mahānāma, taking refuge (*saraṇa-gamana*) in the Buddha; taking refuge in the Dhamma and taking refuge in the Saṅgha. By doing so, Mahānāma, one becomes a lay devotee."

Prince: "By doing what, exalted Buddha, is a lay devotee endowed with morality (*sīla*)?"

Buddha: "Mahānāma, abstaining from taking life, abstaining from taking what is not given, abstaining from wrong sexual acts, abstaining from telling lies and abstaining from taking strong drink, a cause of unmindfulness. By doing so, Mahānāma, a lay devotee is endowed with morality."

Prince: "By doing what, exalted Buddha, is a lay devotee endowed with faith (*saddhā*)?"

Buddha: "In this Dispensation, Mahānāma, a lay devotee believes that the Buddha is an Arahat because he is worthy of extraordinary homage, that he is a Fortunate One because he has great glory in the sense of Awakening. By believing so, Mahānāma, a lay devotee is endowed with faith."

Herein, he is talking about the nine attributes of the Buddha in an elliptical way (*upalakkhaṇa-naya*) of teaching, a lay devotee who believes in the nine attributes of the Buddha also believes in the six attributes of the Dhamma and in the nine attributes of the Saṅgha. Therefore, it means to say that a lay devotee who is convinced of the attributes or the Three Treasures is endowed with faith.

Prince: "By doing what, Exalted Buddha, is a lay devotee endowed with charity (*cāga*)?"

Buddha: "In this Dispensation, Mahānāma, a lay devotee abides at home with his mind freed from the impurity of stinginess (*macchera*), he gives away with full detachment; he washes his hand to give with while his hand is wet; he takes delight in giving; he is pleasing to alms seekers as he shuns wearing a grim face; he delights in offering and distributing things. By doing so, Mahānāma, a lay devotee is endowed with generosity." [766]

Prince: "By what, Exalted Buddha, is a lay devotee endowed with wisdom (*paññā*)?"

Buddha: "In this Dispensation, Mahānāma, a lay devotee is wise; he has wisdom which is pure and noble, which destroys moral defilement, which leads to Nibbāna, the end of suffering, and which helps him understand the rise and fall (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*) of mind and matter. All this makes him endowed with wisdom."

More details about Mahānāma, the Sakyan Prince, will be given in chapter 45a.5.

Prince Suppabuddha

[The following is based on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammpada*, Dhp 128) and its commentary.]

While staying at Nigrodhārāma, Kapilavatthu, in the country of Sakka, the Buddha spoke a verse beginning with: "Monks, he who stands in the air cannot escape from death …" (Dhp 128) in connection with his uncle and father-in-law Suppabuddha, a Sakyan Prince.

Elaboration: the Buddha's uncle, Prince Suppabuddha, bore a grudge against the Buddha for two reasons. He thought: "This nephew and son-in-law of mine, Prince Siddhattha, Buddha Gotama, has abandoned my daughter Mahā Pajāpatī

Gotamī and renounced the world. And having ordained my son Devadatta into the monkhood he treats him as an enemy." One day, thinking: "I should not give him a chance to have his meal," he blocked the Buddha's way, by standing in the middle of the road and preventing him from passing.

At that time, when the Buddha came in a company of monks to that place, the prince's men informed him of the Buddha's visit. "Men," said the prince bitterly, "tell Prince Siddhattha, my nephew, to take another road. He is not older than I am. Therefore I cannot make way for him." Despite his men's repeated plea, the prince said the same thing and kept on standing in the road and drinking.

Failing to get permission from his uncle, the Buddha turned back from that place. Suppabuddha then sent a spy with these words: "Go, man, take note of what my nephew has to say, and come back."

While turning back, the Buddha smiled and Ven. Ānanda asked him about the reason for his smile. "Dear Ānanda," the Buddha asked in return, "Did you see my uncle Suppabuddha?" – "Yes, exalted Buddha," replied Ven. Ānanda. The Buddha then foretold the following: "Dear Ānanda, my uncle Suppabuddha, who refused to make way for me, has made a very serious mistake. Seven days from now, he will be swallowed up by the earth at the bottom of the stairs leading down from the upper terrace."

Having overheard these words, the spy went back to Suppabuddha who asked: "What did my nephew, who has turned back, say?" The man told him of all he had heard. The prince then conceived an idea: "What my nephew has said cannot go wrong. Whatever he says comes true. Despite this I will accuse him of falsehood now. He said that I would be swallowed up by the earth on the seventh day. He said it without mentioning the place, but he did say I was to be swallowed by the earth at the foot of the stairs. From now on I will never go anywhere near the foot of the stairs. If I do not go there, I shall not be swallowed by the earth there! On not being swallowed at the end of seven days, I shall accuse my nephew, the Buddha, of false speech."

After getting this idea, Prince Suppabuddha had his belongings taken up to the top of the residence and had the stairway removed and the doors locked; at each doorway he placed a couple of wrestlers, whom he ordered: "In case I try to descend absent-mindedly, you must prevent me." So he remained in his cosy chamber on the seventh and top terrace of his residence.

Hearing of the matter, the Buddha said: "Monks, the word of a Buddha is never ambiguous, it is only of one meaning that is truthful no matter whether my uncle Prince Suppabuddha stays only on the terrace, or takes flight and remains in the sky, or comes down and abides in a boat in the ocean, or dwells inside a mountain. On the very spot I [767] have mentioned, at the foot of the stairs, he will be swallowed by the earth." Being desirous of teaching by connecting the former speech with the latter, the Buddha uttered the following verse (Dhp 128):

> *Na antalikkhe na samudda-majjhe,*
> *na pabbatānaṁ vivaraṁ pavissa,*
> *na vijjatī so jagatippadeso,*
> *yatthaṭṭhitaṁ nappasaheyya maccu.*
>
> Monks, he who stands in the air cannot escape from death; nor can he who lies in the middle of the ocean; he who enters a hole or a cleft in a mountain and lives there still cannot escape from death; there is no space on the ground, not even that of a hair's breath, that is not plagued by death.

By the end of this verse, innumerable persons attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) and so on.

On the seventh day, while the road leading to the palace where the Buddha would take his meal was being blocked, Suppabuddha's state horse, which was kept under the mansion, got away from the ropes with which he was tied to a post, kicking the walls around and neighing forcefully. Nobody was able to control or capture him. While up on the terrace of the mansion, Suppabuddha heard the cries of his state horse and asked what it was all about. His servants then replied that the prince's charger had broken loose.

As soon as he saw the prince, the state horse stood quietly. Suppabuddha could not help trying to catch the horse, he then rose from his seat and went up to the door which opened by itself. The stairway that had been removed previously stood at its original place. The wrestlers who were on guard caught hold of the prince by the neck and, instead of pushing him back into the mansion, threw him down the stairs. The doors on all seven floors opened up of their own accord. The stairways were reinstated by themselves. The guards on each floor threw him down successively by catching hold of him by the neck.

After that, when he got down to the foot of the stairs leading to the ground, the great earth opened, making a roaring sound, and received Suppabuddha, the Sakyan Prince. Having entered the earth, the prince fell into the Avīci hell.

33b: The 15th Year (Sakka)

While staying at Nigrodhārāma of Kapilavatthu and observing the fifteenth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), the Buddha distributed the cool water of the Dhamma, the elixir of deathlessness, to worthy beings. When the 15th Rains Retreat came to an end, he set out from Kapilavatthu in accordance with a Buddha's practice and arrived eventually at Jetavana in the good city of Sāvatthī.

While he was staying there, the Buddha delivered a teaching beginning with: "The gift of Dhamma, which is the teaching and learning of Dhamma, excels all other gifts," (Dhp 354) upon being questioned by Sakka, the Lord of the Devas. The details are as follows:

Once the Devas of the Tāvatiṁsa celestial abode met and raised four questions:

1. What is the best of all gifts?
2. What is the best of all tastes?
3. What is the best of all delights?
4. Why should Awakening, the end of craving, be called the best?

Not a single Deva was able to answer these four questions. In fact, one Deva asked another, who, in turn, asked another, and so on. Asking like this among themselves, they roamed about the 10,000 world-element for twelve years without getting the answers.

Knowing nothing of the meaning of these questions, though twelve years had passed, the Devas residing in the 10,000 world-element assembled and went up to the Four Great Kings. When asked by the Four Great Kings as to why they had made a great assembly, the Devas said: "We came to you as we have four questions which we are unable to solve." – "What are the four questions, friends?" asked the Deva kings. "Out of the innumerable [768] gifts, tastes, and delights, which is the best gift, taste and delight? Why is Awakening, the end of craving, the best?" asked the Devas, "Finding no answers to these questions, we have come to you."

Then the Four Great Kings said: "We too do not know the meaning of these questions, friends. But our lord Sakka is capable of knowing promptly when he reflects on the significance of the questions that may be forwarded by 1,000 persons. Sakka is superior to us in intelligence, wisdom and glory. Come, we

shall go to Sakka." When the Four Great Kings took them to Sakka and when asked by him about such a great assemblage, the Devas explained the matter to him.

"Devas!" said Sakka: "The significance of these four questions cannot be known by anyone except the Buddha. In fact, these four questions are for a Buddha to solve. Where is the Buddha staying now?" Sakka added: "Come, we shall go to the exalted Buddha and ask him." Together with all these Devas, Sakka illuminated the whole of Jetavana at night and approached the Buddha, did obeisance to him and stood at a proper place. When the Buddha enquired about their coming in such a great multitude, Sakka replied: "The Devas, Fortunate One, have these questions to ask. There is none other than you, venerable sir, who is able to answer them, who could know the true significance of the questions. Please explain the meaning clearly to us, exalted Buddha."

"Very well, Sakka!" said the Buddha. "Having fulfilled the perfections and performed unflinchingly the fivefold generosity, I achieved omniscience just to eliminate the doubts of persons like you. The answers to your four questions are as follows:

1. Of all gifts, the gift of Dhamma is the best.
2. Of all tastes, the taste of Dhamma is the best.
3. Of all delights, the delight in Dhamma is the best.
4. Awakening, as the end of craving, is the best because of the cessation of all suffering.

Having spoken thus in prose the Buddha uttered the following verse (Dhp 354):

> *Sabba-dānaṁ Dhamma-dānaṁ jināti,*
> *sabba-rasaṁ Dhamma-raso jināti;*
> *sabba-ratiṁ Dhamma-rati jināti,*
> *taṇhakkhayo sabba-dukkhaṁ jināti.*

Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, the gift of Dhamma, which is the teaching and learning of Dhamma, excels all other gifts overwhelmingly. The taste of Dhamma, consisting in the 37 factors of Awakening and the nine supermundane attainments, excels all others overwhelmingly. The delight in Dhamma excels all other delights overwhelmingly. Awakening, at the end of craving, absolutely overcomes all suffering.

Explanation of the Meaning

Even if robes, as soft as layers of a banana trunk, were given to Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and Arahats, who were seated up in the abode of Brahmas in a universe with no space between one another, a four line verse, which was delivered in that assembly in appreciation of the gift, is far superior. In fact, the value of such a gift of countless robes is not even a 256th part of the value of the Dhamma verse which was delivered in appreciation of the gift of robes; hence, the excellence of speaking, teaching and learning the Dhamma.

Even to those who put in efforts to organize and manage it so that the multitude might listen to the Dhamma, the benefit accrued is immense. To the gift of food in bowls, each and every one of them filled with a sumptuous meal; to the gift of medicine in bowls, each and every one of them filled with butter, oil and such like; to the gift of hundreds of thousands of dwellings like the Mahā Vihāra; to the gift of [769] hundreds of thousands of pinnacled mansions like the Lohapāsāda; even to the various gifts, including the Jetavana monastery given by Anāthapiṇḍika and others to Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and Arahats who were seated and occupying the whole of the aforesaid universe with no space between one another; to all these gifts, the gift of the Dhamma taught in a four line verse, least of all in appreciation of a material gift, is far superior.

Why? Because those who perform the wholesome act of giving the aforesaid four requisites: Robes, food, dwellings and medicine, do so only after hearing the Dhamma, not otherwise. If they had not heard the Dhamma they would not have given even a ladleful of rice gruel or a spoonful of food. For this reason the gift of Dhamma excels all other gifts.

To make the facts more explicit: Leaving out Buddhas and Paccekabuddhas, even Ven. Sāriputta and other noble ones, who had intelligence that could help them count the rain drops when it rained heavily and endlessly for the whole lifespan (*āyu-kappa*), were unable to make such noble attainments as Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) and higher stages on their own, without hearing the Dhamma. In fact, it was after hearing the teaching of Ven. Assaji and others that they attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*); it was by listening to the Buddha's teaching of the Discourse concerning Dīghanakha (*Dīgha-nakha-sutta*, MN 74) and others, that they attained discipleship (*sāvaka-pāramī-ñāṇa*). For this reason, too, the gift of the Dhamma (*Dhamma-dāna*) is more admirable than the gift of

requisites (*paccaya-dāna*). Hence the Buddha's saying: "The gift of the Dhamma excels all other gifts overwhelmingly."

All kinds of tastes including the taste of fruit, the taste of flowers, the taste of flavours, even that of the food of the Devas, are the cause of rebirth in Saṁsāra and of falling into suffering. The taste of the ninefold supermundane Dhamma together with the 37 factors of Awakening, are more praiseworthy than all mundane tastes. Hence the Buddha's saying: "The taste of Dhamma (*Dhamma-rasa*) excels all other tastes overwhelmingly."

All kinds of delights in earthly things, such as sons, daughters, riches, women, dancing, singing, music, etc., are the cause of rebirth in Saṁsāra and of falling into suffering. Joy (*pīti*) that arises in one, through one's attention paid to the Dhamma while speaking, teaching or hearing it, causes elation, even tears and gooseflesh. Such joy that can put an end to the suffering in Saṁsāra and bring about welfare to the extant of realization of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) is more praiseworthy than all kinds of delight in earthly things. Hence the Buddha's teaching: "The delight in Dhamma (*Dhamma-rati*) excels all other delights overwhelmingly."

All kinds of craving disappear the moment the Arahat path is attained. The Arahat path is immediately followed by its result which is the Arahat fruition. As the Arahat fruition arises at the end of craving, it is called the destruction of craving (*taṇhakkhaya*). As the Arahat fruition, the destruction of craving, overcomes all suffering, it is the Dhamma that is superior to and more praiseworthy than all other things. Hence the Buddha's saying: "The Arahat fruition, the end of craving, absolutely overcomes all suffering."

When the Buddha explained the verse in detail, 84,000 sentient beings realized the four truths and were converted. Having listened to the Buddha's elaborate teaching, Sakka did obeisance to him and made a request: "Exalted Buddha, although the gift of the Dhamma is so great and praiseworthy, why are we not allowed to share the merit of it? From now on, please make the Saṅgha give our share of merit from the gift of the Dhamma."

Having heard Sakka's request, the Buddha called a meeting of the Saṅgha and said: "From now on, monks, after giving a Dhamma-speech, be it a grand one, or an ordinary one, or one given to those who visit you, or at least one given in

appreciation of some alms giving, share the merit, which accrue to you from the [770] Dhamma-speech, with all beings."

33c: The 16th Rains Retreat (Āḷavaka)

King Āḷavaka, of the city of Āḷavī, was in the habit of pursuing pleasurable hunting in a deer forest once a week, leaving behind all his enjoyment at the palace together with the female courtiers and dancers. In order to ward off the dangers of rebels, foes and thieves, and to prevent his contemporary rulers from attacking him, he took up a sporting exercise to boost his kingly might.

One day, just before he set out for hunting, he had an agreement made with his military officers: "He, from whose charge a deer escapes, must be responsible for that deer," and when they got to the forest a deer ran away from the king's charge.

As he was quick and strong, the king, equipped with a bow, immediately followed the deer on foot for up to three leagues. Antelopes can run continuously only for three leagues. Therefore, when the king had covered that distance, he killed the deer that was lying exhausted in a pond, with an arrow. He cut up the animal into two pieces. Though he did not want its flesh, he carried it by means of a pole lest he should be ill-spoken of as one who was unable to catch the deer. On his way back he saw a shady banyan tree in new and old foliage at a place that was neither too near nor too far from the city; he approached the foot of the tree to take some rest.

Now, the Yakkha Āḷavaka had been granted a boon by Vessavaṇa, the Deva King, that whoever came into the vicinity of the banyan tree as far as its shadow fell at noon could be his food.

> Herein, it should not be taken that those who came under the tree only at midday could be eaten by him. The fact was that those who came into the vicinity of the tree covered by the shadow of the tree at noon would be eaten, whether they came by day or by night.

When the Yakkha saw the king come under his banyan tree, he showed himself in person and wanted to eat the king. The king gave the two halves of the deer to the Yakkha as he wanted him to be set free. But the Yakkha did not do so, saying: "Since it came into my hand, is it not mine? How could you, Great King, seek your freedom by giving me the deer?"

Then the king made a promise to the Yakkha saying: "Set me free! I shall send you each day a man and a pot of cooked rice." Still the Yakkha refused to

release him, he said: “You might forget about it, being intoxicated with your kingly luxuries. As for me, I cannot eat those who do not come up to my residence, nor can I eat those who do not voluntarily give themselves up. How would I live if you were released?” Then the king satisfied the Yakkha by saying: “The day I fail to send you food, you may devour me.” He regained his freedom from the Yakkha’s hand and returned to the city of Āḷavī.

While waiting for the king at the make-shift shelter of branches that they had constructed midway, the officers saw the king coming back; they greeted the king and received him, saying: “Why did you try so hard to catch the deer, Great King, did you fear a loss of dignity?” Relating nothing of the incident, the king returned to the city and had his breakfast. Then he summoned the administrative minister of the city and secretly told him of the promise which he had given to the Yakkha.

“Have you agreed upon the time, Great King?” asked the minister. “No, I have not,” replied the king. “You have made a mistake, Great King,” said the minister. “Yakkhas are to have access only to things that are limited. As you have not put a limit, the whole district is in danger of disease. Be that as it may, Great King, though you have been wrong, do not worry, but enjoy your royal comfort, I shall do what is to be done in this matter.” The minister rose early and went to the prison and made an announcement to the criminals who had been sentenced to death, he said: “Those who wish to survive may come out.”

He took the convict that came out first and had him bathed and fed, he then sent him saying: “Take this pot of rice to the Yakkha!” As soon as the convict got into the shade of the banyan tree, the Yakkha assumed a very terrible frame and ate him as though he were biting [771] lotus stalks and stems.

> Through the supernatural power of Yakkhas, a human body, including its hair, etc., turns into a lump of butter.

Those who escorted the convict and the food for the Yakkha saw Āḷavaka devouring the man, became frightened and told their intimate friends of the matter. From that time onwards the news that: “The king catches thieves and feeds them to the Yakkha,” spread and people abstained from stealing.

At a later time, as there were no new thieves and all the old ones were gone, the prisons became empty. Then the minister reported the matter to the king, who had his gold and silver dropped on all the main roads of the city, thinking that

somebody might want to pick it up. But nobody touched it even with his foot lest they should be accused of theft.

When the King of Āḷavaka failed to get new recruits of thieves in this way, he discussed it with his ministers, who advised him, saying: "We shall make people send one aged person from each household in serial order. An aged person means one who by himself is about to enter the mouth of death." But the king rejected the advice saying that people would then be terrorized with the thought: 'The king has the heart to send my father to the Yakkha!' or: 'He is cruel enough to send my grandfather to the Yakkha!' I do not prefer that plan."

Then the ministers presented their alternate idea thus: "In that case Great King, make people send their children who are lying on their backs in their cradles, each day. Such children have no such affection as: 'This is my mother,' or: 'This is my father.' " Upon this the king agreed and let him do so. The minister started executing the plan.

Mothers fled from the city with their children, and pregnant women fled too. After bringing up their children in another country, they brought back their young children to the city.

In this manner the daily feeding of the Yakkha took place for twelve long years. One day, when the royal servants roamed about the city looking for children, they found not a single child. So they reported to the king: "Leaving aside your son, Prince Āḷavaka, in the palace, there are no children in the city." The king replied: "As I love my son, so do all these people love their respective sons. But in this world there is none more lovable than one's own self. Go, men, save my life by giving my son to the Yakkha!"

At that time, the queen, the mother of Prince Āḷavaka, had her son bathed with scented water and adorned with ornaments. She was sitting with her son wrapped in soft white pieces of cloth and placed him at her bosom to let him sleep. Under the command of the king, the royal servants went there, and while the queen and 16,000 female attendants were crying, they took away the chief nurse and the prince, declaring that the little prince would become food for the Yakkha.

The Buddha's Visit to Āḷavī

On that day the Buddha rose early in the morning and engaged in the attainment of great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā-samāpatti*) in the fragrant chamber inside the Jetavana monastery. And when he surveyed the world by his twofold Buddha eyes, consisting in the knowledge of the inclinations and disposition of others (*āsayānusaya-ñāṇa*) and the knowledge of the thoughts and intentions of others (*indriya-paro-pariyatti-ñāṇa*) he saw in his vision three significant things: The past merit of Prince Āḷavaka that would lead him to become a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-phala*); the past merit of the Yakkha Āḷavaka that would lead him to Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*); and the past merit of 84,000 beings that would lead them to the realization of the eye of the Dhamma (*Dhamma-cakkhu*), the penetration of the four truths, at the end of his discourse.

Accordingly, at daybreak he performed his morning duties. Before he finished his afternoon undertakings, at sunset on that new moon day, he set out on foot alone and unaccompanied, taking his bowl and robes, on a journey of 30 leagues from Sāvatthī, and entered the precinct of the Yakkha's residence.

Now where did the Buddha stay? Did he stay in the Yakkha's mansion that was invisible to [772] ordinary people and near the banyan tree? Or did he sit at the foot of the banyan tree? He took his seat in the Yakkha's mansion. Explanation: As Yakkhas saw their mansions, so did the Buddha see them. Therefore, he went up to the Yakkha's mansion and stood at its gate.

At that time, Āḷavaka was attending a meeting of Yakkhas in the Himavanta. The door keeper of Āḷavaka, the Yakkha by the name of Gadrabha (Donkey), approached the Buddha and paid his respects. And a dialogue took place between Gadrabha and Buddha:

Gadrabha: "Exalted Buddha, did you come only at sunset?"

Buddha: "Yes, Gadrabha, I came only at sunset. If it were not a burden to you, I would like to spend the night in Āḷavaka's mansion."

Gadrabha: "Exalted Buddha, it is not a burden to me. But that Yakkha Āḷavaka is violent. He does not show respect even to his parents. Therefore please do not prefer to stay there."

Buddha: "Gadrabha, I know of Āḷavaka's violence. There would not be a bit of harm to me. I want to stay for the night there in Āḷavaka's mansion, if you do not feel my stay burdensome."

Gadrabha: "Exalted Buddha, Āḷavaka is like an iron pan aglow with fire. He is absolutely ignorant of parents, monks, Brahmins and the Dhamma. Those who come to this place he drives them mad, or bursts open their hearts, or throws them beyond the ocean or beyond the universe by catching hold of their legs."

Buddha: "Gadrabha, I know all about this. If it were not burdensome to you, I would like to stay in Āḷavaka's mansion for the night."

Gadrabha: "Exalted Buddha, it is not burdensome for me. But Āḷavaka might kill me if I were to give you permission without first informing him. Exalted Buddha, let me go to him therefore and tell him of the matter first."

Buddha: "Gadrabha, tell him as you like."

Gadrabha: "Exalted Buddha, please consider then whether you should stay here or not."

Having said thus, Gadrabha paid his respects to the Buddha and departed to the Himavanta. Then the door of Āḷavaka's mansion opened by itself, and the Buddha entered and took his seat on the divine, jewelled throne which Āḷavaka usually sat on, on important and auspicious days, enjoying divine luxuries. Being seated, the Buddha emanated golden-yellow (*pīta*) radiance.

Beholding the yellow radiance, Āḷavaka's female attendants gathered, did obeisance to the Buddha and sat around him. The Buddha gave a miscellaneous Dhamma talk to them, saying: "Yakkhīs, as you have in the past given alms and observed morality and honoured those who deserved honour, you attained divine luxuries. Now also, do as you have done before. Abide not by jealousy (*issā*) and stinginess (*macchariya*)," and so on. Having heard the sweet talk of the Dhamma, they gave 1,000 cheers and remained sitting and surrounding the Buddha.

Having arrived at the Himavanta, Gadrabha the Yakkha told Āḷavaka respectfully: "Āḷavaka, King of the Yakkhas, who knows no suffering! May I draw your attention to something, please be informed: The Buddha has come and is sitting in your mansion." Then Āḷavaka made a gesture, meaning to say: "Be quiet! Shut up! I will go back immediately and do whatever is necessary."

> Herein Āḷavaka was so strong in wrong thinking that he took the Buddha's stay in his mansion as a disgrace, and out of pride as a Yakkha, he hushed up the news, thinking: "Let nobody amidst this assembly of Yakkhas hear of it."

Then the two noble Devas, Sātāgiri and Hemavata, agreed between themselves to go visit the Buddha at Jetavana before they went to attend the assembly of Devas. Riding different vehicles, they set off by air together with their hosts of retinue.

> Routes existed nowhere in the space for the Yakkhas. They only had to find out [773] their way, avoiding celestial mansions that were standing there.

Āḷavaka's mansion, however, was situated on the ground. It was well secured, surrounded by properly fixed walls, doors, turrets and archways. Above the mansion was spread a net made of white brass. The mansion was like a box. It was three leagues in height, over which there formed an aerial route used by divine Yakkhas.

When the two friends, the divine Yakkhas Sātāgiri and Hemavata, happened to come just above the mansion on their way to visit the Buddha, and were unable to proceed. In fact, up to the top of the universe above, nobody can pass over the place where a Buddha is seated.

Therefore, when they thought of the cause for their inability to go further, they saw the Buddha and descended to the ground like a stone that has been thrown up falls earth-bound. Having made obeisance to the Buddha, they listened to a discourse and circumambulated the Buddha, and asked for his permission to leave: "Exalted Buddha, we have to attend a meeting of divine Yakkhas." Saying some words in praise of the Three Treasures, they headed for the Himavanta, the venue of their meeting. On seeing the two noble Devas, Āḷavaka rose from his place and invited them saying: "Please take your seats here."

The Fury of Āḷavaka

The two friends informed Āḷavaka: "Friend Āḷavaka, in your mansion the Fortunate One is still sitting. You are so lucky! Go, friend Āḷavaka, wait upon the exalted Buddha!"

> To a faithless person, the pious word connected with faith is unbearable, so is the word connected with morality to an immoral one; the word connected with knowledge to an ignorant one; the word connected with generosity to a miser; and the word connected with wisdom to a fool.

The words of the two friends, encouraging faith in the Buddha, were unbearable to Āḷavaka, who had no faith. Therefore, on hearing words of praise of the Buddha, the faithless the Yakkha Āḷavaka became furious. His heart crackled with rage like lumps of salt thrown into fire. He asked in anger: "What kind of man is the so-called exalted Buddha who is sitting in my mansion?"

Then the two noble Devas said to Āḷavaka: "Friend Āḷavaka, do not you know of our master, the Fortunate One? He is a very prominent and noble personage. Even while in the Tusita abode of Devas, he made five investigations and they related the biography of the Buddha up to his delivery of the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse. They also told the Yakkha of the 32 portents that took place at the time when the Bodhisatta was conceived, and so on. Friend Āḷavaka, have you not seen those marvellous portents?" they asked. Although he had seen them, he was carried away by anger, and he replied, hiding the truth: "No, I have not."

The two Devas then became dissatisfied and said: "Whether you have seen them or not, what is the use of your seeing or not seeing? Friend, what are you going to do to our master, the exalted Buddha? Compared with him, you are like a calf that has been born today near a bull with his hump swaying; like a baby elephant that has been born today near a bull elephant in must with his granular secretion flowing from the three parts: the trunk, the tip of the male organ and the ears; like an old ugly fox, near a lion-king who is graceful with his round back and shoulders and with long bright mane; and like a young crow with its broken wings near a Garuḷa King with his body of 150 leagues in size. Go and do what is to be done."

Being furious, the Yakkha got up from his seat, and standing firmly with his left foot placed on the flat rock of red orpiment, he shouted: "Is your master, the Buddha, powerful? Or, is it I, who is powerful? You will see now who is more powerful!" So shouting he stamped with his right foot on the top of Mount Kelāsa that was of 60 leagues. Then just as fiery particles fall off from the glowing iron that has been excessively heated in the blacksmith's furnace and that is put on [774] the anvil and hammered, even so Mount Kelāsa broke up

into layers of rock. Standing on the mountain top, the Yakkha declared roaringly: "I am Āḷavaka indeed." The roar overwhelmed the whole Jambudīpa. There have been four great roars which were heard by all Jambūdīpa

1. The roar: "I have won! I have won!" made by the Yakkha general, Puṇṇaka, when he beat King Dhanañjaya Korabya in the game of dice as told in the Birth Story about the Wise Vidhura (*Vidhura-jātaka*, Ja 545).
2. The roar: "I will eat up all wicked monks, wicked nuns, wicked male lay devotees and female lay devotees and unrighteous men," made by Vissakamma in the guise of a big black dog under the command of Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, when the Dispensation of Buddha Kassapa deteriorated.
3. The roar: "King Kusa, the Sīhassara, whose voice is bold and penetrating like that of a lion king, am I!" made by the Bodhisatta Kusa, after going out of the city with Princess Pabhāvatī on the back of his elephant, when the seven kings, desirous of winning the Princess's hand in marriage, besieged his city, see the Birth Story about King Kusa (*Kusa-jātaka*, Ja 531).
4. The present one: "I am Āḷavaka indeed!" made by the Yakkha standing on Mount Kelāsa.

When those shouts were made it seemed that they appeared before each and every town-gate and village-gate throughout the whole of Jambūdīpa.

Because of Āḷavaka's power, the Himavanta, 3,000 leagues in vastness, trembled. Thereafter, the Yakkhas attacked the Buddha with the nine kinds of missiles in the way mentioned in the section on the vanquishing of Māra in chapter 7. Despite his attack with such missiles, Āḷavaka was unable to make the Buddha flee. Consequently, he marched towards the Buddha, leading a frightening army composed of four divisions: elephants, horses, chariots and foot-soldiers, and mixed up with various forms of Yakkhas armed with weapons.

The ghosts made all sorts of guises and threats and, shouting: "Seize him! Kill him!" they appeared as though they were overpowering, coming from the sky above the Buddha. But they dared not go near to the Buddha, like flies which dare not approach a solid, hot glowing iron.

Although they dared not go near, they did not retreat in a short time, unlike Māra and his enormous army, who turned back immediately after being defeated, on the verge of the Bodhisatta's awakening at the Mahā Bodhi tree. Instead, Āḷavaka and his Yakkhas, spent half the night making disturbances.

Having failed in his attempt to frighten the Buddha by displaying various terrible objects for half the night, he conceived an idea: "It were well if I would fling the weapon of the divine white cloak that is invincible!"

There are four most powerful weapons in the world. They are:

1. Sakka's thunderbolt.
2. Vessavaṇa's iron club.
3. Yama's side glance.
4. Āḷavaka's divine white cloak.

Explanation:

1. If Sakka, in his fury, were to discharge his thunderbolt towards Mount Meru, it would pierce the mountain, which is 168,000 leagues in height, making a hollow right through it, and come out from the bottom.

2. Vessavaṇa's iron club, when hauled by him in anger, as in his earlier days, when he was still a worldling (*puthujjana*), would chop off the heads of thousands of Yakkhas and, after returning, would lie in its original position. [775]

3. When an angry Yama, the king of hell, glances sideways, thousands of Kumbhaṇḍas are destroyed, making a hissing sound like sesame seeds when thrown into the red-hot iron pan.

4. If the Yakkha Āḷavaka, flying into a rage, were to throw up his divine white cloak into the sky, there would be a drought for twelve years. If it were thrown upon the earth, all the trees and plants and others things would dry up, and the land would be deprived of vegetation for twelve years. If it were thrown into the ocean, all the waters in it would be dried up, like drops of water would in a red-hot pot. When flung at a Meru-like mountain it would fall, breaking up into fragments.

With that idea Āḷavaka took off his divine white cloak, so powerful a weapon, and while standing, he was poised to cast it. At that time, all the Devas, most of whom belonged to the 10,000 world-element, assembled quickly, for they had decided: "Today the Fortunate One will tame the violent Yakkha Āḷavaka. At that taming place, we will listen to the Buddha's teaching." Apart from those willing to listen to the teaching, the Devas, who wished to watch the fight, also gathered there. In this way the entire vault of heaven was full of celestial beings.

The Taming of Āḷavaka

[The following is based on the Discourse to Āḷavaka (*Āḷavaka-sutta*, Snp 1.10) and its commentary.]

Then Āḷavaka, rising up and up, around the Buddha and roaming about, hurled his weapon of the divine white cloak towards the Buddha. Making a terrible sound in the sky, like the weapon of thunder, and emitting smoke all over and burning with flames, the cloak flew towards the Buddha but on coming near him, it turned into a foot-towel and dropped at his feet, destroying the Yakkha's pride.

On seeing this, Āḷavaka became powerless, he felt he had utterly lost his pride like a bull with its horns broken or like a poisonous cobra with its fangs taken out. He then reflected: "The weapon of the divine white cloak has failed to overcome the monk Gotama. Why?" Then he made a guess: "The monk Gotama abides in loving-kindness. This must be the reason. Now I will deprive him of loving-kindness through an annoying speech."

So he said: "Monk Gotama, without my permission why did you enter my mansion and take the seat amidst female attendants like a householder? Is it not improper for a monk to enjoy what is not given and to mix with females. Therefore, if you abide by the rules of a monk, Gotama, get out of my mansion at once!"

With reference to Āḷavaka's speech, only the essential portion was recited as the text in the Buddhist Councils; the rest is taken from the commentary.

The Buddha then accepted the Yakkha's order and went outside the mansion, giving a very pleasant reply: "Very well, friend Āḷavaka."

A hostile man cannot be calmed by hostility. That is true! Just as a piece of the bear's gall put into the nostril of a wild furious dog will make it worse, even so a rude ferocious person, when retaliated upon with rudeness and

> ferocity, will become more violent. In fact, such a man should be tamed only with gentleness. This natural phenomenon, the Buddha understood thoroughly. Hence, he uses mild words and yielding action.

Then the Yakkha thought: "The monk Gotama is very quick to obey indeed. He went out at my command, given but once. Without a cause I have fought against him for the whole night, the monk Gotama who is so docile, that he goes out. Āḷavaka's heart began to be softened thus. He continued to ponder: "But I am not certain yet whether his going out was caused by his obedience or by his anger. Now I will make an enquiry."

So he asked the Buddha again: "Come in, monk Gotama!"

The Buddha, in order to make the Yakkha's mind flexible and to feel certain of his docility, said again pleasingly: "Very well, friend Āḷavaka," and re-entered the mansion.

In this way, the Yakkha tested the Buddha by his repeated orders to know for sure whether the latter was really obedient, for the second time and the third he said: "Come in," and then "Go out." The Buddha followed the Yakkha's orders so that he might become more and [776] more soft-minded. So great was the Buddha's compassion indeed! If the Buddha were to disobey the Yakkha, who was violent by nature, his rough heart would become more and more boisterous and be unable to receive the Dhamma.

To cite a worldly simile, just as a little son, naughty and crying, is helped to become good by giving him something that he wants and by doing something that he likes, even so the Buddha who was like the great mother to the three worlds, acted according to his command in order to make the Yakkha Āḷavaka, who was like a little wild and rough son who was crying out of anger, docile.

Another simile, just as a wet nurse, with a gift and persuasion, suckles a naughty baby, who refuses to take milk, even so the Buddha, who is like the great wet nurse to the three worlds, followed whatever the Yakkha had to say, thereby fulfilling the latter's desire by way of persuasion in order to feed the Yakkha, who was like the naughty baby, on the sweet milk of the supermundane Dhamma.

Still another simile, just as a man, desirous of filling a glass jar with the sweet food or medicine containing four ingredients (*catu-madhu*), cleanses the inside

of the jar, even so the Buddha, desirous of filling the jar-like heart of the Yakkha with the four ingredient-like supermundane Dhamma, had to clean the Yakkha's heart of the dirt-like anger. He therefore obeyed the Yakkha three times by going out of the mansion and coming into it as he had been ordered by him.

Thereafter the Yakkha entertained a wicked desire thus: "The monk is really docile. When ordered, but once: "Go in," he went in; when ordered but once: "Come out," he came out. In this way, ordering him to go in and to come out, I will make him weary during the whole night. Having made him weary thus will I throw him to the other side of the Ganges by holding him by his two legs." Accordingly, he asked the Buddha for the fourth time: "Come out, O monk Gotama!"

Then the Buddha knew the Yakkha's wicked intention. He also foresaw what the Yakkha would do if he said something to him, Āḷavaka would think of asking some questions to the Buddha, and that would create a golden opportunity for the Buddha to preach. Therefore he replied: "I know the vicious plan that is in your mind. So I will not get out. Do whatever you like."

Prior to Āḷavaka's encounter with the Buddha, in former times too, when recluses and wandering ascetics, endowed with higher psychic powers came by air, they visited the mansion out of curiosity to find out whether it was a golden, or a silver, or a ruby one. To these visitors, the Yakkha put questions. If they were unable to give him the answers, he would do harm by driving them mad, or by ripping their hearts out, or by throwing them by the legs to the other shore of the Ganges.

The following is how Yakkhas do harm: They make a man mad in two ways, by showing him their horrible looks and by gripping and crushing his heart. Knowing that the first way would not cause madness to recluses and wandering ascetics, Āḷavaka did not employ the first method; instead he reduced his body to a delicate frame by his own supernormal power and entered the persons of these powerful ascetics and crumpled their hearts with his grip. Then their mental processes could not remain stable and they went out of their senses. He also burst open the hearts of these ascetics who went mad thus. As they could not answer his questions, he would tell them not to come again and would fling them by the two legs to the other side of the Ganges.

So Āḷavaka recalled the questions he had asked on previous occasions and thought: "Now I will ask the monk Gotama in this manner and, then, if he fails to give me satisfactory answers, I will make him mad, burst open his heart and fling him by the legs to beyond the Ganges. Thus will I torment him."

So he said rudely: "Great monk Gotama, I am going to ask you some questions. If you cannot answer them thoroughly I will make you mad, or cause your heart to burst, or hold you by your legs and throw you across the river."

> From where did Āḷavaka's questions come? Answer: His parents had learnt the questions numbering eight, together with their answers from Buddha Kassapa, [777] whom they worshipped. The parents taught him all the questions and answers when he was young.
>
> As time went by Āḷavaka forgot the answers. He then had the questions put down in orpiment on gold plates, lest they should get lost, and he kept the plates at the entrance of the mansion. In this way, Āḷavaka's questions had their source in a Buddha, and they were the ones which only Buddhas could answer as they belonged to the sphere of the Buddhas (*Buddha-visaya*).

On hearing the Yakkha's words, the Buddha wished to show the unique power of the Buddhas; unique in the sense that it was not shared by any in the world, for nobody could do any harm to the four things in their possession; the gains accrued to them, their life, their omniscience, and their physical radiance.

So the Buddha said: "Friend Yakkha, all over the dual worlds, the world of divine beings, such as Devas, Māras and Brahmas, and the world of human beings, such as monks, Brahmins, princes and commoners, I see none who could cause me madness, or who could explode my heart, or who could fling me over the river."

After barring the cruel intent of the Yakkha, the Buddha added in order to make him ask: "Friend Yakkha, in spite of that, you may put whatever questions you like." Thus the Buddha extended his invitation, the kind that omniscient Buddhas adopt.

> Herein there are two kinds of invitation: One made by omniscient Buddhas and Bodhisattas, and the other made by other individuals. Omniscient Buddhas and Bodhisattas invite questions with full self-confidence: "Ask whatever you like. I will answer your questions, leaving nothing

unanswered." Other individuals do so but with less confidence, saying: "Ask, friend. On hearing your question, I will answer if I know."

Āḷavaka's Questions and the Buddha's Answers

When the Buddha made the kind of invitation usually adopted by omniscient Buddhas thus, Āḷavaka put his questions in verse as follows (Snp 183):

Kiṁ sūdha vittaṁ purisassa seṭṭhaṁ,
kiṁ su suciṇṇaṁ sukham-āvahāti,
kiṁ su have sādu-taraṁ rasānaṁ,
kathaṁ jīviṁ jīvitam-āhu seṭṭhaṁ?

O monk, Gotama by clan! What is the most praiseworthy property of men in this world? What, when practised continuously for days can convey the threefold happiness of humans, Devas and Nibbāna? Of all enjoyable tastes, what indeed is by far the best for living beings? How is one's life, the most praiseworthy among living beings, as sweetly declared by numerous men of virtue such as Buddhas and others?

In this manner the first question: "What is the most praiseworthy property of men in this world?" is asked by using the term which is of a leading nature. Such a way of speaking is called the detailed (*ukkaṭṭha*) method. Therefore it is to be noted that the term men here represents both male and female. The question means: "What is the best thing for all men and women?"

By this verse the following four questions are meant:

1. What is the best property in the world?
2. What, when practised day by day, can lead to the three blissful states of humans, Devas and Nibbāna?
3. What is the sweetest of all tastes?
4. What living is the best?

Then the Buddha, desirous of answering in the same way as Kassapa Buddha did, uttered [778] the following answers in verse (Snp 184):

Saddhīdha vittaṁ purisassa seṭṭhaṁ,
Dhammo suciṇṇo sukham-āvahāti,
saccaṁ have sādu-taraṁ rasānaṁ,
paññā-jīviṁ jīvitam-āhu seṭṭhaṁ.

Friend Yakkha by the name of Āḷavaka! In this world the most praiseworthy property of every man and woman is faith (*saddhā*), mundane as well as supermundane.

The ten wholesome deeds or the three good works of generosity, morality and meditation, which practised day and night continuously, can convey the threefold bliss (*sukha*) for humans, Devas and Nibbāna.

Of all enjoyable tastes, the truth (*sacca*), which is significant of Nibbāna, the reality in its ultimate sense (*paramattha-sacca*) or the truthful speech of oral auspiciousness (*vacī-maṅgala*) achieved by refraining from falsehood (*virati-sacca*), indeed is by far the best for all beings.

Men of virtue, such as Buddhas and others, declare that the life following the right course of conduct continuously is the most praiseworthy.

> Herein the meaning, at moderate length should be taken thus: Just as various mundane properties, such as gold, silver, etc., though their usefulness bring about both physical happiness (*kāyika-sukha*) and mental happiness (*cetasika-sukha*), just as they prevent one having thirst, hunger and other forms of suffering, just as they effect the cessation of poverty, just as they form the cause for gaining pearls, rubies, etc., just as they attract admiration from others, even so, the two kinds of faith (*saddhā*), mundane and supermundane, bring about both secular happiness and spiritual happiness; even so, faith being the leading virtue of those who take the right course of conduct, prevents one from suffering in Saṁsāra, such as rebirth, old age, and so on; even so, it effects the cessation of the poverty of virtues; even so it forms the cause for winning the Dhamma Jewel such as the seven constituents of wisdom (*bojjhaṅga*) which are the mindfulness constituent (*sati-sambojjhaṅga*) and others (Dhp 303):
>
> *Saddho sīlena sampanno, yaso-bhoga-samappito,*
> *yaṁ yaṁ padesaṁ bhajati, tattha tattheva pūjito.*

He who possesses faith (*saddhā*), and morality (*sīla*), who also has a retinue and wealth, is honoured wherever he goes.

> As the Buddha preaches thus, a faithful individual is honoured or praised by all human and divine beings. Therefore, the two kinds of faiths, mundane and supermundane, are said by the Buddha to be one's property.
>
> This property of faith is the cause of the threefold unique happiness of humans, Devas and Nibbāna. Moreover, it is the cause of gaining such

secular treasures as gold, silver and the like. This is true: only he who is faithful and performs alms givings can acquire secular treasures. The property of one without faith is just fruitless. Therefore, the property of faith is said to be the most praiseworthy possession.

When the ten wholesome works, or, alternately, the three deeds of generosity (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*) and meditation (*bhāvanā*), are performed day after day, they bring happiness to the performer, as they did to Soṇa, Raṭṭhapāla and other sons of wealthy persons; they bring divine happiness to the performer, as they did to Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, and others; they bring the bliss of Nibbāna to him, as they did bring to Prince Mahā Paduma and others.

Something to be licked and enjoyed is called tasty. Various tastes, such as the [779] taste of roots, the taste of stems, etc., and the other parts of a plant contribute to the development of one's body. But they can convey only secular happiness. The taste of the truth caused by refraining from falsehood (*virati-sacca*) and speaking only the truth (*vacī-sacca*) contribute to one's mental development through tranquillity (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*) meditation and other meditative practices. They lead to spiritual happiness. Awakening called the taste of emancipation (*vimutti-rasa*), as developed through the taste of the peace of Nibbāna, the ultimate truth (*paramattha-sacca*), is sweet and delicious. Therefore, these three tastes of ultimate truth, refraining from falsehood and truth are the best of all tastes.

An individual, who lacks both eyes: The eye of intelligence in mundane development and the eye of intelligence in supermundane development, is called a blind person (*andha-puggala*). One having only the eye of intelligence in mundane development and lacking the eye of intelligence in the Dhamma, is called one-eyed (*eka-cakkhu*), one who has both eyes of intelligence is designated as an individual who has two eyes that can see (*dvi-cakkhu-puggala*).

Of these three kinds of individuals, a two-eyed lay devotee lives by doing his domestic tasks, by taking refuge in the Three Treasures, by keeping the precepts, by fasting and by fulfilling other human social duties only through wisdom. A monk lives by accomplishing his ascetic undertakings, such as purification of morality (*sīla-visuddhi*), purification of mind (*citta-visuddhi*) and others, through wisdom. Only the life of one who abides by wisdom is praiseworthy, the noble ones, such as Buddhas, declared. They do not say that the life of one who lives just by respiration is praiseworthy.

On hearing the Buddha's answer to his four questions, the Yakkha Āḷavaka became very glad, and being desirous of asking the remaining four, he uttered the following verses (Snp 185):

> *Kathaṁ su tarati oghaṁ, kathaṁ su tarati aṇṇavaṁ,*
> *kathaṁ su dukkham-acceti, kathaṁ su parisujjhati?*

Exalted Buddha, how, or by what does one cross over the four rough whirlpools? How, or by what does one cross over the ocean of Saṁsāra? How or by what does one overcome the round of suffering? How or by what does one cleanse oneself of mental impurities?

When the Yakkha had questioned him thus, the Buddha uttered the following verse as he wished to answer as before (Snp 186):

> *Saddhā tarati oghaṁ, appamādena aṇṇavaṁ,*
> *vīriyena dukkham-acceti, paññāya parisujjhati.*

Friend by the name of Āḷavaka! By faith (*saddhā*) one crosses over the four rough whirlpools, by heedfulness (*appamāda*), which is repeated performance of the ten wholesome deeds, one crosses over the ocean of Saṁsāra; by energy (*viriya*) one overcomes the round of suffering; by wisdom (*paññā*) one cleanses oneself of mental impurities.

Herein, he who crosses over the four whirlpools, can also cross over the ocean of Saṁsāra, can overcome the round of suffering and be aloof from moral impurities; but: 1) He who lacks faith (*saddhā*), as he does not believe in the worthy practice of crossing over the four whirlpools, cannot engage in meditation which is the crossing over. Therefore, he cannot go beyond them; 2) he who neglects the crossing by indulging in the five sensual pleasures, as he holds fast to these very pleasures, cannot get beyond the ocean of Saṁsāra; 3) he who is not energetic but indolent, by mixing with unwholesome things, lives miserably; 4) a fool, as he does not know the good path of practice leading to the purification of moral impurities, cannot get away from such mental defilements. Hence the Buddha's answer revealing faith as [780] opposed to faithlessness (*asaddhiya*), heedfulness (*appamāda*) as opposed to heedlessness (*pamāda*), energy (*viriya*) as opposed to indolence (*kosajja*) and wisdom (*paññā*) as opposed to delusion (*moha*).

Again in this answering verse faith or the faculty of faith is the fundamental cause of the four factors of Stream-winning (*Sotāpatti-y-*

aṅga): an association with the virtuous (*sappurisa-saṁseva*), listening to the law of the virtuous (*saddhamma-savaṇa*), proper contemplation (*yoniso-manasikara*), and engagement in tranquillity and insight meditation in accordance with the ninefold supermundane Dhamma (*dhammānudhamma-paṭipatti*).

Only the possession of faith leads to the development of the four factors of the Stream-winning factors, and only the development of these four factors leads to Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*), or the winning of the stream. Hence by the first answer in the verse reading: *Saddhāya tarati oghaṁ*, "By faith one crosses over the four whirlpools of rough waters," the path of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*), which is the crossing over of the whirlpool of wrong beliefs (*diṭṭhogha*), as well as the noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), are meant.

The noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), as he has diligence equivalent to the repeated deeds of merit, accomplishes the second path and is to be reborn but once in the human world; he crosses over the ocean of Saṁsāra. The feat has not been performed yet by Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*) has its source in the whirlpool of becoming (*bhavogha*). Hence by the second answer in the verse reading: *Appamādena aṇṇavaṁ,* "By diligence one crosses over the ocean of Saṁsāra," the Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmī-magga*), which is the crossing over of the whirlpool of becoming (*bhavogha*), as well as the noble individual Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmī*) are meant.

The noble Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmī*) accomplish the third path by energy and overcome the lust-related suffering, which has its source in the whirlpool of sensual pleasures (*kāmogha.*) The feat has not been performed yet by Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmi-magga*). Hence the third answer in the verse reading: *Viriyena dukkham-acceti*, "By energy one overcomes the round of suffering," the Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-magga*), which is the crossing over of the whirlpool of sensual pleasures (*kāmogha*), as well as the noble individual Non-returners (*Anāgāmī*) are meant.

The noble Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*), as he is free from the mire of sensuality, accomplishes the fourth path through the pristine pure insight wisdom and abandons the extreme impurities of ignorance (*avijjā*), which has not been eradicated yet by the Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-magga*). Hence the fourth answer in the verse reading: *Paññāya parisujjhati, "*By wisdom one cleanses oneself of mental impurities," the Arahat path (*Arahatta-*

> *magga*), the crossing over of the whirlpool of ignorance (*avijjogha*), as well as the Arahat are meant.

At the end of the verse, an answer that was taught with Awakening as its apex, the Yakkha Āḷavaka was established in the Stream-entry fruition (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

Āḷavaka Attains Stream-Entry

Now that the Yakkha Āḷavaka had been impressed by the word wisdom (*paññā*), that is contained in the fourth answer of the verse: *Pannāya parisujjhati*, "by wisdom is one is cleansed of one's mental impurities," uttered by the Buddha, as was typical of a noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), he became desirous of asking further questions, a mixture of mundane and supermundane problems, and uttered the following six lines (Snp 187):

> *Kathaṁ su labhate paññaṁ, kathaṁ su vindate dhanaṁ,*
> *kathaṁ su kittiṁ pappoti, kathaṁ mittāni ganthati,*
> *asmā lokā paraṁ lokaṁ, kathaṁ pecca na socati? [781]*

> Exalted Buddha! How is the twofold wisdom, mundane and supermundane, gained? How is the twofold wealth, mundane and supermundane, attained? How is fame achieved? How are friends bound? Through what, one does not grieve on passing away from this world to the next?

By this verse the Yakkha Āḷavaka meant to ask about these five problems:

1. The means to get wisdom.
2. The means to get wealth.
3. The means to get fame.
4. The means to get friends.
5. The means to escape sorrow in the next life.

Being desirous of teaching Āḷavaka properly that there were four things contributing to the acquisition of the twofold wisdom, mundane and supermundane, answering the first question, the Buddha delivered the following verse (Snp 188):

Saddahāno arahataṁ, Dhammaṁ Nibbāna-pattiyā,
sussūsaṁ labhate paññaṁ, appamatto vicakkhaṇo.

Friend by the name of Āḷavaka! He who has deep faith in the ten wholesome deeds and the 37 constituents of Awakening that contribute to the attainment of Nibbāna taught by Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and Arahats; who respectfully pays attention to the wise; who is mindful and earnest; and who reflects thoroughly on the two speeches, one well-spoken (*subhāsita*) and the other ill-spoken (*asubhāsita*), acquires the twofold wisdom, mundane and supermundane.

By this answer the Buddha meant to say that these four are the means to gain wisdom:

1. Faith (*saddhā*).
2. Attention (*sussūsā*).
3. Heedfulness (*appamāda*).
4. Reflection (*vicakkhaṇā*).

To make the meaning more explicit: Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and Arahats realize Nibbāna through the ten wholesome deeds at the beginning and through the 37 constituents of Awakening later on. Therefore, these ten wholesome deeds and the 37 constituents of Awakening are to be designated as the means to Nibbāna. Only he, who has profound faith (*saddhā*), can posses both mundane and supermundane wisdom.

The possession of wisdom, however, is not possible just by faith. Only when the faithful individual develops attention (*sussūsā*) by approaching the wise, serving them, by listening to their pious words, can he win these two kinds of wisdom. That is to say, having faith that leads to Nibbāna, he must go to his preceptor (*upajjhāya*) and fulfil his duties towards him. When the preceptor, being pleased with his fulfilment of duties, teaches him, he must listen carefully. His approach to his preceptors, his service towards him, his listening to his word – all these briefly make up the term attention, respectful obedience. Only one who possesses attention, can realize mundane wisdom as well as supermundane wisdom.

Only when the faithful and respectful listener further develops heedfulness (*appamāda*) and reflection (*vicakkhaṇā*) on well-spoken speech (*subhāsita*),

and ill-spoken speech (*dubbhāsita*), can he realize the twofold wisdom. He who lacks these four cannot gain wisdom.

With regard to the interrelation between these four and the supermundane wisdom: 1) By faith (*saddhā*) a man takes up the practice which leads to wisdom; 2) by [782] attention (*sussūsā*) he listens respectfully to the Dhamma which leads to wisdom (*paññā*); 3) by heedfulness (*appamāda*) he does not forget what he has learnt; 4) by reflection (*vicakkhaṇā*) he considers deeply what he has learnt so that it may remain intact and without distortion and widens his knowledge and wisdom.

Or, 2) By attention a man respectfully listens to the Dhamma which leads to wisdom; 3) by heedfulness he bears in mind what he has learnt so that it may not be forgotten; 4) by reflection he ponders the profound significance of what he has borne in mind.

The repeated practice of these four brings one closer to the ultimate reality of Nibbāna and becoming an Arahat. In this manner, the development of the supermundane wisdom of the path and that of the fruition is to be noted.

After answering the first question thus, did the Fortunate One, being desirous of answering now the second, third and fourth questions, uttered the following verse (Snp 189):

Patirūpa-kārī dhuravā, uṭṭhātā vindate dhanaṁ,
saccena kittiṁ pappoti, dadaṁ mittāni ganthati.

Friend Yakkha by the name of Āḷavaka! He who performs these two things leading to both worldly and spiritual wealth in harmony with the place and time; who, by mental energy, does not abandon his duty, and who is physically energetic as well, certainly gains the twofold wealth. By auspicious, truthful speech does one attain a good reputation, such as: "This man is the speaker of truth," or, by the attainment of ultimate reality of Nibbāna does he reach fame, and people might say: "He is a Buddha," "He is a Paccekabuddha," or "He is a noble disciple of the Buddha." He who, without stinginess but wholeheartedly, gives somebody what he or she wants makes friends.

By the first half of the verse the Buddha answers that the twofold wealth can be attained through three factors: Following the practice that is in harmony with the place and time, leading to wealth, having mental energy

and having physical energy. By the third foot of the verse, the third question is answered. By the fourth foot, the fourth question is answered.

Herein, the way worldly wealth is attained through suitable practice, mental energy and physical energy may be noted from the well-known Birth Story about the Little Merchant (*Cūḷaka-seṭṭhi-jātaka*, Ja 4) which tells of a man who becomes rich, gaining 200,000 within four months beginning with a dead rat as his starting capital.

With reference to the attainment of spiritual wealth, it should be understood from the story of Ven. Mahā Tissa. Explanation: The aged elder Mahā Tissa of Ceylon once decided to live only using the three postures of sitting, standing and walking, and he actually did so, fulfilling his duties. Whenever he felt slothful and drowsy, he soaked a head-pad made of straw, normally used as a cushion for things carried on the head, with water, put it on his head and went into the water to the depth of his throat to remove his sloth and drowsiness (*thīna-middha*). After twelve years, he became an Arahat.

Having answered thus the first four questions in the way in which the worldly and spiritual things for the layman and the monk are mixed, the Buddha now wished to answer the fifth question. Accordingly he uttered the following verse (Snp 190):

Yassete caturo dhammā, saddhassa gharam-esino,
saccaṁ Dhammo dhiti cāgo, sa ve pecca na socati.

He who is faithful and seeking the benefit of one's home, in whom exist four things: Truthfulness (*sacca*), wisdom (*dhamma*), physical and mental energy (*dhiti*) and generosity (*cāga*), indeed does not worry about his departure to the next existence.

After answering the fifth question thus, the Buddha wished to urge the Yakkha Āḷavaka and uttered this verse (Snp 191): [783]

Iṅgha aññe pi pucchassu, puthū samaṇa-brāhmaṇe,
yadi saccā damā cāgā, khantyā bhiyyodha vijjati.

Friend Yakkha by the name of Āḷavaka! In this world, if there were any virtue better than the twofold truthfulness (*sacca*) for the attainment of good reputation, if there were any virtue that is better than taming (*dāma*) through prudence, which is part of wise obedience for the attainment of worldly and spiritual wisdom; if there were any virtue that is better than

> giving (*cāga*) for the making of friends; if there was any virtue better than forbearance (*khantī*) in the form of physical and mental energy for the making of worldly and spiritual wealth; if there was any virtue better than these four: truthfulness, taming, giving and forbearance, for the elimination of grief hereafter; or if you think there are any virtues better than these, I pray you, for your satisfaction ask many others, those monks and Brahmins, such as Purāṇa Kassapa, who falsely claim that they are omniscient Buddhas.

When the Buddha uttered thus, the Yakkha Āḷavaka said to the Buddha in verse, the first half of which explains that he had already removed his doubt through his attainment of the path-knowledge, the doubt as to whether he should ask Purāṇa Kassapa and so on, and the second half explains the reason for his having no intention to ask. Āḷavaka then uttered this verse (Snp 192):

> *Kathaṁ nu dāni puccheyyaṁ, puthū samaṇa-brāhmaṇe,*
> *yohaṁ ajja pajānāmi, yo attho samparāyiko.*

> Exalted Buddha! Now that I, your disciple, Āḷavaka by name, have cut off all doubts by means of the sword of the knowledge of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga-ñāṇa*), why should I ask many monks and Brahmins who unrighteously claim that they are omniscient Buddhas? Indeed I should not ask them as I am free from the endangering defilement of doubt (*vicikicchā*). As you have instructed me, I, who am your disciple, Āḷavaka by name, come to know personally and clearly, on this day, that instruction of yours, regarding the attainment of wisdom, the attainment of wealth, the attainment of fame and the making of friends, and regarding the virtues that do not lead to grief hereafter. Therefore, I need not ask other persons for my satisfaction.

Now the Yakkha Āḷavaka uttered again the following verse in order to show that the knowledge he had acquired had its source in the Buddha (Snp 193):

> *Atthāya vata me Buddho, vāsāyāḷavim-āgamā,*
> *yohaṁ ajja pajānāmi, yattha dinnaṁ mahapphalaṁ.*

> The Fortunate One, lord of the world and omniscient Buddha, has out of compassion come to the city of Āḷavī to spend the whole Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period for the development of my worldly and spiritual welfare. The gift faithfully given by the omniscient Buddha is of great fruit

ranging from the bliss of humans and Devas to the bliss of Nibbāna. That omniscient Buddha, who deserves the best gift, I have come to know now thoroughly.

Having told in verse that he had now acquired the means to develop his welfare, Āḷavaka now uttered again this verse in order to express his wish properly to do for the welfare of others (Snp 194):

So ahaṁ vicarissāmi, [784] gāmā gāmaṁ purā puraṁ,
namassamāno Sambuddhaṁ, Dhammassa ca Sudhammataṁ

Exalted Buddha whose sun of glory shines bright I, your disciple Āḷavaka, from today onwards till the day I met with the master, with my joined hands raised to my head in adoration, will wander from one celestial abode to another, from one celestial city to another, proclaiming aloud the countless attributes of the Buddha, the Lord of the Three Worlds, and the attribute of the Dhamma of the ten constituents: The four paths (*magga*), the four fruitions (*phala*), Nibbāna and the entire collection of your teachings, containing the means of emancipation from the round of suffering, and the attributes of the Saṅgha, the eight classes of its members, the noble ones who carefully follow the various admirable practices of the threefold training.

The Presentation of Prince Āḷavaka

It was the time when the following four events simultaneously took place:

1. The end of Āḷavaka's verse.
2. The coming of daybreak.
3. The reception of Āḷavaka's verse with wild acclaim.
4. The sending of Prince Āḷavaka to the Yakkha's mansion.

When the king's men from the city of Āḷavī heard the tumultuous acclaim, they thought to themselves: "Such a roar could not have occurred about any personage other than the Fortunate One. Could it be that the Fortunate One has come?" On seeing the bodily-radiance of the Buddha, they no longer remained outside the mansion but entered it without fear. There, in the Yakkha's mansion, did they encounter the Buddha seated and the Yakkha Āḷavaka standing with his hands joined in adoration.

After seeing thus, the king's men bravely handed the little Prince Āḷavaka over to the Yakkha Āḷavaka, saying: "Great Yakkha, we have brought this Prince Āḷavaka to give you in sacrifice. You may eat him if you wish. Do as you please." As Āḷavaka had already become a noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) at that time and especially as he was told so in front of the Buddha, he felt greatly ashamed.

Then Āḷavaka tenderly took over the little prince with his two hands and offered him to the Buddha, saying: "Exalted Buddha, I offer this royal child to you. I give you the boy in generosity. Buddhas are kind and protective to sentient beings for their welfare. Exalted Buddha, please receive him, this Prince Āḷavaka, for his welfare and happiness." He also uttered this verse (SnpA, PTS 1.240):

> *Imaṁ kumāraṁ sata-puñña-lakkhaṇaṁ,*
> *sabbaṅgupetaṁ paripuṇṇa-byañjanaṁ,*
> *udagga-citto sumano dadāmi te,*
> *paṭiggaha loka-hitāya cakkhumā.*
>
> Exalted Buddha of the fivefold eye! Being elated and happy I, Āḷavaka by name, faithfully give you the Prince named Āḷavaka, who possesses more than 100 marks owing to his past meritorious deeds, who also has all the big and small limbs and a developed physical appearance. Buddhas look after the sentient beings for their benefit. Kindly accept the prince for his own welfare.

The Buddha accepted the little Prince Āḷavaka with his hands. While he was thus accepting, in order to give his blessing for the benefit of long life and good health of the Yakkha and the prince, the Buddha uttered three verses, each omitting a line to be filled up by somebody else. That blank in each verse was filled up three times as the fourth line by the Yakkha in order to establish the little prince in the three refuges. The incomplete verses [785] which were uttered by the Buddha and completed by the Yakkha are as follows:

Buddha:

> *Dīghāyuko hotu ayaṁ kumāro,*
> *tuvañ-ca Yakkha sukhito bhavāhi,*
> *abyādhitā loka-hitāya tiṭṭhatha.*

May this Prince Āḷavaka live long! Yakkha Āḷavaka, may you also have physical and mental happiness! May you both remain long, being free from the 96 diseases, for the welfare of many!

Yakkha:

Ayaṁ kumāro saraṇam-upeti Buddhaṁ.

Exalted Buddha! This Prince Āḷavaka takes refuge in the Fortunate One, lord of the world, and omniscient Buddha.

Buddha:

Dīghāyuko hotu ayaṁ kumāro,
tuvañ-ca Yakkha sukhito bhavāhi,
abyādhitā loka-hitāya tiṭṭhatha.

May this Prince Āḷavaka live long! Yakkha Āḷavaka, may you also have physical and mental happiness! May you both remain long, being free from the 96 diseases, for the welfare of many!

Yakkha:

Ayaṁ kumāro saraṇam-upeti Dhammaṁ.

Exalted Buddha! This Prince Āḷavaka takes refuge in the Dhamma consisting of the ten features, such as the four paths, four fruitions, Nibbāna and the entire body of teaching.

Buddha:

Dīghāyuko hotu ayaṁ kumāro,
tuvañ-ca Yakkha sukhito bhavāhi,
abyādhitā lokahitāya tiṭṭhatha.

May this Prince Āḷavaka live long! Yakkha Āḷavaka, may you also have physical and mental happiness! May you both remain long, being free from the 96 diseases, for the welfare of many!

Yakkha:

Ayaṁ kumāro saraṇam-upeti Saṅghaṁ.

Exalted Buddha! This Prince Āḷavaka takes refuge in the Saṅgha of the noble ones in the ultimate and noble sense of the word (*paramattha-ariya*).

Then the Buddha entrusted the little prince to the king's officers, ordering: "Bring up this royal child and later return him to me!"

The original name of the prince was Āḷavaka. As has been said, the day the Yakkha was tamed, the prince was passed from the hands of the royal officers to the Yakkha's hands, from the Yakkha's hands to the Buddha's hands, from the Buddha's hands back to the hands of the officers. Hence he was named Hatthaka Āḷavaka – Āḷavaka who has been handed over from person to person.

When the officers returned, carrying the little prince, they were seen by farmers and foresters and other people, who asked timidly: "How is it? Is it that the Yakkha does not want to devour the prince because he is too small?" – "Friends, do not be afraid," replied the officers, "The Fortunate One has made him free from danger," and they related the whole story to them.

Then the entire city of Āḷavī cheered, shouting: Well done! Well done! The people faced in the direction where the Yakkha Āḷavaka was and roared: "The Fortunate One has caused safety! The Fortunate One has caused safety!" When it was time for the Buddha to go to town for alms food, the Yakkha went along, carrying the Buddha's bowl and robe half the way down to see the Buddha off, and then he returned to his mansion. [786]

After the Buddha went on alms round in the city of Āḷavī and when he had finished his meal, he sat on the splendid seat which was prepared under a tree in quietude at the city gate. Then King Āḷavaka came with his hosts of ministers, troops and they were joined by the citizens of Āḷavī who did obeisance to the Buddha and sat down around him and asked: "Exalted Buddha, how could you tame such a wild and cruel Yakkha?"

The Buddha then delivered the aforesaid Discourse to Āḷavaka (*Āḷavaka-sutta*, Snp 1.10) in twelve verses in which he started his narration with the attack made by the Yakkha and related in detail: "In this manner did he rain down nine kinds of weapons, in this manner did he exhibit such horrible things, in this manner did he put questions to me, in this manner did I answer his questions." By the end of the discourse 84,000 sentient beings realized the four truths and found emancipation.

Now King Āḷavaka and the citizens of Āḷavī built a shrine for the Yakkha Āḷavaka, near the original shrine of the Deva Vessavaṇa. And they regularly

made offerings to the Yakkha of things worthy of divine beings (*devatā-bāli*) such as flowers, perfumes, etc.

When the little prince grew up into an intelligent youth, they sent him to the Buddha with these words: "You, prince, have secured a new lease of life because of the Fortunate One. Go and serve the master. Serve the Saṅgha of monks as well!" The prince approached the Buddha and the monks and rendered his service to them, practised the Dhamma, and was established in the Non-returning fruition (*Anāgāmi-phala*). He also learned all the teachings of the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*) and acquired a retinue of 500 lay devotees for the Buddha. At a later time the Buddha held a convocation where the devout layman and Non-returner Prince Hatthaka Āḷavaka was placed foremost among those who lavishly showered upon their audience the four bases of sympathy (*saṅgaha-vatthu*). [787]

> [For more about Hatthaka Āḷavaka see chapter 45a, where his full story is related.]

34a: The 17th Rains Retreat (Beauty)

After taming and converting the Yakkha Āḷavaka while observing the 16th Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at Āḷavī city, the Buddha exhorted and taught those beings who were worthy of his teaching. When the Rains Retreat came to an end, he journeyed from the city of Āḷavī and eventually reached the city of Rājagaha and he stayed at the Veḷuvana monastery in that city to keep the 17th Rains Retreat.

Sirimā the Courtesan

Here is a brief account of Sirimā the courtesan, which should be known in advance: Merchants of Rājagaha who belonged to a trading guild, having personally witnessed the splendour of the city of Vesālī, which was due to the courtesan Ambapālī, told King Bimbisāra on their return to Rājagaha that a courtesan should be kept in their city too. When the king granted permission to do so, they appointed a very pretty woman, Sālavatī by name, a courtesan with appropriate ceremonial emblems who was duly recognized by the king. A fee of 100 coins was charged for those who wanted to enjoy her company for one night.

When the courtesan first gave birth to a son, the infant was abandoned on a road, but was picked up, adopted and named Jīvaka by Prince Abhaya. On coming of age, he went to Takkasilā and studied medicine under a prominent teacher till he became accomplished. He was, in fact, later to be famous as the physician Jīvaka, and his name is well-known even today.

Sālavatī's second child was a daughter. As a daughter could follow her mother's occupation as a courtesan, she was not abandoned, unlike in Jīvaka's case, but nurtured well. The name Sirimā was given to her. On her mother's death, Sirimā succeeded her and was recognized as city courtesan by the king. Those, who wished to seek pleasure with her for one night, had to pay 1,000 pieces of money. This is a brief account of the courtesan Siramā.

The Buddha's Instruction to Sirimā

> [The following is based on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 147-8) and their commentary.]

While the Buddha was keeping the 17th Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at Veḷuvana in Rājagaha, Sirimā was still a lady of great beauty. What was peculiar about her

was this: During one rainy season, she did something wrong against the Buddha's female lay devotee (*upāsikā*) Uttarā, who was daughter-in-law of the wealthy merchant, Puṇṇa, and who was a noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*). In order to beg Uttarā's pardon, she confessed to the Buddha who had finished his meal together with members of the Saṅgha at Uttarā's house. On that very day, after listening to the Buddha's discourse, given in appreciation of the meal, she attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) when the verse beginning with (Dhp 223): *Akkodhena jine kodhaṁ*, "through kindness one should overcome anger," uttered by the Buddha came to a close.

> This is just an abridgment. A detailed account will be given when we come to the section on Nandamātā Uttarā in the chronicle about the female lay devotees, chapter 45b.

The day after her attainment of Stream-entry, the courtesan Sirimā invited the Saṅgha with the Buddha at its head for alms and gave an alms giving on a grand scale. From that day onwards, she undertook repeated (*nibaddha*) giving of alms food to a group of eight monastics. Beginning from the first day of her invitation, the eight monastics went in their turn to Sirimā's place constantly for food. Speaking respectfully, Sirimā said: "Please accept butter, venerable sirs! Please accept milk, venerable sirs!" and she offered alms by putting her supplies to the brim of the bowls of the eight monks who came in turn. The food received by a monk from Sirimā's house was sufficient for three or four monks. Sirimā spent sixteen coins each day for offering food.

One day, one of the eight monks went to Sirimā's place as it was his turn, had his meal [788] there and went to another monastery that was more than three leagues away from Rājagaha. One evening, while the visiting monk was sitting at the place reserved for waiting upon the great elder of the monastery, his fellow monks, asked him in their speech of welcome (*paṭisanthāra*): "Friend, where did you have your meal and come over here from?" The visiting monk replied: "Friends, I came after having the meal which is the permanent offering made to eight monks by Sirimā." Again the monks inquired: "Friend, did Sirimā make her offering attractive and give it to you?" – "Friend, I am not able to praise her food fully. She offered the food to us after preparing it in the best possible manner. The food received by one from her is sufficient for three or four to enjoy. It is particularly fortunate for one to see her beauty rather than to see her offering. That woman, Sirimā, is indeed one endowed with such and

such signs of beauty and fairness of limbs, big and small!" Thus the visiting monk replied, extolling Sirimā's qualities.

Then one of the monks, after hearing the words in praise of Sirima's qualities, fell in love with her, even without actual seeing her. Thinking: "I should go and see her," he told the visiting monk his years of standing as a monastic and asked about the order of monks who were presently due to be at Sirimā's house. "Friend," replied the visiting monk, "if you go now you will be one of those at Sirimā's place tomorrow and receive the food for the eight (*aṭṭhaka-bhatta*) monastics." Hearing the reply, the monk set out at that very moment, taking his bowl and robe. Though he could not reach Rājagaha that night, he made a great effort to continue his journey, and he arrived in Rājagaha at dawn. When he entered the lot-drawing booth and stood there, the lot came to him, and he joined the group to receive the food for the eight monastics at Sirimā's residence.

But Sirimā had been inflicted with a fatal disease since the previous day when the former monk left after having the meal offered by her. Therefore she had to take off her ornaments that she usually put on and lay down on her couch. As her female servants saw the eight monks coming according to their lot, they reported to Sirimā. But she was unable to give seats and treat them personally by taking the bowls with her own hands as in the previous days. So she asked her maids, while lying: "Take the bowls from the monks, women. Give them seats and offer the rice-gruel first. Then offer cakes and, when meal time comes fill the bowls with food and give them to the monks."

"Yes, madam," said the servants, and after ushering the monks into the house, they gave them rice-gruel first. Then they offered cakes. At meal time, they made the bowls full with cooked rice and other foods. When they told her of what they had done, Sirimā said to them: "Women, carry me to see the venerable ones, I would like to pay my respect to them." When they carried her to the monks, she did obeisance to the monks respectfully with her body trembling as she could not remain steady.

The monk, who had became amorous with Sirimā without even seeing her previously, now gazed upon her and thought: "This Sirimā looks still beautiful despite her illness. How great her beauty would have been when she was in good health and adorned with all ornaments." Then there arose in his person wild lustful passions as though they had accumulated for many millions of years. The

monk became unconscious of anything else and could not eat his meal. Taking the bowl, he went back to the monastery, covered the bowl and put it down in a certain place. Then he spread out a robe on which he lay down. No companion monk could persuade him to eat. He starved himself by entirely cutting off food.

That evening Sirimā died. King Bimbisāra had the news sent to the Buddha, saying: "Exalted Buddha! Sirimā, the younger sister of the physician Jīvaka is dead." On hearing the news the Buddha had his message sent back to the king, asking him: "Do not cremate the remains of Sirimā yet. Place her body on its back at the cemetery and guard it against crows, dogs, foxes, etc," The king did as he was instructed by the Buddha.

In this way, three days passed and on the fourth day, Sirimā's body became swollen. Worms came out profusely from the nine openings of the body. The entire frame burst out and was bloated like a boiling-pot. King Bimbisāra sent the drummers all over the city of Rājagaha to announce his orders: "All citizens, except children, who are to look after their houses, must come to the cemetery to see the remains of Sirimā. Those who fail to do so [789] will be punished with a fine of eight coins each." He also sent an invitation to the Buddha to come and observe Sirimā's body.

The Buddha then asked the monks: "Let us go and see Sirimā's body!" The young passionate monk would not follow the advice of others but starved himself, and remained lying down. The food kept in the bowl four days ago had now gone stale. The bowl also had become filthy. Then a friendly monk told the young monastic: "Friend, the Buddha is about to go and see Sirimā's body." Though he was oppressed severely by hunger, the young monk got up as soon as he heard the name Sirimā. "What do you say, friend?" he asked. When the friend replied: "The Buddha, friend, is going to see Sirimā. Are you coming along?" Answering: "Yes, I am," he threw away the stale food, washed the bowl, put it in the bag and went along with other monks.

Surrounded by monks, the Buddha stood on one side at the cemetery. There were also groups of nuns, members of the royalty and male and female lay devotees, standing on other sides. When all had gathered, the Buddha asked the king: "Great King, who was this woman?" – "Exalted Buddha, she was a young woman named Sirimā, sister of the physician Jīvaka," answered the king. "Was she Sirimā, Great King?" the Buddha asked again. When the king affirmed it,

the Buddha said: "Great King, in that case, if she was Jīvaka's sister, have an announcement made by beating the drum that: 'Those who desire Sirimā may take her on the payment of 1,000 pieces of money.' "

The king did as instructed by the Buddha. But there was no one who would say even "Hey!" or "Ho!" So the king informed the Buddha that: "Nobody would like to take her," the Buddha said: "Great King, if there is none to take her for 1,000 pieces of money then reduce the price," the king then had it announced that those who would like to take her by paying 500. Again none was found desirous of taking her by paying that amount of money. Again the price was reduced to 250, 200, 100, 50, 25, five, one coin, half a coin, one fourth of a coin, one sixteenth of a coin, just a liquorice seed. But nobody came out to take her body. Finally it was announced that the body might be taken for free, without making any payment at all. Still no one muttered even "Hey!" or "Ho!"

The king reported the matter to the Buddha, saying: "Exalted Buddha, there does not exist a single person who would take it even when free of charge!" the Buddha then spoke as follows: "You monks, my dear sons! Behold this woman Sirimā who had been dear to many. Formerly in this city of Rājagaha one could seek pleasure with her by paying as much as 1,000 pieces of money. Now nobody would like to take her even without paying anything at all! The beauty that was so highly valued has now come to destruction. Monks, through your eyes of wisdom observe this physical frame that is always intolerably suffering!" Then the Buddha uttered the following verse (Dhp 147):

> *Passa citta-kataṁ bimbaṁ, arukāyaṁ samussitaṁ,*
> *āturaṁ bahu-saṅkappaṁ, yassa natthi dhuvaṁ ṭhiti.*

My dear sons, monks! There is no such a thing as a nature of firmness or of steadfastness in this bodily frame, not even the slightest bit. The body which is made pleasant and exquisite with dress and ornaments, flowers and perfumes and other forms of cosmetics; which is composed of limbs big and small, beautiful and proportionate, giving a false impression of splendour, which can stand upright because of its 300 bones; which is constantly suffering and intolerable; which is wrongly thought of by many blind worldlings to be pleasant, befitting and fortunate as they know no truth and [790] have no intelligence, and which is unpleasant as the whole thing is disgustingly full of loathsomeness, trickling down from the sore-

like nine openings. With your penetrating eye, have a look at such a body, study repeatedly!

By the end of the discourse, 84,000 beings realized the four truths and attained emancipation, and the young monk who had loved Sirimā became established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

While the young monk was starving himself, Sirimā died and was reborn as Chief Queen to Suyāma Deva of the Yāma celestial abode. The Buddha, in the company of monks, took the young monk and went to watch the remains of Sirimā that was not cremated yet but kept by King Bimbisāra under the Buddha's instructions at the cemetery where dead bodies were thrown away. Similarly, the citizens as well as the king himself were present there.

There, at the cemetery, the people talked among themselves: "Friends, in the past it was hard to get your turn to see and enjoy her even by paying 1,000 pieces of money. But now no person would like to do so even for a liquorice seed."

In connection with the story of Sirimā, the account contained in the Discourse about Victory (*Vijaya-sutta*, Snp 1.11) and its commentary, will be included here, for it has so much appeal.

The celestial Queen Sirimā accompanied by 500 divine chariots came to the cemetery. To the monks and lay people who had assembled there at the cemetery, the Buddha delivered the Discourse about Victory (*Vijaya-sutta*) and to the young monk he uttered in his exhortation the verse beginning with: *Passa citta-kataṁ bimbaṁ*, "there is no such a thing as a nature of firmness or of steadfastness in this bodily frame," as preserved in the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 147).

The Discourse about Victory

The first verse spoken by the Buddha (Snp 195):

Caraṁ vā yadi vā tiṭṭhaṁ, nisinno uda vā sayaṁ,
samiñjeti pasāreti, esā kāyassa iñjanā.

Walking or standing; sitting or lying down; bending one's joints or stretching them; all these postures of walking, standing, sitting, lying down, stepping forward, stepping backward, bending and stretching are movements of the body.

By this verse is meant the following: In this body there is no person who walks, no person who stands, no person who stretches. In fact, one should:

1. Know that it is the mind that desires to walk, stand, sit or lie down.
2. Know that it is the mind that conditions the wind element that pervades the body and causes movement.
3. Know that when the wind element pervades the body new matter arises, and it is the matter that walks.
4. Know with intelligence that what walks is no person or self, but it is matter which does the walking.
5. Know with intelligence that what stands is no person or self, but it is matter which does the standing.
6. Know with intelligence that what sits is no person or self but it is matter which does the sitting.
7. Know with intelligence that what has lain down is no person or self, but it is matter which does the lying down. [791]
8. Know with intelligence that what bends is no person or self, but it is matter which does the bending.
9. Know with intelligence that what stretches in and out is no person or self, but it is matter that does the stretching.

In accordance with the above lines:

1. When the mind desires to walk, the wind element, conditioned by the mind pervades the body. Because of the pervasion of the wind element, there appears the bodily gesture of striding in the desired direction. That is to say, particular forms of matter come into being in succession by the gesture of striding towards another desired place. Because of the striding gesture of these successive forms of matter, such a gesture is called “going” in worldly parlance.

2. Similarly, when the mind desires to stand, the wind element, conditioned by the mind, pervades the body. Because of the pervasion of the wind element, there appears the vertically erection of the body. That is to say, particular forms of matter come into being in succession by vertical erection. Because of the vertical erection of these successive forms of matter in linking the upper part

and the lower part of the body, such a gesture is called "standing" in worldly parlance.

3. Similarly, when the mind desires to sit, the wind element, conditioned by the mind, pervades the body. Because of the pervasion of the wind element, there appears the bending gesture of the lower part and the erecting gesture of the upper part of the body. That is to say, particular forms of matter come into being in succession by the bending of the lower part and the erection of the upper part of the body. Because of the partly bending and partly erecting gesture of these successive forms of matter, such a gesture is called "sitting" in worldly parlance.

4. Similarly, when the mind desires to lie down, the wind element, conditioned by the mind, pervades the body. Because of the pervasion of the wind element, there appears the horizontally stretching gesture of the body. That is to say, particular forms of matter come into being in succession by the horizontally stretching gesture of the body. Because of the horizontally stretching of these successive forms of matter, such a gesture is called "lying down" in worldly parlance.

In the case of "bending" or "stretching" too, as the mind desires to bend or to stretch, the mind-conditioned wind element pervades the joints. Because of this pervasion of the wind element, the bending or the stretching gesture appears. That is to say particular forms of matter come into being in succession to form the bending or the stretching gesture. Because of the bending or the stretching gesture of these successive forms of matter, such a gesture is called "bending" or "stretching" in worldly parlance.

Therefore, all these gestures of walking, sitting, sleeping, bending or stretching belong to the body. That is to say, particular forms of matter come into being by their respective gestures. In this body there is no individuality, no entity, no soul that walks, stands, sits, lies down, bends or stretches. This body is devoid of any individual entity, any soul, that does the walking, the standing, the sitting, the lying down, the bending or the stretching, what is in reality is mind preceding the wind element (SnpA, PTS 1.247).

> *Citta-nānattam-āgamma, nānattaṁ hoti vāyuno,*
> *vāyu-nānattato nānā, hoti kāyassa iñjanā.*

> On account of the particular state of mind, the particular state of the wind element arises. On account of the particular state of the wind element, the particular state of the body's movement arises.

This is the ultimate sense of the verse. By this first verse the Buddha teaches the three characteristics: the characteristic of impermanence (*anicca-lakkhaṇa*), the characteristic of suffering (*dukkha-lakkhaṇa*) and the characteristic of non-self (*anatta-lakkhaṇa*).

The way he teaches is as follows: [792] When one remains long in any of the four postures of walking, standing, sitting and lying down, one becomes painful and uneasy. In order to dispel that pain and uneasiness, one changes one's posture.

> The characteristic of suffering is covered over by change in posture. In order to not let the characteristic of suffering appear, it is hidden by means of another posture. That is why the wise say: "The posture (*iriyāpatha*) covers the characteristic of suffering."

Thus by the three feet beginning with: *Caraṁ vā yadi vā tiṭṭhaṁ,* "whether walking or standing," the characteristic of suffering covered up by a change of posture is taught.

> Change of one posture to another is due to body-pain. The cause, which is body-pain, the characteristic of suffering, is known from the aforesaid effect which is change of posture.

In the same way, as there is no posture of standing, sitting, etc., while one walks, the characteristic of impermanence covered by continuity (*santati*) is taught by the Buddha who says: *Esā kāyassa iñjanā*, "all these postures of walking, standing, sitting, lying down, stepping forward, stepping backward, bending and stretching are movements of the body."

Further explanation: The uninterrupted arising of matter and mind is called continuity. Because of this continuity, which is the uninterrupted arising of matter and mind, the cessation and disappearance of matter and mind, that is, the characteristic of impermanence, is not seen. That is why the wise say: "Continuity covers the characteristic of impermanence." By his teaching: *Esā kāyassa iñjanā*, the Buddha means to say: "All these postures of walking, standing, sitting, lying down, stepping forwards, stepping backwards, bending and stretching are movements of the body."

In each posture, an aggregate of mind and matter, in harmony with the posture, arises uninterruptedly. With the change of each posture, the aggregate of mind and matter changes or disappears too. Therefore, it is understood that by the fourth and last line, the Buddha teaches the characteristic of impermanence covered by continuity.

As has been said above, in ultimate reality, it is because of the mind, which desires to walk, to stand, to sit or to lie down that the mind-conditioned wind element arises. Because the wind element pervades the body, particular forms of matter, such as the gesture of walking, of standing, of sitting or of lying down, arise. With reference to these gestures people say: "One walks," "One stands," "One sits," "One lies down," "One steps forward," "One steps backwards," "One bends," or "One stretches." In ultimate reality, however, this is the mere arising of particular forms of matter as they rise into being by certain combined causes in harmony. That is to say this is the mere arising of particular forms of matter by the gestures of walking, standing, etc., as motivated by the combination in harmony of the causes belonging to both the matter and the mind of the body. Those who teach soul theory (*atta-vāda*) have no profound knowledge of this, so they say: "The soul itself walks, stands, sits or lies down." On the contrary the Buddha declares that it is not the soul that does the walking, standing, sitting and lying down. *Esa kāyassa iñjanā,* "all these are but movements of the body appearing through their respective gestures, accomplished by a number of causes which harmoniously come together."

> The following account of the four masses is reproduced from the sub-commentary to the Enumeration of Phenonema (*Dhamma-saṅgaṇī*) and the sub-sub-commentary (*Anuṭīkā*).

Herein, there are four masses (*ghāna*):

1. Mass of continuity (*santati-ghāna*).
2. Mass of coherence (*samūha-ghāna*).
3. Mass of functions (*kicca-ghāna*).
4. Mass of sense objects (*ārammaṇa-ghāna*).

Of these four:

1. The arising of physical and mental elements by uniting, combining and cohering with one another so that they appear as a whole without any gap is the mass of continuity (*santati-ghāna*).

Herein, "without any gap" means the cessation of the preceding element [793] coincides with the arising of the following or, as soon as the preceding element ceases the following arises. This is said by the sub-commentary to be: *Purima-pacchimānaṁ nirantaratā*, "the absence of a gap between one element and the next." By arising thus without any gap, it seems that the arising elements are more powerful and overwhelming and the ceasing elements less manifest; so people then have a wrong impression that what we see now is what we saw previously. This is proved by the fact that when a burning stick is turned round and round, it is thought to be a ring of fire. This indeed is the mass of continuity.

2. The arising of mental elements, such as contact (*phassa*), and of physical elements, such as the earth element (*pathavī*), by uniting, combining and cohering with one another so that they all give the impression of their being one in reality is a mass of coherence. When mental and physical elements arise, they do so not as one natural quality (*sabhāva-satti*). On the mental side, there are at least eight elements, such as eye-consciousness (*cakkhu-viññāṇa*), and seven mental concomitants, dealing with all consciousness (*sabba-citta-sādhāraṇa-cetasika*); on the physical side too, there are at least eight elements, by which eight material units are referred to. Thus, at least eight natural qualities, whether mental or physical, give the impression that they are but one, by uniting, combining and cohering with one another; such is meant by a mass of coherence (*samūha-ghāna*). This indeed is the mass of coherence.

3. Elements belonging to a mental or physical unit arise, performing their respective functions. When they arise, it is difficult for those who have no knowledge of Abhidhamma to understand this is the function of contact (*phassa*), this is the function of sensation (*vedanā*), this is the function of perception (*saññā*), and so on. Likewise, it is difficult for them to understand this is the function of the earth element (*paṭhavī*), this is the function of the water element (*āpo*), this is the function of the wind element (*vāyo*), this is the function of the fire element (*tejo*)," and so on. Thus the functions of the elements, being difficult to grasp, make their appearance as a whole by uniting, combining and cohering with one another; such is called a mass of functions (*kicca-ghāna*). This indeed is the mass of functions.

4. Elements belonging to each mental unit collectively pay attention to elements belonging to each physical unit form a single object for one's attention by uniting, combining and cohering with one another, leading one to the impression that they are just one natural quality, in reality it is a mass of sense objects (*ārammaṇa-ghāna*). This indeed is the mass of sense objects.

In short, several physical and mental elements arise as a result of a cause (*paccayuppannā*); but it is hard to discern their differences in terms of time, nature, function and attention and thus they create the false impression that they are but one unit; they are called respectively mass of continuity (*santati-ghāna*), a mass of coherence (*samuha-ghāna*), a mass of functions (*kicca-ghāna*) and a mass of sense objects (*ārammaṇa-ghāna*).

In dealing with ultimate reality, the quality of an element is to be discerned. For instance, with regard to a chilli seed, the mind is to be focussed only on its taste. Only when the natural quality of an element is discerned with the eye of wisdom can the ultimate reality be penetrated. Only when the ultimate reality is penetrated, is the mass (*ghāna*) dissolved. Only when the mass is dissolved, is the knowledge of non-self (*anatta*) gained. If the natural quality is not discerned with the eye of wisdom, ultimate reality cannot be penetrated. If the ultimate reality is not penetrated, the mass is not dissolved. If the mass is not dissolved, the knowledge of non-self is not gained. That is why the wise say: "Mass (*ghāna*) covers up the characteristic of non-self (*anatta*)."

By the fourth foot of the first verse the Buddha reveals the characteristic of [794] non-self that is covered up by the masses, for he says there, *Esā kāyassa iñjanā*, "all these postures do not belong to a soul or an entity, but they are, in fact, just the movements of the physical and mental elements accomplished in their respective functions." Deep indeed is the teaching. It cannot be understood through the eye of ordinary wisdom.

Having thus taught by way of the three characteristics, the meditation subject of void or absence (*suññatā*) of permanence (*nicca*), happiness (*sukha*), and soul (*atta*), and in order to preach the two kinds of loathsomeness, that of the living (*saviññāṇaka-asubha*) and that of lifeless (*aviññāṇaka-asubha*), the Buddha uttered more verses (Snp 196):

> *Aṭṭhi-nahāru-saṁyutto, taca-maṁsāvalepano,*
> *chaviyā kāyo paṭicchanno, yathā-bhūtaṁ na dissati.*

This living body is composed of 300 bones, 900 tendons that bind the bones and 7,000 capillaries that help experience the tastes. It is plastered by the thick inner skin in white and 900 extremely stinking and disgusting lumps of flesh. This living body is covered by the thinner outer skin of different colours as the walls of a house are painted brown, etc; therefore the reality of loathsomeness is entirely indiscernible in true perspective to the fools who are blind for lack of wisdom.

> The nature of the body is said to be as follows: Just as in a house, beams, purlins, principal rafters and common rafters and other substantial parts are fastened and kept immovable by means of rattan stems, even so in the body the 360 substantial bones are fastened and kept immovable by means of the rattan-like 900 tendons. Just as walls of bamboo matting are plastered with cowdung and fine earth, even so the bones and the tendons are plastered by the 900 lumps of flesh. As the walls of the house are finished with cement, so the body is wrapped up by the thicker skin. The aforesaid bones, tendons, lumps of flesh and thicker skin have by nature a foul and loathsome smell. But, as the walls are painted in different colours, such as brown, yellow, green, red, etc., in order to make the house look beautiful, the bones, tendons, lumps of flesh and the thicker skin are covered by the paint-like outer, thin skin, which is flimsy like the wing of a fly, in brown, golden, red, or white colour. The skin is so flimsy that when it is taken off from the body and rolled into a ball, its size would be as small as a plum seed. Therefore those without the eye of wisdom cannot see its loathsomeness in its true state.

In order to preach that the variety of unpleasant internal organs must be seen by penetrating them with the eye of wisdom – the organs, very impure, foul smelling, disgusting and loathsome but which are not obvious to all people because they are thus enveloped by the thicker skin that is again covered by the coloured outer skin – the Buddha went on to utter these verses (Snp 197-198):

> *Anta-pūro udara-pūro, yakana-peḷassa vatthino,*
> *hadayassa papphāsassa, vakkassa pihakassa ca.*
> *Siṅghāṇi-kāya kheḷassa, sedassa ca medassa ca,*
> *lohitassa lasikāya, pittassa ca vasāya ca.* *[795]*

This living body is not filled with sandalwood perfume, etc. In fact, this body is filled with such things as intestines, newly eaten food, liver, urine, heart, a pair of lungs, a pair of kidneys and the spleen. This living body is

filled with the mucus of the nose, saliva, sweat, fat, blood, sinovic fluid, bile, and marrow.

Having taught thus, by these two verses that there is nothing in the body that is worth keeping with pleasure like pearls, rubies and so on and that this body is, in fact, full of impurities, the Buddha uttered the following two verses in order to reveal the internal impurities in contrast to the external appearance and in order to combine those already enumerated with those not enumerated yet (Snp 199-200):

Athassa navahi sotehi, asucī savati sabbadā,
akkhimhā akkhi-gūthako, kaṇṇamhā kaṇṇa-gūthako.
Siṅghāṇikā ca nāsato, mukhena vamatekadā,
pittaṁ semhañ-ca vamati, kāyamhā seda-jallikā.

Besides, from the nine sore openings of the living body ever uncontrollably flow at all times, day and night, filthy and loathsome elements. From the eyes flows an unclean secretion: from the ears flow the unclean wax. Impure mucus sometimes flows from the nose. Sometimes frothy food, when vomited, comes out through the mouth. Sometimes the bile as organ (*baddha*) and the bile as fluid (*abaddha*) and the phlegm come out frothy from the mouth. From the body, day and night, sweat, salt, moisture, dirt and other impurities come out at all times.

Herein since the flow of excrement from the opening of the rectum and that of urine are understood by many and since the Buddha wished to show his regard for the occasion, the individual and the audience concerned, he did not mention them explicitly and as he desired only to say that there were impurities that flow by other means as well, he summarized all in the expression: *Kāyamhā seda-jallikā*, "other impurities come out at all times."

By these two verses the Buddha gave a simile: Just as when rice is cooked, the impure rice water comes up with the scum and overflows the brim of the pot, even so when the food eaten is cooked by means of the digestive fire element generated by one's past deeds (*kammaja-tejo-dhātu*), impurities, such as secretion of the eyes, ears, etc., come up and overflow the body.

The head is recognized as the most sacred part of the body. Because of the sacredness, or sometimes through conceit, the head is not bowed in showing respect even to those worthy of respect. In order to show that the body was

impure and loathsome by the fact that even the head, as the most sacred part of the body, was devoid of essence and purity, the Buddha uttered this verse (Snp 201):

> *Athassa susiraṁ sīsaṁ, mattha-luṅgassa pūritaṁ,*
> *subhato naṁ maññati, bālo avijjāya purakkhato.*
>
> Besides, the hollow head of the living body is disgusting, it is filled with the brain. The fool, who is blind to reality through craving, conceit and false views because he is enveloped wrongly by ignorance, wrongly takes the body thus: [796] "Beautiful is my body indeed. Beautiful am I indeed. My beauty is permanent!"

Having thus taught the loathsomeness of the living, now, in order, to preach the loathsomeness when life is destroyed, in other words, having taught that even the body of the Universal Monarch is full of putridness, and that therefore even life filled with all kinds of luxury is also unpleasant, the Buddha uttered this verse (Snp 202):

> *Yadā ca so mato seti, uddhumāto vinīlako,*
> *apaviddho susānasmiṁ, anapekkhā honti ñātayo.*
>
> When the body is dead because of the absence of three factors: Life (*āyu*), or material and mental life (*jīvita*), body temperature (*usmā*) or the fire element generated by the past deeds (*kammaja-tejo*) and consciousness (*viññāṇa*) it becomes swollen like a leather bag filled with air, it turns black through loss of the original complexion and it lies in the coffin deserted at the cemetery. Then all relatives and friends have no regard for him thinking: "It is certain that the dead will not come to life again."
>
> In this verse, by "dead (*mato*)" is shown impermanence; by "lies in the coffin (*seti*)" is shown a lack of vitality. By both words, it is urged that the two kinds of conceit, the conceit due to living (*jīvita-māna*) and that due to strength (*bala-māna*), should be rejected.
>
> By "swollen (*uddhumāto*)" is shown the destruction of shape; by "turns black (*vinīlako*)" is shown the loss of the original complexion. By both words it is urged that the conceit due to beauty and that due to good shape should be rejected.
>
> By "deserted (*āpaviddho*)" is shown the total absence of what is to be taken back; by "at the cemetery (*susānasmiṁ*)" is shown the loathsomeness that

is so intolerable that the body is not worth keeping at home. By both words, it is urged that the grasping with the thought: "This is mine," and the impression that: "It is pleasant," should be rejected.

By the words "all the relatives and friends have no regard for it (*anapekkhā honti ñātayo*)," is shown that those who formerly adored the deceased no longer do so. By showing thus it is urged that the conceit due to having a large number of companions around (*parivāra-māna*) should be rejected. By this verse, the Buddha thus pointed out the lifeless body that has not disintegrated yet.

Now in order to point out the loathsomeness of the lifeless body that has disintegrated, the Buddha uttered this verse (Snp 203):

Khādanti naṁ suvānā ca, siṅgālā vakā kimī,
kākā gijjhā ca khādanti, ye caññe santi pāṇino.

Domestic dogs and jackals, wolves and worms, eat that discarded body at the cemetery; crows and vultures also eat it; other flesh eating creatures, such as leopards, tigers, eagles, kites and the like, also devour it.

In this way the Buddha taught the nature of this body by virtue of the voidness (*suññatā*) meditation through the first verse beginning with: *Caraṁ vā yadi vā tiṭṭhaṁ,* "whether walking or standing," by virtue of the loathsomeness of the living body through the six verses beginning with: *Aṭṭhi nahāru saṁyutto,* "his living body is composed of 300 bones," and by virtue of the loathsomeness of the lifeless body through the two verses [797] beginning with: *Yadā ca so mato seti*, "when the body is dead."

Furthermore, the Buddha revealed, thereby, the state of the fool who thought that the body was pleasant, for he was overcome by ignorance regarding the body that was really devoid of permanence (*nicca*), pleasantness (*subha*) and self (*atta*). By so doing, the Buddha disclosed the fact that the round of suffering (*vaṭṭa-dukkha*) indeed was led by ignorance (*avijjā*). Now, in order, to point out the state of the wise man regarding the body of such nature and the fact that the end of suffering (*vivaṭṭa*) was led by the three phases of thorough understanding (*pariññā*), the Buddha uttered these verses (Snp 204):

Sutvāna Buddha-vacanaṁ, bhikkhu paññāṇavā idha,
so kho naṁ parijānāti, yathā-bhūtañ-hi passati.

> In this Dispensation of the Buddha which consists of eight wonders, the monastic, who is a worldling (*puthujjana*), a learner (*sekkha*) or a meditator (*yogāvacara*), endowed with insight (*vipassanā*), having heard properly this discourse of the Buddha named the Discourse about Victory (*Vijaya-sutta*, Snp 1.11), sometimes called the Discourse on Disinterest in the Body (*Kāya-vicchandanika-sutta*) sees with the eye of insight the body in its true nature; he therefore discerns the body clearly through the three phases of understanding (*pariññā*): knowledge (*ñāta*), judgement (*tīraṇa*) and abandoning (*pahāna*).

The way of discernment of the body by the three phases of understanding (*pariññā*) is as follows: After inspecting carefully a variety of merchandise, a merchant considers: "If I buy it at this price my profit would be this much." Then only he buys the merchandise and sells it at a profit. In the same way, the worldling, learner or meditating monastic inspects his body with his eye of wisdom and comes to understand thoroughly, by understanding-knowledge (*ñāta-pariññā*): "Things that truly constitute the body are merely bones, sinews, etc. which are directly mentioned in the text and hair on the head, hair on the body, etc. which are not directly mentioned in the text." He then reflects and judges the body with the eye of insight and comes to understand by judgment (*tīraṇa-pariññā*): "The phenomena that occur in the body are only impermanent (*anicca*), unsatisfactory (*dukkha*), and non-self (*anatta*)." Finally, he arrives at the noble path (*ariya-magga*) and comes to understand by abandoning (*pahāna-pariññā*) and abandons his attachment to the body or his desire and passion for the body.

> Herein, because this body, which is visible to all, would not have been thoroughly understood through the three phases of understanding (*pariññā*) should there be no chance to listen to the Buddha's teaching, in spite of the body's visibility, because such thorough understanding is possible only when his teaching is heard, and in order to point out that there is also the way of understanding the characteristics of voidness (*suññata*), etc. through the three phases of understanding (*pariññā*) and also to point out that those who are outside the Buddha's Dispensation are unable to discern in this manner, the Buddha uttered: *Sutvāna Buddha-vacanaṁ idha*, "in this Dispensation of the Buddha."
>
> On account of the female monastic Ven. Nandā and on that of the monastic whose mind craved for the beauty of Sirimā, the Discourse about

> Victory (*Vijaya-sutta*) was delivered. Of the four assemblies, the assembly of monks ranks highest; it was only that very assembly of monks that was ever close to the Buddha. Anybody, be he a monk or a layman, who meditates on impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and selflessness (*anatta*), can be designated a monastic. In order to point out these things, the Buddha uses the term monastic, not because the three phases of understanding (*pariññā*) are confined to monastics. This import should also be noted in particular.

Now, in order to point out the way of seeing things as they really are in accordance with the words: *Yathā-bhūtañ-hi passati*, "he therefore discerns the body clearly," the Buddha uttered this verse (Snp 205): [798]

> *Yathā idaṁ tathā etaṁ, yathā etaṁ tathā idaṁ,*
> *ajjhattañ-ca bahiddhā ca, kāye chandaṁ virājaye.*

> Even as this living body full of loathsomeness walks, stands, sits and lies down, because it is not without the three factors of physical and mental life (*āyu*), the *kamma*-generated body heat (*usmā*) and consciousness (*viññāṇa*) so was the lifeless body of loathsomeness at the cemetery, which before its death could walk, stand, sit and lie down, as it was then not without those three factors.

Even as the dead, lifeless body is now unable to walk, stand, sit or lie down because of the cessation of those three factors, so will this body of mine be unable to walk, stand, sit or lie down because of the cessation of the very three factors.

Thus, the practising wise one who ponders and discerns the events of the body threatened by the danger of Saṁsāra should be able to uproot the attachment to, or the desire and passion for, the internal body as well as the external, by means of the fourfold path-knowledge, in the mode of abandoning by cutting off (*samuccheda-pahāna*).

> In this verse, by identifying oneself with the lifeless body one abandons the defilement of anger (*dosa-kilesa*) that would arise with regard to the external body as he ponders: *Yathā idaṁ tathā etaṁ,* "even as this living body of mine is, so was that lifeless body of loathsomeness in the past."
>
> By identifying the lifeless body with oneself, one abandons the defilement of passion (*rāga-kilesa*) that would arise in the internal body as he ponders:

Yathā etaṁ tathā idaṁ, "even as this lifeless body, so will be my living body in future."

As one knows, by one's wisdom, the manner of mutual identification of the two internal and external bodies, or of the two living and lifeless bodies, one abandons one's defilement of ignorance (*moha-kilesa*), i.e. ignorance of the nature of both bodies.

In this way, even at the earlier moment of the arising of insight (*vipassanā*) one knows things as they really are and removes the three roots of unwholesomeness, greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*). At the later moment of the arising of insight, through the four stages of the path, one can abandon all desire and passion, leaving no trace of them, in the mode of abandoning by cutting off (*samuccheda-pahāna*). This import is to be noted.

Having pointed out the level of learners (*sekkha-bhūmi*), the Buddha now desired to point out the level of those beyond learning (*asekkha-bhūmi*) and uttered this verse (Snp 206):

Chanda-rāga-viratto so, bhikkhu paññāṇavā idha,
ajjhagā amataṁ santiṁ, Nibbānaṁ padam-accutaṁ.

In this teaching which consists of eight wonders, or, with regard to this body, living or lifeless, within or without, the monastic, who has totally abandoned all craving and desire, who possess the path-wisdom of an Arahat, who has reached the fruition immediately after the path and become an Arahat, attained Nibbāna that is deathless or excellent like ambrosia, the cessation of all condioned things (*saṅkhāra*) or the characteristic of peace, the release from craving, the state absolutely free from the nature of falling, the goal that can be attained by path-wisdom.

By this verse, the Buddha meant to say that the one who practises in the manner mentioned previously, abandons craving and desire, or all moral defilements led by craving and desire, and secures the two elements of Nibbāna.

Having taught thus the loathsomeness meditation (*asubha-kammaṭṭhāna*) by means of the [799] living (*saviññaṇaka*) body and the lifeless (*aviññāṇaka*) body together with its culmination in the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna, the Buddha uttered again the two final verses in order to censure, by a brief discourse, the

unmindful living (*pamāda-vihāra*) that was dangerous to such greatly fruitful meditation (Snp 206-207):

> *Dvipādakoyaṁ asuci, duggandho parihārati,*
> *nānā-kuṇapa-paripūro, vissavanto tato tato.*
> *Etā-disena kāyena, yo maññe uṇṇam-etave,*
> *paraṁ vā avajāneyya, kim-aññatra adassanā.*

This human body, having two feet, which is full of impure, disgusting things and is foul-smelling, has to undergo daily maintenance such as through bathing, perfuming, etc. But despite such daily maintenance it is still filled with numerous kinds of filth, and from the nine openings and the pores on the body flow incessantly such disgusting things as saliva, secretion of the eye, sweat, mucus of the nose, wax of the ear, in spite of repeated attempts to cover them up by applying perfumes and wearing flowers.

> By the body, or because of the body, which is thus impure and full of disgusting things, the fool, whether male or female, may think, through craving, that: "This is my body!" Through conceit that: "This I am indeed!" Through wrong view, that: "My body is lasting!" which only enhances one's arrogance. On the other hand one may despise others for their lowly birth, name, clan and the like. In so exalting oneself and despising others what reason can be there other than not discerning the four truths in their true perspective. It is only due to one's ignorance of the four truths that one praises oneself and has contempt for others.

By the end of the discourse, 84,000 beings realised the four truths and were released. The divine Queen Sirimā attained the Non-returner fruition (*Anāgāmi-phala*). The monastic who was previously enamoured of Sirimā attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

This Discourse is called by three names: 1) The Discourse about Victory (*Vijaya-sutta*); 2) the Discourse on Disinterest in the Body (*Kāya-vicchandanika-sutta*); and 3) the Discourse to Nandā (*Nandā-sutta*). The reason is:

1. It leads to the victory (*vijaya*) over desire and passion (*chanda-rāga*) or craving and greed (*taṇhā-lobha*) for the body: hence it is called the Discourse about Victory (*Vijaya-sutta*).

2. It teaches the eradication of desire and passion, craving and greed, for the body; hence it is called the Discourse on Disinterest in the Body (*Kāya-vicchandanika-sutta*).

3. The story of the courtesan Sirimā was the introduction to the second delivery of the discourse. This very discourse was previously given to Ven. Janapadakalyāṇī Nandā in Sāvatthī; hence it is called the Discourse to Nandā (*Nandā-sutta*).

Explanation:

1. The Discourse about Victory (*Vijaya-sutta*) was first taught in connection with Ven. Janapadakalyāṇī in Sāvatthī.

2. The same discourse was taught with reference to the courtesan Sirimā in Rājagaha.

The account of the second teaching has been told. That of the first teaching was as follows:

Ven. Janapadakalyāṇī Nandā

While visiting the city of Kapilavatthu for the first time after becoming a Buddha, the Buddha exhorted the Sakyan Prince and ordained Prince Nanda and [800] others. Five years later when he granted permission for ordination of females as female monastics the three Sakyan princesses:

1. Nandā, sister of Ven. Ānanda.

2. Abhirūpanandā, daughter of the Sakyan Prince Khemaka.

3. Janapadakalyāṇī Nandā, fiance of Prince Nanda were also ordained.

At the time of their ordination, the Buddha was still staying in Sāvatthī. Of these three princesses, Abhirūpanandā was so-called because of her great beauty. Janapadakalyāṇī Nandā too saw nobody else comparable to her in beauty. Since both were highly conceited with their beautiful appearance, they never approached the Buddha nor did they want to see him either; for they thought: “The Buddha dispises beauty. In various ways, he points out the fault in good looks.”

"Why then did they become female monastics?" it may be asked. The answer is: "Because they had none to depend on in society; hence their becoming female monastics."

Explanation: The husband of the Sakyan Princess, Abhirūpanandā, died on the day they were married. Then the parents made her a nun against her will.

Janapadakalyāṇī became a nun because she had lost her hope to win back her fiance when the latter, as Ven. Nanda, became an Arahat. Then she thought: "My Lord, Prince Nanda, my mother Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī, and other relatives have joined the Saṅgha. It is indeed a misery to live without one's kinsmen in the world of householders," and finding no solace in living in an organised community of families. Both of their ordinations took place, but not out of faith (*saddhā*).

Knowing the maturity of wisdom of both, the Buddha gave an order to Ven. Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī that: "All female monastics are required to come in turn for receiving an exhortation." When their turn came, the elder nuns sent someone else on their behalf. This prompted the Buddha to issue another order: "Coming in person to me, in turn, is compulsory. Sending a representative is not permitted."

Thereafter, one day, Ven. Abhirūpanandā came to the Buddha to receive his exhortation. Then the Buddha stirred her mind by means of his created figure of a woman and by uttering the following verses of exhortation (Dhp 150):

> *Aṭṭhīnaṁ nagaraṁ kataṁ, maṁsa-lohita-lepanaṁ,*
> *yattha jarā ca maccu ca, māno makkho ca ohito.*

Dear daughter Abhirūpanandā! Just as a typical barn for storing crops is built by fixing timber, by binding it with rattan stems, and by plastering it with earth, even so the barn-like body has been built by the carpenter-like craving by fixing the 300 bones, by binding it with sinews, and by plastering it with 900 lumps of flesh and a measure (*pattha*) of blood. Deposited in it are old age, death, conceit and ingratitude (1st line = Nandātherīapadānaṁ, Thī 19a; 2nd line = Thg 394b):

> *Āturaṁ kuṇapaṁ pūtiṁ, passa nande samussayaṁ;*
> *Uggharantaṁ paggharantaṁ, bālānaṁ abhinanditaṁ.*

> Dear daughter Abhirūpanandā! Behold carefully with the eye of wisdom, the body which is constantly painful, impure, stale, having a flow of filth going upwards and downwards, that body the fools are highly fond of.

The second half of the verse in the Verses of the Elder Nuns (*Therī-gāthā*) reads (Thī 19b): [801]

> *Asubhāya cittaṁ bhāvehi, ekaggaṁ susamāhitaṁ.*

Which may be translated as:

> Develop your absorption (*jhāna*) consciousness on the loathsomeness of the living body, the consciousness that has one-pointedness by access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) and that is well concentrated by fixed concentration (*appana-samādhi*). The following verse reads (Thī 20):
>
> *Animittañ-ca bhāvehi, mānānusayam-ujjaha,*
> *tato mānābhisamayā, upasantā carissasi.*
>
> Dear daughter Abhirūpanandā! Develop incessantly your meditation on impermanence (*anicca-bhāvanā*), your meditation on suffering (*dukkha-bhāvanā*) and your meditation on non-self (*anatta-bhāvanā*) which are collectively designated as things having no sign of permanence (*animitta*). Uproot the impression of "I" that has latently come along in the Saṁsāra which has no beginning. By so doing in the mode of abandoning by cutting off (*samuccheda-pahāna*), dear daughter, you will live with all the heat of moral defilement quenched.

By giving his exhortation by these verses, as mentioned in the Verses of the Elder Nuns (*Therī-gāthā*), the Buddha established the elder Abhirūpanandā in the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) in due course.

One day, the citizens of Sāvatthī gave alms and observed the precepts in the morning. They also dressed themselves well and went to the Jetavana monastery, carrying unguents and flowers and other offerings to attend to the Buddha's discourse. When the discourse was over, they did obeisance to the Buddha and entered again into the city. The female monastics also returned to their living quarters after listening to the discourse.

In the city of Sāvatthī, the lay people, as well as the female monastics, spoke in praise of the master as follows: There is nobody who fails to have devotion on seeing the Buddha in the assembly of Devas and humans, who are particularly

attracted by four things: His body (*rūpa*), his voice (*ghosa*), his austerity (*lūkha*) and his Dhamma. To wit:

1. Those who are mainly attracted to body (*rūpappamāṇika*) become devoted to the Buddha when they see his splendid beauty with his major and minor signs and the radiance of light in six colours.

2. Those who are mainly attracted to his voice (*ghosappamāṇika*) become devoted to the Buddha when they hear his good reputation as a Bodhisatta from numerous Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) and his voice as a Buddha that has eight qualities.

3. Those who are attracted to austere use of the four requisites and scarcity of moral defilement (*lūkhappamāṇika*) become devoted to the Buddha when they know of his few wants of the four requisites and of his striving (*dukkara-cariyā*).

4. Those who are mainly attracted to such virtues as morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*) and other attributes (*dhammappamāṇika*) become devoted to the Buddha when they reflect on one of his five attributes, such as morality as an attribute (*sīla-guṇa*), mental concentration as an attribute (*samādhi-guṇa*), wisdom as an attribute (*paññā-guṇa*), emancipation as an attribute (*vimutti-guṇa*) and insight leading to emancipation as an attribute (*vimutti-ñāṇa-dassana*), which are all beyond compare.

In this way, words were spoken everywhere in praise of the Buddha, words that [802] incessantly overflow from their mouths.

> 1) Two thirds (66%) of beings are attracted to his body; 2) four-fifths (80%) are attracted to his fame and voice; 3) nine-tenths (90%) are attracted to his austere use of the four requisites and scarcity of moral defilement; 4) one in 100,000 is attracted to such virtues as morality, concentration and wisdom. However numerous beings are they all make four divisions if divided in this way.
>
> Of these four divisions of beings, those who fail to be devoted to the Buddha were very few, far more were those devoted. Explanation: 1) To those attracted to his body, there was no beauty more attractive than the Buddha's; 2) to those attracted to fame and voice, there was no fame and voice more attractive than the Buddha's; 3) to those attracted to his austere

> use of the four requisites and scarcity of moral defilement, there was no austerity than that of the Buddha who gave up fine clothes made in the country of Kāsi, gold vessels, the three golden palaces befitting the three seasons and replete with various sensual pleasures, but who put on rag-robes, used a lithic bowl, stayed at the foot of a tree for lodging, etc.; and 4) to those attracted to such virtues as morality, concentration and wisdom, there was no attribute more attractive in the whole world than the attributes of the Buddha such as morality, concentration, etc. In this way, the Buddha held in his grip the entire world of beings, so to speak, who formed the four categories (*catuppamāṇika*).[226]

When the Ven. Janapadakalyāṇī Nandā got back to her dwelling, she heard various words in praise of the Buddha's attributes, and it occurred to her: "These people are talking about the attributes of my brother the Buddha as though their mouths have no capacity to contain them all. If the Buddha were to speak ill of my beauty the whole day long how much could he do so? What if l go to the Buddha and pay homage to him and listen to his discourse without showing my person." Thus thinking she told her fellow female monastics: "I shall come along with you to listen to his discourse." The other female monastics were glad and went to the monastery taking along Ven. Nandā as they thought: "It took Ven. Nandā so long to approach the master! Surely, the master will discourse marvellously in various exquisite ways."

The Buddha foresaw the visit of the elder nun and created by his supernormal power the figure of a very pretty fifteen or sixteen year old maiden and made her stand fanning him in order to humble Ven. Rūpanandā's pride in her own beauty, just as a man removes a thorn with a thorn or a prick with a prick.

Together with other female monastics, Ven. Rūpanandā moved towards the Buddha and paid homage to him, after which she remained amidst her companions, watching the Buddha's splendour from the tip of his feet up to the top of the hair. Then seeing the lady standing fanning the Buddha at the side, as the Buddha had created it, Ven. Rūpanandā thought: "Oh, so fair is this maiden indeed!" And her thought led her to an extreme fondness of the created beauty

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[226] This explanation is based on the Abhidhamma and the commentary to the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*).

and a burning desire to have that very beauty herself as she lost pride in her own beauty.

Then the Buddha while discoursing changed the age of the created maiden to 20. A lady is at the height of her beauty indeed when she is sixteen. Beyond that age she is not so fair. Therefore when the age of the created maiden was changed, Ven. Rūpanandā saw with her own eyes the decrease of the lady's beauty, and her desire and passion (*chanda-rāga*) became less than before.

Thereafter, the Buddha increasingly changed the age of the created maiden step by step to that of a lady not being yet in labour, to that of a lady having given birth but once, to that of a middle-aged lady, to that of an aged lady and to that of an old one of 100 years, unsteady with a walking stick in her hand and with her body freckled all over. While Ven. Rūpanandā was watching her, the Buddha caused death to overcome the created old lady, her remains thereafter bloated and decomposed and had a disgustingly foul smell.

On seeing the decaying process of the created figure, Ven. Janapadakalyāṇī Rūpanandā reflected on it: "This process I am watching now, all of us beings are commonly subject to," and the perception of impermanence (*anicca-saññā*) arose in her; following which the perception of [803] suffering (*dukkha-saññā*) and the perception of non-self (*anatta-saññā*) also occurred to her. The three kinds of existences manifested to her, making her helpless like a blazing house.

Then the Buddha, coming to know that Ven. Nandā was engaged in meditation, uttered the following verses that were most appropriate to her (DhpA PTS 3.118):

> *Āturaṁ asuciṁ pūtiṁ, passa Nande samussayaṁ,*
> *uggharantaṁ paggharantaṁ, bālānaṁ abhipatthitaṁ.*
> *Yathā idaṁ tathā etaṁ, yathā etaṁ tathā idaṁ,*
> *dhātuto suññato passa, mā lokaṁ punar-āgami,*
> *bhave chandaṁ virājetvā, upasanto carissati.*

Dear daughter Nandā! Behold carefully with the eye of wisdom, the body which is constantly painful, impure, stale, having a flow of filth going upwards and downwards, that body only fools are highly fond of.

Dear daughter Nandā, as this internal body is subject to impermanence, suffering, etc., so is the external body. As that external body you have

> seen, discards all its various stages and comes to the state of being swollen, etc., so will this internal body of yours discard all its various stages and come to the state of being swollen, etc.
>
> With the eye of insight (*vipassanā*) see both the internal and external bodies as devoid of such elements as earth or self and things associated with self. Do not desire to come again to the world of the five aggregates of attachment. Eradicate in the mode of abandoning by cutting off (*samuccheda-pahāna*) your craving for the three existences of the sense-realm (*kāma*), form-realm (*rūpa*) and formless-realm (*arūpa*). If you have eradicated these, you will abide with all the heat of your moral defilements quenched.

At the end of the verse Ven. Janapadakalyāṇī Nandā was established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). Then did the Buddha give the Discourse about Victory (*Vijaya-sutta*) teaching in order to preach insight meditation (*vipassanā*) with the accompaniment of voidness (*suññatā*) so that Ven. Nandā might reach the higher paths and fruitions.

> The Buddha gave this Discourse about Victory (*Vijaya-sutta*) firstly, to Janapadakalyāṇī when he was in his fifth or sixth year after his Awakening; , and later, it was in his 17th year that he delivered it to the monk craving for Sirimā.

When the delivery of the discourse was over, Ven. Nandā was greatly stirred with fear, thinking: "Oh, it was so stupid of me! To this brother of mine, the Buddha, who taught me such a wondrous doctrine, paying much attention to me and so compassionately, I had failed to come and attend earlier!" Having feared thus she repeatedly reflected on the discourse and diligently practised voidness (*suññatā*) meditation, and accordingly, in two or three days' time, she became an Arahat.

34b: The 18th Year (Delaying)

The Weaver's Daughter

[The following is based on Dhp 174 and its commentary.]

Having emancipated a large number of deserving people according to their respective dispositions, beginning with the poor man of Āḷavī who searched for his lost bullock, the Buddha observed the eighteenth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) on a hill near Cāliya, administering the cool water of the Dhamma to those who sought to be emancipated.

At the close of the eighteenth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) on the Cāliya Hill, the Buddha journeyed again from place to place and arrived in Sāvatthī and stayed at Jetavana.

Three years prior to the Buddha's stay at Jetavana, at the end of the 18th Rains Retreat, the Buddha went to Āḷavī city and the citizens invited him and gave a great alms giving. After finishing the meal, the Buddha gave a Dhamma talk in appreciation of the people's alms giving. The talk which included such exhortations as follows: "Dear supporters, you men and women! Meditate on death thus: 'My life is not lasting; death will certainly occur to me. It is certain that I shall die. My life will end in death; life is not permanent, but death is!' The benefits of meditation on death are these: On seeing a snake, a man without a stick is frightened, like him, those who have not meditated on death, die making terrible sounds that are caused by fear. A man with a stick, however, is not frightened but remains calm at the sight of a snake, for he can overpower the snake and catch it by means of his stick and send it away. In the same way, those, who are accomplished in meditation on death, are not frightened at their last moment when death is drawing near but pass away without fear and courageously. Therefore, you should meditate on death as has been said above."

While other people were minding their own business after hearing the Buddha's talk, a sixteen-year old daughter of a weaver gave good heed to it thus: "Oh, the word of Buddhas is indeed wonderful! I should meditate on death!" So she engaged herself in that meditation day and night. From the city of Āḷavī, the Buddha returned to Jetavana. The girl for her part continuously meditated for three full years.

After three years, the Buddha, while sojourning now at Jetavana, surveyed the world of sentient beings one morning and saw that very daughter of a weaver in his vision. When he [806] made further investigation as to what might happen to her, he came to know as follows: "The girl has meditated on death for three long years since she heard my talk on it. Now I shall go to Āḷavī and ask her four questions. When she gives answers to them, I will cheer her on all four answers. Then I will utter the Dhamma-verse beginning with (Dhp 174): *Andha-bhūto ayaṁ loko*, 'this world is composed of numerous worldly people, who do not see.' At the end of the verse the girl will attain Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). On account of her, a multitude of people will also benefit."

Foreseeing this, the Buddha, in the company of 500 monks, left Jetavana for Āḷavī and arrived at the monastery, named Aggāḷava. Hearing the news of the Buddha's arrival, the people of Āḷavī went, in happy mood, to the Aggāḷava monastery and invited the Saṅgha with the Buddha as its head for a meal.

The weaver's daughter also learned of the Buddha's arrival and became joyous at the thought: "My spiritual father and teacher, the Buddha of the Gotama clan, whose beautiful face may be likened to a full moon, has arrived," and thought further as follows: "Three years ago I saw the golden-complexioned Buddha. Now I have another opportunity to view the Buddha's body in the brightness of gold and to listen to his sweet and nourishing talk on Dhamma."

At that time, the girl's father was about to go to the weaving shed; so he asked his daughter before he went: "Dear, I have fixed some person's fabric on the loom. It remains unfinished with only about a hand span left unwoven. I will finish it today. Wind the woof quickly and bring it to me."

The girl was now in a dilemma, thinking: "I am desirous of listening to the Fortunate One's teaching. Father has also urgently asked me to do something else. What should I do now? Should I listen to the Fortunate One's discourse first, or should I wind the woof and hand it to father first?" Then she decided thus: "If I fail to send the woof, father will hit me or beat me. Therefore only after winding the woof shall I hear the Dhamma." So sitting on a small stool she wound the woof.

The citizens of Āḷavī, after serving the Buddha with a meal, were holding the bowls of dedication water to hear the Buddha's teaching in appreciation of their good deeds. The Buddha, however, kept silent, for he pondered: "For the sake of

this girl, a weaver's daughter, I have travelled this journey of 30 leagues. The girl has not got a chance to hear me. Only when she does get a chance to listen to my talk, shall I give a discourse of appreciation."

> While the Buddha was remaining silent no one whosoever in the world of sentient beings dared to ask him to speak.

The girl wound the woof, put it in a basket, and, on her way to her father, she stood at the edge of the audience. The Buddha too looked at the girl, stretching his neck. From the way the Buddha glanced at her she knew: "The Fortunate One wants me to go closer to him, for while sitting amidst such a great assembly he looks directly at me."

> Herein it may be asked: "Why did the Buddha stretch his neck and look at her?" Answer: For it occurred to the Buddha thus: "If she goes to her father without listening to my discourse even at the edge of the assembly, she will die a worldling (*puthujjana*) and her destiny after her death will not be safe. But if she goes after coming to me and listening to my discourse her destiny will be a safe one, for she will attain Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) and will be reborn in a divine mansion in Tusita. Besides, there would be no escape for her from death on that very day. That was why the Buddha stretched out his neck and looked at the girl.

After taking the cue from the Buddha, and approaching the Buddha by passing through his six radiant lights, she paid homage and stood at a proper place. The following questions and answers between the Buddha and the girl then took place:

Buddha: "Where did you come from, young lady?"

Young lady: "I do not know, exalted Buddha."

Buddha: "Where are you going?" [807]

Young lady: "I do not know, exalted Buddha."

Buddha: "Do you not know, young lady?"

Young lady: "I do, exalted Buddha."

Buddha: "Do you know, young lady?"

Young lady: "I do not, exalted Buddha."

In this way the Buddha asked the girl four questions. Realising what was meant by the Buddha, the girl gave her answers which had a profound significance.

Those people, who did not understand the significance, reproached her, saying: "Behold this girl, friends! In her conversation with the Buddha she spoke at random, she spoke just nonsense. When asked: 'Where did you come from?' she should have answered: 'I came from the weaver's home,' when asked: 'Where are you going?' she should have answered: 'To the weaver's work-shop.' "

The Buddha, after silencing the people, asked the girl: "Young lady, when I asked you: 'Where did you come from?' Why did you say you do not know?"

Then the girl answered: "Exalted Buddha, you knew, of course, that I came from the weaver's home. Indeed, by: 'Where did you come from?' You meant to say from which existence did I come to this weaver's daughter's existence. I do not know from which existence I came, hence my answer: I do not know."

The Buddha then expressed his appreciation for the first time, saying, "Well said, well said! Young lady you have answered the question raised by me."

He asked another question: "Young lady, when I asked you: 'Where are you going?' Why did you say you did not know?"

The girl answered: "Exalted Buddha, you knew, of course, that I am going to the weaver's work-shop with the woof basket in my hand. Indeed, by asking: 'Where are you going?' You meant to say, to which existence I was going after this human existence. To which existence I am going I do not know. Hence my answer: 'I do not know.' "

The Buddha then expressed his appreciation for the second time, saying: "You have answered the question raised by me."

He asked still another question: "Young lady, when I asked you: 'Do you not know?' Why did you say you did?"

The girl answered: "Exalted Buddha, I know I am bound to die. Hence my answer: I know."

The Buddha then expressed his appreciation for the third time, saying: "You have answered the question raised by me."

He asked still another question: "Even then, young lady, when I asked you: 'Do you know?' Why did you say you do not?"

The girl answered: "Exalted Buddha, I do know that I am bound to die. I, however, do not know what time will I die, whether at night, during day time, in the morning, or when. Hence my answer: 'I do not know.' "

The Buddha then expressed his appreciation for the fourth time, saying: "You have answered the questions raised by me."

Then the Buddha addressed the audience: "You do not know even this much of the significance in the answers given by this girl. You reproach her, and that is all you can do. Verily those who lack the eye of wisdom are blind despite their organic eyes. Only those who have the eye of wisdom have sight." After that the Buddha spoke this Dhamma-verse (Dhp 174):

> *Andha-bhūto ayaṁ loko,* [808] *tanukettha vipassati,*
> *sakuṇo jālam-uttova, appo saggāya gacchati.*
>
> My virtuous audience! This world composed of numerous worldly people who do not see is like the blind, for they lack the eye of wisdom. In this multitude of countless worldly people only a few highly intelligent ones can reflect and discern the nature of the conditioned mind and matter in the light of the three characteristics. Just as the quails that escape from the bird-catcher's net are of inconsiderable number, even so only a small number of sharp, intelligent persons attain the abode of humans and Devas and the bliss of Nibbāna.

At the end of the teaching, the weaver's daughter was established in the state of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). The teaching was also beneficial to many other people.

The girl took the woof-basket and proceeded to her father, who was then dozing while sitting at the loom. When the daughter pushed and moved the basket casually it hit the end of the shuttle and dropped making a sound.

Her father, the weaver, woke up from dozing and pulled the shuttle by force of habit. Because of its excessive speedy motion the end of the shuttle struck the girl right in the chest. The girl died on the spot and was reborn in the Tusita Deva-abode.

When the weaver looked at his daughter, he saw her lying dead with her body stained with blood all over. The weaver was then filled with grief. Thereafter, he came to his senses and thought: "There is no one other than the Buddha who

can extinguish my grief." So thinking he went to the Buddha, most painfully weeping and after relating the story, said: "Exalted Buddha, kindly try to ease my lamentation."

The Buddha caused some relief to the weaver and said: "Do not be sad, devotee. The volume of the tears that you have shed on the occasions of your daughter's death in the past while in this Saṁsāra of unknown beginning is far greater than the volume of the waters of the four great oceans." Having said this, the Buddha delivered a discourse on the beginningless round of births and deaths (*anamataggiya-saṁsāra*, see SN 15). Now with little sorrow, the weaver begged the Buddha to ordain him, and after becoming a monastic he put effort in meditation and soon became an Arahat.

A Male Lay Devotee

[The following is based on Dhp 203 and its commentary.]

Having spent the seventeenth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at Veḷuvana in Rājagaha and converted those humans, Devas and Brahmas worthy of conversion through various discourses, including with the Discourse about Victory (*Vijaya-sutta*, Snp 1.10) as has been told above, the Buddha set out on a journey when the Rains Retreat was over and eventually arrived in Sāvatthī and took up residence at Jetavana.

Then one day, while staying in the fragrant chamber of Jetavana, he surveyed the world of beings at daybreak and saw a poor man of Āḷavī city. Knowing of his past merit that would lead him to the attainment of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*), the Buddha went to Āḷavī [804] in the company of 500 monks. The citizens of Āḷavī, as they were the Buddha's followers, possessing right belief, respectfully invited the monks headed by the Buddha to a feast.

When the poor man learned of the arrival of the Buddha, he felt happy thinking: "I will have a chance to listen to a discourse in his presence." Then an incident took place on the day the Buddha was about to enter the city. A bullock, belonging to the poor man, ran away as the rope tied to it broke.

The poor man then thought: "What shall I do? Shall I first search for the bullock or first listen to the discourse?" And he decided to search for the bullock first and listen to the Buddha's discourse later, without worry. So he left home in search of the lost bullock.

The Āḷavī citizens offered seats to the Saṅgha led by the Buddha and served them with food and made arrangements for the Buddha's discourse in appreciation of the meal. "For the poor man, I have taken this journey of 30 leagues," reflected the Buddha, "he has now entered the forest to look for the lost bullock. I shall give a Dhamma talk only when he comes." With that idea he remained silent.

It was late in the morning when the poor man found his bullock and put it into the herd. Then he thought: "At this hour I have no chance to give my service in any form. Yet, I will just pay my respects to the Buddha." Though he was severely oppressed by hunger, he did not think of going home but rushed to the Buddha, did obeisance to him and stood at an appropriate place.

When the man was standing thus, the Buddha asked the head worker at the alms giving: "Supporter, is there any surplus food after feeding the Saṅgha?" – "Yes, exalted Buddha," answered the head worker, "there is a full meal." The Buddha then ordered him to feed the poor man.

The head worker let the man sit at the very place where the Buddha requested and served him well with gruel, hard and soft food. Having eaten with relish, the man washed his mouth thoroughly.

> Nowhere else in the Three Baskets is the Buddha found to have himself asked somebody to feed a householder.

After eating the food with relish to his satisfaction, the poor man's mind became calm with one-pointedness. Then the Buddha taught him in serial order with talk on generosity (*dāna-kathā*), talk on morality (*sīla-kathā*), talk on celestial abodes (*sagga-kathā*), talk on the faults of sensual pleasures (*kammānaṁ ādinava-kathā*), talk on the advantages of renunciation (*nekkhamme ānisaṁsa-kathā*) and finally he taught the four truths. At the end of the teaching, having given appreciation of the alms giving, the Buddha rose and departed. The people saw him to the monastery and went back to Āḷavī.

While the monks were going along with their master, they sarcastically talked among themselves: "Friends, look at what the master did. Absolutely nowhere else did he ask to arrange for feeding a layman! But today, just on seeing a poor man, he himself has arranged to get the gruel and other foods set for him." The Buddha turned back and asked what they were talking about. When he knew what it was about, the Buddha said: "Yes, you are right! Monks, I took this

tedious journey of 30 leagues just because I saw his past merit had potential enough to lead him, the poor lay devotee, to the path and fruition of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*). He was very hungry. Since daybreak, he had been searching for his lost bullock by roaming about the forest region. If I had taught him without feeding him, he would not have been able to penetrate my teaching because of suffering from hunger. Having thus reflected, I asked for food for him in this manner. There is no ailment like hunger." Then he uttered the following verse (Dhp 203):

> *Jighacchā-paramā rogā, saṅkhāra-paramā dukhā,*
> *etaṁ ñatvā yathā-bhūtaṁ, Nibbānaṁ paramaṁ sukhaṁ.*

My dear sons and monks! Hunger surpasses all oppressing and painful [805] ailments. Amongst all ailments, hunger is the worst. By giving treatment but once, other ailments might be completely cured. Or they are allayed for days, for months or for years. The ailment of hunger, however, cannot be quenched by eating once. The treatment of it consists in feeding day after day. Therefore, it means that of all ailments hunger is the worst.

The conditioning factors (*saṅkhāra*) of the five aggregates surpass all suffering. As long as these factors exist, suffering will not come to an end. Therefore, it means that of all suffering the conditioning factors of the five aggregates are the worst.

The unconditioned element, the ultimate Nibbāna, is the highest happiness. Happiness that is felt (*vedayita-sukha*) and liked by worldly people is enjoyable only when it exists. When it reaches the moment of destruction, when it is destroyed and gone, there is neither comfort nor enjoyment. The peace of Nibbāna never has a destructive nature but it remains peaceful forever; hence it is the best of all happinesses. Knowing this as it really is, the wise man realizes the happiness of Nibbāna.

By the end of the discourse numerous beings attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) and other fruitions.

34c: The 19th Year (Conversions)

Having travelled to the city of Āḷavī and other places distributing the cool medicinal water of deathlessness among humans and Devas, the Buddha spent the 19th Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) also at the monastery on Cāliya Hill, doing the same among those beings who were worthy of release.

After spending the 19th Rains Retreat at Cāliya, the Buddha set out again at the end of the Rains Retreat and eventually arrived in Rājagaha and stayed at Veḷuvana.

The Hunter Kukkuṭamitta

[The following is based on Dhp 124 and its commentary.]

While the Buddha was staying at Veḷuvana, he gave a Dhamma talk beginning with: *Pāṇimhi ce vaṇo nassa*, "if there is no sore or injury in the palm of a hand," with reference to the family of Kukkuṭamitta, the hunter. The details of the story are as follows: The daughter of a wealthy man in Rājagaha, on coming of age, was made by her parents to live in comfort in a splendid chamber on the top floor of a seven-storeyed mansion. She was cared for by a maid-servant provided by her parents. One evening, while she was viewing the street through the window, she saw Kukkuṭamitta, the hunter, who earned his living by killing deer, for which he carried 500 snares and 500 stakes.

At [809] that time the hunter, who had killed 500 deer, was in a front seat of his cart driven by himself and fully loaded with deer-meat for sale. The girl fell in love with him and after handing her maid some presents, she sent her with these words: "Go, dear maid, give these presents to the hunter and try to get information about the time of his return."

The maid-servant went and gave the presents to the hunter and asked: "What time will you go home?" – "After selling the meat today," said the hunter, "I shall go home tomorrow early morning by such a such a gate." Having got the hunter's reply, the maid-servant returned and told her mistress about it.

The mistress then packed her clothings, ornaments, gold and silver that she should take with her, and putting on dirty garments early that morning, she carried a water-jar on her head and left her house as though she were going to the river-side. Reaching the place mentioned in the hunter's reply, she waited

for the hunter's coming. The hunter came out from the city driving his cart early that morning. The lady then followed the hunter's cart close behind.

On seeing the young lady, the hunter said: "Lady, I do not know whose daughter you are. Please do not follow me." – "You did not ask me to come," replied the lady, "I came on my own accord. Drive on in your cart quietly." The hunter repeated his words to prevent her from following him. Then the young lady said: "Lord, one should not bar the fortune that has come to oneself." Only then the naive hunter came to understand without any doubt the reason for her following him, he picked the young lady up on to the cart and drove away.

The parents of the young lady searched for their daughter everywhere and could not find her. At long last they concluded that she must have died and held a ceremony in memory of their daughter (*mataka-bhatta*). Because of her living together with the hunter, the lady gave birth to seven sons and she had them married on their coming of age.

The Liberation of the Hunter's Family

On surveying the world of sentient beings in the early morning one day, the Buddha saw the hunter Kukkuṭamitta (Chicken-friend) together with his seven sons and seven daughters-in-law who came into the view of his supernormal vision. When he investigated the reason, he discerned that the past merit of all these fifteen persons would lead them to the attainment of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*). Taking his bowl and robe, the Buddha went alone early that morning to the place where the snares were set up. That day not a single animal happened to be caught.

The Buddha then put his footprint near the hunter's snares and sat down in the shade of the bush in front of him. Carrying his bow and arrows, Kukkuṭamitta went early to that place and checked the snares, one after another; he found not a single deer was caught, and all he saw were the Buddha's footprints.

Then it occurred to him thus: "Who could have set the animals free from the snares and roamed about?" Having a grudge against the Buddha even before he saw him and while moving about, he saw the Buddha sitting under the bush in front of him. Thinking: "This then must be the one who had released my ensnared animals. I will kill him with an arrow," he bent the bow and pulled the string with all his might.

The Buddha permitted him to bend the bow and pull the string, but he did not permit him to release the arrow. The Buddha performed a miracle so that the hunter could do the bending of the bow and the pulling of the string but not the shooting. Not only was he unable to shoot the arrow, he was also helpless in unbending the bow. It appeared that his ribs were going to break, and the saliva flowed from his mouth. Looking very exhausted, he stood like a stone statue.

The seven sons went to the father's house and asked their mother during a conversation with her: "Father is taking so long. What would be the reason for his delay?" When their mother said: "Follow your father, dear sons," they went after their father, each holding [810] his bow and arrows. Seeing their father standing like a stone figure, and seeing the Buddha sitting in the shadow of the bush, they thought: "This man must be the enemy of our father." Everyone of them then tried to bend his bow and pull the string. On account of the Buddha's miraculous power, however, they all stood there like stone figures, just like their father.

Their mother then wondered: "What is the matter? My sons are also taking too much time!" With her seven daughters-in-law, she went after them and saw all eight persons: the father and his sons. When she looked around, wondering: "Who were these eight, the father and his sons, aiming at while so standing?" and she saw the Buddha, and with her both arms up she shouted aloud: "Do not destroy my father!"

Hearing the cry of his wife, Kukkuṭamitta the hunter thought: "Oh, I am ruined! This man is said to be my father-in-law. Oh, I have done a great misdeed!" The seven sons also thought: "This man is said to be our grandfather! We have made a great mistake!" Thereafter, under the impression that: "This man is my father-in-law!" the hunter cultivated loving-kindness towards the Buddha. So did the seven sons with the notion that: "This man is our grandfather!"

Then the mother of these seven sons, the daughter of a wealthy man said: "Discard your bows and do obeisance to my father." As he knew the eight men had become soft-minded, the Buddha let them put down their bows. He now withdrew his miraculous power that he had previously exercised in order to prevent them from laying down their bows. The eight people then did obeisance to the Buddha, saying: "Kindly forgive our wrong, exalted Buddha," and they took their seats in the proper place.

When they were thus seated the Buddha gave a series of talks to them, a family of sixteen members: Talk on generosity (*dāna-kathā*), talk on morality (*sīla-kathā*), talk on celestial abodes (*sagga-kathā*), talk on the faults of sensual pleasures (*kammānaṁ ādinava-kathā*) and talk on the advantages of renunciation (*nekkhamme ānisaṁsakathā*) in this order. At the end of the talk, Kukkuṭamitta the hunter and his seven sons and the seven daughters-in-law, were established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). Having thus helped them realise Stream-entry, the Buddha entered Rājagaha for alms and returned to the monastery in the afternoon.

The Buddha was then asked by Ven. Ānanda: "Where have you been, exalted Buddha?" – "I have been to the home of Kukkuṭamitta the hunter, my dear son Ānanda," was the answer. "Have you, exalted Buddha, made him one who refrains from the wrong-doing of taking life? Have you admonished and emancipated him?" – "Yes I have, dear Ānanda," the Buddha answered. "All of them, with Kukkuṭamitta as the fifteenth member, are now established in unwavering faith, absolutely free from doubts in the Three Treasures, and they have become people who refrain from the evil act of killing."

The monks interrupted them, saying: "Exalted Buddha, there is also the hunter's wife; was she not there?" – "Yes, she was," answered the Buddha. "Monks, that housewife has already become a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) while still living as a girl in her parent's home."

Then a discussion took place at a religious meeting in the Dhamma-hall (*Dhamma-sāla*), as follows: "Friends, Kukkuṭamitta's wife, a merchant's daughter, had attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) while still a young woman who was still living with her parents. Thereafter she followed the hunter to his home and had seven sons. Asked by her husband to bring the bow, the arrow, the spear, the stake, or the net, she would bring them to him. The hunter on his part would carry those weapons given by his Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) wife and would commit the evil deed of taking life day after day for a long time. How is it friends? Do those Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*), the noble ones, too commit such a crime?"

The Buddha came to the monk's meeting and asked: "What was the subject-matter of your discussion, monks, before I came here?" The monks answered:

"We were discussing this matter of Kukkuṭamitta's wife, the daughter of a merchant."

Thereupon the Buddha said: "Monks, the noble ones, Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*), never commit such a crime as killing. The hunter's wife brings him such weapons as bow and arrow because she was mindful of her duty, the duty that the wife must obey her husband's word. She had no [811] intention to make the hunter go to the forest with the weapons in his hand for the evil practice of taking-life; she had not the slightest idea of that sort.

For example, if there is no sore on the palm of the hand, one who uses that hand to hold poison cannot be harmed by the poison; similarly, to him who does not do any evil because he has no unwholesome intention, no bad result accrues to him though he may have fetched the weapon."

Having said thus, the Buddha spoke the following verse as a continuation of his utterance (Dhp 124):

> *Pāṇimhi ce vaṇo nāssa, hareyya pāṇinā visaṁ,*
> *nābbaṇaṁ visam-anveti, natthi pāpaṁ akubbato.*

Monastics, if there is no injury in the palm of a hand, poison cannot enter it. Therefore with the hand without any sore or injury, one is able to carry the poison safely. Similarly, to him who has not done a wrong thing because he has no unwholesome volition, there arises not the slightest act of wrongdoing just by bringing a bow and the like.

> As poison cannot hurt the hand free from a boil or a cut, so he who just passes over a weapon, such as a bow and an arrow, does not do evil as he has no wicked intention. That is to say, as no poison can affect the healthy hand, so no desire for doing evil can approach his stout heart.

By the end of the teaching, many attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) and other fruitions.

The Past Merit of Kukkuṭamitta's Family

At a later time, in the Dhamma-assembly, the monks were engaged in a conversation among themselves: "Friends, what was the past merit that caused the attainment of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*) of Kukkuṭamitta, the hunter, who had seven sons and seven daughters-in-law? Why was he born in a hunter's family?"

Thereupon the Buddha came and asked: “Monks, what were you taking about?” and getting the reply as to what they were talking about, the Buddha related the story of the hunter’s past merit as follows: “Monks, in times past, when people were holding a discussion on the construction of a huge shrine over Buddha Kassapa’s relics, they deliberated the question as to what should be used for fine earth and what for liquid.

Then they got an idea to use orpiment for fine earth and sesame oil for the liquid, and they all agreed to do so. The people had the orpiment powdered and mixed it with sesame oil and used it as cement plaster to hold the bricks together. The bricks that were laid inside the shrine were coated with gold. As for the layer of bricks outside the shrine, they laid bricks of gold. Each brick was worth 100,000.

When the people’s construction of the shrine was complete enough for enshrining the relics, a discussion took place as to who should be selected president, for a great deal of money was badly needed when enshrining the relic.

Then a country merchant, thinking: “I shall become president,” donated money amounting to 10 million to the enshrinement fund. On seeing the generosity of the country merchant, the people dispraised the town merchant, saying: “This town merchant accumulates wealth like white ants. He is not eligible to become chief of this occasion for constructing such a great relic-shrine. But the country merchant has generously donated 10 million and shall become president.”

On hearing what the people had said, the town merchant gave in generosity 20 million hoping to become president. [812] “Only I must be president of the enshrinement ceremony,” thought the country merchant and he gave away 30 million. In this way the donations made by both parties increased till the town merchant’s contribution became 80 million.

But the country merchant had only 90 million at his place. In the residence of the town merchant, however, there were 400 million. Therefore it occurred to the country merchant thus: “If I gave 90 million the merchant from the town would say that he would donate 100. Then as I cannot compete with him the state of my lacking any further wealth will be known to all.” He then said: “I will donate this much of money. I shall also take upon myself servitude to the shrine together with my seven sons, seven daughters-in-law and my wife.” So

saying he brought his family members and dedicated them and himself, sixteen persons in all, to the shrine.

"Acquisition of more funds is possible, that of dedicated human labour is not," said the people, "this country merchant has given up his seven sons and seven daughters-in-law and wife and himself to the shrine. Let him therefore become president of the enshrinement ceremony." Thus they all unanimously selected the country merchant as president.

In this way the sixteen family-members became slaves to the shrine. But the people agreed to set them free from servitude. The sixteen-member family however took care of the shrine till the end of their lives, and on their death were reborn in a celestial abode.

The sixteen persons enjoyed the blissful life in that abode during the whole the period between the lifetime of Buddha Kassapa and that of our Buddha (*Buddhantara-asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*). When the time of the Buddha emergence (*Buddhuppāda*) came as our Buddha Gotama appeared, the merchant's housewife passed away from the celestial abode and became a merchant's daughter in Rājagaha. While only a young girl she attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

The birth of a worldling, who has not discerned the four truths is burdensome, says the commentary. He is likely to be reborn into a lowly family despite the fact that this very life is his last (*pacchima-bhavika*), for he has not overcome the risk of falling into a lowly state. Therefore the Deva who had been the husband of the merchant's daughter, on his return to the human world, was reborn in a family of hunters. As soon as she saw the hunter, her former love (*taṇhā-pema*) revived. That was why the Buddha spoke the following verse (Ja 237):

> *Pubbe va sannivāsena, paccuppanna-hitena vā,*
> *evaṁ taṁ jāyate pemaṁ, uppalaṁ va yathodake.*
>
> Because of living together in love in the past and also because of benefiting one another at present, for these two reasons, love of two types, craving-love (*taṇhā-pema*) and friendliness-love (*mettā-pema*) arose. How? In the same way as lotuses and any other aquatic flowers thrive depending on the two factors of water and mud.

It was only because of her love in the past that she followed the hunter to his house. Their sons, from the celestial abode took conception in the womb of the merchant's daughter. The daughters-in-law were reborn in various families, and on coming of age, they all went over to the home of the hunter's family owing to their affection they had had in their past lives.

As the result of their services rendered together to the relic shrine dedicated to Buddha Kassapa the sixteen members of the hunter's family attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) in this Buddha's Dispensation.

Ānanda the Wealthy Merchant

[The following is based on Dhp 62 and its commentary.]

Having distributed the medicinal Dhamma-water of immortality among beings, including the family of the hunter Kukkuṭamitta, while staying at Veḷuvana, Rājagaha, from there the Buddha arrived at Sāvatthī and stayed at Jetavana. While staying there, he gave a discourse beginning with: *Puttā matthi dhanam-matthi*, "I have children, I have wealth," with reference to Ānanda the wealthy merchant and citizen of Sāvatthī.

The story in detail is as follows: [813] There was in Sāvatthī a wealthy merchant, Ānanda by name, whose wealth was worth 400 million, yet who was extremely stingy. The man had his relatives assembled fortnightly and gave advice to his son, Mūlasiri, amidst his kinsmen at three different times, saying thus: "Dear son, do not think that the 400 million is a great deal of wealth. What is in one's hand should not be given to another. Try to gain new wealth. He who spends one coin after another will certainly exhaust his wealth one day. Therefore, we advise (DhpA, PTS 2.26):

> *Añjanānaṁ khayaṁ disvā, upacikānañ-ca ācayaṁ,*
> *madhūnañ-ca samāhāraṁ, paṇḍito gharam-āvase.*
>
> Dear son, having observed the disappearance of a collyrium stone due to repeated rubbing, the arising of an anthill due to repeated gathering of earth by white ants, the development of a beehive due to repeated collection of the nectar of flowers by bees, a wise man should live exerting himself to keep his old wealth undiminished and to bring about new wealth.

Later on, the merchant Ānanda died without telling his son Mūlasiri about his five big jars of gold that he had buried, and being greedily attached to his wealth and dirtying himself with the taints of miserliness, upon his death he was conceived in the womb of a outcaste (*caṇḍāla*) woman in a village of 1,000 householders at the gate of the city of Sāvatthī. On learning of the merchant's death, King Kosala summoned the son, Mūlasiri, and appointed him as the successor to his father.

The 1,000 outcaste (*caṇḍāla*) households made their living by working collectively as daily labourers, and from the time of the conception of the miser Ānanda, the former rich man, they no longer had their wages, nor did they have food more than what was enough to live on. The labourers came to the conclusion, saying: "Now we hardly earn a small morsel of rice despite our hard work. There must be somebody evil and unfortunate among us." So they divided themselves into two groups, and the dividing process went on and on until there remained the isolated household of the miser's parents. In that situation, the family of Ānanda said: "The ominous one is in our household," and they expelled Ānanda's mother.

The mother had much difficulty in obtaining enough food as long as she was carrying the child in her womb, and she gave birth to a son in such a miserable way. The child's hands, legs, eyes, ears, nose and mouth were all displaced. With his body so deformed, he looked very ugly, like a little earth-bound demon. Despite all this, the mother did not have the heart to dispose of him. In fact, so great was the mother's love for her child who had developed in her womb, that she brought him up, even with great hardship. On the days when she took him to her work, she got nothing, and on the days she left him behind, she got her daily wage.

Later, when the son became big enough to roam about and look for food by himself, the outcaste mother thrust a small bowl into the boy's hand and said: "Dear son, on account of you we have suffered much. Now we are no longer able to look after you. In this city of Sāvatthī, there are readily cooked and reserved meals for destitutes, travellers and so on. Make your living by going where the food is and begging for it." And after saying this, she deserted him.

The boy roamed about the city, going from one house to another, and he arrived at the place where he had lived as Ānanda, the wealthy merchant. As he was

endowed with the ability to remember his former births (*jātissara-ñāṇa*), he boldly entered his own residence. He passed through the first, second and third gates with nobody noticing him or being aware of him. At the fourth gate, however, Mūlasiri's children saw him and cried out loud in fear.

Then Mūlasiri's servants beat him, saying: "You, luckless, ill-fated one!" They also took him out of the gate and put him on the garbage heap. At that moment, the Buddha, on his alms round accompanied by Ven. Ānanda, was at the scene. The Buddha looked at Ven. Ānanda and at his request narrated the past account and the present events of Ānanda, the wealthy merchant. [814]

Ven. Ānanda then summoned Mūlasiri. People also gathered around. The Buddha then addressed Mūlasiri: "Supporter Mūlasiri, do you know this boy?" – "I do not, exalted Buddha." – "This boy is your father Ānanda, the merchant," said the Buddha. When Mūlasiri did not believe it, the Buddha asked Ānanda: "Wealthy Ānanda, tell your son about the five big jars of gold you had buried." Mūlasiri become convinced after he had uncovered the five jars of gold, as mentioned by Ven. Ānanda. The merchant Mūlasiri then took refuge in the Buddha. Desiring to preach to Mūlasiri, the Buddha spoke this verse (Dhp 62):

> *Puttā matthi dhanam-matthi, iti bālo vihaññati,*
> *attā hi attano natthi, kuto puttā kuto dhanaṁ.*

I have children, I have wealth, thinking thus the fool is afflicted by craving for children (*putta-taṇhā*) and craving for wealth (*dhana-taṇhā*). In reality, however, one is not even one's own shelter from woes. How can children be one's shelter? How can wealth be one's shelter?

A fool, who considers himself to be the owner of his children and wealth, is troubled by craving for both. How? He is troubled by the notion: "My children have died," or "My children are dying" or "My children will die." The same happens in the case of wealth. In this way, he suffers in six ways: in three ways regarding children and in three ways regarding wealth. Since he has craving for children, he plans to feed his children by striving in many ways on land or in water, day or night, and thus he is full of woe. Since, he has craving for wealth, he plans to increase his riches by farming or trading, and suffered thereby.

It is impossible for a man, who is suffering, owing to craving for children and craving for wealth to lead himself to safety later on. When death approaches him, he is oppressed by fatal pains (*maraṇantika-vedanā*) like

> flames, his joints are broken and his bones separated. He shuts his blinking eyes to visualize his next life and then opens them to see his present life. He is thus miserable on his death-bed; formerly he looked after himself throughout his life, bathing two times a day and feeding three times a day, adorning himself with perfumes and flowers and other ornaments. But now, even as a true friend to himself, he is unable to release himself from misery. At such a later time, when he is so miserably dying, how can his children or his wealth come to his rescue. Indeed they simply have no ability to save him.
>
> As for the merchant, who had been reluctant to give somebody something, but who had piled up riches only for his son Mūlasiri, who on his death-bed in his previous life and when he was hungry, ill-treated by others and so miserable in the present life, which of these woes could his beloved children or his accumulated wealth remove? Indeed, neither could do so. What kind of happiness could they bring to him? Indeed, neither could bring happiness. Such is the import of the verse.

By the end of the discourse 84,000 beings realized the four truths and were released. This discourse was therefore beneficial to many.

34d: The 20th Rains Retreat (Sudinna)

In this way, while fulfilling his five great duties without any interruption, while distributing the doctrinal and medicinal cool water of deathlessness among gods and humans, the Buddha departed from Sāvatthī and after travelling in the company of monks, reached Rājagaha in the kingdom of Magadha, and stayed at Veḷuvana to keep the twentieth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*).

The Buddha's Rains Retreat

Of the Buddha's 45 Rains Retreats (*Vassa*), the first 20, beginning from his Awakening are called not bound (*anibaddha*) or not settled (*aniyata*) Rains Retreats because they were spent not at one and the same place but in various towns or villages, one Rains Retreat here, two Rains Retreat there, three still at another place and so on.

They are also referred to as the first period after Awakening (*paṭhama-bodhi*) or the earlier period after Awakening (*purima-bodhi*) Rains Retreats because they formed the first or former half of the whole series of Rains Retreats in which gods and men were led to Awakening by the fourfold path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*).

The remaining 25 Rains Retreats are called bound (*nibaddha*) or settled (*niyata*) Rains Retreats because they were spent at only one place, in Sāvatthī in the kingdom of Kosala, in either the Jetavana or the Pubbārāma. They are also known as the second period after Awakening (*dutiya-bodhi*) or later period after Awakening (*pacchima-bodhi*) Rains Retreats for they formed the second or latter half of the whole series of Rains Retreats in which gods and humans were caused to be Awakened by the fourfold path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*).

> Elaboration: For the 20 Rains Retreats of the first period after Awakening, the Buddha's stay was not regular, for he observed Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in different towns or villages as he pleased. But from the 21st Rains Retreat he stayed regularly at Jetavana or Pubbārāma, relying upon Sāvatthī as his resort for alms food. This information is from the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary.
>
> A different exposition in the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*), however, is as follows: From the 21st Rains Retreat, the Buddha's use of the two dwellings of Jetavana and Pubbārāma was

permanent because the services, rendered by Anāthapiṇḍika, the wealthy merchant, and Visākhā, the female devotee, were great. In fact, the Buddha dwelt constantly at these residences on account of his being grateful to both supporters.

The Buddha journeyed to other places during the months outside the Rains Retreats, but during the Rains Retreats he stayed alternatively at these two monasteries. The Buddha, whose custom was to pass his times thus, spent a night at Jetavana, went on alms round the next morning in the company of monks; entered Sāvatthī by the south-gate to collect food and went out by the east-gate to Pubbārāma where he spent the day. After spending the night at Pubbārāma, he went on alms round the next morning in the company of monks, entered Sāvatthī by the east-gate to collect food and went out by the south-gate to Jetavana where he spent the day.

Ven. Ānanda appointed Permanent Attendant

During the 20 years of the first period after Awakening, the Buddha had no permanent attendant to serve him. Sometimes Ven. Nāgasamāla was at his service, taking his bowl and robe and following him wherever he went. Sometimes Ven. Nāgita, sometimes Ven. Upavāṇa, sometimes Ven. Sunakkhatta, a Licchavī Prince, sometimes Ven. Cunda, a brother of Ven. Sāriputta, sometimes Ven. Sāgata, sometimes Ven. Meghiya served him, travelling about with him. They did so but generally not to the Buddha's satisfaction.

One day, while the Buddha was sitting in his prepared Buddha-seat surrounded by monks in the fragrant chamber, he addressed the monks: "Now, monks, I am old. At that time he was 55 years of age. I tell some attendants: "Let us go this way," but they leave me and go the other way, and some attendants put down my bowl and robe on the ground; so now you must consider and select a permanent attendant for me."

The monks were shocked and stirred on hearing this from the Buddha. Then Ven. Sāriputta stood up and saluted the Buddha, saying: "I will serve you, exalted Buddha." But the Buddha rejected Ven. Sāriputta's offer. Following Ven. Sāriputta, apart from Ven. Ānanda, all the other venerables, led by Ven. Moggallāna, made their offer, one after another, saying: "I will be your attendant, venerable sir, I will be your attendant, venerable sir." The Buddha rejected their offers too.

Ven. Ānanda, however, was just sitting there and keeping quiet. When [816] the other monks said: "Friend Ānanda, you too should ask for the post of the master's attendant." Ven. Ānanda replied: "Friends, what kind of a post is it that is secured by begging? Should the Fortunate One want me, he himself will say so."

Then the Buddha said: "Monks, Ānanda is not a type of person who needs to be urged. He will serve me at his own discretion." Then the monks asked him again: "Stand up, Ven. Ānanda, ask the master for the post as his attendant."

Ven. Ānanda rose from his seat and said: "Exalted Buddha: 1) If you do not give me the good robes received by you; 2) if you do not give me the good food collected by you; 3) if you do not give me the privilege to sit together with you in the fragrant chamber; 4) if you do not take me to the places you are invited, then I shall serve you, exalted Buddha."

> These four negative boons were begged so that nobody else could disapprovingly say: "With such benefits or gains in view, who would think it is burdensome to serve the master?"

Ven. Ānanda continued: "Exalted Buddha: 1) If you go at my request to the places invited by your male and female devotees; 2) if I have the permission to let each and every visitor pay homage to you promptly; 3) if I have the permission to approach you, to ask you, the moment there arises any doubt in me; 4) if you repeat to me what you have taught in my absence; then I shall serve you, exalted Buddha."

> These four positive boons were begged in order to avoid others' criticism who would say that: "In spite of his service rendered day and night to the Fortunate One, poor Ānanda was not favoured by the master even this much," and in order to be able to perform good deeds and fulfil the perfections, so that he would be recognized by Devas and humans as the Treasurer of the Dhamma.

In this way Ven. Ānanda asked for eight boons, four negative and four positive. The Buddha bestowed these eight boons on him. Ven. Ānanda received these eight boons and became the permanent attendant to the Buddha. The fruit of his perfections fulfilled for the 100,000 aeons for that post of permanent attendant was realized on that very day.

From the day of his appointment as the Buddha's attendant, he served the master by giving him hot and cold water, by providing him with three kinds of tooth brush, short, long and medium, by massaging him, by rubbing his back when taking a bath, by sweeping the fragrant chamber and so on. Ven. Ānanda roamed about near the Buddha each day, deciding: "At this hour the Fortunate One must get this thing, this should be done to him." At night he encircled around the fragrant chamber nine times, holding a big torch to be able to answer the Buddha promptly on being asked by him, and to remove sloth and drowsiness. This is just a brief account of Ven. Ānanda's service rendered to the Buddha. His other services will be mentioned in chapter 43. [817]

Ven. Sudinna and the First Rules

> [This section has been moved here from Chapter 31, as it is more suitable to learn about the laying down of the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) rules at this place, when they started to be laid down.] [731]

Eight years previously, in the village of Kalanda, near the city of Vesālī, there was the merchant Kalanda's son, who was named Sudinna. Accompanied by many friends, Sudinna the merchant's son went to Vesālī on some business.

> The village was named Kalanda because it abounded in black squirrels (*Kalandaka*). The Kalanda merchant owned 400 million. He was therefore a man of riches recognized by the king. His son, Sudinna, went to Vesālī to transact business, to collect debts, and to make appointments among other things.
>
> Some scholars said that he was in Vesālī to have fun in the festival of the constellation Kattikā. The Buddha indeed came to Vesālī in the bright fortnight of the month of November (*Kattikā*). The festivity of Kattikā in Vesālī attracted large crowds of people. For the sake of this festive gathering, Sudinna the merchant's son also went there at this time.

On seeing the people who went out from Vesālī after breakfast, wearing clean clothes and carrying flowers, perfumes and unguents, to see the Buddha and to listen to his discourse, Sudinna asked them where they were going and was informed of their purpose; then thinking: "I too should go along with them," he joined the crowd that flocked to hear the Buddha, who, in the midst of the audience composed of four classes of devotees, was delivering a discourse in a voice resembling that of a Brahma. Inspired by the Buddha's pleasing manner

and stirred by his past wholesome deeds (*kamma*), he thought to himself: "How well it would be if I too could listen to the discourse!" But since the audience was so large, he was unable to get near the Buddha and had to take a suitable seat at the edge of the assembly, paying attention to the Buddha's talk from there.

While he was thus paying attention to the Buddha's talk on the threefold training of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*), a thought arose in him: "When I ponder in many ways the Buddha's discourse, I come to the conclusion that it is not easy indeed for a householder to practise such a noble practice of the threefold training which is so pure and perfect like a newly polished conch. How wonderful it would be if I leave household life for monkhood, having shaved my head and beard and donned the dyed robe!"

Thereafter, Sudinna went along with the moving crowd for a short distance, for in the crowd were many of his relatives and friends, who might be in his way and they would forcibly take him away by the arm, saying: "You are the only son of your parents. You must not be given permission to become a monk." Hence his short distance of departure together with the crowd. Then pretending that he had to wash his hands, he turned back and approached the Buddha with these words of request: "Exalted Buddha, when I pondered your discourse in many ways, I came to the conclusion that it was not easy indeed for a householder to practise such a noble practice of the threefold training, which is pure and perfect like a newly polished conch. Exalted Buddha, I wish to enter monkhood, having shaved my head and beard and donned the dyed robe, exalted Buddha, kindly accept me as a monk!"

As the Buddha had denied monkhood to those who were not permitted by their parents since the initiation of Prince Rāhula, the Buddha asked Sudinna, "Have your parents, Sudinna, permitted you to leave the household life for monkhood?" "No, exalted Buddha, they have not yet permitted me to do so," replied Sudinna. Then said the Buddha: "Sudinna, Buddhas do not ordain a man who has not got permission from his parents." – "Exalted Buddha," said Sudinna, "I shall seek permission from my parents."

Then Sudinna, having finished his business in Vesālī, approached his parents, at Kalanda [732] village, with these words: "Dear parents, when I pondered the Buddha's discourse in many ways, I came to the conclusion that it was not easy

indeed for a householder to practise such a noble practice of the threefold training, which is pure and perfect like a newly polished conch. I wish to leave the household life for the monkhood, having shaved my head and beard and donned the dyed robe! Please give me permission to do so."

The parents then rejected Sudinna's request, saying: "Our son Sudinna, you are our only son whom we love so dearly. You are the child whom we have brought up and nurtured in happiness. Dear Sudinna, you know no discomforts whatever. Let us be separated from you against our wish only when you die. How can we permit you to leave the household life for monkhood while you are living?"

The son requested as before for the second time. The parents similarly rejected for the second time. He did so for the third time. And they too did reject for the third time.

Knowing then that his parents will not permit me by any means to renounce the household life, and lying down on the bare ground, the very spot on which he made the request, he said: "This place will see either my death or my renunciation." He refused to eat his meal once, twice, three times; four, five, six and seven times and demonstrated his great meritorious desire by fasting.

Then the parents said to their son: "Dear son Sudinna, you are our only child, whom we love so dearly. You are the one whom we have brought up and nurtured in happiness. Dear Sudinna, you know no discomfort whatever. Only your death will separate us from you against our wish. How can we permit you to leave the household life and take up monkhood while you are alive? Rise, dear Sudinna, eat, drink and have fun. Feel delight in doing good deeds while eating, drinking and having fun. However, we will never give you our permission by any means for your renunciation." Sudinna kept quiet while they were saying so. He remained silent even when his parents said so a second time and a third time.

Not getting even verbal response from their son though they had appealed to him three times, the parents sent for his friends and urged them saying: "Your friend Sudinna is desirous of becoming a monk. Please prevent him from doing so!" The friends went up to Sudinna and tried to prevent him three times as they had been told by his parents. To the friends as well, Sudinna gave no answer but kept quiet.

Then the friends reflected and discussed among themselves: “If this Sudinna were to die for not getting permission to become a monk, no benefit would accrue from his death. If he were to become a monk his parents could see him at will and so could we. Monkhood is very burdensome. The monk goes on alms round carrying an earthen bowl daily. He sleeps alone and eats a single morning meal. Such a noble practice is so difficult to follow. And Sudinna is a delicate urbanite. By no means can he devote himself to the noble practice that requires one to sleep alone and to eat a single morning meal. He will definitely come back home. Well, we shall ask his parents to permit him.”

Thereafter they approached Sudinna’s parents and spoke to them with some advice: “Dear elders, Sudinna is lying on the bare ground, saying: ‘This place will see either my death or my renunciation.’ If you do not give him permission to renounce the world and enter monkhood, he will die at that very place where he is lying. Suppose you grant him permission for his monkhood, you can have a chance to see him as a monk. After becoming a monk, if he is not happy with ascetic life, where will he go except back to his parents’ house? He will come back to this house of yours. You had better permit Sudinna to go forth and live an ascetic life!”

Then Sudinna’s parents replied: “Dear boys, we grant him our permission for his renunciation and entering upon monkhood,” and the friends went up to Sudinna and said: “Get up, friend Sudinna, permission has been granted to you by your parents!” [733]

So happy and elated with the news that he had been permitted to become a monk, Sudinna got up, dusting his body with his hands, and tried to regain his strength for one or two days; thereafter he approached the Buddha, bowed his head in adoration, sat down at a suitable distance and said: “Exalted Buddha, permission has been granted to me by my parents. May the exalted Buddha make me a monk!”

The Buddha asked a nearby monk who was practising the ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*): “Monk, as has been requested by Sudinna, dear son, grant him ordination as a novice and then ordination as a monk!” – “Very well, exalted Buddha,” replied the ascetic monk, and taking Sudinna, as his co-residential (*saddhi-vihārika*) pupil entrusted by the Buddha, he made him a novice and then a monk.

Soon after becoming a monk, Ven. Sudinna engaged in the following ascetic practices, the means of shaking off the mental defilements: Dwelling in a forest monastery (*āraññika-dhutaṅga*); eating food obtained by going on alms round (*piṇḍapātika-dhutaṅga*); putting on robes made of rags (*paṁsukūlika-dhutaṅga*); and collecting food from houses in sequence (*sapadāna-cārika-dhutaṅga*). Thus he dwelt in an unknown small village as his resort for food.

Sudinna Returns to his Home

Now in the 20th year after the Buddha's Awakening, the country of Vajjī was short of food. It was hard to live there. There were white bones from the dead everywhere. People had to live by food tickets. It was not easy for monks to get enough food going round with alms bowls in their hands.

Then it occurred to Ven. Sudinna: "Now Vajjī country is short of food. It is hard to live there. There are white bones from the dead everywhere. Lots have to be drawn for food. It was not easy for monks to get enough food by going round with alms bowls in their hands. I have a large number of relatives in the city of Vesālī who are prosperous, who possess plenty of hidden treasures, who are endowed with an abundance of riches, an abundance of gold and silver, an abundance of delightful articles and gems for daily use, and a large quantity of goods and grains for trading and exchange. What if I were to live there, depending on my relatives? On account of me they would make offerings and do things of merit. And material gains will accrue to the monks. I too will not be troubled by food."

With this idea, Ven. Sudinna packed his bedding and headed for Vesālī, taking his bowl and robe. On his arrival at Vesālī, he stayed at a monastery with a peaked roof (*kūṭāgāra*) in the Great Wood near Vesālī.

Getting the news that the Kalanda merchant's son, Sudinna, was said to have come to Vesālī, his relatives sent 60 pots of food as an offering to him. Each pot contained food for ten monks. Then, according to his previous plan, he offered the 60 pots to 600 monks, and as for himself, being an observer of eating food obtained by going on alms round, he adjusted his garment, took his bowl and robe and entered the village of Kalanda for food. While going round and stopping in front of the houses, one after another he happened to approach the gate of the house belonging to his father, the Kalanda merchant.

At that moment, a female slave to kinsmen of Sudinna was coming out of the house to throw away barley cakes that had become stale after having been kept overnight, so stale that it was impossible for male slaves, workers and cattle to eat them. Then Sudinna said to her: "Sister, if you are to throw away those cakes, please put them into my bowl!"

While she was putting the stale cakes into Ven. Sudinna's bowl, she could not recognize him as the son of her master, for Sudinna had been away for eight years; but taking note of the features of his hands and feet and also his voice, she went to Sudinna's [734] mother and said: "You know, madam, your son Sudinna has returned!" Sudinna's mother replied: "Woman, if you have told me the truth, I will set you free from slavery!" Meanwhile Ven. Sudinna was leaning against the base of the wall in a dining room in Kalanda and enjoying the stale food with relish.

> Some homes of supporters in certain regions had dining rooms built. In these rooms seats were readily arranged. Jars of water for drinking and use were placed; vinegar was also provided. After receiving food, monks sat and ate it in these rooms. If need be, they took offerings which were placed there by supporters. Therefore, "the base of the wall" here means the bottom of the wall of a refectory erected by supporters. Monks never eat, sitting at an unseemly place, unlike destitutes.

When Sudinna's wealthy father came back from work and saw him enjoying the stale food with relish, he went nearer and reproved him, saying: "Dear beloved son Sudinna! It is a pity that you should be eating stale barley cakes! Can you not come home?"

Ven. Sudinna then replied: "I have been to your house, supporter. And I got the stale barley cakes from there!" The father grasped Sudinna's arm and said: "Come, dear Sudinna. Let us go home!" An obedient son having love for his father, Sudinna went along to his father's house and took the prepared seat.

The wealthy father requested him: "Help yourself son!" – "Enough, father," replied Ven. Sudinna: "I have eaten for the day." When the father invited him, saying: "Please accept my offering of food for tomorrow," though he was committed to eating food obtained only by going on alms round (*piṇḍapāta-dhutaṅga*), Sudinna accepted it by keeping silent, he then rose from his seat and departed, for he thought: "If I reject their single meal, it will be a great distress to my parents and kinsmen."

When the night was over, Ven. Sudinna's mother had the ground plastered with wet cowdung, and two heaps of treasures made, one of gold and the other of silver. The heaps of treasure were so great that a man standing on one side could not see another man standing on the other side, so great and high were the piles of treasures. Having caused them to be covered by mats, and a seat prepared in the middle and screens set up, she then asked Sudinna's ex-wife: "Dear daughter, I would like to ask you to put on the clothes that would please my son Sudinna." – "Yes, mother," replied the ex-wife to Ven. Sudinna's mother.

When morning came, Ven. Sudinna approached his parent's house, having adjusted his robe and carrying his bowl and robe, and sat down on the prepared seat between the two heaps of treasure. The father came to Ven. Sudinna and had the heaps uncovered and said: "Dear son Sudinna, this gold and silver is the treasure that has come down from your mother's side. This much is just for the use of feminine things. This is the cost of powder and flowers. There is yet the treasure from me. The treasures from your grandfather and great grandfather are also kept separately. Dear son, they are available for you to live in luxury and perform meritorious deeds when you leave the monkhood. Come, dear Sudinna, enjoy your wealth and do good works."

"I cannot become a layman, supporter," replied Ven. Sudinna, "I am very happy following the noble practice of the threefold training." His father said as before for the second time, and Ven. Sudinna replied similarly. When the father said for the third time, however, Ven. Sudinna replied differently, saying: "If you, supporter, show no anger, I would like to say something." Thinking that his son would tell him favourably, the father said delightedly: "Go ahead, son." Then Ven. Sudinna uttered determinedly to his father, the wealthy merchant: "Father, in that case, have fibre bags made and fill them with gold and silver, take them in cans and drop them in the middle of the Ganges! Because, supporter, on account of the possession of this gold and silver, you will have fear, trembling, gooseflesh, and you will need protection. No possessions means no fear and other forms of [735] trouble. That is what I want to say!"

This caused sadness to the father who wondered: "Why does my son Sudinna have the heart to say so?"

Lured by his Wife

Being unable to lure Ven. Sudinna to return to household life by showing him the riches, his father thought: "There is no fetter for a man like a woman," and he sent the ex-wife of Sudinna, saying: "I pray you, dear daughter, my son Sudinna loves you. He is fond of you. He may listen to you." Accordingly, the ex-wife grasped Sudinna's legs in her arms and said: "You have followed the noble practice, my lord, for the sake of getting celestial maidens. How do they look like?"

> Explanation: In those days, many princes, sons of Brahmins, and sons of merchants renounced their untold luxuries and became ascetics. Seeing them, those who were ignorant of the benefits of an ascetic life used to ask: "Why do these people become ascetics?" The answers they got from those who pretended to know was: "Because they want to have celestial maidens and dancers." The questions and answers of these unknowledgeable people became widespread. Acting on that reply, the ex-wife of Ven. Sudinna spoke as mentioned above.

Ven. Sudinna replied: "I do not, sister, practise the noble practice for celestial maidens." Being prompted thus, his ex-wife thought: "My lord Sudinna has now called me sister. He no longer wants me now. Not wanting me who is his partner in life, and his own wife, he takes me as his own sister, born of the same mother." The thought brought about grief and caused her to fall down in faintness at that very place.

Then Ven. Sudinna said to his father: "If you are to give food, supporter, do so. Do not trouble us with your display of wealth and women. Enticement with such a display means torment to monks!" Thereafter, the parents personally offered excellent food to Ven. Sudinna until he was satisfied and stopped them.

When the meal was done, the mother of Ven. Sudinna said to him: "Dear son Sudinna, our family is rich. We have a great hidden wealth. There are abundant luxuries and things for daily use. There are many delightful articles and treasures. So are there countless goods and grains for trading and exchange. Come, dear Sudinna, return to lay life and enjoy the riches. And do good works."

Sudinna rejected his mother's words by giving the same answer as that given to his father: "I cannot become a layman, mother. I dare not do so. I am very happily engaged in the noble practice of the threefold training." His mother said

as before for the second time and Ven. Sudinna replied the same. On the third time, however, Sudinna's mother asked for procreative seed by saying: "Dear son Sudinna, our family is rich. We have a great hidden wealth. There are abundant luxuries and things for daily use. There are many delightful articles and treasures. There are countless goods and grains for trading and exchange. Dear Sudinna, in that case, if you find happiness so much in the Buddha's Dispensation, at least give the seed for procreation. Let not the Licchavī princes take over these possessions of ours because we have no sons to inherit."

Then Sudinna reflected: "I am the only heir to the wealth of my father and mother. There is nobody else. As long as I do not give the seed they will constantly follow me about seeking to protect their wealth. If they do so, I will not have a chance to devote myself to asceticism and be free of worries. My parents will give up following me only when they get a son as an heir. Then only will I be able to perform my duties as a monk in comfort and happiness." And he replied: "Mother, I can do something to provide the seed for [736] procreation." He said this, without knowing that he would be guilty for doing so.

Again, his mother asked: "Where are you staying now, dear Sudinna?" – "In the Great Wood, mother," so replying, Ven. Sudinna rose from his seat and departed. Then Sudinna's mother asked her son's ex-wife: "Dear daughter, let me make a request for getting a son. Tell me when your fertile period is." – "Very well, madam," replied Sudinna's ex-wife.

Before long, Sudinna's ex-wife was ready for conception, and she informed Sudinna's mother of the matter. "In that case, dear daughter, dress up in the clothes which used to have appeal for my son," said the mother. "Very well, madam," so saying she did as she had been told.

Taking Sudinna's ex-wife, his mother went to Great Wood and told Sudinna twice as before to leave monkhood and enjoy the riches and do deeds of merit. Sudinna refused to do so by saying, as before, that he could not become a layman and that he dared not do so. He further added that he was happy in pursuing the noble practice of the threefold training. On the third time, however, the mother asked for the seed of procreation. Saying: "This is something I can do," he caught hold his ex-wife's arm and together they entered the Great Wood. As it was a time when the first Expulsion (*Pārājika*) rule had not been laid down yet, he did not see sexual intercourse as an offence. As such, in the forest, he

successfully indulged three times in sex with his ex-wife. As a result his ex-wife became pregnant.[227]

Tumultuous Denunciation of Devas and Brahmas

There is no hidden place in the world for a man who commits a wrong-doing. In fact, he who does a wrong-doing is the first to know his wrong-doing. Next, his guardian spirit and the guardian spirits of the forests know it. Then other Devas and Brahmas come to know successively. Therefore, when Sudinna copulated with his ex-wife, the terrestrial spirit living in the entire Great Wood saw the offence and transmitted it by shouting it out so that higher Devas and Brahmas might hear: "Friends, the Saṅgha in the past was indeed free from the thieves of immorality (*dussīla*)! It was indeed free from the blemishes of immorality (*dussīla*)! But now the Kalanda merchant's son, Sudinna, is a thief through immorality (*dussīla*)! He has caused the blemishes of immorality (*dussīla*)!"

On hearing the voice of the terrestrial spirits, the celestial spirits, such as the Catumahārajika Devas, the Tāvatiṁsa Devas, the Yāma Devas, the Tusita Devas, the Nimmānarati Devas, the Paranimmitavasavattī Devas, and the Brahmas shouted in the same way successively. Thus, in a moment, the roars of condemnation spread and rose to the world of the Brahmas.

When her pregnancy became mature, Sudinna's ex-wife gave birth to a son. Then Sudinna's friends named him, Bījaka, and not otherwise, as it was well known that the baby's grandmother made the request saying: *Bījakaṁ pi dehi*, "give us the procreative seed." Sudinna's ex-wife also came to be known as Bījaka's mother (*Bījaka-mātā*), and Sudinna as Bījaka's father (*Bījaka-pitā*).

Seven or eight years later, the son and the mother, Bījaka and Bījakamātā, went forth from the household life and joined the Saṅgha, respectively as a monk and a nun. They became Arahats through the help of good teachers and friends.

In this way the monastic life of the son and the mother was of benefit. The father, Ven. Sudinna, was, however, severely tormented by remorse.

> In this connection the commentary says: *Pitā pana vippaṭisārābhibhūto-vihāsi*, "the father, Ven. Sudinna, however, lived being overcome by great

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[227] [A short pasage here on the causes of pregnancy has been moved to the Further Explanations.]

> remorse." It should therefore be assumed that for Ven. Sudinna it was totally impossible to become an Arahat in that life or existence.

It is said in the commentary that the former Sudinna, the Kalanda merchant's son, while going to listen to the discourse, was: *Bhabba kulaputta*, "a man of good family who had the possibility of path and fruition." Though he was a man endowed with merits leading to such higher attainments, a hindrance to the paths and fruitions would occur to him, as in the case of King Ajātasattu, and that hindrance actually occurred, as he was in great torment on account of his evil practice when he had sexual intercourse with his ex-wife, or so the teachers say. [738]

> A question may arise here: "Was such a hindrance possible to occur to one, who is endowed with the potential for higher attainments, even in the lifetime of a Buddha?" The answer is: "Yes, it was." But the hindrance did not derive from the Buddha. In fact, Buddhas are those who endeavour to help others attain the paths and fruitions; they constantly put efforts for the spiritual welfare of others. Therefore no hindrance can come from them to those who are possessed of the merits of their past.
>
> In reality, a hindrance on spiritual progress is due to inadequacy of performance, and association with bad friends. Of these two, inadequacy of performance is of two kinds: the lack of teaching effort which is conductive to the paths and fruitions on the part of the teacher, and the lack of practice conductive to the paths and fruitions on the part of the student who is endowed with the merits of the past.
>
> Of these, inadequacy of performance on the part of the teacher means that on the part of a Buddha's disciple only, and not on the part of Buddhas. Explanation: in the Discourse to Dhanañjānī (*Dhanañjānī-sutta*, MN 97) it says that while the Brahmin Dhānañjānī was dying, Ven. Sāriputta taught him the doctrine of the four sublime practices (*Brahma-vihāra*) that could lead him to the Brahma abode. When the Brahmin died, he was reborn in that very plane of existence. Details should be taken from the discourse. If Ven. Sāriputta, the General of the Dhamma, had known of the latent qualifications of the Brahmin and if he had taught him accordingly, he would have become a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*). But now the teaching was different and the Brahmin's attainment was short of the noble status. Inadequacy of performance on the part of the teacher thus can cause the danger of failure to reach the paths and fruitions.

An example of inadequacy of performance on the part of the student who has qualifications may be seen in the Discourse to Kandaraka (*Kandaraka-sutta*, MN 51). According to this discourse, a wandering ascetic, named Kandaraka and an elephant trainer's son, named Pessa, once went to the Buddha, who taught them the four individuals, the first being one who worries himself (*attantapa*).

When the Buddha finished just an outline of the discourse, and before he could go on to deal with it in detail, Pessa, the elephant trainer's son, departed in satisfaction. If he had listened to the discourse in detail, Pessa would have become a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*). As he left after hearing the discourse in brief, he had only two advantages: His becoming faithful to the Saṅgha and a new method of practising the foundations of mindfulness. Details should be taken from the translation of the discourse. Had he waited a little longer to hear the elaborate teaching on the four individuals, he would have reached the first stage on his way to Awakening. His impatience now caused his failure to do so. Inadequacy of performance on the part of the student with qualifications for higher attainments is a cause of his loss.

Hindrance to the paths and fruitions due to association with bad friends may be understood from the following: If King Ajātasattu, an associate of Devadatta and a follower of his advice, had not killed his father, he would have become a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) the day he listened to the Buddha's delivery of the Discourse on the Fruits of the Ascetic Life (Sāmañña-phala-sutta, DN 2). Now that he adhered to the advice of his evil friend and did wrong by murdering his father, he did not become one. Association with a wicked companion creates a hindrance to the paths and fruitions.

Here also it should be taken that Sudinna suffered the same loss because of his company with a bad friend. If he had not followed his parents' counsel and kept away from having sex with his ex-wife, there would not have occured a sudden stop to his good prospects for attainments, the stop that was brought about by his remorse. The remorse was so great and tormenting that he met with failure in becoming an Arahat. [739]

Ven. Sudinna's Remorse

At that time a fit of remorse occurred to Ven. Sudinna: "I have failed to make achievements such as absorption (*jhāna*). My gain of monkhood has been worthless! I have ill-gotten the teaching! The Buddha's Dispensation has not

come to me in a good manner! Because I have thus been incapable of practising in perfection, in purity for life, the noble practice of the threefold training after receiving ordination in the Dispensation of the Dhamma and Vinaya taught so well!" So great was his remorse that he became emaciated day by day, and with poor and dry skin, his good appearance deteriorated and his complexion became pale like a withered leaf. His body had sinews that were like a cast net; his distress was hidden in him and his introverted thoughts developed gradually; tormented by his physical and mental unhappiness, he remained in a pensive mood.

Then Sudinna's friends said to him: "Though formerly you were handsome, your sense-faculties were alert, your facial colour was clear, and your complexion was especially clean, now you are emaciated day by day, and with poor and dry skin, your good appearance deteriorates and your complexion becomes pale like a withered leaf. Your body has sinews that are like a cast net; your distress is hidden in you and your introverted thoughts develop gradually; tormented by your physical and mental unhappiness, you remain in pensive mood. Why, friend Sudinna? Are you practising the noble practice of the threefold training with unhappiness in the Buddha's Dispensation?"

Ven. Sudinna replied as follows: "Friends, not with unhappiness am I practising the noble practice of the threefold training in the Buddha's Dispensation. There is one wrong deed done by me though. I have committed sexual misconduct with my ex-wife, for which I feel remorseful, thinking: 'I have failed to make achievements such as absorption (*jhāna*). My gain of monkhood has been worthless! I have ill-gotten the teaching! The Buddha's Dispensation has not come to me in a good manner! Because I have thus been incapable of practising in perfection, in purity for life, the noble practice of the threefold training after receiving ordination in the Dispensation of the Dhamma and the Vinaya taught so well!' "

Then his friends blamed him by citing a large number of instances: "Friend Sudinna, since you are thus incapable of practising in perfection and purity for life the noble practice of the threefold training after receiving ordination in the Dispensation of the Dhamma and the Vinaya taught so well, you should be remorseful.

Friend Sudinna, did not the master teach us, in various ways, to separate ourselves from lust and not to combine with lust? Did he not teach us to dissociate from sensuality and not to associate with sensuality? Did he not teach us to be detached from craving and wrong view and not to be attached through craving and wrong view?

Friend Sudinna, despite the master's teaching to separate from lust, you have striven to combine with lust. Despite the master's teaching to dissociate from sensuality, you have striven to associate with sensuality. Despite the master's teaching to be detached from craving and wrong view, you have striven to be attached through craving and wrong view.

Friend, did not the master teach us, in various ways, to separate from lust, to give up conceit, to remove hunger or thirst that are moral defilements, to eliminate attachment that is lingering through craving, to cut the source of suffering, to cease craving, to have no passionate desires, to stop craving and to extinguish moral defilements?

Friend, did the master not teach us, in various ways, the removal of sensuality? Did he not teach us the analytical knowledge of perception concerning sensuality? Did he not teach us the elimination of craving that is hunger or thirst for sensuality? Did he not teach us the cutting off of thoughts connected with sensuality? Did he not teach us the cooling of the heat that is sensuality? [740]

Friend, the wrong deed you have done cannot cause the faithless to become faithful nor can it cause the faithful to become more faithful. In fact, friend, the wrong deed of yours will make the faithless remain faithless and will lead to the destruction of the faith of the faithful." Then they reported the matter to the Buddha.

On account of this incident the Buddha held a meeting of the Saṅgha and asked Ven. Sudinna: "Is it true, Sudinna, that you have committed sexual misconduct with your ex-wife?" When he replied: "Yes, venerable sir," the Buddha rebuked Sudinna in the following manner: "You foolish man (*mogha purisa*), who have failed to attain the paths and fruitions, achieving nothing! It is not befitting a monk! It is not the practice of a monk. It is improper. It should not be done! You good for nothing! Why are you incapable of practising in perfection, in purity for life, the noble practice of the threefold training after receiving ordination in the Dispensation the Dhamma and the Vinaya proclaimed so well?

You foolish man, did I not teach you, in various ways, to separate yourself from lust, and not to combine with lust? Did I not teach you to dissociate from sensuality and not to associate with sensuality? Did I not teach you to be detached from craving and wrong view and not to be attached through craving and wrong view. Though I teach you to separate yourself from lust, you have striven to combine with lust! Though I teach you to dissociate from sensuality, you have striven to associate with sensuality! Though I teach you to be detached from craving and wrong view, you have striven to be attached through craving and wrong view.

You foolish man, did I not teach you, in various ways, to be free from lust, not to be intoxicated with conceit, to remove hunger or thirst that is a defilement, to cut off attachment tinged with craving, to eliminate the roots of the round of suffering, to cease craving, to reject desires, to stop craving and to extinguish defilement?

You foolish man, did I not teach you, in various ways, the removal of sensual pleasures? Did I not teach you the analytical knowledge of perception concerning sensual pleasure? Did I not teach you the removal of craving for sensual pleasure? Did I not teach you the cutting off of thoughts concerning sensual pleasure? Did I not teach you the extinguishing of the heat of sensual pleasure?

You foolish man, it is better to put your male organ into the mouth of a highly poisonous, severely poisonous snake! But it is not good to put it into the female organ! You foolish man, it is better to put your male organ into the mouth of a cobra! But it is not good to put it into the female organ! You foolish man, it is better to put your male organ into a heap of embers with glowing and blazing flames that burn all around! But it is not good to put it into the female organ!

Because, foolish man, by putting your male organ into the snake's mouth or into the heap of embers, you will just come to death or you will suffer almost to death. By putting your male organ into the snake's mouth or into the heap of embers, you cannot go to the four suffering states of long suffering, of animals, of departed spirits and the Asuras on destruction of your body. But by doing so with regard to the female organ, foolish man, you may go to those suffering states on destruction of your body!

You foolish man, you have committed sexual intercourse which is not the practice of noble persons, which is the practice of villagers, which is a crude act that ends in washing, which is done only in a secluded place because of its unseemly sight, which is done by a couple of a man and a woman. You foolish man, you are a pioneer in the sense that you engage in unwholesomeness ahead of others!

You foolish man, what you have done now cannot cause the faithless to become [741] faithful; nor can it cause the faithful to become more faithful. In fact, foolish man, the evil deed of yours will make the faithless remain faithless and lead to the destruction of the faith of the faithful."

Then the Buddha censured Ven. Sudinna in many ways and taught the disadvantages of such unseemly things as difficulty of maintenance of self, difficult of maintenance by others, greediness, discontent, fondness of companions, and indolence. He also taught the advantages of such seemly things as easy maintenance of self, easy maintenance by others, little wants, easy content, decrease in defilements, the shaking off of defilements, assuming a pleasant appearance, the destruction of defilements, and industriousness.

Ten Objectives of the Disciplinary Rules

He also gave the monks a talk appropriate to this incident and addressed them as follows: "Monks, in that case I will lay down disciplinary rules with ten objectives:

1. For the observance by the Saṅgha.
2. For the welfare of the Saṅgha.
3. For suppressing those who violate morality.
4. For the happy life of monastics who cherish morality.
5. For removing suffering in the present life.
6. For removing suffering that may arise in future.
7. For causing the faithless to become faithful.
8. For causing the faithful to become more faithful.
9. For the perpetuation of the Dhamma.

10. For the support of the training.

Monks let it be proclaimed thus: A monk who commits sexual intercourse suffers loss in the Dispensation which amounts to Expulsion (*Pārājika*).[228] There should no longer be association with moral monastics in performing various monastic acts. Let it thus be proclaimed." In this manner did the Buddha lay down the first Expulsion rule in the 20th year after the Awakening. [818]

[228] Expulsion (*Pārājika*): The first category of offences, considered to be grave and irremediable; it entails the expulsion of the offender from the monastic life.

35a: List of Rains Retreats

[This and the next section are moved here from the end of chapter 19, where they interrupted the flow of the story.]

The Buddha had no fixed rain-residence for 20 years during the early period after his Awakening (*paṭhama-bodhi*), as he went from place to place wherever sentient beings could be saved from the round of suffering. Briefly, this is a list of rains retreats observed by the Buddha:

1. After teaching the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) to the Group-of-Five monastics headed by Ven. Koṇḍañña, together with 180 million Brahmas, at the Deer Park at Isipatana, near Bārāṇasī, the Buddha observed the first Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in the Deer Park, going for alms round in Bārāṇasī.

2-4. Then the Buddha observed the second to fourth Rains Retreats at Veḷuvana monastery, making Rājagaha his alms resort.

5. The fifth Rains Retreat was observed at a monastery with pinnacles and finials called the Kūṭāgāra Hall in the Great Wood, depending for alms food on Vesālī.

6. The sixth Rains Retreat was spent at the monastery in the Chāya forest in the vicinity of Mount Makula.

7. The seventh Rains Retreat was observed on the emerald throne at the foot of the Coral (*Pāricchatta*) tree in the celestial realm of Tāvatiṁsa, teaching the Abhidhamma to his reborn mother.

8. The eighth Rains Retreat was spent in the forest of pigeon peas, a wildlife sanctuary, or the forest governed by a celestial Yakkha, with Saṁsumāragiri with the Bhagga country as his alms food resort.

9. The ninth Rains Retreat was observed at the Ghositārāma monastery where Kosambī was the alms food resort for him.

10. He spent the tenth Rains Retreat in the Pālileyyaka forest, where the elephant King Pāḷileyyaka placed himself at his service.

11. He spent the eleventh Rains Retreat at Nāḷikārāma monastery with the Brahmin village, Nāḷa, serving as his alms food resort.

12. He observed the twelfth Rains Retreat near the Margosa (*Pucimanda*) tree, which was governed by a Yakkha named Nāḷeru, with Verañjā country as his alms resort.

13. With Jantu village, in the Cāliya country, serving as his alms resort, he spent the thirteenth Rains Retreat at the Cāliya mountain monastery.

14. The fourteenth Rains Retreat was spent at the Jetavana monastery with Sāvatthī, in the country of Kosala, as his alms resort.

15. With Kapilavatthu, in the Sakka country, serving as his alms resort, he spent the fifteenth Rains Retreat at the Nigrodha monastery.

16. He spent the sixteenth Rains Retreat at Aggāḷava shrine, which was a temple for the spirits, with the country of Āḷavī serving as his alms resort.

17. The seventeenth Rains Retreat was spent at the Veḷuvana monastery, where Rājagaha of Magadha became his alms resort. [489].

18-19. The Buddha resided at the Cāliya mountain monastery for two Rains Retreats – the eighteenth and nineteenth – with his alms resort located in Jantu village within the Cāliya country.

20. The twentieth Rains Retreat was observed at the Veḷuvana monastery, in Rājagaha of Magadha, which served as his alms resort.

These are the places where the Buddha spent irregular rains-residence during the first 20 years after his Awakening (*paṭhama-bodhi*).

21-44. The Buddha observed regular Rains Retreats from the 21st to the 44th year at Jetavana and Pubbārāma monasteries at Sāvatthī, in the Kosala country, which served as his alms resort.

45. Then the Buddha spent his last Rains Retreat, the 45th in the village of Veḷuva, in Vesālī country, when on the verge of his Parinibbāna.

Various Works in Myanmar dealing with the Rains Retreats

Ven. Monywe Zetawun Sayādaw had composed a verse for easy recollection of the places where Buddha Gotama had observed the Rains Retreats, in one of his

works entitled the Light on the All-Seeing One (*Samanta-cakkhu-dīpanī*) (Vol II, p. 374).[229]

The great friend of sentient beings of the three worlds spent two months or 60 days at the place of his Awakening, and then observed Rains Retreats in the places shown below:

1. First Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at Bārāṇasī.

2-4. Veḷuvana monastery, Rājagaha.

5. Great Wood monastery, donated by the Licchavī princes of Vesālī.

6. Sixth at Mount Makula.

7. Seventh in Tāvatiṁsa.

8. Eighth in the Bhagga country.

9. Ninth at Ghositārāma monastery near Kosambī.

10. Tenth in the Pāḷileyyaka Forest of the elephant King Pāḷileyyaka.

11. Eleventh in the Brahmin village of Nāḷa.

12. Twelfth at Verañjā.

13. Thirteenth at Cāliya Mountain.

14. Fourteenth at Jetavana monastery, Sāvatthī.

15. Fifteenth at Nigrodha monastery of Kapilavatthu.

16. Sixteenth at Āḷavī.

17. Seventeenth at Veḷuvana monastery, Rājagaha.

18-19. Eighteenth and nineenth at Cāliya Mountain monastery.

20. Twentieth back at Rājagaha.

21-44. Thus the Buddha was on the move from place to place for the duration of the first 20 years, which is the first period after Awakening, as regards the second period, from the 21st to the 44th year, he spent 24

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[229] The author reproduced here the said verse of the Monywe Zetawun Saydaw. We have provided here only an excerpt thereof in prose.

Rains Retreats alternately at Pubbārāma and Jetavana monasteries in Sāvatthī.

45. The Buddha spent the last Rains Retreat at the village of Veḷuva when on the verge of his Parinibbāna, making a total of 45 Rains Retreats (*Vassa*) spent variously at fifteen places in the course of 45 years before crossing over to the other shore at the age of 80. [491]

35b: Stories about Wrong View

Out of the many events that took place during the later period after the Awakening (*pacchima-bodhi*), the last 25 years of his teaching career, only a few notable ones will be recorded hereafter.

500 Women

[The following is based on the Dhamma Verse 153, and its commentary.]

Once the Buddha was staying near Pañcasāla village which he made his resort for alms, for he had discerned the past meritorious deeds of the 500 young women of the village, deeds that were potential for their attainment of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*). On a festive day, the women went to the riverside, bathed, dressed and were on their way back to the village.

As Buddha was entering the village for alms food, Māra, the Wicked One, then possessed all the villagers there so as to cause the Buddha to be deprived of food, he did not get even a spoonful of rice. Compelled to leave the village with his bowl as clean as when he entered it, he stood at the village gate. There Māra asked the Buddha: "Monk, have you received any alms food?" When the Buddha replied: "Māra, you have done something so that I received nothing, haven't you?" Māra said: "In that case, venerable sir, enter the village again for food."

It was not with honesty that Māra said this. In fact, he did so with an ulterior motive, he would like to possess the villagers again to scoff at the Buddha by clapping his hands in front of him. The Buddha knew Māra's intention and did not enter the village again out of compassion for him. The Buddha was aware that should Māra hurt me in this manner according to his plan, his head would split into seven pieces.

The moment the Wicked One spoke to the Buddha, the 500 young women arrived at the village gate, showing their respect to the Buddha and they stood at an appropriate place. Māra then asked the Buddha: "Venerable sir, if you have no food will you not suffer hunger greatly?" – "Māra!" said the Buddha, "Even if we have collected no food, I will spend the time in joy (*pīti*) and bliss (*sukha*) accompanied by absorption (*jhāna*) like the Mahā Brahmas, who are residents of the Ābhassara abodes and he uttered the following Dhamma-verse thereafter (Dhp 153):

Susukhaṁ vata jīvāma, verinesu averino,
verinesu manussesu, viharāma averino.

Hey wicked Māra! There is not the slightest degree of things that cause worry, such as passion, hatred, etc., in us. We will live long free from suffering and in great happiness. Like the Brahmas of the Ābhassara abode, we shall certainly have bliss as our food by engaging in the absorptions (*jhāna*) with joy.

At the end of the teaching, the 500 young women were established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

King Kosala's Matchless Alms Giving

Once as the Buddha travelled and entered the great Jetavana monastery in the company of 500 monks, King Pasenadi Kosala went to the monastery and invited the Buddha to the next day's gift for visitors (*āgantuka-dāna*). He prepared the gifts elaborately and made an announcement: "Let the citizens see my gifts!"

Having come and seen the king's gifts, the citizens became desirous of competing against the king and invited the Buddha for the following day's alms giving and made every gift perfect and invited the king, saying: "Let the Great King, our recognized lord (*sammuti-deva*), come and observe our generosity."

Having observed the alms giving of the citizens, the king thought to himself: "The people have given gifts that are greater than mine. I will give another alms giving [819] that will excel theirs." The next day he prepared his gifts more elaborately and invited the people to witness it. The people saw the king's gifts, and in order not to be outdone by him, they organized for the following day a greater alms giving and sent an invitation to the king. In this way the king could not defeat the citizens, nor the citizens the king.

At the sixth grand offering of alms, the people increased their gifts 100 times, nay, 1,000 times, and decided that their offering should be so perfect that nobody could say that: "Such and such a thing is not included in the gifts of the citizens."

Seeing the people's offerings, the king became desperate, thinking: "What is the use of my living if I cannot perform better than the people in the giving of alms?"

So he lay down on his couch, thinking of ways and means to outdo his subjects. Queen Mallikā then went to the king and asked: "Why are you lying down, Great King? Why do your sense faculties look as though you are fading away?" – "Don't you know, my dear queen?" asked the king in return. "No, I do not, Great King," replied the queen. The king then related the matter to her.

Queen Mallikā then said to the king: "Do not worry and fret, Great King. Where have you learnt that a monarch ruling over land and water can be defeated by his subjects? I shall try to organize your generosity."

Having encouraged the king thus, the queen gave her advice as she was desirous of taking over the management of the matchless alms giving (*asadisa-dāna*) in the following manner: "Have a pavilion, Great King, built with fragrant planks of the Beautiful Sāla[230] tree for the 500 monks in the precincts of the golden palace. The people will stay outside the precincts. Have 500 white umbrellas made; each of 500 elephants will take hold of one umbrella with its trunk, and stand, sheltering each monk with it. Have eight boats made of the best gold. These boats are to be filled with perfumes in the middle of pavilion.

Between each pair of monks will sit a princess grinding scented wood for perfumes. Another princess will hold a round fan and flap it for each pair of monks. Other princesses will convey ground perfumes and put them in the boats. Among these princesses, some will carry branches of blue lotus flowers and stir the perfumes in the boats so that they will be pervaded with the fragrance from the perfumes. Certainly, the people have no princesses, no white umbrellas, no elephants. For these reasons the citizens will be defeated. Do, Great King, as I now have told you." Replying: "Very well, my dear, you have given me good advice," the king had everything done according to the queen's instructions.

While everything was being done accordingly, one tame elephant was yet to be acquired for a monk. Then the king asked: "A tamed elephant is wanted, dear queen. What shall we do?" – "Do you not have 500 elephants?" – "Yes, I have dear. But the rest are all untamed. Like the tornado wind they might turn very wild on seeing monks." – "I have an idea, Great King, as to where a young wild elephant should be placed to make him hold an umbrella with his trunk." – "Where is the place?" – "It is close to Ven. Aṅgulimāla," answered the queen.

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[230] A type of *Shorea robusta*.

The king had all this done, as advised by the queen. The young wild elephant stood there quietly with his tail tucked between its thighs, its ears down, and eyes closed. The people were amazed to see the elephant, saying to themselves: "Even such a wild elephant has now become such a docile and quiet animal!"

Having treated the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha to alms food, the king showed his [820] respect to him and said: "In this pavilion of alms giving, exalted Buddha, I offer to you things suitable for monks (*kappiya-bhaṇḍa*) as well as things unsuitable for them (*akappiya-bhaṇḍa*)."

The things that were offered in this matchless gift in a single day cost 140 million. Priceless were the four things offered to the Buddha: 1) The white umbrella; 2) the throne for sitting on; 3) the stand to place the bowl on; and 4) the wooden board to stand on after washing his feet. It was impossible to repeat such a grand offering to the Buddha. Therefore the alms giving performed by King Kosala became famous in the Dispensation as the matchless gift (*asadisa-dāna*). Indeed, such a matchless gift takes place but once to every Buddha. And that matchless gift which happened just once to our Buddha was organized by the wise lady, Queen Mallikā.

Ministers Juṇha and Kāla

King Pasenadi Kosala had two ministers: Juṇha and Kāḷa. Between them, Kāḷa considered: "A loss has indeed occurred to the king's palace! The treasures amounting to many millions have come to nothing in a single day. Having taken the king's gifts, these monks will return to their places and abandon themselves to slumber. Oh, the palace has come to ruin in unprecedented proportions!"

On the contrary, Juṇha thought like this: "The king has properly and successfully given alms! True, one who is not established in kingship cannot give such alms. There is no alms giver who does not share his merit with all other beings. I rejoice at the king's excellent matchless gift and say: Well done! Well done!

Reflecting thus, the minister Juṇha appreciated and took delight in the gift. When the Buddha had finished partaking of his food, King Pasenadi Kosala made himself ready to hear the discourse by holding a cup readey to pour the water of dedication, the discourse to be given by the Buddha in approval of the king's gift.

The Buddha reflected as follows: "The king has indeed given at great sacrifice as though he let a great flood roll down wave after wave. Could he succeed in gladdening the hearts of the people or could he not?"

Then he came to know the reactions in the minds of the two ministers and came to know further thus: "If I were to give a detailed discourse that goes well with the king's gift, the minister Kāḷa's head will be split into seven pieces but the other minister, Juṇha, will be established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*). Taking pity on Kāḷa, the Buddha delivered only a four line verse (*catuppadika*) despite such a great alms giving having been performed by the king; then he rose from his seat and left for the monastery.

Ven. Angulimāla's Courage

On their arrival back at the monastery, the monks asked Ven. Aṅgulamāla: "When you saw the wild elephant holding the umbrella over you, friend, were you not afraid?" Getting the answer in the negative, the monks drew near to the Buddha and complained with doubt: "Ven. Aṅgulimāla, exalted Buddha, professes to be an Arahat."

"Monks," addressed the Buddha, "Aṅgulamāla was not afraid indeed. Ascetics like my dear sons who are highly noble amidst Arahats have no fear." And the Buddha added the following verse as contained in the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 422):

> *Usabhaṁ pavaraṁ vīraṁ, mahesiṁ vijitāvinaṁ;*
> *anejaṁ nhātakaṁ Buddhaṁ, tam-ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ*
>
> Monks! The Arahat with the pollutants (*āsava*) destroyed, who is courageous as he knows no trembling like a bull-king, who possesses noble energy, who has [821] sought and acquired the aggregate of virtues, who has triumphed over the three evils: Māra as deity, *māra* as moral defilement, and *māra* as conditioning factors, who has quenched all craving for existences, who has washed away his mental dirt with the clear water of the path and who has realized the four truths, him I declare a Brahmin.

Destinies of the Two Ministers

King Pasenadi Kosala was unhappy and thought to himself as follows: "The Fortunate One has risen from his seat and left without giving me a discourse that would befit the occasion though I have performed a great alms giving (*dāna*) to the assembly of such greatness. Instead, he has merely uttered a verse. Perhaps, I have not done what is agreeable to him, I must have done what is not agreeable. Perhaps, I have not given suitable things, I must have given unsuitable things. Perhaps the Buddha is averse to me. The alms giving performed by me is known as a matchless gift (*asadisa-dāna*). The Buddha should have delivered some discourse appropriate to this kind of gift." Thinking thus he went to the monastery, paid respects to the Buddha and said: "Exalted Buddha, have I not given the right alms giving (*dāna*), or have I not given things that are good, or have I given things that are not good?"

When the Buddha replied: "Why do you ask me like this, Great King?" The king said: "You delivered no discourse in accord with my matchless gift." The Buddha replied: "You have given the right things, Great King. Yes, the gift you have given is known as a matchless gift. This kind of gift is given to each Buddha but once. It is not possible to repeat it."

Then the king asked: "Why then, exalted Buddha, did you not preach to us in accord with the greatness of the gift?" – "Because the audience was not pure." – "What was the defect of the audience, exalted Buddha?" the Buddha then told the king of the reactions of the two ministers and explained that he had not taught elaborately out of compassion for Kāḷa. The king then asked Kāḷa whether it was true. When Kāḷa answered in the affirmative, the king banished him from the kingdom, saying: "As I, with my family, gave from my own property without taking a coin from you, what trouble did you suffer? Kāḷa, get out! But the wealth I have given you remains yours, I will not take it back. However, you must leave the country on this day!"

Then the king summoned the other minister, Juṇha, and asked him whether it was true that he had reacted favourably, and on receiving a positive answer, the king said to Junha: "Well done, uncle, well done! I admire you, uncle. Take over my retinue and give gifts for seven days the way I have done."

So saying, the king handed over his kingship to Juṇha for seven days, after which, he addressed the Buddha: "Look at what the fool has done, exalted Buddha. He is the one who stood against my gift being given in such a manner!" "Yes, Great King," said the Buddha, "the fools are those who do not approve of another's act of generosity but condemn it and finally land up in a suffering abode. The wise, however, rejoice in other's gift and finally attain happy states." And the Buddha uttered the following verse (Dhp 177):

> *Na ve kadariyā Deva-lokaṁ vajanti,*
> *bālā have nappasaṁsanti dānaṁ,*
> *hīro ca dānaṁ anumodamāno,*
> *teneva so hoti sukhī parattha.*

> Great King! Indeed those who are hard and stingy do not attain celestial abodes. The fools, who are ignorant of the present world and the future, indeed do not admire gifts and are not happy about it. Only the far-sighted [822] man of wisdom is able to rejoice in gifts. For the very reason of his rejoicing, upon his death, he enjoys divine bliss.

At the end of the teaching, the minister Juṇha became a noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*). Enjoying the king's favour, he performed charitable acts for seven days in the manner of the king.

When the Buddha spoke the verse beginning with (Dhp 177): *Na ve kadariyā Deva-lokaṁ vajanti*, "indeed those who are hard and stingy do not attain celestial abodes," King Pasenadi Kosala was so pleased that he offered the Buddha a double robe made in Sivi country and worth 100,000 pieces of money. Thereafter, he re-entered the city.

The Birth Story about King Sivi

> [The following is based on the Birth Story about King Sivi (*Sivi-jātaka*, Ja 499) and its commentary.]

The next day, at the assembly, the monks talked about the King's generosity; "Friends, King Kosala was not satisfied even with his matchless gift that he had just given; so, after the Fortunate One had taught the Dhamma, he offered him again the double robe made in Sivi worth 100,000. The king is so insatiable in his thirst for alms giving."

Then the Buddha came and asked what they were talking about and on hearing what was being discussed, he said: "It is easy, monks, to give away one's external belongings. The good and wise Bodhisattas of old gave away their wealth daily to the value of 600,000, making it unnecessary for the whole populace of Jambudīpa to work with their ploughs. Yet they were not satisfied with giving such external things (*bāhira-dāna*). They believed unwaveringly that: 'He who gives what he is very fond of can enjoy the special benefit which he is so fond of.' With this belief, they gave away even their eyes to those who came into their presence and asked for them."

> [At the request of the monks, the Buddha related the Birth Story about King Sivi, an event that happened in the past.]

Once upon a time, when the mighty King Sivi reigned in the city of Ariṭṭhapura in the kingdom of Sivi, the Great Being was born as his son. They called his name Prince Sivi. When he grew up, he went to Takkasilā and studied there; then returning, he proved his knowledge to his father the king, and was made viceroy by him. At his father's death he became king himself, and, forsaking the ways of evil, he kept the ten royal virtues and ruled in righteousness. He caused six alms halls to be built, at the four gates, in the midst of the city, and at his own door. He was munificent in distributing each day 600,000 pieces of money. On the eighth, fourteenth, and fifteenth days he never missed visiting the alms halls to see the distribution made.

Once, on the day of the full moon, the state umbrella had been lifted up early in the morning, and he sat on the royal throne thinking over the gifts he had given. He thought to himself: "Of all outside things there is nothing I have not given; but this kind of giving does not content me. I want to give something which is a part of myself. Well, this day when I go to the alms hall, I vow that if anyone ask for something not from outside me, but name what is a part of myself, if he should mention my very heart, I will cut open my breast with a spear, and as though I were drawing up a water-lily, stalk and all, from a calm lake, I will pull forth my heart dripping with blood-clots and give it him: If he should name the flesh of my body, I will cut the flesh off my body and give it, as though I were graving with a graving tool; let him name my blood, I will give him my blood, dropping it in his mouth or filling a bowl with it; or again, if one say, I can't get my household work done, come and do a slave's work at my home, then I will leave my royal dress and stand without, proclaiming myself a slave, and slave's

work I will do; should any men demand my eyes, I will tear out my eyes and give them, as one might take out the pith of a palm tree." Thus he thought within himself:

> "If there be any human gift that I have never made, be it my eyes, I'll give it now, all firm and unafraid."

Then he bathed himself with sixteen pitchers of perfumed water, and adorned himself in all his magnificence, and after a meal of choice food he mounted upon an elephant richly caparisoned and went to the alms hall.

Sakka, perceiving his resolution, thought: "King Sivi has determined to give his eyes to any chance comer who may ask. Will he be able to do it, or no?" He determined to try him; and, in the form of a Brahmin old and blind, he posted himself on a high place, and when the king came to his alms hall he stretched out his hand and stood crying: "Long live the king!" Then the king drove his elephant towards him, and said: "What do you say, Brahmin?" Sakka said to him: "Great King! In all the inhabited world there is no spot where the fame of your munificent heart has not sounded. I am blind, and you have two eyes." Then he repeated the first verse, asking for an eye:

> "To ask an eye the old man comes from far, for I have none; give me one of yours, I pray, then we shall each have one."

When the Great Being heard this, thought he: "Why that is just what I was thinking in my palace before I came! What a fine chance! My heart's desire will be fulfilled today; I shall give a gift which no man ever gave yet." And he recited the second verse:

Sivi:

> "Who taught you hither to wend your way, mendicant, and for an eye to pray? The chiefest portion of a man is this, and hard for men to part with, so they say."

Sakka:

> "Sujampati among the gods, the same here among men called Maghavā by name, he taught me hither to wend my way, begging, and for an eye to urge my claim. It is the chiefest gift for which I pray! Give me an eye, do

> not say me nay! Give me an eye, that chiefest gift of gifts, so hard for men to part with, as they say!"

Sivi:

> "The wish that brought thee hither, the wish that did arise within, be that wish fulfilled. Here, Brahmin, take my eyes. One eye you did request of me; behold, I give you two! Go with good sight, in all the people's view; so be thy wish fulfilled and now come true."

So much the king said. But, thinking it not meet that he should root out his eyes and bestow them there and then, he brought the Brahmin indoors with him, and sitting on the royal throne, sent for a surgeon named Sīvaka. "Take out my eye," he then said.

Now all the city rang with the news, that the king wished to tear out his eyes and give them to a Brahmin. Then the commander-in-chief, and all the other officials, and those beloved of the king, gathered together from city and harem, and recited three verses, that they might turn the king from his purpose:

> "Do not give your eye, my lord; desert us not, king! Give money, pearls and coral give, and many a precious thing: Give thoroughbreds caparisoned, forth be the chariots rolled, king, drive up the elephants all fine with cloth of gold; these give, king! That we may all preserve you safe and sound, your faithful people, with our cars and chariots ranged around."

Hereupon the king recited three verses:

> "The one who, having sworn to give, is then unfaithful found, puts his own neck within a snare low hidden on the ground. The one who, having sworn to give, is then unfaithful found, more sinful is than sin, and he to Yama's house is bound. Unasked give nothing; neither give the thing he asks not, this therefore which the Brahmin asks, I give it on the spot."

Then the courtiers asked: "What do you desire in giving your eyes?" repeating a verse:

> "Life, beauty, joy, or strength, what is the prize, O King, what motive for your deed supplies? Why should the King of Sivi-land supreme for the next world's sake thus give up his eyes?"

The king answered them in a verse:

> "In giving thus, not glory is my goal, not sons, not wealth, or kingdoms to control. This is the good old way of holy men; of giving gifts enamoured is my mind."

To the Great Being's words the courtiers answered nothing; so the Great Being addressed Sīvaka the surgeon in a verse:

> "A friend and comrade, Sīvaka, art thou: Do as I bid thee – thou hast skill enough – take out my eyes, for this is my desire, and in the beggar's hands bestow them now."

But Sīvaka said: "Think, my lord, to give one's eyes is no light thing." – "Sīvaka, I have considered; don't delay, nor talk too much in my presence." Then he thought: "It is not fitting that a skilful surgeon like me should pierce a king's eyes with the lancet," so he pounded a number of simples, rubbed a blue lotus with the powder, and brushed it over the right eye; round rolled the eye, and there was great pain. "Reflect, my king, I can make it all right." – "Go on, friend, no delay, please."

Again he rubbed in the powder, and brushed it over the eye: the eye started from the socket, the pain was worse than before. "Reflect, my king, I can still restore it." – "Be quick with the job!"

A third time he smeared a sharper powder, and applied it; by the drug's power round went the eye, out it came from the socket, and hung dangling at the end of the tendon. "Reflect, my king, I can yet restore it again." – "Be quick."

The pain was extreme, blood was trickling down, the king's garments were stained with the blood. The king's women and the courtiers fell at his feet, crying: "My lord, do not sacrifice your eyes!" Loudly they wept and wailed. The king endured the pain, and said: "My friend, be quick." – "Very well, my lord," said the physician; and with his left hand grasping the eyeball he took a knife in his right, and severing the tendon, laid the eye in the Bodhisatta's hand. He, gazing with his left eye at the right and enduring the pain, said: "Brahmin, come here." When the Brahmin came near, he went on: "The eye of omniscience is dearer than this eye a hundred fold, indeed a thousand fold; there you have my reason for this action," and he gave it to the Brahmin, who raised it and placed it

in his own eye socket. There it remained fixed by his power like a blue lotus in bloom.

When the Bodhisatta with his left eye saw that eye in his head, he cried: "Ah, how good is this, my gift of an eye!" [408] Thrilled, he straightway with the joy that had arisen within him, gave the other eye also. Sakka placed this also in the place of his own eye, and departed from the king's palace, and then from the city, with the gaze of the multitude upon him, and went away to the world of gods. The Buddha, explaining this, repeated a verse and a half:

> "So Sivi spurred on Sīvaka, and he fulfilled his mind. He drew the king's eyes out, and to the Brahmin these consigned, and now the Brahmin had the eyes, and now the king was blind."

In a short while the king's eyes began to grow; as they grew, and before they reached the top of the holes, a lump of flesh rose up inside like a ball of wool, filling the cavity; they were like a doll's eyes, but the pain ceased. The Bodhisatta remained in the palace a few days. Then he thought: "What has a blind man to do with ruling? I will hand over my kingdom to the courtiers, and go into my park, and become an ascetic, and live as a recluse." He summoned his courtiers, and told them what he intended to do: "One man," said he, "shall be with me, to wash my face, and so forth, and to do all that is proper, and you must fasten a cord to guide me to the retiring places." Then calling for his charioteer, he bade him prepare the chariot. But the courtiers would not allow him to go in the chariot; they brought him out in a golden litter, and set him down by the lake side, and then, guarding him all around, returned. The king sat in the litter thinking of his gift.

At that moment Sakka's throne became hot; and pondering he perceived the reason: "I will offer the king a boon," thought he, "and make his eye well again." So to that place he came; and not far off from the Bodhisatta, he walked up and down, up and down. To explain this, the Master recited these verses:

> "A few days past; the eyes began to heal, and sound to appear. The fostering King of Sivi then sent for his charioteer. Prepare the chariot, charioteer; to me then make it known. I go to park and wood and lake with lilies overgrown. He sat in a litter by the waterside, and here Sujampati, the Lord of the Devas, great Sakka, did appear."

"Who is that?" cried the Bodhisatta, when he heard the sound of the footsteps. Sakka repeated a verse:

> "Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, am I; to visit you I came: Choose a boon, royal sage! whatever your wish you may name."

The king replied with another verse:

> "Wealth, strength, and treasure without end, these I have left behind, Sakka, death and nothing more I want: for I am blind."

Then Sakka said: "Do you ask death, King Sivi, because you wish to die, or because you are blind?" – "Because I am blind, my lord." – "The gift is not everything in itself, your majesty, it is given with an eye to the future. Yet there is a motive relating to this visible world. Now you were asked for one eye, and gave two; make an act of truth about it." Then he began a verse:

> "Warrior, lord of humankind, declare the thing that's true. If you the truth declare, your eye shall be restored to you."

On hearing this, the Bodhisatta replied, "If you wish to give me an eye, Sakka, do not try any other means, but let my eye be restored as a consequence of my gift." Sakka said: "Though they call me Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, your majesty, yet I cannot give an eye to anyone else; but by the fruit of the gift given by you, and by nothing else, your eye shall be restored to you." Then the other repeated a verse, maintaining that his gift was well given:

> "Whatever sort, whatever kind of suitor shall draw near, whoever comes to ask of me, he to my heart is dear. If my solemn words be true, now let an eye reappear!"

Even as he uttered the words, one of his eyes grew up in the socket. Then he repeated a couple of verses to restore the other:

> "A Brahmin came to visit me, one of my eyes to crave. Unto that Brahmin mendicant the pair of them I gave. A greater joy and more delight that action did afford; if these my solemn words be true, be the other eye restored!"

On the instant appeared his second eye. But these eyes of his were neither natural nor divine. An eye given by Sakka as the Brahmin, cannot be natural, we know; on the other hand, a divine eye cannot be produced in anything that is

injured. But these eyes are called the eyes of truth absolute and perfect. At the time when they came into existence, the whole royal retinue by Sakka's power was assembled; and Sakka standing in the midst of the throng, uttered praise in a couple of verses:

> "Fostering King of Sivi land, these holy hymns of yours have gained for you as bounty free this pair of eyes divine. Through rock and wall, over hill and dale, whatever bar may be, 100 leagues on every side those eyes of thine shall see."

Having uttered these verses, poised in the air before the multitude, with a last counsel to the Great Being that he should be vigilant, Sakka returned to the world of gods. And the Great Being, surrounded by his retinue, went back in great pomp to the city, and entered the palace called Candaka, the Peacock's Eye. The news that he had got his eyes again spread abroad all through the kingdom of Sivi. All the people gathered together to see him, with gifts in their hands.

"Now all this multitude is come together," thought the Bodhisatta, "I shall praise my gift that I gave." He caused a great pavilion to be put up at the palace gate, where he seated himself upon the royal throne, with the white umbrella spread above him. Then the drum was sent beating about the city, to collect all the trade guilds. Then he said: "People of Sivi! Now you have beheld these divine eyes, never eat food without giving something away!" and he repeated four verses, declaring the Dhamma:

> "Who, if he's asked to give, would answer no, although it be his best and choicest prize? People of Sivi thronged in concourse, see! Come hither, see the best of gifts, my eyes! Through rock and wall, over hill and dale, whatever bar may be, A hundred leagues on every side these eyes of mine can see. Self-sacrifice in all men mortal living, of all things is most fine. I sacrificed a mortal eye; and giving, received an eye divine. See, people! See, give before you eat, let others have a share. This done with your best will and care, blameless to heaven you shall repair."

In these four verses he declared the Dhamma; and after that, every fortnight, on the holy day, even every 15th day, he declared the Dhamma in these same verses without cessation to a great gathering of people. Hearing which, the people gave alms and did good deeds, and went to swell the hosts of heaven.

The Birth Story about Burning

[The following is based on the Birth Story about Burning (*Āditta-jātaka*, Ja 424) and its commentary.]

One day, after King Kosala's matchless alms giving, the monks at the assembly discussed among themselves: "Friends, only with discrimination did King Kosala give the matchless gift to the Saṅgha of noble monks headed by the Fortunate One, as he knows himself that they form the fertile soil for sowing the seeds of meritorious deeds."

The Buddha joined them and having heard what they were talking about, he said: "Monks, it is no wonder that after careful selection, King Kosala has sown the seeds of a matchless alms giving in the supreme field of my Dispensation. Learned and virtuous Bodhisattas of the past also performed great gifts only after discerning who should be the recipients very carefully."

Then at the request of the monks, the Buddha narrated the Birth Story about Burning (*Āditta-jātaka*, Ja 424).

[Again in the Great Chronicles instructions were given to look it up in the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*), as before I include it for completion's sake. The translation is that of H.T. Francis and R.A. Neil, slightly modified to fit in with the conventions used here.]

Once upon a time a King named Bharata reigned at Roruva in the kingdom of Sovīra. He practised the ten royal virtues, won the people by the four elements of popularity, stood to the multitude like father and mother and gave great gifts to the poor, the wayfarers, the beggars, the suitors and the like.

His Chief Queen Samuddavijayā was wise and full of knowledge. One day he looked round his alms hall and thought: "My alms are devoured by worthless greedy people; I don't like this; I should like to give alms to the virtuous Paccekabuddhas who deserve the best of gifts; they live in the Himālaya region; who will bring them here on my invitation and whom shall I send on this errand?"

He spoke to the queen, who said: "King, be not concerned; sending flowers by the force of our giving suitable things, and of our virtue and truthfulness, we will invite the Paccekabuddhas, and when they come we will give them gifts with all things requisite." The King agreed. He made proclamation by drum that

all the townspeople should undertake to keep the precepts; he himself with his household undertook all the duties for the holy days and gave great gifts in charity. He had a gold box full of jasmine flowers brought, came down from his palace and stood in the royal courtyard. There prostrating himself on the ground with the five contacts, he saluted towards the eastern quarter and threw seven handfuls of flowers, with the words: "I salute the saints in the eastern quarter; if there is any merit in us, show compassion on us and receive our alms."

As there are no Paccekabuddhas in the eastern quarter, they did not come next day. On the second day he paid respects to the southern quarter; but none came from there either. On the third day he paid respects to the western quarter, but none came. On the fourth day he paid respects to the northern quarter, and after paying respects he threw seven handfuls of flowers with the words: "May the Paccekabuddhas who live in the northern district of the Himālaya receive our alms." The flowers went and fell on 500 Paccekabuddhas in the Nandamūla cave. On reflection they understood that the king had invited them; so they called seven of their number and said: "Sirs, the king invites you; show him favour."

These Paccekabuddhas came through the air and alighted at the king's gate. Seeing them the king saluted them with delight, made them come up into the palace, showed them great honour and gave them gifts. After the meal he asked them for next day and so on until the fifth day, feeding them for six days; on the seventh day he made ready a gift with all the requisites, arranged beds and chairs inlaid with gold, and set before the seven Paccekabuddhas sets of three robes and all other things used by holy men. The king and queen formally offered these things to them after their meal, and stood in respectful salutation. To express their thanks the elder of the assembly spoke two verses:

> Whatever man can save from flames that burn his dwelling down, not what is left to be consumed, will still remain his own. The world's on fire, decay and death are there the flame to feed; save what you can by charity, a gift is saved indeed.

Thus expressing thanks the elder admonished the king to be diligent in virtue: then he flew up in the air, straight through the peaked roof of the palace and alighted in the Nandamūla cave; along with him all the requisites that had been given him flew up and alighted in the cave; and the bodies of the king and queen

became full of joy. After his departure, the other six also expressed thanks in a verse each:

> He who gives to righteous men, strong in holy energy, crosses Yama's flood, and then gains a dwelling in the sky. Like to war is charity; hosts may flee before a few; give a little piously; bliss hereafter is your due.
>
> Prudent givers please the lord, worthily they spend their toil. Rich the fruit their gifts afford, like a seed in fertile soil. They who never rudely speak, wrong to living things abjure; men may call them timid, weak; for 'tis fear that keeps them pure.
>
> Lower duties win for man, reborn on earth, a princely fate, middle duties win them heaven, highest win the purest state. Charity is blest indeed, yet the Dhamma gains higher meed; ages old and late attest, thus the wise have reached their rest.

So they also went with the requisites given them. The seventh Paccekabuddha in his thanks praised Nibbāna to the king, and admonishing him carefully went to his abode. The king and queen gave gifts all their lives and passed through the path to heaven.

Sirigutta and Garahadinna

> [The following is based on the Dhamma Verses (Dhp 58-59) and their commentary.]

In Sāvatthī, there were two friends, the householders Sirigutta and Garahadinna. The former being a follower of the Buddha whereas the latter was a follower of the heretical teachers.

The heretical teachers said constantly to Garahadinna: "Should you not ask your friend Sirigutta thus: 'Friend, why do you follow the monk Gotama? What will you gain from the monk Gotama?' Should not you persuade him in such a way as to make him come over to us and offer us something?"

On hearing the words of his teachers again and again, Garahadinna went to his friend and wherever they were standing, sitting, or doing something else, he said to Sirigutta: "Friend, what is the use of the monk Gotama to you? What benefit will accrue to you from your devotion to the monk Gotama? Do you not think you should serve [823] my teachers and give them alms too?"

The householder Sirigutta said nothing and kept silent for many days. But being sick of hearing his friend's repeated request, he said to Garahadinna one day: "Friend, you come to me constantly and wherever we are standing, sitting or doing something else, you ask me what benefit will accrue to me from my devotion to my master and you also urge me to go over to your teachers and give them alms. But tell me first what things do your teachers know?"

Then Garahadinna replied to his friend Sirigutta: "Oh! What a surprise, sir! Do not speak like this. As for my teachers, there is nothing unknown to them. They know all about the past, the present and the future; all that is done, said and thought, that is, body, verbal and mental actions. They know: 'This will happen and this will not.' They know: 'This should be and this should not.' They know everything fully!"

Sirigutta invites the Heretics

Thereupon, Sirigutta asked Garahadinna in order to get his affirmation: "Friend, do you say so?" The latter boldly affirmed: "Yes, I do." Then the former said: "In that case, friend, you have made a grave mistake by not telling me about this for such a long time. Only today I will know the intellectual power of your teachers. Go, friend, invite your teachers in my name for the meal tomorrow."

Delighted, the householder Garahadinna went to his teachers, paid his respects and said: "Masters, my friend Sirigutta has invited you to tomorrow's meal." The heretical teachers asked: "Did Sirigutta himself do so?" – "Yes, sirs, Sirigutta himself did," replied Garahadinna in confirmation. Jubilant, the heretical teachers said: "Very well, Garahadinna. With the householder Sirigutta as our devoted follower, what luxury is there that will not be ours?"

Sirigutta's home was very large. In the compound he had a long huge ditch dug between his two houses and had the ditch filled with excrement. On the two outward edges, tree stumps were set up and fastened with ropes. The forelegs of couches were placed on the fore edge of the ditch and the hindlegs on the ropes. This was made with this idea: "When they come, they will take their seats; when they take their seats, they will fall headlong into the ditch." Then the couches were covered with coverings, the edges of which touched the ground, so that the ditch was hidden.

Several large pots were placed behind the house. The brims of the pots were bound with banana leaves and white pieces of cloth and the empty pots smeared on the outside with gruel, rice, butter, oil, honey, molasses and crumbs of cakes.

The next day the householder Garahadinna went quietly to Sirigutta's residence early in the morning and asked: "Have you prepared your offerings for the venerable ones?" – "Yes, I have," replied Sirigutta. "Where are the offerings?" asked Garahadinna. Sirigutta answered, pointing to the pots: "These pots are full of gruel. These full of rice. These full of butter, molasses and cakes. The seats have also been arranged." Saying: "Very good, friend," Garahadinna left. On his return, the 500 heretical teachers came to Sirigutta's place.

Coming out of his house, Sirigutta paid respects with with the hands, knees and forehead touching the ground to the heretical teachers. Raising his folded palms, he stood before them and communicated with them but mentally: "It is said that you masters know everything such as the past, present and future. It has been said so by your attendant and supporter Garahadinna. If you really know everything, please do not go into my residence. There is no gruel for [824] you who have come to my place, nor is there rice, nor any other food. If you do enter my dwelling, I will have you dumped into a ditch full of excrement and I will also have you beaten."

Having mentally told them thus, Sirigutta signalled to his workers by his facial expression that they, knowing that the teachers were about to take their seats, should remove the coverings from behind just before the teachers sat down so that the coverings might not be soiled with the excrement.

Then Sirigutta invited the teachers, saying: "Please come this way, sirs." The heretics went between the two houses and were about to take their seats when Sirigutta's men said: "Wait a moment, sirs. Do not sit yet." – "Why?" asked the teachers. "You should sit only knowing your manners." – "What should we do?" "Sirs, you should first stand near your seats, and you should all sit down at the same time."

> These instructions were designed to make the first teacher, who would fall into the ditch, unable to warn the others not to take their seats.

The teachers said: "Very well," and considering that the instructions should be followed, they all 500 stood near their seats in order. Then the men told them: "Please sit down all together, quickly!" When the teachers were about to sit, the

men removed the coverings from the couches. As soon as the teachers sat down, the legs of the couches on the rope slipped, and they fell head-long into the ditch.

Sirigutta closed the house doors and to every teacher who had clambered out of the ditch, and he gave them a good thrashing with his stick, saying: "Why do not you know the events of the past, the future and the present as claimed by your supporter Garahadinna?" After beating them to his satisfaction, he had the doors opened, saying: "This much is enough for them."

The heretical teachers tried to run away from the house but the plastered ground along the way had been made slippery beforehand and they could not control themselves and fell to the ground. Every one of them who fell down was beaten again and sent away with the word: "This much suffices for you."

The heretical teachers went to the house of their supporter Garahadinna, crying: "Sirigutta has ruined and humiliated us! He has ruined and humiliated us!" When the householder Garahadinna saw his teachers ruined and humiliated and reduced to a disaster, he became furious and said: "My friend Sirigutta has let me down! He had the heart to have my teachers beaten and made my teachers miserable, they who form a good field for sowing the seeds of good works and who can bestow all the desired benefits in the Deva realm even on anyone who just stretches his hands to pay respect to them, not to speak of anyone who gives them offerings." Muttering thus, he went to the court of King Pasenadi Kosala and filed a suit for a fine of 100,000 coins against Sirigutta.

Then King Kosala summoned Sirigutta to the court. Sirigutta came and paid respect to the king and said: "Great King, impose the fine on me only after investigating the matter. Do not do so without an inquiry." When the king agreed, saying: "Householder I shall fine you only after investigation." Sirigutta said: "Very well, Great King." – "Then you, Sirigutta, state your case," said the king.

Sirigutta reported to the king all that had happened, beginning with the following words: "Great King, my friend Garahadinna, a follower of the heretical teachers, repeatedly asked me everywhere what was the use of following the monk Gotama and what benefit would accrue to me from my devotion to the monk Gotama."

The king, looking at Garahadinna, asked: "Did you really say so?" When the latter admitted as much, saying: "Yes, Great King," the king passed the

following judgment: “Regarding your teachers, who as ‘Great Buddhas’ are so ignorant of the creation [825] of the dirty ditch, why did you tell Sirigutta, a follower of the Fortunate One, that they knew all the events that took place in the three divisions of time, past, present and future? The fine of 100,000 pieces of money for which you have sued Sirigutta must be paid by you.” So saying, the king imposed the payment of the fine on Garahadinna. His heretical teachers who had come to the court as complainants were beaten and sent away.

Garahadinna’s Revenge

The householder Garahadinna was angry with Sirigutta and did not speak to him for a month afterwards. Then he thought to himself: “For me, it is not nice not to be on speaking terms with him. Indeed, I should ruin his teacher in revenge.” So he went to Sirigutta and broke the ice: “Friend Sirigutta!” – “What is the matter, friend?” replied Sirigutta. Then the former blamed him, saying: “Friend, it is natural for friends and relatives to quarrel and dispute. Why did not you speak to me about anything for a long time, friend? Why are you behaving like this?”

Sirigutta replied calmly: “Friend I did not speak to you because you did not speak to me. There is no other reason.” Garahadinna tried to make peace: “Friend, let bygones be bygones. Let us not destroy our mutual friendship.” From that time, they became reconciled and moved about again together.

One day, Sirigutta said to his friend, the way the latter had done before: “Friend, what is the use of your teachers for you? What benefit will accrue to you from your devotion to your teacher? Do you not think you should serve my teacher, the Fortunate One, and give alms to the venerable ones?” Garahadinna had been longing for that kind of request, and it was like scratching an itchy part of his body with a fingernail.

So he asked his friend: “Friend Sirigutta, what does your teacher, the monk Gotama know?” Then Sirigutta said: “Friend, do not speak like that. There is nothing that is not known to our teacher, the Fortunate One. He knows all the things of the past, present and future, he comprehends clearly the analysis of the sixteen aspects of a living being’s mental processes.”

Then Garahadinna said: “Friend, I did not know it earlier. Why have you kept silent about it for such a long time? In that case, friend, you go and invite your

teacher, the Fortunate One, for the meal at my place tomorrow. I would like to feed him. Please tell him to accept with 500 monks the food I am going to offer."

So Sirigutta approached the Buddha and said: "Exalted Buddha! My friend Garahadinna has asked me to invite you for an alms giving. He said you should accept, together with 500 monks, his food-offering tomorrow. There is, however, one thing: One day in the past I did something to his heretical teachers; I do not know whether he wants to take vengeance for what I have done to him or if he wants to offer you food with a pure heart. Please reflect upon his invitation and accept it if he is sincere. If not, please do not accept."

When the Buddha reflected on what ulterior motive Garahadinna had, he foresaw that the householder had a large ditch dug between his two houses, had it filled with 80 cartloads of firewood, burnt them with the intention that the Buddha and his monks would fall into the ditch full of embers.

Again when the Buddha contemplated: "Will my visit to his place be beneficial or not," he clearly had a vision as follows: He would stretch his leg into the ditch of fire. At that moment the rough mat covering the ditch would vanish. A large lotus flower, having the size of a chariot wheel or a cart wheel, would appear out of the ditch. He would step onto the centre of the flower and sit there. Likewise his 500 monks would step on to the lotus flowers and take their seats respectively. People would assemble. With two [826] verses, the Buddha would give a blessing talk. By the end of the talk, 84,000 beings would realize the four truths and gain liberation. The two friends, Sirigutta and Garahadinna, would become Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*). Inspired with faith, both of them would give away their properties in honour of the Buddha's Dispensation of eight wonders.

So the Buddha decided to go for the sake of Garahadinna. Having had the vision clearly, the Buddha accepted the invitation by keeping silent. Sirigutta went to Garahadinna's place and told him of the Buddha's acceptance. Saying: "Dear friend, with gladness do honour to the Buddha, the Lord of the Three Worlds," Then Sirigutta went home.

Thinking: "Now is the time to do what should be done to Sirigutta," Garahadinna had a large ditch dug between his two houses, had 80 cart loads of firewood brought there, filled the ditch with the firewood, burnt them to create embers and kept them glowing the whole night. Over the ditch he had placed

wooden planks covered with rough mats that were smeared with cowdung. He also had a path made by placing fragile sticks on one side so that when monks tread and broke them, they would fall into the ditch of embers.

At the back of his residence, he placed large pots the way Sirigutta did. The seats were also arranged in the same way. Early in the morning Sirigutta went to Garahadinna's residence and asked: "Friend, have you made your offerings ready?" – "Yes, I have," answered Garahadinna. "Where are those offerings?" – "Come, let us go and see," said Garahadinna and showed Sirigutta the way the latter had done before. "Excellent, friend!" said Sirigutta delightedly.

People had assembled. There usually was a large gathering of people whenever the Buddha was invited by a man of heretical views. Other heretics also came together, thinking and saying: "We are going to witness with our own eyes the downfall of the monk Gotama." Those who possessed right beliefs also attended the assembly, hoping that the Fortunate One would deliver a great discourse today, and that they might have a chance to see the might and glory of the Fortunate One.

The next day the Buddha went with 500 monks to the gate of Garahadinna's residence. The householder came out and made obeisance with the hands, knees and forehead touching the ground; standing and raising his joined hands, he said mentally, not by word of mouth: "Venerable sirs, it is said that you know the past, present and future, that you comprehend the analysis of the sixteen aspects of a living being's mental process. That is what your devotee Sirigutta told me. If that is true, do not enter my house. There is really no gruel, no food, nothing for you. In fact, I am going to harm you by making you all fall into a ditch filled with embers."

Expressing his intention mentally thus he took the alms bowl from the Buddha's hand. After saying: "Please come this way," he added: "Venerable sir, you visitors to my place have come here not knowing etiquette." When the Buddha asked: "What should we do?" Garahadinna said: "You should enter the house one by one and it is only after the preceding one has sat down that the next one should follow."

> This suggestion was made because if they all went together other monks would see the one who went ahead of them falling into the ditch. Seeing

his fall nobody else would proceed. Therefore his idea was to destroy them by letting them one after another fall into the fire.

Saying: "Very well, supporter," the Buddha walked off alone. When Garahadinna came to the fire ditch, he stepped back and told the Buddha to go ahead. As soon as the Buddha stretched his leg over the ditch, the rough mats disappeared. Out of the fire emerged large lotus flowers each having the size of a chariot wheel or a cartwheel. The Buddha walked, stepping on to the centre of each lotus flower, and sat on the Buddha's seat placed there. The 500 monks, too, walked on the centre of one flower to that of another and took their respective seats. [827]

On seeing this extraordinary, unprecedented phenomenon, Garahadinna's body emitted heat and vapour, like that from a hot pan of oil. He hurried to his friend Sirigutta and appealed to him, saying: "Friend Sirigutta, please be my refuge." – "Why did you say so, friend?" asked Sirigutta. Garahadinna replied: "There was no gruel, no food, nothing, in my home for 500 monks. What shall I do?" Sirigutta asked him bluntly: "What have you done, friend?" Garahadinna confessed: "Friend, to speak frankly I had a large ditch full of embers made between the two houses, my intention being to subdue the Buddha and his 500 monks by making them fall into the ditch. Yet, there emerged large lotus flowers out of the ditch. The Buddha and all the monks walked on the flowers and are sitting on the seats. What am I to do now?"

When he made his confession and asked for help, Sirigutta argued, saying: "But have you not personally shown me, saying: 'These many are large pots. This much is gruel, this much is rice, etc.?' " – "Friend Sirigutta, what I have told you is utterly false." Garahadinna confessed further: "The pots are empty, containing no gruel, no rice, nothing." Then Sirigutta said as he had unwavering faith in the Buddha's power and glory: "Be that as it may, friend. Go home and you will see the gruel and other foods in your pots."

The Buddha's Unimaginable Capacity

No sooner had Sirigutta said so, than the pots which were falsely claimed by Garahadinna to be full of gruel became full of gruel, the pots which were falsely claimed by him to be full of rice became full of rice, and the same happened to the other pots. When he went home and was confronted with all the miraculous happenings, his whole body was filled with joy. His mind also became serene.

After serving the Buddha and his monks respectfully with food, Garahadinna wanted the Buddha to give a discourse in appreciation of the offerings so he took the alms bowl from the Buddha who had finished his meal. Desirous of giving such a discourse, the Buddha said: "Because these beings have no eye of wisdom, they are ignorant of the attributes of my disciples and the attributes of my Dispensation. Those who possess no eye of wisdom are known to be blind and those who possess it are known to have eyesight." Then he spoke the following two verses:

> *Yathā saṅkāra-ṭhānasmiṁ, ujjhitasmiṁ mahā-pathe,*
> *padumaṁ tattha jāyetha, suci-gandhaṁ manoramaṁ.*
> *Evaṁ saṅkāra-bhūtesu, andha-bhūte puthujjane,*
> *atirocati paññāya, Sammā-sambuddha-sāvako.*
>
> Just as a lotus flower of 100 petals, pure, fragrant and delightful to every beholder, originates and arises wonderfully in the garbage dump along the public road, even so among those who should be discarded like garbage, the Buddha's disciple, a good and glorious person who has destroyed all his defilements, glows with splendour, surpassing by his wisdom all the worldlings who are like the blind as they lack wisdom.

By the end of the discourse, 84,000 people realized the four truths and won liberation. The two friends, Sirigutta and Garahadinna, attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). Inspired by faith, both of them dedicated all their wealth to the cause of the Buddha's Dispensation that was of eight wonders.

After giving an appreciative talk, the Buddha rose and returned to the monastery. At the assembly in the evening, the monks extolled the master, saying: [828] "Wonderful indeed, friends, is the power of the Fortunate One. A series of lotus flowers, each having the size of a chariot wheel or a cartwheel, arose out of the horrible embers."

The Buddha came to the assembly and asked: "Monks what are you talking about?" – "We are talking about this sort of subject, with reference to your power," answered the monks. Then the Buddha said: "Monks, it is no wonder that out of the heap of embers arose lotus-flowers for me to walk on, for I have become Perfectly Self-Awakened, Lord of the Three Worlds, omniscient. The lotus flowers emerged on one occasion in the past, when as a Bodhisatta, even

though I was still immature." Then at the request of the monks, the Buddha related in detail the Birth Story about the Embers (*Khadiraṅgāra-jātaka*, Ja 40).

> [Again in the Great Chronicles instructions were given to look it up in the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*), as before I include it for completion's sake. The translation is that of Robert Chalmers, slightly modified to fit in with the conventions used here.]

The Birth Story about the Embers

Once upon a time when Brahmadatta was reigning in Benares, the Bodhisatta came to life in the family of the lord high treasurer of Benares, and was brought up in the lap of all luxury like a royal prince. By the time he was come to years of discretion, being barely sixteen years old, he had made himself perfect in all accomplishments. At his father's death he filled the office of lord high treasurer, and built six almonries, one at each of the four gates of the city, one in the centre of the city, and one at the gate of his own mansion. Very bountiful was he, and he kept the precepts, and the Observance Day duties.

Now one day at breakfast-time when dainty fare of exquisite taste and variety was being brought in for the Bodhisatta, a Paccekabuddha rising from a seven days' absorption, and noticing that it was time to go his rounds, bethought him that it would he well to visit the treasurer of Benares that morning. So he cleaned his teeth with a tooth-stick made from the betel-vine, washed his mouth with water from lake Anotatta, put on his inner robe as he stood on the tableland of Manosilā, fastened on his belt, donned his double robe; and, equipped with a bowl which he called into being for the purpose, he passed through the air and arrived at the gate of the mansion just as the Bodhisatta's breakfast was taken in.

As soon as the Bodhisatta became aware of his presence there, he rose at once from his seat and looked at the attendant, indicating that a service was required. "What am I to do, my lord?" – "Bring his reverence's bowl," said the Bodhisatta.

At that very instant Māra the wicked rose up in a state of great excitement, saying: "It is seven days since the Paccekabuddha had food given him; if he gets none to-day, he will perish. I will destroy him and stop the treasurer too from giving." And that very instant he went and called into being within the mansion a pit of red-hot embers, 80 cubits deep, filled with Acacia-charcoal, all ablaze

and aflame like the great hell of Avīci. When he had created this pit, Māra himself took his stand in mid-air.

When the man who was on his way to fetch the bowl became aware of this, he was terrified and started back. "What makes you start back, my man?" asked the Bodhisatta. "My lord," was the answer, "there's a great pit of red-hot embers blazing and flaming in the middle of the house." And as man after man got to the spot, they were all panic-stricken, and ran away as fast as their legs would carry them.

Thought the Bodhisatta to himself: "Māra, the enthraller, must have been exerting himself to-day to stop me from alms giving. I have yet to learn, however, that I am to be shaken by 100, or by 1,000, Māras. We will see this day whose strength is the stronger, whose might is the mightier, mine or Māra's." So taking in his own hand the bowl which stood ready, he passed out from the house, and, standing on the brink of the fiery pit, looked up to the heavens. Seeing Māra, he said: "Who are you?" – "I am Māra," was the answer.

"Did you call into being this pit of red-hot embers?" – "Yes, I did." [233] – "Why?" – "To stop you from alms giving, and to destroy the life of that Paccekabuddha." – "I will not permit you either to stop me from my alms giving or to destroy the life of the Paccekabuddha. I am going to see to-day whether your strength or mine is the greater." And still standing on the brink of that fiery pit, he cried: "Reverend Paccekabuddha, even though I fall headlong into this pit of red-hot embers, I will not turn back. Only vouchsafe to take the food I bring." And so saying he repeated this verse:

> Far rather will I headlong plunge amain full in this gulf of hell, than stoop to shame! Vouchsafe, sir, at my hands to take this alms!

With these words the Bodhisatta, grasping the bowl of food, strode on with undaunted resolution right on to the surface of the pit of fire. But even as he did so, there rose up to the surface through all the 80 cubits of the pit's depth a large and peerless lotus-flower, which received the feet of the Bodhisatta! And from it there came a measure of pollen which fell on the head of the Great Being, so that his whole body was as it were sprinkled from head to foot with dust of gold! Standing right in the heart of the lotus, he poured the dainty food into the bowl of the Paccekabuddha.

And when the latter had taken the food and returned thanks, he flung his bowl aloft into the heavens, and right in the sight of all the people he himself rose bodily into the air likewise, and passed away to the Himālayas again, seeming to tread a track formed of clouds fantastically shaped. And Māra, too, defeated and dejected, passed away back to his own abode.

But the Bodhisatta, still standing in the lotus, taught [234] the truth to the people, extolling alms giving and the commandments; after which, girt round by the escorting multitude, he passed into his own mansion once more. And all his life long he did charity and other good works, till in the end he passed away to fare according to his deserts.

The Taming of Nandopananda

> This account of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna's taming of Nandopananda, the Nāga King, is taken from the Exposition of the Super-Powers (*Iddhi-niddesa*) in the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*), and from the commentary on Mahā Moggallāna's Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*, Thg 1149-1217).

Once, after hearing the Buddha's Dhamma talk, the merchant, Anāthapiṇḍika, invited the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, please accept, together with 500 monks, an alms giving at my house tomorrow." Having the Buddha's acceptance, the merchant returned home.

The Buddha accepted Anāthapiṇḍika's invitation and passed the rest of the remaining daytime and night-time. At dawn, when he surveyed the 10,000 world-element, the divine Nāga King, Nandopananda, appeared within the view of his intellectual vision.

The Buddha reflected: "The Nāga King has appeared in my vision. Has he done any good works in the past?" and he came to know that: "The Nāga King, having no faith in the Three Treasures, holds wrong views." Again, when he continued to reflect as to who could free the Nāga from his wrong views, he discerned Ven. Mahā Moggallāna.

At daybreak, the Buddha cleaned himself and addressed Ven. Ānanda: "My dear Ānanda, tell the 500 monks that I shall make a celestial journey to the Tāvatiṁsa Deva abode."

Particularly, on that day, the divine Nāgas were preparing for the Nāga King's feast and drunken orgy. Nandopananda was seated on a jewelled divine throne, and had the divine white umbrella held over his head. Surrounded by female dancers of three different categories of age, grown-up, young and those in between, and also by a host of Nāgas, he was viewing divine food and drinks that had been put in gold and silver vessels.

With the 500 monks the Buddha travelled to Tāvatiṁsa, passing above the mansion of Nandopananda and thus making himself visible to the latter. Then an evil thought arose in the Nāga King: "These wicked shaven-headed monks go to Tāvatiṁsa and come out passing over our abode from one higher mansion to another. This time, however, we will not allow these monks who scatter dust over us to move on." With this evil intention, he rose from his jewelled seat, went to the foot of Mount Meru and after changing his original body, he coiled himself round the mountain in seven folds and concealed the celestial world of Tāvatiṁsa from sight by enveloping it with his hood that lay prone from above.

Then Ven. Raṭṭhapāla asked the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, formerly standing from here, we could see Mount Meru; we could see its surrounding seven mountains; we could see Tāvatiṁsa; we could see the Vejayanta palace; we could see Sakka's flag hoisted on the Vejayanta Palace. Exalted Buddha, now we cannot see Mount Meru, the seven surrounding mountains, Tāvatiṁsa, the Vejayanta palace and Sakka's Flag, why is that?"

The Buddha replied: "My dear Raṭṭhapāla, this Nāga King Nandopananda is angry with [829] you all, and so after coiling his body round Mount Meru in seven folds, he has covered it with his hood and created darkness." Ven. Raṭṭhapāla then said to the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, let me tame the Nāga King," but the Buddha rejected his request. Thereafter, the venerables Bhaddiya, Rāhula and all others, rose one after another in the wake of Ven. Raṭṭhapāla and made their offer to tame the Nāga King. But the Buddha did not give them his permission.

At last, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna asked for permission to tame the Nāga King and the Buddha granted it to him, saying: "Tame him, my dear Moggallāna." Having obtained the Buddha's permission, Ven. Moggallāna changed his body into that of a great Nāga and coiled his body fourteen folds round Nandopananda and

covering Nandopananda's hood with his from above he also pressed the latter tightly against Mount Meru.

The Nāga King emitted powerful vapour. Ven. Mahā Moggallāna emitted even more powerful vapour, saying: "It is not you alone who have vapour; I too have it." The Nāga King's vapour could not hurt Ven. Mahā Moggallāna but Ven. Mahā Moggallāna's could hurt the Nāga.

Then the Nāga emitted blazing flames. Ven. Mahā Moggallāna emitted mightier flames, saying: "It is not that you alone have the flames, I have them too." The flames emitted by the Nāga could not harm Ven. Mahā Moggallāna but Ven. Mahā Moggallāna's could harm the Nāga.

The Nāga King, Nandopananda, perceived: "This man is crushing and pressing me against Mount Meru. He is also emitting vapour and blazing flames." Then he asked Ven. Mahā Moggallāna: "Who are you, sir?" Ven. Mahā Moggallāna replied: "Nanda, I am Ven. Moggallāna." – "In that case please wear your ascetic garb." Then Ven. Mahā Moggallāna discarded his Nāga form and assumed his original ascetic form and entered the Nāga's body by the right ear and came out by the left. Again he entered by the left ear and came out of the right. Similarly, he entered the Nāga by the right nostril and came out by the left and entered by the left nostril and came out by the right.

Then Nandopananda opened his mouth for Ven. Mahā Moggallāna who went inside him and walked from east to west and vice versa. The Buddha warned Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, saying: "My dear son Moggallāna, be very careful. The Nāga King is of great power."

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna replied: "I have successfully developed the four bases of psychic powers (*iddhi-pāda*) through the five kinds of mastery (*vasī-bhāva*). I can subjugate hundreds of thousands of divine Nāgas of Nandopananda's type, let alone his single self, exalted Buddha."

The Nāga King thought: "I have let Ven. Mahā Moggallāna enter my body through my mouth. Be that as it may. When he comes out I will keep him between my fangs, and eat him, biting him to pieces." So he said: "Come out sir, do not torment me by pacing about in my belly." Ven. Mahā Moggallāna came out and stood outside. As soon as he saw Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, the Nāga King, perceiving: "So this is Moggallāna," snarled fiercely. Ven. Mahā Moggallāna

entered upon the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) and defended himself against the Nāga's nasal wind, so the wind could not stir even a hair on his body.

> Other monks might have the power to perform miracles from the beginning but when the snarling took place, they would not be able to engage in absorption (*jhāna*) as rapidly as those who were of instant consciousness concerning supernormal powers (*khippa-nisanti*) like Ven. Moggallāna. That was why no permission was given by the Buddha to the other monks to tame the Nāga King.

Then the Nāga King Nandopananda noted: "I was not able to stir even the body-hair in a pore of the monk's skin by snarling. This monk is very powerful indeed," and he tried to escape. Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, having changed his natural shape into that of an enemy of the Nāgas, a Garuḷa, pursued the Nāga with the speed of a bird. Being unable to escape, the Nāga turned himself into a young man and fell in salutation at the feet of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, saying: "Venerable sir, in you I take refuge." [830]

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna said: "Nanda, the Fortunate One is coming. Come, let us go to him." Having tamed the Nāga and freed him from the poison of conceit, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna took him to the master. The Nāga paid his respects to the Buddha and solemnly declared himself a follower. "Venerable sir, I take refuge in you." The Buddha gave his blessings, saying: "May you be happy both physically and mentally," and then accompanied by the monks, the Buddha went to the house of the merchant Anāthapiṇḍika.

The merchant asked the Buddha: "Why did you come when the day was so far advanced?" the Buddha said: "There had been a terrible battle of life and death fought between Moggallāna and the Nāga King Nandopananda. That was why I came late." The wealthy merchant asked: "Who won the battle and who lost it, exalted Buddha?" – "The victory belonged to Moggallāna and the defeat to Nanda."

Anāthapiṇḍika was so joyous and elated that he said: "Venerable sir, may the exalted Buddha and the monks receive my offering of an alms meal every day for seven days. I will honour Ven. Mahā Moggallāna for seven days." Then the merchant celebrated the victory of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna by honouring the 500 monks, headed by the Buddha, for a week.

35c: More Stories about Wrong View

Baka Brahma

The account of the taming of Brahma Baka by the Buddha occurs in the Birth Story about Brahma Baka (*Brahma-baka-jātaka*, Ja 405), the Birth Story about the Ascetic Kesava (*Kesava-jātaka*, Ja 346), the Discourse about Brahma Baka (*Baka-brahma-sutta*, SN 6.4) and the Discourse about the Invitation of Brahmā (*Brahma-nimantanika-sutta*, MN 49), and their commentaries.

Once, while dwelling at Jetavana in the noble city of Sāvatthī, the Buddha called the monks and said: "Monks, on one occasion, I was living at the foot of a large Sāla tree in the Subhaga grove near the town of Ukkaṭṭha. Then arose, monks, the following thought in Brahma Baka: 'The world of Brahmas together with this body is permanent, firm, stable, unique and subject to no change. In this Brahma world, there is no one who is conceived, who grows old, who dies, who falls, who is reborn by way of conception. There is no liberation higher than the Brahma world together with this body.' Such was the very strong but wrong view of eternalism (*sassata-micchā-diṭṭhi*) that arose in Brahma Baka."

Brahma Baka, who held this view, rejected the existence of the higher transcendent states of the second and third absorption (*jhāna*) planes in the Brahma worlds, the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) planes in the Brahma worlds, together with the four formless (*arūpa*) states and the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna, for he belonged only to the first absorption (*jhāna*) plane.

"Monks, knowing his thought with my mind, I disappeared then from the foot of the Sāla tree in the Subhaga grove, near Ukkaṭṭha and appeared in the first meditation Brahma abode, just as a strong man stretches his bent arm and bends his stretched out arm.

When Brahma Baka saw from afar my approaching, monks, he said: 'Sir, please come. Sir, you are welcome. Sir, you visit this Brahma abode after a long time. Sir, the Brahma world, together with this body, is permanent, firm, stable, unique and subject to no change. In this Brahma world, there is no one who is conceived, who grows old, who dies, who falls, who is reborn by way of conception. There is no liberation higher than the Brahma world together with this body.'

Monks, when Brahma Baka spoke thus, I said: [831] 'Friends, Brahma Baka is foolish indeed! He speaks of what is not permanent as permanent, what is not firm, not stable, not unique and subject to change as firm, stable, unique and not subject to change. He says that in this Brahma world there is no one who is conceived, who grows old, who dies, who falls, who is reborn by way of conception, though in this Brahma world there are those who are conceived, who are born, who die, who fall, who are reborn by way of conception. He says that there is no liberation higher than the Brahma world though there clearly are higher forms of liberation in terms of other absorptions such as the second, third and fourth meditation Brahma worlds and the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna.

Monks, Māra the Wicked One then possessed a young Brahma attendant (*Brahma-pārisajja*) and rebuked me thus: "Monk, do not criticize this Brahma Baka. Monk, do not criticize this Brahma Baka. He is great. He is dominant. He is indomitable. Surely, he sees all. He holds sway over all living beings. He rules the world. He created the world. He is the lord of the world. He determines a living being's destiny declaring: 'You shall be a king, you shall be a Brahmin, you shall be a merchant, you shall be a farmer, you shall be a labourer, you shall be a human, you shall be a monk, or, at the least, you shall be a camel or you shall be an ox.' He is accomplished in absorption (*jhāna*). He is the father of beings that have arisen and beings that are arising."

> Of the expressions 'beings that have arisen' and 'beings that are arising,' the latter means 'beings originating in the eggs or in the wombs.' From the time they come out from the eggs or the wombs they are known as 'beings that have arisen.'
>
> In the case of beings originating in moisture (*saṁsedaja*), they are called 'beings that are arising' at the moment of their rebirth consciousness, and after that moment they are 'beings that have arisen.'
>
> As for the spontaneous (*upapatti*) beings they are called 'beings that are arising' at the moment of their first bodily posture and after that they are 'beings that have arisen.'

"Monks! In this world, those ascetics and Brahmins before you, who, like you, condemned and abhorred the earth-element, the water-element, the fire-element, the wind-element as impermanent (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and without self (*anatta*) and who, like you, condemned and abhorred living beings, Devas,

Māras and Brahmas, as impermanent, suffering and without self, they all landed in the lower worlds of woes after the dissolution of their bodies at death.

Monks, in this world, those ascetics and Brahmins before you, who admired and cherished the earth-element, the water-element, the fire-element, the wind-element as permanent, firm, stable, imperishable, unbreakable and inexhaustible and who admired and cherished the living beings, Devas, Māras and Brahmas as firm, stable, imperishable, unbreakable and inexhaustible they all landed in the sublime Brahma world after the dissolution of their bodies at death.

Therefore I say unto you, monk, I want to urge you to follow this Brahma's teaching. Do not go against his teaching. Monk, if you go against his teaching, you will be like a man who beats and drives away with a six-foot long stick the glory that has come right to you or like a man who falls over a cliff and does not land on the supporting ground by not coming into contact with it by his hands and legs. This example will do for you. I therefore want to urge you to follow the Brahma's teaching. Do not contradict it. Monk, you see the Brahmas who have assembled, do you not?"

"Thus, Monks, Māra the Wicked One aimed his speech at me and tried to make me a member of Brahma Baka's assembly."

> Herein it may be asked: "How did Māra see the Buddha?" While staying in his [832] mansion, Māra enquired frequently: "In which village or market town is the Buddha staying now?" When he enquired on this particular occasion, he came to know that the Buddha was staying in the Subhaga grove near Ukkaṭṭha. When he tried to see where the Buddha had gone, he saw that the Buddha had gone to the Brahma world. So he thought: "I will go and make him give up his desire to preach there before he causes the Brahmas to get out of my dominion." So he followed the Buddha vigilantly and stood anonymously among the Brahmas. Knowing that the Buddha had rebuked Brahma Baka, he emerged as a supporter of the Brahma. Māra could not possess Mahā Brahma and Purohita Brahmas. He therefore possessed the young Brahma attendant.

Monks, when the evil Māra spoke thus through the Brahma attendant, I refuted him as follows: 'Wicked Māra! I know you. Do not think that the monk Gotama does not know you, Wicked One, you are Māra. You are the evil Māra: the Mahā Brahma, the assembly of Brahmas, the Brahma-attendants they all fall into your hand; they are all under your sway.' Wicked Māra, you are wrong in

believing thus: ‘This monk too may fall into my hand. This monk too may come under my sway.’ In reality, I do not fall into your hand. I do not go under your sway.

Monks, when I had thus spoken to Māra, Brahma Baka said to me: ‘Venerable sir, I speak of what is permanent as permanent. I speak of what is firm, stable, unique and imperishable as firm, stable, unique and imperishable. I say that in the Brahma world there is no one who is conceived, who grows old, who dies, who falls away, who is reborn, because in the Brahma world there is no one who is conceived, who is old, who dies, who falls away, who is reborn. I say that there is no liberation better than the Brahma world with this body because there is no liberation higher than the Brahma world together with this body.’

Monks, in this world, the practice of those ascetics and Brahmins before you was as old as your age. They might have known what liberation is higher than the Brahma world with this body as the liberation higher than the Brahma world with this body. They might have known the liberation no higher than the Brahma world with this body as the liberation that is no higher than the Brahma world with this body.

Monks, therefore I say to you this: ‘You will not find any other liberation higher than the Brahma world with this body.’ If you search for it, this will mean only trouble and suffering for you.

Monks, if you cling to the earth element you will live near me, you will live in my place, you will be my subordinate. If you cling to the water element, the fire element, the wind element, living beings, Devas, Māras and Brahmas, you will live near me, you will live in my place, you will be my subordinate.”

The Buddha replied: “Brahma, I too know this: If I cling to the earth element, I will live near you, I will live in your place, I will be your subordinate. So will I be if I cling to the water element, the fire element, the wind element, living beings, Devas, Māras and Brahmas. I know all this! Brahma, in fact, I know that you are of such great power, of such might, of such great fame and retinue. I know your abilities, too.”

Then Brahma Baka asked the Buddha: “Venerable sir, how do you know that I am of such great power, of such great might, of such great fame and retinue? How do you know my abilities too?” Then the Buddha answered: “Your

authority lies in 1,000 universes, in each universe, the sun and the [833] moon move about and shine in all directions."

> A vast circular area in which the sun and the moon wander, illuminating all over the directions, is called a world-element (*loka-dhātu*), or a spherical universe (*cakka-vāḷa*).

"All over these universes, numbering 1,000, your Brahma's authority spreads. You, Brahma Baka, know beings high and low, beings covetous and uncovetous, this and the remaining 999 universes, the rebirth and death of beings in these universes. Brahma Baka, I know that you are of such great power, of such great might, of such great retinue and fame. I know your abilities too."

> The Buddha's words have not come to an end yet. A note may, however, be inserted here. By saying so, the Buddha tried to subdue the Brahma. What he meant to say was this: "Brahma Baka, your authority spreads only within 1,000 universes. Yet you think highly of yourself: 'I am a Great Brahma.' you are only a Brahma who can see 1,000 universes. There are other Brahmas who are superior to you such as those who can see 2,000 universes, who can see 3,000, 4,000, 5,000, 10,000 world-elements and those who can see 100,000 world-element, and they are countless. And yet, like a man who tries to compare his piece of cloth, which is only four cubit long, with another piece of cloth that is far greater in length, like a man who desires to immerse himself in the water which is only ankle-deep, or like a small frog which thinks that the water in a bullock's footprint is a deep pool, you have a high opinion of yourself, thinking: 'I am a Great Brahma.'

"Brahma Baka, there is still another world indeed apart from this world of the first absorption (*jhāna*). You neither know it nor see it. But I know it and see it. Brahma Baka, there is still another world known as the Ābhassara world. Falling from that Ābhassara world, you have landed in this world of the first meditation. Because you have lived in this world of the first meditation you have lost your memory. Therefore you neither know nor see that Ābhassara world. But I know and see it. Brahma Baka, because I know the Ābhassara world which is unknown to you, you are not equal to me in intellect. Why should I be inferior to you? In fact, I am superior to you intellectually."

> The Buddha's speech has not come to an end yet. Another note may, however, be inserted here. Brahma Baka had fallen from the higher worlds and landed in a lower world. In a past aeon (*kappa*), devoid of the

appearance of a Buddha, Brahma Baka became an ascetic and practised meditation on a device (*kasiṇa*) as a prelude to the attainment of the absorptions (*jhāna*). When he passed away, without any slip of the meditation, he was reborn in the Vehapphala Brahma world of the fourth absorption, which is of a long lifespan, 500 aeons. Having lived the full life-span there, he desired rebirth in a lower world and developed the third absorption (*jhāna*) to a high standard. When he passed away from that Vehapphala world, he landed in the Subhakiṇhā Brahma world of the third absorption (*jhāna*) which has a lifespan of 64 great aeons (*mahā-kappa*).

If a man commits a number of immediately resultant (*anantariya*) deeds, such as matricide, patricide, etc., only the severest and heaviest one of them bring about rebirth in the Mahā Avīci state of long suffering; others do not bring it about but contribute to its occurrence. Similarly of the four form absorptions (*jhāna*) that are developed, only the specially developed one with the four dominant (*adhipati*) factors brings about rebirth in the form worlds (*rūpāvacara*) and the remaining form meditations do not result in that rebirth as they themselves have no chance to do so; they merely facilitate the sustenance of that rebirth for its full lifespan.

Having existed in that Subhakiṇhā Brahma abode for the full lifespan of 64 great aeons, Brahma Baka developed in the previous manner the second absorption (*jhāna*) of the higher standard and when he fell from Subhakiṇhā he landed in the Ābhassara Brahma abode which is on the second meditation plane, lasting for eight great aeons. Having [834] existed there for the full lifespan of eight great aeons, he developed, in the previous manner, the first meditation of the higher standard and when he fell from Ābhassara he landed in the Mahā Brahma abode, which is the first meditation plane, lasting for 64 great aeons in terms of an inferior kind or just one aeon in terms of the immeasurable period (*asaṅkhyeyya*).

In his present Mahā Brahma abode, however Brahma Baka remembered in the earlier part of his life, his performance of wholesome meditation and the former abode where he had existed. When he had been there for too long, he forgot even those two things and wrongly took to himself the false belief in eternalism. That was why the Buddha said to Brahma Baka: “You have lost your memory. Therefore you neither know, nor do you see that Ābhassara world,” and so on.

The Past Story of Brahma Baka

The following is based mainly on the commentary to the Birth Story about Brahma Baka (*Brahma-baka-jātaka*, Ja 405).

When the Buddha spoke thus, Brahma Baka thought: "The monk Gotama knows the lifespan of my previous lives, the worlds of my previous rebirths and the good deeds of absorption (*jhāna*) that I had practised before, I will ask him now about my good deeds in the past." In response to his question, the Buddha told him about his good deeds. This Brahma Baka in one of his former births was a son of a good family. Seeing the dangers of sense desires he decided: "I will put an end to birth, old age, sickness and death." Thereafter, he renounced the world and became an ascetic, developing mundane absorptions (*jhāna*). Having accomplished the absorptions which were the foundation of the super knowledges he built a small leaf-hut near the river Ganges and spent his time enjoying the bliss of the absorptions.

While he was staying thus, a caravan of 500 carts carrying merchants crossed a desert frequently. When they crossed the desert by night the bullocks that were harnessed at the foremost cart lost their way and turned back, thus coming back to the former track that they had taken. The other carts too similarly came back to the former track and this was known to the merchants only at dawn. For the merchants it was the day they needed to have passed through the desert. All their firewood and water had run out. Therefore, thinking that they were now about to lose their lives the people unyoked their bullocks from the carts, tied them to the wheels and went to sleep in the shade of the rear part of the carts.

The absorption-accomplished ascetic, the future Brahma Baka, got out of the leaf-hut early in the morning. While sitting at the hut door, he had a look at the Ganges and saw a great flood overwhelming the whole Ganges as though a huge green stone was rolling down. When he thought: "Are there in this world any beings that are wearied for lack of such sweet water?" he saw the caravan of those merchants suffering in the sandy desert. Wishing them well, he resolved through psychic powers: "May a great volume of water from the Ganges flow towards the merchants in the caravan."

As soon as his psychic powers occurred, a great volume of water flowed into the desert as though into a drain. The merchants got up because of the sound of the water. On seeing the water they were overjoyed. They bathed, they drank, and

they let the cattle drink and they finally arrived at their destination. In order to point out this past good deed of Brahma Baka, the Buddha spoke this verse:

Yaṁ tvaṁ apāyesi bahū manusse,
pipāsite ghammani samparete,
taṁ te purāṇaṁ vata-sīla-vattaṁ,
suttappabuddho va anussarāmi.

Brahma by the name of Baka! In the past, when you were an absorption-accomplished ascetic who caused, by your psychic powers, those thirsty people of a caravan, who were tortured by the sun in the desert, to have water to drink and to bath. Like a man waking up, I recollect again and again, by my power of the rememberance of former lives (*pubbe-nivāsānussati-ñāṇa*), your morality practised in the past.

At a later time, the ascetic, built a leaf-hut on the bank of the Ganges and lived there depending upon a small village for food. Then robbers beat the villagers and robbed them [835] of gold and silver and took with them cattle and people as hostages. The cries of the people and the animals created loud noises. On hearing the noises, the ascetic wondered what it was all about. Knowing that some danger has befallen the villagers, he made a wish: "May these beings not perish while I am seeing them." Then he engaged himself in absorption (*jhāna*), the foundation of his psychic powers. Arising from that meditation, he created a large army of four divisions – elephants, horses, chariots, and foot-soldiers – that marched arrow-shooting, trumpet-blowing, drum-beating and threat-shouting.

Seeing the great army, the robbers thought that it was the marching of the king, they discarded their loot and fled. The ascetic resolved: "May the property go back to their respective owners," and this happened in accordance with the ascetic's resolve. The people were thus overjoyed. In order to point out also this past good deed of Brahma Baka, the Buddha spoke this verse:

Yaṁ eṇi-kūlasmi' janaṁ gahītaṁ,
amocayī gayhaka niyyamānaṁ,
taṁ te purāṇaṁ vata-sīla-vattaṁ,
suttappabuddho va anussarāmi.

Brahma by the name of Baka! In the past when you were an absorption-accomplished ascetic on the bank of the Ganges, which was also named

> Eṇikūla because there were many herds of antelopes there, you caused the villagers, who were taken as hostages and whose properties were robbed by theives, to escape from the robbers' hands by your creation of an army of four divisions. Like a man waking up, I recollect again and again, by my power of remembering former lives, your morality practised in the past.

Again at a later time, a family living in the upper part of the Ganges and another family living in the lower part held a wedding ceremony, one party giving the bride to the other and making friends together. They joined their boats, forming them like a raft which carried many kinds of food, unguents, flowers, etc, and which floated on the currents of the Ganges waters. The people on the boats had a great feast, dancing and singing. They revelled as though they were moving in a celestial flying mansion.

Then the Nāga King, ruler and resident of the Ganges, saw the people and became angry, thinking: "These people have no regard for me as they are not aware that their riotous merry making would annoy me, the Nāga King of the Ganges. Now I shall make them float into the ocean." So thinking he assumed an enormous body and split the water into two halves between which he emerged all of a sudden. With his vast hood raised, he made a great hissing sound and stayed there as though he were going to bite the people and put them to death.

On seeing the Nāga King, the people became frightened and cried loudly and feverishly. While sitting in the leaf-hut the ascetic hearing their cries, thought: "Earlier these people were very happy, dancing and singing. Now they are making sounds of fear and grief. What is the matter?" Then he saw the Nāga King and desired for the people's safety: "May they not perish while I am seeing them." So he engaged himself in the absorptions, the foundation of his super knowledges, and after assuming the guise of a Garuḷa bird, he was poised to snatch away the Nāga King. Fearing being attacked, the Nāga King withdrew his hood and immersed himself in the water. All the people were thus saved. In order to point out this good deed of Brahma Baka, the Buddha spoke this verse:

> *Gaṅgāya sotasmiṁ gahīta-nāvaṁ,*
> *luddena nāgena manussa-kappā,*
> *amocayi tvaṁ balasā pasayha,* *[836]*

taṁ te purāṇaṁ vata-sīla-vattaṁ,
suttappabuddho va anussarāmi.

Brahma by the name of Baka! In the past when you were an ascetic you saved the people of two villages, who were going to be destroyed by the fierce Nāga King in the water currents of the Ganges, by your psychic powers known as the power of transformation (*vikubbaniddhi*) and you thus set them free from the threat of the Nāga King. Like a man waking up, I recollect again and again by my power of remembering former lives, your morality practised in the past.

Still at a later time, Brahma Baka was a noble ascetic known as Kesava. At that time our Bodhisatta was a youthful ascetic by the name of Kappa. Constantly staying near the ascetic Kesava and serving him as a residential pupil (*antevāsika*), who was always obedient, thinking to do only what was pleasing to his master, who was intelligent and who practised what was beneficial. The ascetic Kesava was unable to move about, to remain still, to eat or drink without the help of his close pupil, the young ascetic Kappa. At one time, he was looked after by the King of Bārāṇasī but he left the king and lived depending on his own pupil, Kappa the ascetic. In order to point out also this past good deed of Brahma Baka, the Buddha spoke this verse:

Kappo ca te baddha-caro ahosi,
Sambuddhim-antaṁ vatinaṁ amaññaṁ,
taṁ te purāṇaṁ vata-sīla-vattaṁ,
suttappabuddho va anussarāmi.

Brahma by the name of Baka! In one of the past existences I was a virtuous ascetic, Kappa by name, who, as your residential pupil, served you, a virtuous ascetic, Kesava by name. At that time you fondly spoke in praise of me, saying I was good, intelligent and that I had practised morality adequately. Like a man waking up, I recollect again and again by my power of remembering former lives, your morality practised in the past.

In this way the Buddha spoke to Brahma Baka, pointing out the latter's good deeds done in his various past existences. While the Buddha was thus talking, Brahma Baka recollected his past lives. All his past deeds gradually manifested

to him as though different objects become clear when 1,000 oil lamps are lighted. He was so pleased, having a faithful heart, he spoke the following verse:

> *Addhā pajānāsi mam-etam-āyuṁ,*
> *aññam-pi jānāsi tathā hi Buddho,*
> *tathā hi tāyaṁ jalitānubhāvo,*
> *obhāsayaṁ tiṭṭhati Brahma-lokaṁ.*
>
> Fortunate One, who has done away with all suffering! Certainly, you know my past lives. You also know all other things worth knowing apart from my lives also. You are therefore an omniscient Buddha. This bright body-light of yours exists, illuminating the whole Brahma abode, outshining the light of hundreds and thousands of suns and moons.

Having related as a parenthesis to the past events of Brahma Baka at his request, the Buddha came back to his original topic, speaking thus: "Brahma Baka, there is also the Subhakiṇhā abode, Vehapphala abode, and Abhibhū abode. You neither know nor see them. I know and see them. I know what you do not, you are not equal to me intellectually. How can I be inferior to you? In fact, I am superior to you intellectually."

Then in order to prove a step further that Brahma Baka was not his intellectual equal and [837] that he himself was superior to Brahma Baka intellectually, the Buddha continued his speech as follows: "Brahma Baka, with extraordinary intellect I know the earth element that it is by nature impermanent (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and selfless (*anatta*). I know Nibbāna, that is inaccessible to the earth element by its nature; and I do not cling to the earth element with craving (*taṇhā*), conceit (*māna*) or wrong view (*diṭṭhi*). I do not cling to it, as something in which self (*atta*) lies, or something from which self emerges, I do not cling to it as I, mine, or my self. Brahma Baka, as I know the Nibbāna that is unknown to you, you are not equal to me intellectually. How can I be inferior to you? In fact, I am superior to you intellectually.

Brahma Baka, with extraordinary intellect, I know the water element, the fire element, the wind element, sentient beings, the Devas, Māras, Brahmas, Ābhassara Brahmas, Subhakiṇhā Brahmas, Vehapphala Brahmas, Abhibhū Brahmas, with extraordinary intellect. I know all individuality pertaining to the three planes of existence (*te-bhūmaka*) that is by nature impermanent, suffering and selfless. I know Nibbāna, that is inaccessible to all individuality by its very

nature and I do not cling at all to individuality with craving, conceit and wrong view. I do not cling to it, as something in which self lies or, as something from which self emerges. I do not cling to all to individuality pertaining to the three planes of existences as I, mine, or my self. Brahma Baka, as I know Nibbāna, which is unknown to you, you are not equal to me intellectually. How can I be inferior to you? In fact, I am superior to you intellectually."

Then Brahma Baka, wishing to charge the Buddha with falsehood, said: "Venerable sir, if it is true there is something as you say that is inaccessible to all by its very nature, your claim that you know it would come to nothing. Do not let it come to nothing. Your statement would become empty. Do not let it become empty."

> Herein some clarification will be made so that the virtuous readers of the Chronicle may not be confused. The English word all and the Pāḷi *sabba* are of similar meaning, but here the word *sabba* is used in the sense of all mundane things, all that has individuality (*sakkāya*). The complete terminology is *sakkāya-sabba* or all individuality. It is this *sakkāya-sabba,* all individuality, that is referred to in the Instruction about Burning (Āditta-pariyāya-sutta, SN 35.235) where: *Sabbaṁ āditta*ṁ occurs; the Pāḷi sentence means: "All things, monks, areon fire, with lust (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*), etc."
>
> It cannot be said that supermundane things are burnt by fire, for unwholesome things, such as lust, hatred and delusion are absolutely incapable of taking the supermundane things as their target. They are capable of doing so only in the case of mundane things, individuality (*sakkāya*) or the factors of clinging to existence (*upādānakkhandha*); hence, the burning of mundane things by the fires of lust, hatred, etc. Therefore what is supermundane is to be excluded from "all," whereas what is mundane is to be included therein. Therefore by the word all of the Instruction about Burning is meant *sakkāya-sabba* or, all individuality.
>
> With reference to the term *sabbaññutā-ñāṇa* or, all embracing knowledge, or, omniscience, its component *sabba* includes both the mundane and supermundane, for the Buddha knows the whole range of things, mundane as well as supermundane. Therefore, the word *sabba* of *sabbaññutā-ñāṇa* means *sabba-sabba*, all this, and all that.
>
> By this much the readers of this Chronicle might have understood that in the field of Dhamma literature the use of the word *sabba*, all is of two

kinds: The use of it in the sense of *sakkāya-sabba*, all individuality, or all mundane things, and the use of it in the sense of *sabba-sabba*, all this, and all that, with both mundane or supermundane designations. Let us examine now the use of all by the Buddha and Brahma Baka.

When the Buddha asserted that he was intellectually superior to Brahma Baka, he presented 13 points as follows: [838] 1) I know the earth element and you know it too, I know Nibbāna which is inaccessible to the earth element, but you do not; 2) I know the water element and you know it too, I know Nibbāna which is inaccessible to the water element but you do not. In this way the Buddha went on with regard to: 3) the fire element; 4) the wind element; 5) sentient beings; 6) Devas; 7) Māras; 8) Brahmas; 9) Ābhassara Brahmas; 10) Subhakiṇhā Brahmas; 11) Vehapphala Brahmas; 12) Abhibhū Brahmas (Assaññasatta Brahmas); 13) I know all (*sakkāya-sabba*) and you know it too; I know all (*sabba -sabba*), including Nibbāna, which is inaccessible to all but you do not.

With regard to the first 12 points, Baka saw no reason to blame the Buddha. As regards the last point, however, he saw something to accuse the Buddha of.

When the Buddha said: "I know all (*sakkāya-sabba*) and I know Nibbāna which is inaccessible to all (*sakkāya-sabba*)," he said it as a puzzle. What he meant to say by this was: "Brahma Baka, I know all mundane things (*sabba-sakkāya*) by my extraordinary intellect that they are, by nature, impermanent, suffering and selfless. Having known this, I also know Nibbāna by my extraordinary insight (*vipassanā*), which cannot be attained by all (*sakkāya*) individualities."

In that speech the statement reading: "I know all by all their nature," means: "I know by insight (*vipassanā*) all individuality pertaining to the three planes of existence, and the five aggregates of mundane things in their nature of being impermanent, suffering and selfless." Here the Buddha said: "I know all by all their nature," with reference to *sakkāya-sabba*. "I know Nibbāna which is inaccessible to all by all nature," means "I know Nibbāna with the path-knowledge, realizing that it is inaccessible to all individuality and the five aggregates of mundane things in their nature of being conditioned (*saṅkhata*).

Such conditioned material things as the earth element, the wind element, etc., have the nature of hardness, cohesiveness, etc., which are also conditioned, such conditioned mental things as contact, sensation, etc.,

have the nature of the tangibility, feeling, etc., which are also conditioned. All these conditioned things are absent in Nibbāna which is unconditioned. Only the nature of peace (*santi*), as opposed to conditioned things is present in unconditioned Nibbāna. This was in view when it was said that Nibbāna is inaccessible to the earth element. Nibbāna is inaccessible to the water element, Nibbāna is inaccessible to all individuality.

By this much, readers of the Chronicle must have understood that what the Buddha meant was as follows: "I know thoroughly all (*sabba-sakkāya*), or the five aggregates of mundane things and you know them too. I also know Nibbāna which cannot be reached by all individuality, but you do not know it, and that the word "all" in that speech implies the five aggregates of mundane things and that Nibbāna is something which cannot be attained by that "all."

But as a fault-finding ideologue, Brahma Baka took it wrongly, that by all was meant *sabba-sabba*, each and everything, mundane or supermundane and designated, for he was totally ignorant of the fact that here mundane all (*sakkāya-sabba*) was referred to in the Buddha's speech. This led him to his criticism of the Buddha: "Venerable sir, if the Dhamma is inaccessible to all other things by its nature, your saying that you know what is inaccessible would come to nothing. Do not let it come to nothing. Your statement would become empty. Do not let it become empty."

The gist of Brahma Baka's criticism was as follows: In your speech, venerable sir, you claim your knowledge of all, and your knowledge of the Dhamma that is inaccessible to all. The word all of the first statement covers all things. So there can be nothing which is inaccessible to all things. And yet the Buddha insists on his knowledge of what is mentioned in the second statement. His insistence, therefore, will be reduced to nonsense like the flower of the sky, the horn of a rabbit, the hair of a turtle, and the blood of a crab. If what is inaccessible is semantically exclusive of the word all of the first [839] statement, his assertion there cannot be true, for the things known to him are not complete. It will be a lie then.

In this way did Brahma Baka wanted to accuse the Buddha of false speech. In short, the Buddha spoke of all things (*sakkāya-sabba*), all that is mundane. The Brahma Baka mistook it for all that is either mundane or supermundane (*sabba-sabba*). Hence his accusation against the Buddha was unjust.

Being a supreme ideologue, 100 times, 1,000 times, nay, 100,000 times greater than Brahma Baka, the Buddha would still proclaim his knowledge of all and the Nibbāna that is inaccessible to all for the Brahma to listen to, in order to refute the Brahma's charge of falsehood, so he went on to say: "Brahma Baka, there is Nibbāna which is higher than all conditioned things, which is to be known through path-knowledge, fruition-knowledge, reflection-knowledge, which is invisible to the naked eye or which has no resemblance that can be shown as its representative, which is completely devoid of an arising-and-passing nature, which is brighter than all other things or which never knows darkness but ever remains brilliant." By these words the Buddha boldly affirmed the real existence of Nibbāna that is beyond all individuality on the three planes of existence.

That Nibbāna 1) cannot be reached by the earth element through the nature of earth; 2) cannot be reached by the water element; 3) by the fire element; 4) by the wind element; 5) by sentient beings through their nature; 6) by Devas; 7) Māras, 8) Brahmas, 9) Ābhassara Brahmas, 10) Subhakiṇhā Brahmas; 11) Vehapphala Brahmas; 12) it cannot be reached by Abhibhū Brahmas through their nature; it cannot be reached by all (*sakkāya-dhamma*) through the nature of them all (*sakkāya*). By these words the Buddha made clear that he spoke of all, too.

In this way there is the aggregate of all (*sakkāya-dhamma*) of the three planes of existence which is within the range of knowledge that belongs to persons like you. By that aggregate of all of the three planes of existence through the nature of them all, Nibbāna with the aforesaid four attributes cannot be reached. Thus the Buddha firmly asserted his doctrine.

,'Miracle Contest

Every aspect of his belief in the eternity of the Brahma world together with the body having been criticized and repudiated, Brahma Baka was at a loss for words. In order to cover his defeat, he gave up arguing for his belief and decided to show his superiority by performing miracles. So he said: "Venerable sir, if that is the case, I will now vanish in your presence. I am going to perform the sort of miracle whereby I become invisible to you. You just watch me." The Buddha said: "Brahma Baka, you are not able to do so. If you indeed have such a power, then vanish before me now."

Brahmas have two kinds of body, a natural body and an artificial or created body. The natural body which originates at the time of birth is so subtle that it cannot be seen by other Brahmas. So to make it visible, they take the form of a created gross body.

Therefore when Brahma Baka received consent, he bent his mind on changing his created gross body into the natural, subtle body. The Buddha knew his intention and resolved that his body should remain unchanged in its gross form. So Brahma Baka could not change his body into its natural, subtle form and there was no vanishing of his body.

Unable to change his body, Brahma Baka again tried to create darkness that might envelope his present body. But by means of his supernormal power, the Buddha dispelled [840] the darkness created by the Brahma. So Baka was unable to hide himself.

Being unable to hide by changing his body or by creating darkness, Brahma Baka desperately entered his mansion and hid there. He hid under the wish-fulfilling tree. He squat down furtively. Then hosts of Brahmas burst into laughter and jeered, saying: "This Brahma Baka is now hiding in the mansion. Now he is hiding under the wish-fulfilling tree, squatting furtively. O Brahma Baka what a pity that you think you have hidden yourself." Being thus jeered at by other Brahmas, Brahma Baka wore a displeased face. Hence it is said in brief in the text: "Monks, though Brahma Baka said: 'I will hide myself in the presence of the monk Gotama,' he was unable to do so."

To the Brahma who was unable to hide himself, the Buddha said: "Brahma Baka, if you cannot hide yourself, I will hide myself in your presence now. I am going to perform a miracle so that you cannot see me." Then Brahma Baka replied to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, hide yourself in my presence now if you can."

Then the Buddha first entered upon the fourth absorption (*jhāna*), the foundation of his resolve; then rising from that meditation, he resolved that the Mahā Brahma, the assembly of Brahmas and the young attendant Brahmas could only hear his voice but not see his body; then he entered upon the fourth absorption (*jhāna*), the foundation of his psychic power; when he rose from that meditation, a process of psychic power occurred in his mind; as soon as he felt that mental process but once, the Buddha's body vanished and not a single

Brahma could see him. To make them know that he was still with them though he had vanished, the Buddha uttered this verse:

> *Bhavevāhaṁ bhayaṁ disvā, bhavañ-ca vibhavesinaṁ,*
> *bhavaṁ nābhivadiṁ kiñci, nandiñ-ca na upādiyiṁ.*
>
> Brahmas who have assembled here! Because I have seen clearly with my eye of wisdom, the dangers of birth, old age, and sickness on the three planes of existence such as the sense worlds (*kāma-loka*), the form worlds (*rūpa-loka*) and the formless worlds (*arūpa-loka*), and the endless arising of beings like Brahma Baka, who have gone astray in their search of Nibbāna that is non-existence, I no longer cling to any existence as permanent, constant, eternal, etc., under the power of craving and wrong view. I am entirely free from craving for existence as I have rooted it out and cut it off four times with the axe-like wisdom of the fourfold path-knowledge.
>
> In this verse, by the word existence (*bhava*) is indicated the truth of suffering, by craving for existence (*bhava-taṇhā*) is indicated the truth of the cause of suffering, by non-existence (*vibhava*) is indicated the truth of the cessation of suffering, by I have no craving for existence (*nandiñ ca na upādiyiṁ*) is indicated the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

Thus the Buddha taught the four truths in detail to the Brahmas according to their dispositions and led them to insight (*vipassanā*) and concluded his teaching with the Arahat fruition as its apex. At the end of the discourse, the Brahmas, reflectively following the discourse, were steeped in the essence of insight at various stages, some attaining Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*), some Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmi-phala*), some Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-phala*) and the rest became Arahats. Then the Brahmas rejoiced, marvelled and extolled the Buddha.

Hence it is said in the text: “Monks, then the Brahma, his followers and attendants were filled with great wonder, saying: ‘Friends, wonderful indeed is the great power and the great might of the monk Gotama! Never have we seen or heard any ascetic or Brahmin who is so powerful and mighty as the monk Gotama, a Sakyan Prince and an ascetic [841] of the Sakyan royal family. Indeed, the monk Gotama can remove the roots of existence, ignorance and

craving from all beings who take delight in existence, who take pleasure in existence and who arise in existence.' "

Molestation by Māra

Then Māra reflected and came to know in anger thus: "While I am moving about the monk Gotama has taught 10,000 Brahmas and set themselves free from my dominion." So furious was he that he once again possessed a young attendant Brahma.

> Herein, how did Māra know that the 10,000 Brahmas had become noble ones (*ariya*)? He knew this by inference (*nayaggāha* or *anumāna*). He knew that when the Buddha taught to worthy beings, he pointed out the ills of Saṁsāra and the bliss of Nibbāna so that the listening beings would discern Nibbāna; that all his sermons were beneficial and effective like the thunderbolt (*vajira*) weapon hurled by Sakka; and that Devas and humans who were established in his teaching became invisible in Saṁsāra.

Having possessed the young Brahma, Māra spoke to the Buddha, disturbing him. This is mentioned in the text in the following manner: "Monks, at that time the wicked Māra possessed a young attendant Brahma and said to me thus: 'Venerable sir, if you know the four truths analytically thus, if you know them by your omniscience, do not convey this doctrine to your disciples. Do not convey them to recluses and wandering ascetics. Do not preach to your disciples. Do not preach to recluses and wandering ascetics. Have no greed for your disciples. Have no greed for recluses and wandering ascetics.

Monk, there were ascetics and Brahmins who lived before you and who claimed to be Arahats or who claimed to have destroyed the enemy in the form of moral defilements, or who claimed to be Sammāsambuddhas, those who claimed to know all the doctrines by themselves. They conveyed their doctrines to their disciples and recluses and wandering ascetics. They taught to their disciples and recluses and wandering ascetics. They had greed for them and on the dissolution of their bodies at death they landed in the low suffering states.

Monk, there were in this world ascetics and Brahmins who lived before you and who claimed to be Arahats or who claimed to have destroyed the enemy in the form of moral defilements, or who claimed to be Sammāsambuddhas, those who claimed to know all the doctrines by themselves. They did not convey their doctrines to their disciples. They did not preach to their disciples and recluses

and wandering ascetics. They had no greed for them and on the dissolution on their bodies at death they landed in the high Brahma worlds.

Therefore, monk, I would like to tell you thus: "Venerable sir, I urge you. Live in comfort, live without any bother. Sir, non-teaching is good. Do not exhort others." I would like to tell you thus.'

Monks, when Māra the Wicked One said this, I spoke to him as follows: 'Wicked Māra, I know you. Do not think that I do not know you. You are Māra the Wicked One, you have spoken thus not because you desire my welfare but because you desire my loss. You fear that those who follow my teaching will overcome the three kinds of existence that lie within your domain.

Wicked Māra, ascetics and Brahmins whom you speak of claimed to be Sammāsambuddhas without actually being Sammāsambuddhas. But I truly claim to be Sammāsambuddha, who know all the doctrines myself.

Wicked Māra, whether the Buddha preaches to his disciples or not, he has neither love nor hate; he is endowed with the attributes of being undisturbed (*tādi*). Why? Wicked Māra, the Buddha has abandoned the pollutants (*āsava*) that lead [842] to anxiety, rebirth, anguish and suffering, later on causing rebirth, old age and death. He has cut off their latent (*anusaya*) roots. He has made them like an uprooted palm tree. He has made it impossible for them to arise again. So, for the Buddha, there is absolutely no revival of those pollutants (*āsava*).

Wicked Māra, as a palm tree cut off at its neck, cannot thrive, so the Buddha has abandoned the pollutants that lead to anxiety, rebirth, anguish and suffering, later on causing rebirth, old age, and death. He has rooted them out. He has made them like an uprooted palm tree. He has made it impossible for them to arise again. So, for the Buddha, there is absolutely no possibility of the resurgence of those pollutants."

Thus the Buddha taught this discourse to silence Māra and imparted special knowledge to the Brahma. Hence this discourse is called the Discourse about the Invitation of Brahmā (MN 49, *Brahma-nimantanika-sutta*).

Cūḷa Subhaddā and Ugga

[The following is based on the Dhamma Verses (Dhp 304) and its commentary.]

While the Buddha was residing at Jetavana in the good city of Sāvatthī, he gave a discourse beginning with (Dhp 304): *Dūre santo pakāsenti,* "though people may stay many leagues away," in connection with the merchant Anāthapiṇḍika's daughter, Cūḷa Subhaddā.

The details are as follows: Ugga, who was another merchant, a citizen of Ugga city, was the childhood friend of the merchant, Anāthapiṇḍika. While they were educated by the same teacher, they promised to each other that when they grew up and had children, one who had a daughter should give her in marriage to a son of the other, who wanted her to be his daughter-in-law.

The two friends grew up and became great merchants in their respective cities. One day, the merchant, Ugga, went to the house of Anāthapiṇḍika in Sāvatthī with 500 carts to do business. Anāthapiṇḍika called his daughter, Cūḷa Subhaddā, and assigned a duty to her, saying: "Dear daughter, your would-be father-in-law Ugga the merchant has come. Do all that is necessary for him."

"Very well," said Cūḷa Subhaddā and from the day of Ugga's arrival, she prepared and cooked the food personally for him. She put on flowers, perfumes and unguents, etc. While the merchant was being fed, she got the bath-water ready and after he had taken his bath, she personally supervised all the needful for him, and all was done with respect.

Observing she had the character of a good housewife, the merchant Ugga was pleased with Cūḷa Subhaddā. Then one day, while conversing cordially with Anāthapiṇḍika, he reminded his friend saying: "Friend, when we were young we made such and such a pledge to each other," and then asked for Cūḷa Subhaddā for his son. But Ugga was a heretic. So Anāthapiṇḍika did not make any decision on his own but reported the matter to the Buddha, who seeing Ugga's former good deeds that would contribute to his attainment of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*) approved. He then discussed with his wife, Puññālakkhaṇa Devī, and they agreed to his friend's proposal. He fixed the date and arranged an elaborate wedding ceremony, and when he sent Cūḷa Subhaddā away in marriage, he called his daughter and gave ten pieces of advice which were the same as those given to Visākhā by her father, Dhanañjaya.

My dear daughter, a woman who lives in the house of her parents-in-law:

1. She should not take the fire inside her house outside. That is, she should not tell people in other houses about the faults of her parents-in-law and husband.

2. She should not bring into her house the fire from outside. That is, when the neighbours speak ill of her parents-in-law and husband, she should not report it to them.

3. She should give only those who give back. That is, she should lend only to those who punctually return what they have borrowed from her house.

4. She should not give to those who do not give back. That is, she should not give another loan to those who do not punctually return what they have borrowed from her house. [843]

5. She should give to others whether they give her or not. That is, when poor relatives come to her house, she should give them whether they can afford to give or not.

6. She should sit well. That is, she should stand up first at the sight of her parents-in-law and husband. It is not proper for her to remain sitting when she should stand up.

7. She should eat well. That is, she should not eat before her parents-in-law and husband but she should serve them and eat only after making sure everybody has his or her food.

8. She should sleep well. That is, she should not sleep in her bed before her parents-in-law and husband. She should sleep only after doing her duties towards them.

9. She should serve the fire respectfully. That is, she should regard her parents-in-laws and husband as a great mass of fire or a poisonous serpent Nāga King and look at them respectfully. She should not look at them disrespectfully by casting a side glance or frowning upon them.

10. She should worship the Devas in the house. That is, she should show respect to her parents-in-law and husband, regarding them as the Devas occupying the foremost or the most sacred place in the house.

These were the ten pieces of advice which Anāthapiṇḍika gave to his daughter as did the merchant Dhanañjaya to his daughter Visākhā (see chapter 45b.2). He also sent eight wise men as guarantors along with his daughter with these instructions: "Whenever a problem crops up for my daughter Cūḷa Subhaddā you must solve it lawfully."

The day of her departure saw him giving alms lavishly to the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha. Then he sent his daughter to the merchant Ugga's house with great pomp and ceremony as though he exhibited the magnificent fruition of the good deeds which Cūḷa Subhaddā had done in her previous lives.

Arriving at Ugga city, she was welcomed by the merchant's family and hosts of the citizens. Like Visākhā, she entered the city standing in her chariot, and impressing the people much with her glory and splendour. She accepted the presents sent by the citizens and sent in return gifts appropriate to their distinguished status and thus by virtue of her wisdom she endeared herself to the whole city.

When her heretical father-in-law honoured the naked ascetics (*acelaka*) on auspicious occasions at his house, he sent for her as he wanted her to come and pay respect to his teachers. But she refused to go to the place where they were being honoured because she was so shy to see the unclothed teachers.

The merchant Ugga sent for her repeatedly but Cūḷa Subhaddā remained adamant in her refusal. So the merchant became angry and ordered her to be turned out of the house. She refused to take such unreasonable treatment. Instead she called in the eight wise men, her guarantors, and stated her case openly. They decided that she had no fault and informed the merchant accordingly.

The merchant told his wife that Cūḷa Subhaddā did not pay respect to his teachers, saying that they had no sense of shame. The merchant's wife wondered what kind of monks were the teachers of her daughter-in-law whom she extolled so excessively. So she summoned Cūḷa Subhaddā and asked her (DhpA, PTS 3.467):

> *Kīdisā samaṇā tuyhaṁ, bāḷhaṁ kho ne pasaṁsasi,*
> *kiṁ-sīlā kiṁ-samācārā, taṁ me akkhāhi pucchitā.*

Our daughter-in-law Subhaddā! How are your teachers and monks possessed of noble qualities? You do praise them highly. Those teachers of yours, the monk Gotama and his disciples, what kind of distinction do they have? What kind of good conduct do they show? As you are asked, tell me [844] truthfully about that.

Then Cūḷa Subhaddā, desiring to talk to the wife of the wealthy merchant about the qualities of the Buddha and his disciples, uttered the following verse:

Santindriyā santa-mānasā, santaṁ tesaṁ gataṁ ṭhitaṁ,
okkhitta-cakkhū mitabhāṇī, tādisā samaṇā mama.

Madam, those monks of mine, comprising the Fortunate One and his disciples, in contrast to the fickle and self-indulgent behaviour of your teachers, are mentally serene, being free from the heat of all defilements. Therefore, their walking with their steps like lotus flowers or their standing with their twin golden feet is so calm that the faith of the beholders increases. They have their eyes downcast and never look beyond the length of a yoke. They speak moderately and with what is in accordance with time and place. My teacher, the Fortunate One, and his disciples possess such impressive attributes.

Kāya-kammaṁ suci nesaṁ, vācā-kammaṁ anāvilaṁ,
mano-kammaṁ suvisuddhaṁ, tādisā samaṇā mama.

Madam, all the physical behaviour of my teacher, the Fortunate One, and his disciples, is clear of unwholesomeness and pure; their verbal behaviour is serene by nature without the dust and mud of unwholesomeness, all their mental behaviour is free from the stain of evil character. They possess such impressive attributes.

Vimalā saṅkha-muttābhā, suddhā antara-bāhirā,
puṇṇā suddhehi dhammehi, tādisā samaṇā mama.

Madam, my teacher, the Fortunate One, and his disciples, are free from moral defilements like a conch-shell or a pearl necklace. They are pure both inside and out, having no dust of fault at all. They are fully endowed with the three kinds of pure training. They possess such impressive attributes.

Lābhena unnato loko, alābhena ca onato,
lābhālābhena ekaṭṭhā, tādisā samaṇā mama.

Madam, in the world, people become puffed up with pride when they acquire many things owing to their possession of effort now (*payoga-sampatti*) and their good deeds in the past. They become depressed when they do not acquire anything owing to their lack of effort now and their evil deeds in the past. But my teacher, the Fortunate One, and his disciples, are not affected by the acquisition, nor by the non-acquisition of things, but remain calm and tranquil. They possess such impressive attributes.

Yasena unnato loko, ayasena ca onato,
yasāyasena ekaṭṭhā, [845] tādisā samaṇā mama.

Madam, in this world people became puffed up with pride when they become famous and have many followers owing to their possession of effort now and good deeds in the past. They become depressed when they cease to become famous and have fewer followers owing to their lack of effort now and their evil deeds in the past. But, my teacher, the Fortunate One, and his monastic disciples are not affected by having fame or not having fame and by having only a few followers, but remain calm and tranquil. They possess such impressive attributes.

Pasaṁsāyunnato loko, nindāyāpi ca onato,
samā nindā-pasaṁsāsu, tādisā samaṇā mama.

Madam, in this world people become puffed up with pride when they are praised owing to their effort now and good deeds in the past. They are depressed when they are dispraised owing to their lack of effort now and their evil deeds in the past. But my teacher, the Fortunate One, and his monastic disciples are not affected by praise or by dispraise, but remain calm and tranquil. They possess such impressive attributes.

Sukhena unnato loko, dukkhenāpi ca onato,
akampā sukha-dukkhesu, tādisā samaṇā mama.

Madam, in this world, people become puffed up with pride when they are affluent owing to their effort now and good deeds in the past. They become depressed when they are poor owing to their lack of effort now and their evil deeds in the past. But my teacher, the Fortunate One, and his monastic disciples, are not affected by affluence, but remain calm and tranquil. They possess such impressive attributes.

Thus, Cūḷa Subhaddā, the wise daughter-in-law, pleased her mother-in-law, by extolling the Fortunate One and his disciples. The merchant's wife asked her whether she would be able to show them her teacher, the Fortunate One and his disciples, and Cūḷa Subhaddā said she could do so. Then her mother-in-law told her to make an arrangement so that they could see her teacher and all.

Having promised thus, Cūḷa Subhaddā prepared a great offering for the Buddha and the Saṅgha, and on the top of the mansion, facing towards the Jetavana monastery, she paid respects to the Buddha and contemplated his attributes. Then honouring the Buddha with sweet smelling flowers, and perfumes, she resolved thus: "Exalted Buddha, I invite the Saṅgha headed by the Fortunate One to an alms giving at my house. May the Fortunate One, the teacher of Devas and humans, know my invitation well through these jasmine flowers which I am now sending."

After extending her invitation, she threw up eight handfuls of jasmine flowers into the air. Like small butterflies, the flowers travelled in the air and became a flower-canopy above the Buddha, while he was teaching amongst the four assemblies of people in the Jetavana monastery.

At that moment the merchant Anāthapiṇḍika, who had heard the Dhamma, invited the Buddha to his house the next day to his good deeds. The Buddha replied that he had already accepted the invitation to the meal offering by another supporter. The merchant said: "There is no one who has come and invited the exalted Buddha before me. Whose meal-offering have you accepted?" The Buddha replied that he had already been invited by [846] Cūḷa Subhaddā. The merchant said: "But, exalted Buddha, is not my daughter Cūḷa Subhaddā living in Ugga which is 120 leagues away from this city of Sāvatthī?"

The Buddha replied: "You are right, merchant, but good people can manifest as if they were standing before me even though they may be living in a place that is many leagues away." Then the Buddha uttered the following verse (Dhp 304):

> *Dūre santo pakāsenti, himavanto va pabbato,*
> *asantettha na dissanti, rattiṁ khittā yathā sarā.*

Merchant Anāthapiṇḍika, supporter of Jetavana! Though people, pure at heart and doers of good deeds, may stay many leagues away, they manifest themselves to my knowledge as does the Himavanta forest. Though foolish monks and lay persons exist near me, they never manifest

> themselves in the neighbourhood of my vision like the arrows shot in the darkness of four characteristics: midnight, moonless, in the heart of the forest and under an all cloudy sky.

By the end of the discourse, many people attained the fruition of Sotāpatti.

Knowing that the Buddha had accepted Cūḷa Subhaddā's invitation, Sakka told Vissakamma to create 500 turreted flying vehicles in which the Buddha and his monks were to be taken to Ugga the next day. The next day, Vissakamma stood at the gate of the Jetavana monastery, after creating 500 flying vehicles. The Buddha took a batch of 500 choice Arahats as his entourage, and they, one seated in each vehicle, travelled by air to Ugga city.

Looking forward with his followers to the Buddha's arrival, as instructed by his wise daughter-in-law Cūḷa Subhaddā, Ugga saw the Buddha coming with great glory. Overwhelmed by devotion, he welcomed and honoured the Buddha with flowers, scents, etc. After performing the alms giving, he invited the Buddha now and then and repeated his great offering for seven days.

The Buddha taught a Dhamma teaching that was suitable for Ugga. As a result, he and his wife, together with 84,000 beings, realized the four truths and became liberated.

In order to show his appreciation to Cūḷa Subhaddā, the Buddha told Ven. Anuruddha to stay behind in Ugga and he himself and the rest of the Arahats returned to Sāvatthī. From that day onwards the city of Ugga became a great centre of the faith and a city devoted to the Three Treasures.

A Brahmin with Wrong Views

> [The following is based on the Dhamma Verses (Dhp 216) and its commentary.]

Once, while residing at Jetavana in Sāvatthī, the Buddha taught a discourse beginning with (Dhp 216): *Taṇhāya jāyatī soko*, "grief arises from craving," in connection with a certain Brahmin. The story in detail is as follows: One day, a Brahmin, a citizen of Sāvatthī, who held wrong views, was clearing a farm land near the river Aciravatī.

The Buddha came to know that he had performed in the past an act that would contribute to his attainment of the paths and fruitions. The Brahmin saw the

Buddha but as he was of wrong views, he did not pay his respects to the Buddha, not even talking to him but keeping silent. The Buddha himself first addressed the Brahmin, [847] saying: "Brahmin what are you doing?" The Brahmin replied: "Gotama, I am clearing the farmland." With only a few such words on the first day, the Buddha went away.

The next day, too, the Buddha went to the Brahmin and asked him what he was doing. The Brahmin replied that he was ploughing the field. After hearing this reply the Buddha went away.

Again, the next day and the following days, the Buddha asked the Brahmin what he was doing and he replied that he was sowing seeds, planting seedlings, weeding or looking after the field. The Buddha heard the Brahmin's answers which were appropriate to his work and went away.

In this way, owing to the frequency of the Buddha's visit, the Brahmin began to like the Buddha. Wanting to make the Buddha his friend he said: "Gotama, you have been visiting me since the day I cleared my farmland. If the farm yields good and abundant crops, I will share them with you. I will not consume them without giving you first. From today you have become my friend."

Then one day the crop on the Brahmin's field became ripe and mature and he decided to have them reaped the next day. But, while he was making preparations for the harvesting, heavy rain fell at night and swept away all the crops. So the whole farmland was destroyed and barren like a field with all its crops removed.

Since the very day of his first visit, the Buddha had foreseen that the crops would come to nothing. But, if he started visiting the Brahmin only after the destruction of the crops, his discourse would have fallen on deaf ears. He had, therefore, been visiting the Brahmin from the day when the latter cleared the field, in this way the Buddha hoped to gain the Brahmin's confidence and that would make him receptive to the discourse to be given on the day when the crops were ruined.

The Brahmin went early to his field and seeing his farmland stark empty, he was overwhelmed with grief. "The monk Gotama has been visiting me since I cleared my field," he thought, "I have told him that I will give him a share of the crops after harvesting, that I will not consume them all by myself, without

giving him and that he has become my friend. Now my desire will remain unfulfilled." So thinking, he returned home, ate nothing and lay down on his bed.

Then the Buddha went to the Brahmin's house. When the Brahmin heard of the Buddha's coming, he told the people in his house to bring his friend inside and to give him a seat. They did according to his instructions. The Buddha sat down and asked where the Brahmin was. They answered that he was lying on his bed in the room. Thereupon, he told them to bring the Brahmin. The Brahmin came and sat at a suitable distance. Then he asked the Brahmin what was wrong with him.

The Brahmin said: "Gotama! You have been visiting me ever since I cleared my farm land. I have promised to share the crops with you when they come out well. But now my desire cannot be fulfilled and I am overwhelmed with anguish. I do not even want to eat my meal."

Then the Fortunate One asked: "Brahmin! Do you know why grief arises in you?" The Brahmin said: "I do not know, Gotama. But do you know?" The Fortunate One replied: "Yes, I do. Grief and fear arises from craving." Then the Buddha taught the following verse (Dhp 216):

> *Taṇhāya jāyatī soko, taṇhāya jāyatī bhayaṁ,*
> *taṇhāya vippamuttassa, natthi soko kuto bhayaṁ.*
>
> Brahmin, grief arises from craving. From craving arises fear. There is not the least grief in a person who has become free from craving through [848] becoming an Arahat. How can fear arise in him since he has repudiated it at the moment of attaining Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-magga*)?

At the end of the discourse, the Brahmin attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*).

Ven. Candābha

> [The following is based on the Dhamma Verses (Dhp 413) and its commentary.]

While dwelling in Jetavana, in Sāvatthī city, the Buddha taught the verse beginning with (Dhp 413): *Candaṁ va vimalaṁ suddhaṁ*, "the Arahat is free from the impurity of the five kinds of sensual pleasure," in connection with Ven. Candābha.

Deed in the Past

The story in detail: Long ago, a trader in Bārāṇasī planned to go to a border country to collect fragrant sandalwood. So he took a lot of garments and ornaments to the border country. There, he camped near the gate of a village and asked the cowherds in the wood: "Boys, is there somebody who works at the foot of the hill?" The cowherds said: "Yes." He asked again: "What is his name?" When they gave the man's name, he also asked the names of the man's wife and children. When they gave their names, he asked further the locality of man's home. The cowherds gave their answers with honesty.

Acting on the information given by the cowherds, the trader went in a small cart to the house of the forest worker. He stepped down, went into the house and called the housewife by her name. Thinking that the visitor was one of their relatives, the woman quickly came out and gave him a seat. The trader sat down, and mentioning the name of her husband, he asked: "Where is my friend?" She replied: "Sir, your friend has gone to the forest." Then he asked her about the children, mentioning their names and referring to them as "son" and "daughter." He gave her garments and ornaments as presents for her husband and children. The housewife served the trader hospitably with very good food. When her husband returned from the forest, she told him about the guest, how he had inquired about their children by name and how he had given her presents for the whole family. The worker became intimate with the trader and dutifully did all that was necessary for the guest.

Then in the evening the trader sat on the bed and asked the forest worker: "What objects do you find abundantly at the foot of the hill while you are wandering there." The forester said: "I do not find anything extraordinary other than the trees with red branches that are plentiful." The trader asked him whether he found such trees abundantly and the forester assured him that the trees abounded. "In that case, please show me those trees." Then, led by the forester, the trader went into the forest, cut down the red sandalwood trees and came back with 500 cart-loads of sandalwood. He gave the forester his address in Bārāṇasī and said: "I would like you to come to my place. You are always welcome. When you come, I want you to bring only those trees. I want no present other than the trees with red branches." After speaking warmly out of friendship, the trader returned to Bārāṇasī.

In accordance with the trader's instruction, the forest worker brought only red sandalwood whenever he went to see the trader. The trader was grateful for his kindness and gave much gold and silver.

On another occasion, after the passing away (*Parinibbāna*) of the Buddha Kassapa and the construction of a great relic shrine (*stūpa*), the forester came to his friend, the Bārāṇasī trader, with a lot of sandalwood. The trader had the sandalwood pounded, filled the bowl with it and said to his friend: "Come, friend, let us go to the great shrine before the meal is ready. We will honour the shrine and come back." So saying he took his friend to the shrine and honoured it with an offering of sandalwood powder. His friend, the forest worker, too honoured the shrine by making the shape of a moon with red sandalwood powder on the bell shape part of the shrine.

> This forest worker was the future Ven. Candābha. This above act of honouring [849] was his only good deed in the past that contributed to his attainment of the paths and fruitions.

On his death, the forest worker was reborn in the Deva realm and after passing his time during the whole interval between the two Buddhas, he was reborn in an affluent Brahmin family in Rājagaha in the time of Buddha Gotama. From the navel of the young Brahmin there came out white, brilliant light like that of the full moon. So his parents and relatives named him Candābha, master moonlight.

> This emission of the whole bright light like the full moon was the result of his honour done to Buddha Kassapa shrine with a sandalwood powder shaped like the moon.

The Brahmins decided to take the child round and make money by deceiving the people. They made the child sit in a vehicle and wandered about the whole Jambudīpa, boasting that those who stroked the youth's body with their hands would acquire much wealth. Only those who could pay 100 or 1,000 pieces of money were allowed to stroke the child.

In the course or their wanderings, the Brahmins came to Sāvatthī and stayed in a place between the city and the Jetavana monastery. In the morning, fifty million noble, virtuous men gave alms, and in the afternoon, they went to Jetavana with scents, flowers, robes, medicines, etc. to listen to the Dhamma.

Seeing these people, the Brahmin asked them where they were off to. "We are going to hear the Fortunate One's discourse," answered the noble, virtuous men. Then the Brahmin said: "Come friend, what's the use of going to that Fortunate One. There is no power like that of our Candābha. Certainly, those who stroke his body will have such and such benefits. Come and see Candābha."

Candābha taken to the Monastery

The good people said: "What kind of power does the Brahmin Candābha possess? Our teacher the Fortunate One is the most powerful being in the world." Being unable to give a final decision on the issue by themselves, they at last agreed to go to the monastery and see the powers of the Fortunate One and of the Brahmin. So they went to the monastery taking the Brahmin Candābha.

As soon as the Brahmin came near him, the Buddha resolved to make the moonlight that emitted from the Brahmin's navel disappear. The Brahmin became something like a small crow in a basket of charcoal. When the Brahmin was taken away from the Buddha, the light from his navel reappeared and when he was taken back to the Buddha, the light vanished as before. This occurred three times and Candābha wondered whether the Buddha knew any mantra that could dispel the light and he asked the Buddha accordingly.

The Buddha said: "Yes, I know it." The Brahmin requested: "In that case please teach me the mantra." The Buddha replied that he could not teach it to anyone who was not a monk. Then the Brahmin told his companions: "I will become the greatest man in the whole of Jambudīpa after learning this mantra. You wait for me in your lodgings in this city. I will learn the mantra within two or three days after ordination." Having thus cheered up his friends he went back to the Buddha, asked for ordination and became a monk.

Then the Buddha taught Ven. Candābha contemplation of the 32 parts of the body (*dvattiṁsākāra-kammaṭṭhāna*). Then Ven. Candābha asked the Buddha what head-hair (*kesa*), body-hair (*loma*), etc. meant. The Buddha said: "That contemplation is preliminary (*parikamma*) to learning the mantra. You should recite it."

The other Brahmins came occasionally and asked him if he had learnt the mantra. Ven. Candābha answered that he had not and that he was still reciting the preliminary. In this way [850] through the contemplation of the 32 parts of

the body, Ven. Candābha developed concentration, then practised insight meditation (*vipassanā*) and within two or three days he became an Arahat. When the Brahmins came and inquired about him, he told them clearly and decisively: "Go away! It is now not possible for me to return to the worldly life."

On hearing his words, other monks reported to the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha! This Ven. Candābha has falsely claimed to be an Arahat." The Buddha said: "Monks! Now, my son, the monk Candābha, is an Arahat with all his pollutants (*āsava*) extinct. He speaks only the truth." Then the Buddha uttered the following verse (Dhp 413):

> *Candaṁ va vimalaṁ suddhaṁ, vippasannam-anāvilaṁ,*
> *nandī-bhava-parikkhīṇaṁ, tam-ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ.*
>
> Monks! The Arahat is free from the impurity of the five kinds of sensual pleasure; pure, spotless and clear like the flying mansion of the moon, free from all defilements and craving for the three kinds of existence. Such an Arahat, I call a true Brahmin, as he really and naturally is.

By the end of the Discourse many people attained Stream-entry fruition and higher levels.

Māra's Temptation

> [The following is based on the Dhamma Verses (Dhp 331-333) and their commentary.]

The Buddha taught the discourse beginning with (Dhp 331): *Atthamhi jātamhi sukhā sahāyā*, "when there is any kind of understanding, friends are a source of happiness" in connection with Māra who came to tempt him to be a king.

The detailed account is as follows: Once the Buddha was dwelling in a small forest hermitage on the slopes of the Himālayas, in Kosala country. At that time, the kings still enforced their rule by oppressing the people. The Buddha saw the people in the countries of tyrants being ill-treated through various kinds of unlawful taxation and punishment. Being moved with pity, the Buddha wondered whether it was possible for one to be a good ruler without killing by oneself or through another person, without bringing about damage or loss of citizen's property by oneself or through another person, and without making one grieve by oneself or through another person.

Māra knew what was passing through the Buddha's mind and he thought: "Now, the monk Gotama is considering the possibility of being a ruler. Perhaps, now he wants to be a king. Kingship is a cause of negligence. If the monk Gotama becomes a king, I will have the opportunity to molest him. I will now go and make the monk Gotama try for kingship." So thinking, he approached the Fortunate One and said: "Exalted Buddha, let the Glorious One be a king! Let the one who utters good words becomes a righteous king who does not kill by himself nor through another person, who does not bring about damage or loss of other's property by himself or through another person and who does not make others grieve by himself or through another person."

Thus Māra lured the Buddha. The Fortunate One said: "Wicked Māra! What do you see in me that makes you speak to me like this?" Māra replied: "Exalted Buddha, you have thoroughly and effectively developed the four foundations of supernormal power (*iddhipāda*). If your mind is inclined to turn the great Himālayas into gold, it will certainly become solid gold. If you act lawfully as a king, I will support you in all matters that require gold or silver." Then the Fortunate One uttered the following verse (SN 4.20):

> *Pabbatassa suvaṇṇassa, jāta-rūpassa kevalo,*
> *dvittā va nālam-ekassa, iti vidvā samañcare.*

There may be a big mountain that is made up of pure gold unmixed with copper, iron, lead, or other minerals. Let alone such a mountain of gold, [851] even a gold mountain that is twice as high as the Himālayas cannot satisfy the craving of a person. The wise man who understands the nature of craving should steadfastly and diligently practise the ten good deeds in thought, speech and deed.

> *Yo dukkham-adakkhi yato-nidānaṁ,*
> *kāmesu so jantu kathaṁ nameyya,*
> *upadhiṁ viditvā saṅgoti loke,*
> *tasseva jantu vinayāya sikkhe.*

If a man knows clearly that all kinds of suffering have their source in the five kinds of sensual objects, why should he be inclined to see anything good in them? In this world, a man who clearly sees sensuality as a substratum (*upadhi*) of existence that is bound with greed, hatred, ignorance, conceit and false beliefs, should devote himself to the threefold

training in morality, concentration and wisdom in order to overcome sensual desire.

After startling Māra with these verses, the Buddha said: "Wicked Māra, your teaching is one thing while my teaching is another; you teach to strive to enjoy sense objects and sense pleasures while I stress the need for eradicating them. Certainly, by no means is it possible to enter into a doctrinal discussion with you. I teach as follows." Then the Buddha taught the following verses (Dhp 331-333):

Atthamhi jātamhi sukhā sahāyā,
tuṭṭhī sukhā yā itarītarena,
puññaṁ sukhaṁ jīvita-saṅkhayamhi,
sabbassa dukkhassa sukhaṁ pahānaṁ.

In this world, when there is any kind of understanding, friends are a source of happiness, contentment with whatever is available is the source of happiness, when one is dying, good deeds are a source of happiness. Awakening, which means the total abandoning of the whole round of suffering inherent in the life cycle, is the source of happiness.

Here the cause of happiness is described as happiness in the sense of being the source (*phalupatti*). The same may be said of the following verses. This verse mentions four causes of happiness.

Sukhā matteyyatā loke, atho petteyyatā sukhā,
sukhā sāmaññatā loke, atho brahmaññatā sukhā.

In this world, supporting one's mother is a source of happiness, so is supporting one's father, giving alms respectively to recluses, monks and wandering ascetics is also a source of happiness. Moreover, giving gladly and respectively to the Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and to noble disciples is a source of happiness.

This verse also shows four sources of happiness.

Sukhaṁ yāva jarā-sīlaṁ, sukhā saddhā patiṭṭhitā,
sukho paññāya paṭilābho, pāpānaṁ akaraṇaṁ sukhaṁ.

The good moral life involving the observance of the five, eight or ten precepts is good and productive of happiness until old age when one's hair turns grey, teeth fall out and the skin becomes wrinkled.

> Ruby earring, red garments, etc. are congenial to people only at a certain age. Young [852] people's garments are not congenial to adults and vice versa. An adult wearing the garment of a young man or vice versa will cause criticism and gives one the impression of being crazy. But morality comprising the observance of the five or ten precepts is congenial to young or old people alike in the three phases of life. A morally good person earns the approbation of other people that is pleasant and delightful to him.

Unwaveringly established faith, mundane and supermundane, is a source of happiness. So is the ability to acquire mundane and supermundane wisdom by diligence. Complete abstinence from doing evil deeds is another source of happiness. This verse also shows another set of four sources of happiness. By the end of the discourse, millions of Devas realized the four truths and became liberated.

35d: Ambaṭṭha and his pupil Pokkharasāti

[The following is based on the Discourse to Ambaṭṭha (*Ambaṭṭha-sutta*, DN 3) and its commentary.]

One day at dawn the Buddha surveyed the world of living beings and there appeared the Brahmin Pokkharasāti within the range of his omniscience. After further reflection the Buddha saw the former good deeds of the Brahmin that would contribute to his attainment of the Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*). The Buddha also foresaw that: "When I go to the Icchānaṅgala region, the Brahmin teacher Pokkharasāti will send his the young Brahmin Ambaṭṭha to inquire about my major and minor marks. Ambaṭṭha will hold a debate with me, uttering all kinds of foolish words. I must admonish him and dispel the poison of his pride. He will report the matter to his teacher. When his teacher hears his word, he will come to me and examine my marks. I will then teach the Brahmin Pokkharasāti, who will attain Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*) at the end of my teaching."

With this foreknowledge, the Buddha journeyed to Kosala kingdom with 500 monks and on arriving at the Brahmin village of Icchānaṅgala in Kosala, the Buddha dwelt in a huge nearby grove at Icchānaṅgala.

At that time the Brahmin Pokkharasāti was appointed as city administrator by King Pasenadi Kosala, and he administered the populous city of Ukkaṭṭha which abounded in grass, firewood, water, rice and paddy.

The commentary says: When the city was about to be founded its site was marked under the light of torches and firebrands, hence the name of the city, Ukkaṭṭha (it means elevated, besides other meanings).

About the Brahmin Pokkarasāti: In the time of Buddha Kassapa he was a Brahmin well-versed in the three Vedas. After giving alms and hearing the Dhamma, he was reborn in the Deva realm.

When he died in the Deva realm and was reborn in the human abode in the moisture of a Paduma lotus in a big lake near the Himavanta. A recluse, having built a hermitage near the lake, was living there. While standing near the lake, he saw the big lotus bud and thought to himself: "This big lotus bud is much bigger than others. When it blossoms, I will take it."

The lotus did not blossom even after a week. The recluse became impatient and stepping into the lake, he plucked it. As soon as it was broken from the

> stalk, the bud opened. Then to his surprise, the recluse found in the flower a baby boy, silvery white and covered with pollen all over his body, like a silver statue with gold dust scattered all over.
>
> The recluse thought: "This child will become a great man. I will look after him from now." He took the child to the hermitage, raised him and began to teach him the three Vedas when he was seven years old. The boy became a very famous Brahmin teacher who was an authority in the three Vedas. Later on, the Brahmin [853] teacher demonstrated his knowledge to King Kosala. The king, having a high opinion of his knowledge, offered him the post of administrator of Ukkaṭṭha city. He was known as Pokkharasāti because he was conceived in a lotus-flower (*pokkhara*).
>
> The Brahmin's body had the colour of a white lotus flower and was splendid like a silver post set up at the gate of a celestial city. His head had the dark blue colour of sapphire. His beard appeared like a dark line drawn on the surface of the moon. The eyes were like a blue lotus flower and the nose was quite clean and round like a silver tube. His palms, soles and lips seemed well tainted with lacquer. The Brahmin's body was very beautiful. He was fit to be made a king in a place where there was no ruler. Such was the splendour of the Brahmin. Because of his resemblance to a white lotus, he was called Pokkharasāti.

Like the Brahmin Verañja mentioned earlier, Pokkharasāti heard the news about the attributes of the Buddha. He has a residential pupil, named Ambaṭṭha, a young Brahmin who was also well-versed in the three Vedas and various other sacred books, and worthy of being a Brahmin teacher himself, he held Ambaṭṭha in high esteem and ranked him as his peer.

Pokkharasāti told his pupil, Ambaṭṭha, about the reported virtues of the Buddha and said: "Dear son Ambaṭṭha, go to the monk Gotama and enquire whether the reports that are going round are true or not, and whether he is true to his fame or not. The 32 marks of a great man are explicitly mentioned in our Vedas. For a great man who possesses these marks, there are only two possibilities: If he leads a worldly life, he will become a Universal Monarch, the ruler of the four continents; or if he leads an ascetic life, he will become a Buddha. My dear son Ambaṭṭha, I have taught you the Vedas and you have learnt them from me."

> As an intelligent Brahmin, Pokkharasāti thought: "In this world, there are many people like Purāṇa Kassapa and others who go about claiming to be Buddhas, so it is not advisable for me to associate with a teacher merely

from hearsay. Certainly, it is hard to dissociate oneself from some person if one has become associated with them. Besides, such an attempt may be harmful to one's welfare, so it is good to send my disciple and find out whether the monk Gotama is a Buddha before I myself go and see him." So Pokkharasāti sent his disciple Ambaṭṭha.

Then having risen and paid respect to his teacher, Ambaṭṭha said: "Very well, master," and went to Icchānaṅgala grove with many other young men in his teacher's chariot that was drawn by a mule. He went as far as the chariot could travel in the grove, then got off the chariot near the gate and entered the monastery on foot. It was then noon.

At that time, several monks who engaged in meditation were walking to and fro on the ground in the open air. Ambaṭṭha went to the monks and said: "Friends, where is the monk Gotama now? We have come to this place to see the monk Gotama."

Then the monks thought to themselves: "This youth Ambaṭṭha is of a well-known family. He is also a pupil of the famous Pokkharasāti. For the Fortunate One, it should not be burdensome to converse with such a son of a good family."

So they said to Ambaṭṭha: "Approach quietly that lodging with the closed doors. Enter the frontage slowly and after coughing, knock at the door. The Fortunate One will open the door for you."

Then Ambaṭṭha went and knocked at the door as instructed by the monks. The Buddha opened the door. Ambaṭṭha entered the building followed by the other young men. They exchanged pleasant words with the Buddha and sat in suitable places.

The Buddha did not get up and open the door by himself. In fact, he stretched his hand, resolving that the door should be opened. Then the door opened by itself, as if it were saying: "Venerable sir! You, who have given alms for millions of aeons (*kappa*), have not done the kind of deeds (*kamma*) that would make you open the door [854] with your hands."

This opening of the door by itself, as resolved upon by the Buddha, is expressed by: *Vivari Bhagavā dvāraṁ* in Pāḷi, which is simply translated as "the Buddha opened the door."

Ambaṭṭha's Behaviour

The young Ambaṭṭha was not impressed by the splendour of the Buddha's body. Bent on threatening him, he unfastened the strip of cloth tied on his chest and let it hang down loose on his neck. Holding the edge of his waist-cloth with one hand, he got onto the promenade and sometimes walked there, sometimes stood, sometimes showed his arm, sometimes showed his chest, sometimes showed his back, sometimes made a rude gesture with his hands, and sometimes made ugly facial expressions such as grimaces, saying: "Gotama! Are you quite well? Do you get your food without any hardship? It is apparently not hard for you to get food. Certainly, all your physical features are robust and very impressive. Wherever you go, people adore you very much as a monk belonging to a royal family or as a Buddha, and give the choicest and most nourishing food. Friends, look at the abode of Gotama! It is like an extraordinary hall. It looks like a celestial mansion. Look at his bed and his pillow! For a man who lives in such a good place, how can it be possible to experience any hardship in leading a monastic life!" Thus Ambaṭṭha spoke only derisive words and ungentlemanly words that would be bitter and painful forever to ordinary people.

Then the Buddha thought: "This young Ambaṭṭha spends his energy irrelevantly like a man who stretches his hand up to grasp Bhavagga, the highest Brahma abode, or like a man who stretches his legs to wander in the Avīci hell or like a man who wants to swim across the great ocean or like a man who wants to climb Mount Meru. I will now talk with him." So thinking, the Buddha said to Ambaṭṭha: "You speak to me disrespectfully and bitterly in a way that is unacceptable to good people. Do you speak to the aged Brahmin teachers and their teachers in the same way?"

"No, Gotama, I do not speak to them in this way. When a Brahmin wants to speak to a walking teacher, he speaks while walking. If he wants to speak to a standing teacher, he speaks while standing. If he wants to speak to a sitting teacher, he speaks while sitting. If he wants to speak to a teacher who is lying down, he has to speak while lying down."

Monks denounced as Low Caste

> Herein a Brahmin usually spoke to his teacher only while walking, standing and sitting. But Ambaṭṭha was so arrogant that he mentioned the lying posture.

So the Buddha said: “Ambaṭṭha, a walking Brahmin pupil may speak to a walking Brahmin teacher, a standing Brahmin pupil may speak to a standing Brahmin teacher, a sitting Brahmin teacher may speak to a sitting Brahmin teacher. Such behaviour, all Brahmin teachers approve of. But you speak while lying down to your teacher who is also lying down. In that case, you are indeed like an ox. Is your teacher then an ox and you also an ox?”

Then Ambaṭṭha became very angry and said: “Gotama! With the dark, low-caste, vile and bare-headed monks who sprang from the instep of Brahma, I speak in the same way as I now speak to you.” Thus he disparaged the Buddha using the word low-caste for the first time.

> Herein, according to Ambaṭṭha, Brahmins sprang from the mouth of the Brahma, princes from the chest, merchants from the navel, labourers from the knees and monks from the instep. Believing thus, Ambaṭṭha ranked the monks as men of the lowest caste and though he made no reference in his speech, it was intended to insult the Buddha.

Then the Buddha thought: “Since this young Ambaṭṭha came here, he has spoken to me only with conceit motivating his remarks. Like a man who grasps a very poisonous snake by the neck or who embraces a big fire or who holds the trunk of a bull-elephant in a rut, he [855] does not know his capacity. I will now let him know it.”

So the Buddha said: “Ambaṭṭha, you came here for some purpose. You should be mindful of the purpose for which you came here. Without having any real intelligence as yet, you consider yourself already intelligent. There is nothing but lack of intelligence to account for the way you behave and speak to me.”

> Here the first statement means: “Your teacher has sent you here not for insulting, but for some other purpose. So now mind the business you are sent for.” After reminding Ambaṭṭha of the etiquette to be observed by visitors, the Buddha made the second statement to snub him.

Resentful and displeased with the Buddha’s reference to his lack of intelligence, Ambaṭṭha decided to censure the Buddha in the presence of his companions and said: “Gotama! The Sakyan princes are arrogant, rough, small-hearted, talkative and if they do not revere, adore, honour or bow down to the Brahmins it is downright improper.” Thus Ambaṭṭha spoke in contempt of the Sakyan princes.

Then the Buddha asked Ambaṭṭha how the Sakyan princes had wronged him. Ambaṭṭha replied: "Gotama, I once went to Kapilavatthu city to do some business for my teacher Pokkharasāti. I visited the Assembly Hall of the Sakyan princes. At that time, many Sakyan kings, who have been anointed as princes, who have not been anointed yet, were tickling one another, laughing uproariously and playing boisterously while seated on a raised platform in the hall. In fact, they seemed to be laughing only at me. Nobody offered me a seat, Gotama! Not to revere, adore, honour or bow down to the Brahmin on the part of low-caste Sakyan princes is downright improper." Thus Ambaṭṭha denounced the Buddha for the second time using the word, low-caste.

> The Sakyan princes sneered at Ambaṭṭha because they know his ancestry.
> He arrived like one intoxicated with pride, his shoulder-bone bent and one
> hand holding the edge of his waistcloth that hung loosely down to his feet.
> They tickled one another, laughed and played boisterously saying: "Look
> folks! There comes Ambaṭṭha, a descendant of our slave, Kaṇhāyana."
> Ambaṭṭha also knew his ancestry and so he considered rightly that the
> princes were laughing only at him.

Then the Buddha said: "Ambaṭṭha, even a skylark can chirp as much as it likes in her nest. Kapilavatthu is the city of Sakyan princes. You should not have a grudge over such a trivial matter."

When the Buddha cited the simile of the skylark, Ambaṭṭha thought that the Buddha was free from conceit since he linked his relatives to the skylark and the Brahmins to the goose (*haṁsa*), crane and peacock. So Ambaṭṭha went on to mention the four assemblies of people, saying: "Friend Gotama, there are four assemblies of people: kings, Brahmins, merchants and labourers. Of these four classes, the kings, merchants and labourers are in fact servants of the Brahmins. So, friend Gotama, not revering, adoring, honouring or bowing down to the Brahmins on the part of the low-caste Sakyan princes is downright improper." Thus Ambaṭṭha belittled the Sakyan princes for the third time with the word, low-caste.

Origin of the Sakyans

As Ambaṭṭha persisted in denouncing the Sakyan princes as low-caste people, the Buddha decided to ask him about his clan. So the Buddha said: "Ambaṭṭha,

of what clan are you?" Ambaṭṭha, shouted three times: "Gotama, I am of Kaṇha clan."

> Herein, Ambaṭṭha knew the impurity of the Kaṇha clan superficially. But he did not know the previous life of Kaṇha. Owing to his ignorance he thought that the Buddha could not say anything and he made the above remark because of his [856] arrogance.

Then the Buddha explained to Ambaṭṭha the lineage of Sakyan princes and the origin of the Kaṇha clan: "Ambaṭṭha, if you trace back your genealogy, you will find that the Sakyan princes are the sons of lords and that you are the son of their slave-woman. Ambaṭṭha, the Sakyan princes regard King Okkāka as their grandfather. Long ago King Okkāka had a young queen whom he loved very much. Wishing to give his kingdom to her son, he sent into exile his elder sons called Okkāmukha, Karakaṇḍa, Hatthinika and Sinisūra.

> Their elder and younger sisters: Piyā, Sappiyā, Ānandā, Vijitā and Vijitasenā, these five princesses also accompanied the princes with the permission of the king.

The exiled princes founded a city in a teak forest near a lake on the fringe of the Himavanta. They married their sisters in order to preserve the purity of their family.

Ambaṭṭha, King Okkāka asked his ministers where his sons lived. They reported to him that the princes had founded a city in the teak forest, near a lake on the Himavanta and that they had married their sisters to preserve the purity of their family.

Ambaṭṭha! King Okkāka exclaimed then: 'My sons are so able. They are so able!' in allusion to that exclamation the princes were known as Sakyan, or able ones. King Okkāka was the prototype of the Sakyan princes.

Origin of Kaṇha Clan

Ambaṭṭha, King Okkāka had a slave woman named Disā. She gave birth to a son called Kaṇha. Immediately after his birth, Kaṇha said: 'Mother, cleanse me! Bathe me! Free me from this impurity! I will be one who can do good to you.'

Ambaṭṭha, just as nowadays, people call a Yakkha a Pisāca, so also in those days people gave the name Kaṇha to Yakkhas. They talked about the slave-woman's son: 'This child spoke soon after his birth. So he is a Kaṇha (Yakkha).' The

Kaṇha clansmen were known as Kaṇhāyana after the saying: 'That Kaṇha was the progenitor of the Kaṇha clan.' Ambaṭṭha, if you trace back your ancestry, you will find that the Sakyan princes are the sons of the lord, while you are the son of their slave-woman."

When the Buddha spoke thus, the young men who had come along with Ambaṭṭha, said together: "Gotama! Do not disparage Ambaṭṭha so severely with the word: 'Son of a slave-woman.' Ambaṭṭha is well-born, a young man of good family, well-informed, skilful in speaking and wise. He is competent to challenge and refute you in connection with your use of the word: 'Son of a slave-woman.' "

> Herein the outcry of these young men was designed merely to absolve themselves of blame before their teacher. In their view, Ambaṭṭha was the top disciple of their teacher. If they did not put in a word for him in his dispute with the Buddha, he would make such a report as would make his teacher displeased with them. So thinking, they supported Ambaṭṭha so as to be free from censure. They secretly wanted him to be snubbed. Indeed because of his arrogance they naturally hated him.

Then the Buddha thought: "If these young men, seated there keep talking loudly, I will not come to the end of my speech. I will silence them and talk only with Ambaṭṭha." So the Buddha said to them: "Young men! If you believe that because Ambaṭṭha is low born, not of good family, ill-informed, not skilful in speaking and devoid of wisdom, he is not competent to refute the monk Gotama, then leave him alone. It rests only with you to argue with me about the matter. But if you think that Ambaṭṭha is well-born, of good family, well-informed, skilful is speaking and wise and competent to argue [857] with me about this matter, then you keep quiet. Let Ambaṭṭha argue with me."

Then the young men thought: "Ambaṭṭha dare not raise his head again after it was said about him being the son of a slave-woman. This matter of birth is inscrutable. If the monk Gotama tells someone that he is a slave, who will be able to challenge and contend with the monk Gotama? Let Ambaṭṭha rid himself of the burden that is of his own making." So wishing to wash their hands of the matter and put the responsibility on Ambaṭṭha, they said to the Buddha evasively: "Friend Gotama! Ambaṭṭha is well-born, of good family, well-informed, skilful in speaking and wise. He is competent to rebut your use of the

word about being the son of a slave-woman. We will keep quiet. Let Ambaṭṭha refute you."

The Buddha now asked Ambaṭṭha: "Ambaṭṭha, here is a reasonable question for you. You will have to answer it although you do not wish to do so. If you do not answer it thoroughly or speak evasively or keep silent or go away, then your head will break into seven pieces on the spot.

Ambaṭṭha, what do you think of the question I now ask? What have you heard from old Brahmin teachers and their predecessors about it? How did the Kaṇha clan originate? Who was the ancestor of the Kaṇha clans?" When the Buddha asked him thus, Ambaṭṭha remained silent.

> His silence was the outcome of this thought: "The monk Gotama wants me to admit verbally myself that I am the son of a slave-woman. If I do so, then I will certainly be a son of a slave-woman. If the monk Gotama asks me twice or thrice and I refuse to answer him, he will say nothing and then I will go away."

For a second time the Buddha asked him: "Ambaṭṭha! What do you think of the question I will now ask? What have you heard from old Brahmin teachers and their predecessors? How did the Kaṇha clansmen originate? Who was their ancestor?" But Ambaṭṭha remained silent.

Then the Buddha said: "Ambaṭṭha, now it is not the time for you to remain silent. If a man refuses to answer a reasonable question which the Buddha asks him thrice, then his head will break into seven pieces on the spot."

At that moment, Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, came and stood in the air above Ambaṭṭha in the form of a Yakkha with a glowing and blazing iron hammer in his hand, threatening to break Ambaṭṭha's head into seven pieces on the spot, if he refused to answer the reasonable question which the Buddha asked him thrice. Sakka in the form of a Yakkha was visible only to the Buddha and Ambaṭṭha.

> Herein it may be asked why did Sakka come. The answer is he came in order to make Ambaṭṭha discard his false belief, or, in the above section when Brahma Sahampati requested the Buddha to proclaim the Dhamma, Sakka, who was with the Brahma, said: "Venerable sir, you do the teaching, we will make disobedient and defiant people obey you. Let your authority be the Dhamma, ours will be the command." In accordance with his pledge,

Sakka came to scare Ambaṭṭha and force him to answer the Buddha's question.

With regard to the statement "Sakka, in the form of a Yakkha, was visible only to the Buddha and Ambaṭṭha," it should be explained that if he were seen by other people as well, those who saw Sakka would have a poor impression of the Buddha. They would say contemptuously that the Buddha showed the Yakkha to Ambaṭṭha because the latter would not accept his doctrine and that the young Brahmin had to speak reluctantly and under duress.

As soon as he saw the Yakkha, Ambaṭṭha's body sweated profusely. He felt his whole stomach was moving up and down making a terrible sound. He scrutinized his companions [858] but he did not see any sign of fear in them. He thought: "I am the only person threatened by this Yakkha. If I tell them about the Yakkha, they will say: 'Do you alone have the eyes to see a Yakkha? You did not see a Yakkha before. You see him only when you find yourself at your wit's end in your dispute with the monk Gotama! Now there is no one other than the monk Gotama for my refuge.' " Thus frightened with his hair standing on end, Ambaṭṭha approached the Buddha, sat at a lower place and said: "What did friend Gotama ask, let friend Gotama ask it again."

The Buddha then asked him for the last time: "Ambaṭṭha, what do you think of my question? What have you heard from your old teachers and their predecessors? How did the Kaṇha clansmen originate? Who were their ancestors?"

Then Ambaṭṭha made his confession: "Friend Gotama! I have heard what you said from my old Brahmin teachers and their predecessors: Kaṇha clansmen have their origin in Kaṇha, the son of the slave-woman. That Kaṇha was their ancestor."

Ambaṭṭha's confession caused an uproar among the other young Brahmins. They shouted: "Friend, it is said that Ambaṭṭha is low born, not of a good family, and the son of the Sakyan princes' slave-woman. The Sakyan princes are said to be the sons of the masters of Ambaṭṭha. We have misunderstood the monk Gotama and blamed him, whereas in fact, he is a speaker of the truth (*Dhamma-vādī*)."

Then the Buddha thought: "These young men are humiliating Ambaṭṭha severely with the word: 'Son of a slave-woman.' I had better set Ambaṭṭha free from such a humiliation."

So he said: "Young men! Do not humiliate Ambaṭṭha severely with the word: 'Son of a slave-woman!' That Kaṇha was a powerful recluse. He went to the region south of the river Ganges and after having learnt the holy mantras he approached King Okkāka and asked for his daughter, Maddarūpī's hand in marriage.

King Okkāka said: "This recluse, Kaṇha, is the son of my slave-woman and yet he is asking for my daughter. What kind of a man is he?" Furious and displeased, he bent his bow but he could not shoot the arrow nor could he withdraw it. Then the ministers approached the recluse and begged him to save the king. Kaṇha said that the king would be safe but he threatened that if the king dropped the arrow, the earth in the whole kingdom would be destroyed.

> Herein, the recluse Kaṇha went to the region south of the Ganges as a layman and while serving a Brahmin recluse, he obtained from that recluse a mantra for obstructing arrows. Then he donned the robe of a recluse, came to King Okkāka, asked for the latter's daughter and when the irate king bent his bow to kill him, he obstructed the arrow with his spell. The spell had the power only to obstruct the arrow. Kaṇha's reference to the destruction of earth was an empty threat, merely a lie. The same may be said of his other threats.

The ministers again begged him to save the king and the country. He said that the king and the country would be safe but again he lied that if the king dropped the arrow, there would be no rain in the whole kingdom for seven days.

Again the ministers begged him to spare the king and the country and make the rain fall. He said that both the king and the country would be safe and it would rain but he said that if the arrow were directed at the elder son, he would be safe without a hair standing on end. Kaṇha said this only after making the king promise to give his daughter.

Young men, the ministers then reported to King Okkāka. The king directed the [859] arrow at his eldest son and the prince was safe, and free from fear, without a hair standing on end. Then he threatened him with the weapon of the mantra,

and King Okkāka became frightened, his hair stood up; and having made Kaṇha wash his head, he released him from slavery, and gave his daughter Maddarūpī.

Young men, do not humiliate Ambaṭṭha severely with the word: 'Son of a slave-woman.' That Kaṇha was a powerful recluse.

The Buddha gave his account of Kaṇha, saying that Ambaṭṭha was somewhat akin to the Sakyan princes on his side and thereby he consoled the young Ambaṭṭha. Like a man on whom water is poured, Ambaṭṭha felt much relieved as his worry about his social status had been washed away. He became conceited, thinking that the Buddha had affirmed his kinship to the royal family, being a noble (*khattiya*) on his mother's side.

The Nobles

Ambaṭṭha considered himself a member of the ruling class, not knowing that he was not a real prince. So the Buddha decided to disillusion him and in order to explain the meaning of noble (*khattiya*) he further engaged in the following dialogue with the young man.

"Ambaṭṭha, now what do you think of the question that I will ask you? Suppose in this world a man of a noble family marries a woman of Brahmin family. As a result of their marriage a son is born. Will the son born of that couple receive priority among the Brahmins in regards to seat and water?"

When Ambaṭṭha answered: "Yes, Gotama, he may receive it," the Buddha said again: "May the Brahmins serve that man at the feast in memory of the dead, the wedding feast, the feast at a sacrificial ceremony and at the feast given to guests?"

When Ambaṭṭha answered: "Yes, Gotama, they may serve him," the Buddha asked again: "May the Brahmins teach or may they not teach him the Vedas?"

When Ambaṭṭha answered: "Yes, Gotama, they may teach him," the Buddha asked again: "May the Brahmin forbid or may he not forbid his marriage with a Brahmin woman?"

When Ambaṭṭha answered: "No, Gotama, they may not forbid," the Buddha, clinching the argument, asked: "May the royal family consecrate him a king?"

"No Gotama," replied Ambaṭṭha reasonably, "they may not consecrate him because his mother is not a member of a noble (*khattiya*) family."

Here, in this section Ambaṭṭha answered that a son of a noble father and a Brahmin mother is not crowned king because of the low birth of the mother, so also is the son born of a Brahmin father and a noble mother because of the low birth of the father. The Buddha made this clear in his further dialogue with Ambaṭṭha.

Buddha: "Ambaṭṭha! What do you think of the question which I will now ask you? Suppose, in this world, a Brahmin marries a Khattiya woman and a son is born of this marriage. May their son receive priority among the Brahmins in respect of seat and water?"

Ambaṭṭha: "Yes, Gotama, he may."

Buddha: "May the Brahmins serve him at the feast in memory of the dead?"

Ambaṭṭha: "Yes, Gotama, they may."

Buddha: "May they teach him the Vedas or may they not?"

Ambaṭṭha: "Yes, Gotama, they may."

Buddha: "May they forbid his marriage with a Brahmin woman?"

Ambaṭṭha: "No, Gotama, they may not."

Buddha: "May the nobles consecrate him king?" [860]

Ambaṭṭha: "No, Gotama, they may not, because the father is not a noble."

Buddha: "So, Ambaṭṭha, if you compare a man with man or woman with a woman, you will find that the nobles (*khattiya*) are superior and that the Brahmins are inferior."

The following is a different dialogue between the Buddha and Ambaṭṭha to show the superiority of the nobles and the inferiority of the Brahmins.

Buddha: "Ambaṭṭha! What do think of the question which I will now ask you? Suppose in this world, a Brahmin is exiled from the country or the city by other Brahmins for a certain offence, with his head shaved and ashes sprinkled over him. May that exiled Brahmin receive priority among the Brahmins in respect of seat and water?"

Ambaṭṭha: "No, Gotama, he may not."

Buddha: "May the Brahmins serve that exiled Brahmin at the feast in memory of the dead, at the wedding feast, at the sacrificial feast and at the rest given to guests?"

Ambaṭṭha: "No Gotama, they may not."

Buddha: "May the Brahmins teach or may they not teach the Vedas to that exiled Brahmin?"

Ambaṭṭha: "No, friend Gotama, they may not."

Buddha: "May the Brahmins forbid the marriage of that exiled Brahmin with a Brahmin woman?"

Ambaṭṭha: "Yes, friend Gotama, they may."

Buddha: "Ambaṭṭha, what do you think of the question that I will now ask you? In this world, the nobles exile a noble from the city or the county, with his head shaved and ashes sprinkled over it for some offence. May that man receive priority among the Brahmins in respect of seat and water?"

Ambaṭṭha: "Yes, Gotama, he may."

Gotama: "May the Brahmins serve him at the feast in memory of the dead, at the wedding feast, at the sacrificial feast and at the feast given to guests?"

Ambaṭṭha: "Yes, Gotama, they may."

Buddha: "May the Brahmins teach or not teach him the Vedas?"

Ambaṭṭha: "Yes, Gotama, they may."

Buddha: "May they forbid or not forbid the marriage of that man with a Brahmin woman?"

Ambaṭṭha: "No, Gotama, they may not."

Buddha: "Ambaṭṭha, nobles may have exiled a noble with his head shaved and ashes sprinkled over him, and exiled him from the country or the city for a certain offence and by such treatment he is very much disgraced. But even when he is very much disgraced, the noble is superior, and the Brahmin is inferior. Ambaṭṭha, Sanaṅkumāra Brahma too, utters this verse (SN 6.11):

> *Khattiyo seṭṭho janetasmiṁ, ye gotta-paṭisārino,*
> *vijjā-caraṇa-sampanno, so seṭṭho Deva-mānuse.*

> Among people who count much on ancestry, the nobles are praiseworthy and superior. Among Devas and humans, one who has knowledge and good conduct is praiseworthy and superior.

Ambaṭṭha, this verse is well-spoken by Sanaṅkumāra Brahma. It is not ill-spoken: it is relevant to welfare; it is not irrelevant to welfare. I approve of it. Ambaṭṭha, I [860] too, like Sanaṅkumāra Brahma, uttered this verse:

> Among people who count much on ancestry, the nobles are praiseworthy and superior. Among Devas and humans, one who has knowledge and good conduct is praiseworthy and superior. ”

Knowledge and Good Conduct Explained

There is the phrase: *Vijjā-caraṇa-sampanno,* in the verse, which means: “Possessed of knowledge (*vijjā*) and good conduct (*caraṇa*).” In the view of Ambaṭṭha, knowledge refers to the three Vedas while good conduct refers to the five moral precepts. Ambaṭṭha thought that if a man who possesses knowledge and good conduct is praiseworthy and superior, that only the Brahmins were praiseworthy and superior people. Wishing to know these two qualities, he asked: “Friend Gotama, what is knowledge and what is good conduct?”

Then the Buddha, desiring to point out the supreme, transcendent knowledge and good conduct, leaving aside the three Vedas and the five precepts that are bound up with the well-known caste system of Brahmanism, said: “Ambaṭṭha, in the matter of possessing supreme transcendent knowledge and good conduct, you should never utter words such as: ‘You are fit for me’ or ‘You are not fit for me,’ words that stem from attachment to birth, attachment to clan and attachment to pride.

Ambaṭṭha, only in a human society with its marriage customs involving the taking or giving of a daughter, should you ever utter words that stem from attachment to birth, clan and pride, words such as: ‘You are fit for me’ or ‘You are not fit for me’.

Ambaṭṭha, those, who cling to words stemming from attachment to birth (*jāti-vāda*), words stemming from attachment to clan (*gotta-vāda*), words stemming from attachment to pride (*māna-vāda*) and words stemming from attachment to marriages that involve the taking or giving of a daughter, are far from possession of the supreme, transcendent knowledge and good conduct.

Ambaṭṭha, one can realize the supreme, transcendent knowledge and good conduct only if one overcomes attachment to birth, attachment to clan, attachment to pride, attachment to marriages that involve the giving or taking of a daughter."

Then Ambaṭṭha thought: "It has been our belief that we are in possession of knowledge and practice. But just as a violent storm gets rid of husks of grain, the monk Gotama has explained to us the true knowledge and good conduct. The monk Gotama insists and extols only this supreme knowledge and good conduct which we cannot grasp. We should know the knowledge and good conduct which this monk Gotama talks about," and again he asked the Buddha: "Friend Gotama, what is wisdom and what is practice?"

Then, as in the Discourse on the Fruits of the Ascetic Life (*Sāmañña-phala-sutta*, DN 2), the Buddha gave a talk on the supreme, transcendent knowledge and good conduct, section by section, beginning with the appearance of the Buddha and ending in the attainment of Awakening.

The Four Paths of Failure

Then the Buddha pointed out to Ambaṭṭha the four paths of failure of knowledge and good conduct. The four paths are:

1. The life of an ascetic, who, being unable to live up to the doctrine for the attainment of knowledge and good conduct, enters the forest and takes to eating fallen fruits.
2. The life of an ascetic, who, being unable to practise even that much, enters the forest and takes to eating roots and fruits.
3. The life of an ascetic, who, being unable to practise even that much, builds a fire-shed near a town or village and worships fire.
4. The life of an ascetic, who, being unable to practise even that much builds a pavilion with an entrance from the four directions at the junctions of the crossroads, for money-making by providing drinking-water to all the people who come from the four quarters.

The Buddha described these four paths of ascetics making the so-called ascetics and Brahmins merely attendants of [862] the monk who possessed the knowledge and good conduct of the Buddha-Dhamma. Ambaṭṭha and his teacher

were lacking in such knowledge and good conduct. So they belonged to the four types of degenerate monks and recluses, not to the types of true monks who possessed the two qualifications. The Buddha elicited these facts from Ambaṭṭha through his questions and then criticized him for the first time.

"Ambaṭṭha, you and your teacher lack supreme knowledge and good conduct. Nay, you do not even have the lesser qualities of those whose mode of life is the cause of the destruction of such knowledge and good conduct.

Ambaṭṭha, your teacher, the Brahmin Pokkharasāti, does not even have the lesser qualities leading to such destruction and yet he says impertinently: 'What kind of people are these low-born, bare-headed and useless monks who sprang from the instep of Brahma? How can it be possible for the Brahmins well-versed in the three Vedas to discuss with them?' Ambaṭṭha, you note this defect of your Brahmin teacher Pokkharasāti."

Then the Buddha added: "Ambaṭṭha, your Brahmin teacher, Pokkharasāti, enjoys the privileges granted by King Pasenadi Kosala. Yet the king does not give the Brahmin teacher any opportunity to face him. Also, when he consults the Brahmin Pokkharasāti, he does so from behind a curtain. Ambaṭṭha, why does the king not allow the Brahmin to face him, the Brahmin who is a recipient of provisions lawfully given by him? Think over the reason for this matter. Ambaṭṭha, note this defect of your Brahmin teacher Pokkharasāti." This was the second criticism made by the Buddha.

> Herein, the Brahmin knew the mantra for deception in one's presence (*summukhā*). If, while the king was adorned with a very costly ornament, he stood near the king and recited the mantra, uttering the name of the ornament, the king had to give the ornament without being able to say: 'I will not give it.' Then on a festival day, he would say: 'Bring me my expensive ornament,' then the attendants would inform him of his having given it to the Brahmin Pokkharasāti. The king asked why he had given it and the ministers said that the Brahmin knew the mantra for immediate deception, that he had tricked the king and taken away his expensive ornament.
>
> Other ministers too, who envied the Brahmin for his close relationship with the king said: "Great King, the Brahmin Pokkharasāti has a kind of leprosy called leucoderma. This kind of leprosy is infectious through physical contact. So do not embrace and fondle the Brahmin as you do now

when you see him." From that time, the king did not allow the Brahmin to face him.

Still in spite of this loss of privilege, the Brahmin Pokkharasāti was a scholar learned in law and statecraft. There was nothing which went wrong if it was done after consultation with him. Therefore, the king sat behind a curtain and consulted the Brahmin who remained outside behind the curtain.

This was known to no one except the king and the Brahmin. The Buddha revealed the secret not to humiliate the Brahmin, but because he knew that such revelation would certainly convince others of his omniscience.

Then the Buddha questioned Ambaṭṭha and made him admit that it was impossible for a commoner or his slave to become a king or a minister just by sitting at a place where the King of Kosala conferred with the ministers and princes and by repeating what they said at such meetings. The Buddha pointed out that likewise it was impossible for Ambaṭṭha or his teacher to become a recluse or a novice recluse just by reciting and teaching the Vedas that were recited and taught by ancient recluses like Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka and others.

The Buddha again questioned Ambaṭṭha and made him admit that unlike Ambaṭṭha and his teacher, Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka and others of ancient times did not don good garments, eat good food, move in the company of women, ride good chariots, keep their mansions [863] well-guarded and indulge in sensual pleasures.

Then in conclusion, the Buddha said: "Ambaṭṭha, thus you and your teacher are not recluses or novice recluses. One who has doubts about my being a Buddha should remove that doubt by asking me, I shall dispel his doubt by answering his questions."

The Buddha said so because there was no likelihood of Ambaṭṭha's attainment of the paths and fruitions in his present life. The day would only pass away. The young Brahmin had come to examine the major marks possessed by the Buddha. He had now forgotten the object of his visit and so the Buddha decided to remind him of it indirectly.

No one was capable of examining the major marks of a Buddha who was sitting or lying. Examination was possible when he was standing or walking. Also, it was customary for the Buddha to rise and walk when someone came to

investigate the marks. For these reasons, the Buddha came out of the monastery and went for a walk. Ambaṭṭha followed the Buddha closely.

Two Hidden Marks

Walking behind the walking Buddha, Ambaṭṭha looked for the 32 major marks of an extraordinary man on the body of the Buddha. He saw clearly 30 of them. He did not, however, see the remaining two great marks: The male genital covered with a sheath and the thin, long and flat tongue. Therefore, he had doubts and was sceptical and indecisive.

Knowing this very well, the Buddha created, by his supernormal power, a man's genital covered with a sheath, in such way as to make it visible to the young man Ambaṭṭha. Then he stuck out his tongue and passed it to both ears, right and left, thereby revealing its length, passed it into both nostrils, right and left, thereby revealing its tenderness, and covered the whole forehead with the tongue, thereby revealing its width.

Then Ambaṭṭha concluded that the Buddha really possessed those marks and took leave of him, saying: "Well, Gotama, we will go now. We have many things to attend to." Then the Buddha said: "Ambaṭṭha, you may go if you wish." Ambaṭṭha got onto his mule-drawn chariot and left.

At that time the Brahmin teacher, Pokkharasāti, had come out of Ukkaṭṭha city and together with many Brahmins, he was waiting for Ambaṭṭha in his garden. Ambaṭṭha went to the garden in his chariot as far as he could go and then descending, he walked on foot. Then after paying respect to his teacher, he sat down at a certain place. Then there followed a dialogue between the teacher and Ambaṭṭha:

Pokkharasāti: "Ambaṭṭha have you seen the monk Gotama?"

Ambaṭṭha: "Yes sir, we have seen the monk Gotama."

Pokkharasāti: "Ambaṭṭha, is the report about the reputation of the monk Gotama true or false? Does the reputation of Gotama have any basis or does it have no basis?"

Ambaṭṭha: "Sir, the report about Gotama's reputation is true. The reputation of Gotama has some basis in fact. Gotama really does possess the 32 major marks of a great man and the marks are thoroughly genuine."

Pokkharasāti: "Ambaṭṭha, did you talk with the monk Gotama about something?"

Ambaṭṭha: "Yes, sir, I talked with the monk Gotama about something."

Pokkharasāti: "Ambaṭṭha, what did you talk with the monk Gotama about?"

Thus questioned, Ambaṭṭha reported to his teacher all the conversation that he had with the Buddha. Then the teacher Pokkharasāti said: "Oh! Our young sages and intellectuals are so amazing! Oh! Our experts in the [864] Vedas are so wonderful! With such an assistant like Ambaṭṭha, a man is bound to land in one of the four lower worlds after physical dissolution and death."

Thus he rebuked Ambaṭṭha, and being angry and displeased, he kicked the young man, making him collapse on the floor. He was angry with Ambaṭṭha but in a moment there also arose in him the desire to go and see the Buddha. As for Ambaṭṭha, the privilege that he formerly had of going together with his teacher in a chariot as a charioteer was forfeited and from that time, he had to go on foot before the chariot.

Pokkharasāti's Visit to the Buddha

The Brahmin Pokkharasāti was very anxious to meet the Buddha but the other Brahmins told him to put off the visit till the next day as it was already too late to make the visit on that day.

Then having prepared very delicious food, he put the food in the vehicle, had the fire torches hoisted on it and coming out of Ukkaṭṭha city, he went to Icchānaṅgala grove. He went in the vehicle as far as possible, then stepped down and approached the Buddha on foot. He greeted the Buddha, exchanged polite words and took his seat at a certain place.

> Translators have made a special observation that the house in this context could not be in Ukkaṭṭha city, which was too far away, and that it might be Pokkharasāti's house in Icchānaṅgala village or elsewhere.

After taking his seat, the Brahmin Pokkharasāti had the following conversation with the Buddha:

Pokkharasāti: "Gotama did our pupil Ambaṭṭha come to this place?"

Buddha: "Yes, Brahmin, your pupil Ambaṭṭha did come."

Pokkharasāti: "Friend Gotama, did you talk with Ambaṭṭha about anything?"

Buddha: “Yes Brahmin, I talked with Ambaṭṭha about something.”

Pokkharasāti: “Friend Gotama, what did you talk about with Ambaṭṭha?”

Then the Buddha told the Brahmin Pokkharasāti all about the conversation with Ambaṭṭha. Pokkharasāti apologised to the Buddha, saying: “Friend Gotama, young Ambaṭṭha is a fool. Kindly excuse him.” The Buddha said: “Brahmin, I wish Ambaṭṭha happiness,” thus forgiving the young man.

Then the Brahmin Pokkharasāti looked for the 32 marks of a great man on the body of the Buddha. He saw the 30 major marks, just as Ambaṭṭha did, but not the other two major marks: The male genital covered with a sheath, and the thin and long tongue, so he was doubtful, sceptical and indecisive.

Knowing this full well, the Buddha created, by his supernormal power, the male genital covered with a sheath so as to make it visible to the Brahmin. Then the Buddha stuck out his tongue and passed it over both ears, right and left, thereby revealing its length, passed it over both nostrils, right and left, thereby revealing its tenderness, and covered the whole forehead with the tongue, thereby revealing its width.

Then Brahmin Pokkharasāti became convinced that the Buddha certainly possessed all the 32 major marks of an extraordinary being and said: “Let Ven. Gotama and his monastics accept the meal at my house today for [865] my benefit.” The Buddha accepted the invitation by keeping silent.

Knowing the Buddha’s acceptance, when the meal was ready, the Brahmin Pokkharasāti informed him that the meal was ready, that it was time for the Buddha to partake of it. So, at his invitation, the Buddha went to the Brahmin’s house with his monks in the morning and they sat on the seats prepared for them.

Then the Brahmin Pokkharasāti and his young pupils undertook the responsibility and personally served the Buddha and the monks respectively with good, delicious food. When the Brahmin knew that the Buddha had finished his meal and put aside the bowl, he took a seat and sat down at a proper place.

The Buddha gave the Brahmin Pokkharasāti a series of Dhamma talks leading to path and fruition, talks on 1) generosity, 2) morality, 3) the attainment of the Deva realm and 4) the noble way leading to the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna. While following these talks, the mind of the Brahmin became stable, flexible, free from hindrances, joyous and clear, then the Buddha taught the four truths

that he himself had discovered (*sāmukkaṁsika*) and the Brahmin attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*).

Then the Brahmin Pokkharasāti, who had become a noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna-ariya*), said to the master: "Venerable Gotama, your teaching is so delightful, just as an object that has been upside down is turned the right way up, just as a covered object is uncovered, just as a man who has lost his way is shown the right way, just as fire-torches are lighted in the darkness in order that those who have eyesight may see various objects, so also you, venerable Gotama, have clearly taught me the Dhamma in many ways.

Venerable Gotama, with my son, daughter, wife, followers and councillors, I seek refuge in venerable Gotama, in the Dhamma and in the Saṅgha. From today, let venerable Gotama regard me as a layman devoted to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha for the rest of his life.

Just as venerable Gotama visits the house of other lay devotees in Ukkaṭṭha, so also kindly visit my house. Young men and young women in my house will pay respect to you. They will welcome you. They will offer seats and water to you. At the very least they will be much inspired with faith. The response of these young men and women to your visit will be conducive to their welfare and prosperity for a long time."

Thus having committed himself to the Buddha on the supermundane level, the Brahmin invited the Buddha to his house. The Brahmin Pokkharasāti's commitment to the Buddha differed from that of other lay devotees in that 1) it embraced his sons, daughters, wife, followers, and councillors, and 2) in the last paragraph, he stated the reasons for his commitment. Therefore, in conclusion the Buddha extolled him, saying: "Brahmin, you have spoken well," and accepted the invitation.

36: King Pukkusāti and Others

[I have moved the section on King Pukkusāti to the top of this chapter, as being the more important story. Material on Devadatta that originally appeared in this chapter is now in the next one, together with King Ajātasattu's story.]

[The following is based on the Discourse on the Analysis of the Elements (*Dhātu-vibhaṅga-sutta*, MN 140) and its commentary.]

When King Bimbisāra was ruling the city of Rājagaha in the country of Magadha in the Middle Land (*Majjhima-desa*), the ruler of the city of Takkasilā, on the border of the Middle Land, was King Pukkusāti.

Once, the merchants of Takkasilā went to Rājagaha with goods for sale. They took presents and went to see King Bimbisāra. They offered the presents and stood paying respect to the king, who asked them where they lived and they replied they lived in Takkasilā.

After making further enquiries about the political situation, material welfare and about the city itself, he asked the name of the king. When the merchants replied that their king was Pukkusāti, he asked if their king fulfilled the ten kingly duties. They answered: "Great King, our monarch fulfils the ten duties. He promotes the welfare of the people through the four supporting things (*saṅgaha-vatthu*) such as crop-sacrifice (*sassa-medha*), human-sacrifice (*purisa-medha*), winning over the poor (*sammā-pāsa*), and endearing speech (*vācā-peyya*). He acts like the parent of the people and makes them happy as the parent would to the child sleeping in his lap."

1. Prudence with regard to crops (*sassa-medha*). In collecting land revenue, only a tenth of the crops harvested is collected. [867]
2. Prudence with regard to men and warriors in service (*purisa-medha*). Prizes are awarded and provisions were distributed half-yearly.
3. Winning the hearts of the poor (*sammā-pāsa*). Loans in cash, 1,000 or 2,000, are offered to them without interest for three years.
4. Endearing speech (*vācā-peyya*). Using friendly terms, such as: "Young man," "Uncle," etc., were used when addressing people according to their age.

King Bimbisāra asked yet another question: “How old is your king?” The merchants answered with the age of their king, and it so happened that the two monarchs were of the same age.

Then the king said to the merchants: “Friends, your king is righteous. He is equal to me in age. Would you be able to make your king my friend?” When the answer was in the affirmative, King Bimbisāra exempted the merchants from customs duties, provided them with lodgings and ended the conversation by asking them to see him before their departure from the city.

In accordance with the king’s instructions, the merchants went to see King Bimbisāra on the eve of their departure, and the king said: “Friends, have a pleasant journey on your way home. Ask your king, in my name, about his health and tell him, on my behalf, that I desire friendship with him.”

“Very well,” replied the merchants and they returned to Takkasilā. On arrival there, they stowed away their goods properly, and went to see their king after breakfast. The king asked: “Where have you been, men? I have not seen you for all these days.” The merchants reported the whole matter to their king. Then the king rejoiced, saying: “Excellent, men! Because of you, I have a friend and ally in the Middle Country.”

Later on, the merchants of Rājagaha went to Takkasilā on business. They called on King Pukkusāti with presents. When the king learned that they had come from Rājagaha, the city of his royal friend. He said: “Are you the visitors from Rājagaha, the city of my friend and ally, King Bimbisāra.” The merchants replied in the affirmative.

Afterwards the king asked after his friend’s health and made an announcement with the beat of drums: “From today onwards, all the merchants, who have come to my kingdom from the country of my friend King Bimbisāra, on foot or in carts, shall be provided with houses for lodging and provisions from the royal granary. They shall be exempted from taxes. There shall be no molestation whatsoever to them.” King Bimbisāra did similarly in his kingdom.

Exchanges between the Kings

Then King Bimbisāra sent a message to King Pukkusāti saying: “Friend, precious stones, such as rubies, pearls, etc. are usually produced in border

countries. If you ever find various precious stones that make attractive objects and sensational news, please inform me of them."

King Pukkusāti, on his part, sent a return message reading: "Friend, the Middle Land is a great region. If attractive and sensational precious stones of different kinds appear there, kindly inform me."

As the days, months and years passed, the two kings remained staunch friends even without seeing each other. While the two kings were thus committed to sharing the news of their potential treasures, a very special thing worthy to be given as a gift occurred to King Pukkusāti first. The king obtained eight pieces of an invaluable, five-coloured muslin. "These are of fine quality," thought the king, "I shall send them as gifts to my friend King Bimbisāra." So he had eight cases made of sandalwood, each being the size of a gum-lac ball, turned on a lathe: in each case he put a muslin piece, and by applying gum-lac, he had the cases made [868] into balls. Each ball was then wrapped with a white cloth and put in a box which was wrapped again with another cloth and sealed. "Give it to my friend King Bimbisāra," the king asked his ministers and sent the boxes to his royal friend. He also sent a message: "I would like my friend to open the box and see the gifts in the company of his ministers and other officials at the centre of the city."

The ministers went to Rājagaha and presented the gift. On hearing the message, King Bimbisāra ordered his ministers and officials, through his drummers, to assemble. At the city-centre, the king sat on the jewelled throne under a white royal umbrella. Then he removed the seal and the cloth-covers and opened the box. When he untied the package in the box and saw the gum balls, it occurred to him thus: "Oh, my friend King Pukkusāti sent these gum balls as his gifts, for he must have mistaken me for a gambler, a dice-addict." Thinking thus, he took a ball, rolled it in his hand, guessed its weight and knew definitely that it contained a bundle of muslin.

When the king struck the ball against the foot of the throne, the gum fell off in layers. He opened the fragrant case gently with his fingernails and on seeing the muslin he ordered the other seven cases to be opened. They clearly saw with their eyes that they all contained priceless pieces of muslin. When these were spread and measured, they were found to be of beautiful colours and fine material, each measuring sixteen cubits in length and eight cubits in breath. On

seeing the precious treasure of muslin, people clapped their hands and threw up their turbans. They rejoiced, saying: "Our king and his friend, King Pukkusāti, have never seen each other, yet that king has sent such priceless gifts. It is proper to make such a king a friend."

King Bimbisāra had each muslin piece appraised and found all of them to be of inestimably high value. He had four of them offered to the Buddha and kept the other four in his palace.

Then King Bimbisāra considered thus: "A return gift should excel the gift received. My friend, King Pukkusāti, has sent me a priceless gift. What kind of gift should I send in return to him?"

Herein, it may be asked: "Is there no treasure that is better then the eight pieces of muslin in Rājagaha?" The answer is: It was not that there was none indeed. King Bimbisāra was a great king. Therefore, it could not be that there was nothing better than the eight pieces of muslin. Nevertheless, from the time of his attainment of Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) any worldly treasure had been no more delightful to the king's heart. Only the Three Treasures, in the form of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, were delightful.

Therefore, in selecting the most valuable thing as a return gift, the king considered in the following manner: "In this world, treasures (*ratana*) are of two kinds: the living (*saviññāṇaka*) and the non-living (*aviññāṇaka*). Of these two, the non-living, such as gold, silver or any other precious thing, is only to adorn the living. Therefore, the living treasure is more praiseworthy.

Again, the living treasure is of two kinds: the human and the animal. The animal, such as an elephant, horse or any other creature, is only to work for the human. Therefore the human treasure is the more praiseworthy.

Again, the human treasure is of two kinds: the male and the female. The female, even if she be the wife of a Universal Monarch, is to serve the male. Therefore the male treasure is more praiseworthy. Again, the male treasure is of two kinds: the householder (*agārika*) who strives for his family, and the ascetic (*anagārika*) who does not strive for his family. The householder, even if he be a Universal Monarch, the top of the former kind, is to pay homage with the hands, knees and forehead touching the ground to the newly ordained novice of today. Therefore the ascetic treasure is more praiseworthy.

Again, the ascetic treasure is of two kinds: the learner (*sekkha*), a [869] man of lower attainments, and the non-learner (*asekkha*), an Arahat. Even if there be 100,000 learners, they are not equal to one non-learner, the Arahat, in sanctity. Therefore, the non-learner treasure is more praiseworthy.

Again, the non-learner treasure is of two kinds: the Buddha and the disciple. Even if there be 100,000 disciples, they are not equal to one Buddha in sanctity. Therefore, the Buddha treasure is more praiseworthy.

Again, the Buddha treasure is of two kinds: the Independent Buddha (*Paccekabuddha*) and the Perfectly Self-Awakened One (*Sammā-sambuddha*). Even if there be 100,000 of the former type, they are not equal to one Buddha of the latter kind. Therefore, the omniscient Buddha is more praiseworthy.

Indeed, in this world of sentient beings, together with the world of Devas and Brahmas, there is no treasure like an omniscient Buddha. Therefore, I will send that unique treasure to my friend King Pukkusāti."

So thinking, King Bimbisāra asked the ministers from Takkasilā whether they had ever seen the Three Treasures: the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, in their country. The ministers replied that they had not even heard of them, much less seen them. The king was much pleased because he now had the opportunity to send a present that was not found in Takkasilā. Then the king thought: "I can request the Fortunate One to go to Takkasilā, the city of my friend King Pukkusāti, for the spiritual uplift of the people. But it is not customary for the Fortunate One to pass the night in border countries. So it is impossible for the Fortunate One to go there.

Suppose I request the Buddha to send Ven. Sāriputta, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna and other great disciples and Arahats. But the fact is, even as soon as I hear of the sojourn of these great venerables in border regions, I should send my people, have them brought here by any means possible and serve their physical needs. So it is not possible for the great venerables to go there. Therefore I will send a message that will serve the same purpose as the visit of the Fortunate One and the great venerables to Takkasilā would."

The king then had a gold sheet made, four cubits in length and half a cubit in breath, neither too thick nor too thin. On the day he was going to write on the sheet, he washed his head early in the morning, bathed, committed himself to the eight precepts and after his breakfast, he did not adorn himself with flowers

or use any perfume. Then taking the vermilion in a gold cup, he closed all the doors of the lower storey and went upstairs and in order to get more light, he opened the lion-figure supported window in the east, and sat in the airy chamber.

The king then wrote on the golden sheet: "There has arisen in this world the master, who is the Worthy One (*Arahaṁ*), the Perfectly Self-Awakened One (*Sammā-sambudha*) the possessor of knowledge and good conduct (*vijjā-caraṇa-sampanna*), the noble wayfarer (*Gracious One*), the knower of the worlds (*loka-vidū*), the peerless charioteer and trainer of men (*anuttaro-purisa-damma-sārathi*), the teacher of men and Devas (*satthā-Deva-manussānaṁ*), the Awakened One (*Buddha*), the Fortunate One (*Bhagavā*)."

Thus the king first wrote some high attributes of the Buddha. Then he described how the Bodhisatta practised the ten perfections (*pāramī*); how, after his demise in the Tusita realm, he took conception in the womb of his mother; how, at that time, there appeared 32 great signs that seemed to open the whole world freely; about the miracles attending his conception; how he practised asceticism and strove for Awakening; how, sitting on the undefeated (*aparājita*) throne, he attained omniscience; and how he acquired extraordinary supernormal powers that made the whole world open to him.

Finally, King Bimbisāra wrote that in the living world of Devas and Brahmas there was no jewel other than the Buddha-jewel which possessed such great attributes. The king again described some other attributes of the Buddha in the following verse (Khp 6, Snp 2.1): [870]

> *Yaṁ kiñci vittaṁ idha vā huraṁ vā*
> *saggesu vā yaṁ ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ*
> *na no samaṁ atthi Tathāgatena;*
> *idam-pi Buddhe ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ*
> *etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*

> Whatever riches there are, here or hereafter or in the heavens, that excellent treasure is not equal to the Realised One; this excellent treasure is in the Buddha, by virtue of this truth may there be safety!

Then willing to extol the Dhamma-jewel, the king wrote down its six attributes: "The doctrine of the Buddha is well-proclaimed (*svākkhāta*), leading to results discernible in this very life (*sandiṭṭhika*), it is instantly beneficial (*akālika*), it invites beings to come and see (*ehipassika*), it is worthy to be embraced

(*opanayika*), and worthy to be experienced by the wise individually (*paccattaṁ veditabbo viññūhi*). The king also mentioned special attributes such as the 37 constituents of Awakening (*Bodhi-pakkhiya-dhamma*), the four foundations of mindfulness (*sati-paṭṭhāna*), the four right efforts (*sammappadhāna*), the four paths to supernormal power (*iddhi-pāda*), the five faculties (*indriya*), the five strengths (*bala*), the seven factors of Awakening (*bojjhaṅga*) and the eightfold path (*maggaṅga*).

Then the king described the attributes of the Dhamma partly as follows:

> *Yaṁ Buddha-seṭṭho parivaṇṇayī suciṁ,*
> *samādhim-ānantarikañ-ñam-āhu,*
> *samādhinā tena samo na vijjati;*
> *idam-pi Dhamme ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ,*
> *etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*
>
> That which the great Buddha praised as being pure, the concentration said to have immediate result, no equal to that concentration is found; this excellent treasure is in the Dhamma, by virtue of this truth may there be safety!

Then the king, willing to extol the Saṅgha-jewel, wrote down its nine attributes, of which the first four were: "The disciples of the Buddha possess good conduct (*suppaṭipaññatā*), upright conduct (*uju-paṭipaññatā*), conduct leading to Nibbāna (*ñāya-paṭipaññatā*), conduct leading to their being worthy of veneration (*sāmīci-paṭipaññatā*); by possessing which they are worthy of offerings brought from afar (*āhuneyya*), worthy of offerings meant for guests (*pāhuneyya*), worthy of proper offerings (*dakkhiṇeyya*), worthy of veneration (*añjali-karaṇīya*), and are the best field for beings to sow the seeds of good deeds (*anuttaraṁ puññakkhettaṁ lokassa*).

The king continued with his writing: "Clansmen, who are of good birth and good conduct, hear the words of the Fortunate One and renounce the world to become monks. Some do so, giving up the pleasures of a king, some the pleasures of a crown prince, some the post of a supreme commander, and so on. Having become monks, they lead a noble way of life." After this foreword, with regard to the noble way of life, the king wrote something about lower morality (*cūḷa-sīla*), medium morality (*majjhima-sīla*), higher morality (*mahā-sīla*), etc., as contained in the Discourse on the Supreme Net (*Brahma-jāla-sutta*, DN 1). He

also wrote, in part, on the restraint of the six senses, cultivation of mindfulness with clear comprehension (*sati-sampajañña*), contentment with the four requisites of life, the nine kinds of dwellings suitable for meditation, the overcoming of the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*), making preparations with certain devices (*kasiṇa*) for mind-training, the development of absorption (*jhāna*), the supernormal powers (*abhiññā*), the 38 kinds of meditation, etc., all leading up to the attainment of Awakening.

After describing in detail the sixteen kinds of mindfulness on breathing (*ānāpānassati*) meditation, the king glorified the Buddha's Disciples in the Saṅgha:

> *Ye puggalā aṭṭha sataṁ pasatthā,*
> *cattāri etāni yugāni honti,*
> *te dakkhiṇeyyā Gracious Onessa sāvakā,*
> *etesu dinnāni mahapphalāni;*
> *idam-pi Saṅghe ratanaṁ paṇītaṁ,*
> *etena saccena suvatthi hotu!*

> Those eight individuals praised by the good, there are these four pairs of persons, those disciples of the Fortunate One are worthy of gifts, those things that have been given to them have great fruit; this excellent treasure is in the Sangha, by virtue of this truth may there be safety!

The king then added: "The teaching of the Fortunate One with its threefold training [871] (*sikkhā*) is beautiful in the beginning, beautiful in the middle and beautiful in the end. It is the teaching that will also certainly lead to liberation from Saṁsāra. Friend Pukkusāti, I would like to urge you to renounce the world and become a monk if you can."

King Bimbisāra then rolled the gold sheet, wrapped it in a piece of very fine cloth and put it in a sandalwood case; the sandalwood case was then placed in a gold case, the gold case in a silver case, the silver case in a ruby case, the ruby case in a coral case, the coral case in a carbuncle case, the carbuncle case in a spotted ruby (*masāra-galla*) case, the spotted-ruby case in a crystal case, the crystal case in an ivory case, the ivory case in a ten-jewelled case, the ten-jewelled case in a bamboo-strip case and the bamboo-strip case again in a sandalwood box, then again the sandalwood box was placed in a gold box, silver box, ruby box, coral box, carbuncle box, spotted-ruby box, crystal box, ivory box,

the ten jewelled box and a bamboo-strip box successively, one box in the other as before.

Then the bamboo-strip box was put in a sandalwood casket, the sandalwood casket in a gold casket, then in a silver casket, ruby casket, coral casket, carbuncle casket, spotted ruby casket, crystal casket, ivory casket, ten-jewelled casket and lacquer casket successively. Then after having the lacquer casket wrapped up in a piece of fine cloth, and the royal seal stamped, the king ordered his ministers: "Decorate the streets in my domain, each street being eight measures in width, the two portions being two measures in width on either side to be just patched up but the middle portion measuring four measures (*usabha*)[231] in width is to be decorated with royal accessories."

Then the king had a seat placed on a fully ornamented royal elephant, had a white umbrella placed over it, had the roads of the capital sprinkled with water and thoroughly swept. Flags, banners, and streamers were to be hoisted. Either side of each road was decorated with plantain trees, water-filled pots, various performers and fragrant flowers. Messengers were sent to the provincial and city governors with instructions saying: "You should honour the royal present when it passes through places under your rule."

Splendidly adorned with full regalia, and accompanied by his ministers, the king himself set off, carrying the sacred present to the border with great pomp and ceremony amid the boisterous playing of all kinds of music. He privately told his envoy who was in charge of the sacred present: "Men, I want my royal friend to receive it not in the presence of his queens but on the upper terrace of the mansion."

The king worshipped the sacred present most respectfully, regarding its journey as the visit of the Buddha himself to the border country. Then he returned to Rājagaha city. The provincial and city governors also improved the road in the same way and passed on the sacred present from one place to another.

King Pukkusāti, too, had the road from the border refurbished, had the capital beautifully decorated and received the sacred present magnificently. The sacred

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[231] 1 *usabha* = 20 *yaṭṭhi*; 1 *yaṭṭhi* = 7 *ratana*; 1 *ratana* = 2 *vadatthi*; 1 *vadatthi* = 12 *aṅgula*; 1 *aṅgula* = 1 inch. Hence 1 *usabha* = 280 ft according to Childers.

present reached Takkasilā surprisingly on an Observance (*Uposatha*) day. The minister, who brought the present, transmitted to the king the message that King Bimbisāra had given him.

Having heard the message, King Pukkusāti made the necessary arrangements for the comfort of the visitors and took the present himself and went up to the upper terrace of the mansion. He posted guards at the door to prevent anyone from entering the mansion, opened the window, placed the holy present on a high place and took a lower seat for himself. Then he removed the royal seal and the outer covering of cloth and on opening the [872] containers one by one beginning with the lacquer casket he saw the innermost sandalwood casket and rightly concluded: "The way in which the present is packed is different from the way in which earthly treasures are packed. Surely it must be a jewel (*ratana*) that has appeared in the Middle Land and that deserves our attention."

Then the king opened the fragrant casket, removed the royal seal and holding the very fine cloth by both edges, he unwrapped it gently and saw the golden scroll. He was struck with wonder at the fine script of the writer: the beautiful, well-shaped letters and lines that made up his handwriting. The king read every letter of the message.

As he read of the attributes of the Buddha, beginning with: "There has arisen the Fortunate One in this world," he became very ecstatic, with the hair from 99,000 pores standing straight on end. He was unconscious even of his standing or sitting posture. He was deeply gratified when he thought of the opportunity that he had, thanks to his friend King Bimbisāra for the opportunity to hear the message about the Buddha-jewel that was so hard to hear despite the passage of millions of aeons (*kappa*).

Being unable to read further, King Pukkusāti sat in a contemplative mood till his ecstasy faded away. Then he read the attributes of the Dhamma-jewel beginning with being well-proclaimed (*svākkhāta*). Again he became ecstatic as before. Having remained in a contemplative mood till his ecstasy faded, he then read the attributes of the Saṅgha beginning with having good conduct (*suppaṭipaññho*) and there arose a great ecstasy in him as before.

King Pukkusāti Ordains

Then the king read the last section in the gold scroll which described the mindfulness of breathing meditation. He engaged in meditation according to the instructions in the scroll and gained the form world (*rūpāvacāra*) absorption fully. He spent his time enjoying the bliss of meditation without anyone other than a young attendant who was allowed to stay with him. In this way, half a month elapsed.

The people of the city assembled in the courtyard of the palace and clamoured for the appearance of the king, saying: "The king has completely stopped reviewing the troops or seeing the dancers since the day he received the royal present. He has also ceased to give royal decisions. We want the king to show anyone he likes the royal present sent by his friend, King Bimbisāra. It is a tendency of some kings to try to annex a country by alluring the ruler with royal presents. What is our king doing now?"

When the king heard their outcry, he wondered whether he should work for the welfare of the country or follow the teaching of the Buddha. Then he thought: "No mathematician can count the number of lifetimes that I have spent as a ruler of a country. Therefore, I will now only practise the teaching of the Fortunate One." So thinking, he took the sword that was near the bed, cut off his hair, opened the window and threw down the hair-knot with the ruby-headdress into the midst of the assembly, saying: "Men! Take my hair-knot and let it act as king."

The people received the hair-knot together with its ornamental ruby headdress and cried, lamenting: "Great king! Are the kings who receive presents from their royal friends all like you?" The beard of King Pukkusāti was two finger-breaths long like that of the Bodhisatta on the eve of his renunciation.

Then the king sent his young attendant to the market to buy two dyed robes and an earthen bowl. Then saying: "I dedicate my monk's life to the Fortunate Ones who are worthy of honour in this world," he donned one robe as the lower garment, put on the other as the upper garment and, with the alms bowl hanging over his left shoulder and a staff in one hand, he paced twice or thrice outside the mansion to see whether he looked well and proper as a monk. He was

pleased to find that he did. He then opened the main door and stepped down from the mansion.

The dancers and others who were waiting at the three successive doors saw the monk Pukkusāti coming down but they did not recognize the king. They thought that a Paccekabuddha had come to preach to their king. It was only when they got on to the top [873] of the mansion and thoroughly examined the seat of the king that they knew of the king's departure and they cried all at once, like people in a sinking boat in the middle of the sea.

As soon as the monk Pukkusāti stepped on the ground, all the citizens and soldiers surrounded him and wept bitterly. The ministers said to Pukkusāti: "Great King! The kings in the Middle Land are very crafty. You should go only after sending emissaries and making inquiries to know definitely whether or not the Buddha-jewel has really appeared in the world. For the time being, you should return to the palace."

But Ven. Pukkusāti went off, saying: "Friends, I have implicit faith in my friend, King Bimbisāra. My friend, King Bimbisāra, has never spoken to me ambiguously. You stay behind." The ministers and the people, however, persisted in following the king.

Pukkusāti, the man of good family, then made a mark on the ground with his staff and asked the people: "Whose country is this?" They replied: "Great King, it is your country." Then the monk said: "He who destroys this mark should be punished by the authority of the king." In the Birth Story about King Mahājanaka (*Mahā-Janaka-jātaka*, Ja 539), the Queen Sīvali Devī dared not erase the line drawn on the ground by the Bodhisatta, King Mahā Janaka. So rolling on the ground, she artfully made the line disappear and followed the king. The people too followed through the pathway made by the queen. But in the case of the line drawn by King Pukkusāti, the people dared not destroy it and they were left rolling and weeping with their heads turned towards the line.

Pukkusāti the man of good family went off alone without taking even a servant or a slave to offer him a tooth-stick or water for washing his face on the journey. He travelled by himself, mindful of the fact that: "My teacher, the Fortunate One, renounced the world as a Bodhisatta and went off alone to become a monk." Bent on following the example of the Buddha as far as possible and remembering that the Buddha never used a vehicle, he did not wear even a

single-layered slipper or use even an umbrella made of leaves. The people climbed the trees, city-walls, small turrets or scaffolds on the walls or inside of fortifications, etc. and watched their king setting out alone.

Pukkusāti the man of good family thought: "I will have to go on a long journey. I cannot fare to the end of my journey all by myself." So he followed a caravan. As he had to travel by foot on very rough terrain under the burning sun, the soles of his tender feet cracked with sores and eruptions, causing great pain and suffering. When the caravan set up a tent made up of branches and leaves and took rest, Pukkusāti stepped off the main road and sat at the foot of a tree. There was no one to massage him or attend to his physical needs. He entered upon the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) by engaging in breathing meditation, dispelled his weariness and passed the time in the bliss of absorption.

The next morning, he cleaned his body and again followed the caravan. When it was time for his morning meal, the merchants took his alms bowl and offered him food. Sometimes the food was not well-cooked: sometimes too soft, sometimes too rough, being mixed with sand and pebbles, sometimes too salty, and sometimes it had too little salt. The monk did not bother whether the food was soft or hard, rough or tender, salty or lacking salt, but only thought of the place it entered, and ate it as if it were celestial food.

In this way, he came to Sāvatthī, having covered a distance of 192 leagues. Although the caravan passed the Jetavana monastery in the city, it never occurred to him to ask where the Buddha resided. This was due to his reverence for the Buddha and the message of King Bimbisāra.

Throughout his journey, Ven. Pukkusāti concentrated his mind on the Buddha without thinking of anything else. Having arrived near Jetavana with deep reverence for the Buddha, he did not even wonder whether the Buddha lived there or not. The question to ask about the master never occurred to him.

The message of King Bimbisāra said that: "The Fortunate One appears in this world," and so it led Pukkusāti to believe that the Buddha lived in Rājagaha. So, although he passed [874] by the Jetavana monastery, he did not ask about the residence of the master and continuing his journey, and came to Rājagaha, 45 leagues from Sāvatthī.

On reaching Rājagaha, just after sunset, Pukkusāti found many monasteries and as he concluded from King Bimbisāra's message that the Buddha was in

Rājagaha, he asked the people where the Buddha lived. The people asked him from where he came and on hearing that he came from the north, they said: "Venerable sir, you have come too far. The Fortunate One lives in Sāvatthī, 45 leagues distant from Rājagaha on the way by which you have come."

The monk thought: "Now, it is too late. I cannot go to the Fortunate One today. I will spend the night here and see the Fortunate One tomorrow." He asked the people about the place where the ascetics who came to Rājagaha after sunset put up. The people pointed to a potter's small hut as the rest house for visiting monks. With the permission of the potter, the monk entered the hut and sat there to spend the night.

Meeting with the Buddha

At dawn on that day the Buddha surveyed the world of living beings and on seeing Pukkusāti, the Buddha thought: "This man of good family read the message sent by his friend King Bimbisāra and after completely renouncing his 100-league wide domain of Takkasilā, he became a monk out of reverence for me. Today he will reach Rājagaha after travelling 192 leagues, being 45 leagues beyond Sāvatthī. If I do not go to him, he will pass the night and die hopelessly without attaining the lower three fruitions. If I go to him he will realize the three lower fruitions of the noble path and become liberated. I have developed and practised the perfections for aeons out of compassion for worthy beings. I will now go and see him for his spiritual welfare."

So early in the morning the Buddha cleaned his body and entered Sāvatthī with the monks on the round for alms. In the afternoon, he left the city, rested for a while in the fragrant chamber and thought: "This man of good family out of reverence for me has done that which is hard for many people to do. Having renounced the 100-league vast domain of Takkasilā, he set out alone without even a servant to give him water for washing his face." The Buddha thought of this austerity of the monk and without calling Ven. Sāriputta or Ven. Moggallāna or any other disciples, he left Sāvatthī, taking his alms bowl and robes by himself.

The Buddha did not fly in the air or shorten the journey but went on foot as he knew that, out of reverence for him, the monk did not travel by elephant, horse,

chariot or on a golden palanquin but went barefooted without even a slipper or a leaf-umbrella.

With a Buddha's splendour and all the great marks and six bodily-radiance, etc. shrouded like the cloud-covered moon, the Buddha travelled incognito for about six hours during the whole afternoon and covering a distance of 45 leagues, he arrived near the potter's hut at sunset, just after the monk Pukkusāti had entered the hut. The Buddha arrived with his glory covered in order to enable the monk to have complete rest, knowing that one who is tired and weary cannot absorb the Dhamma.

When the Buddha arrived near the potter's hut, he did not enter it impolitely as the omniscient Buddha, but stood at the entrance and asked for the monk's permission to stay there. Pukkusāti mistook the Buddha for an ordinary monk and gave his permission willingly, saying: "My friend, this hut is quiet. It is not small. You may stay here comfortably as you please."

> How could the monk Pukkusāti, who had renounced the 100-league vast kingdom of Takkasilā, be reluctant to share his accommodation in a deserted hut with a fellow-monk? He was not reluctant at all. Yet some vain and foolish monks (*mogha-purisa*) are very miserly and possessive with regard to their abodes (*āvāsa-macchariya*) and try to deny accommodation to fellow-monks! [875]

The Buddha, who was very tender and delicate, left the fragrant chamber which was like a celestial mansion and entered the potter's hut which was very filthy and loathsome with ashes, broken pots, grass straws and droppings of chickens and pigs. Here, amidst this collection of garbage, the Buddha made a bed of grass, spread the robe of rags and sat totally unperturbed as though he were in the Perfumed Chamber that was fragrant with celestial scents.

Thus, as the two men of noble (*khattiya*) families, who were credited with past good deeds, who renounced royal pleasures to become monks, who had golden complexions, who had attained transcendent states, the Buddha and Pukkusāti both sat in the potter's hut, making the hut very splendid, like the crystal cave where the two lion kings dwelt.

The Buddha never thought: "I am very delicate and yet I have travelled strenuously 45 leagues for six hours during the whole afternoon. I will now lie down on my right side to get over my weariness for a moment." Without having

any such thought, the Buddha entered upon the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) of fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) while sitting there.

Nor did the monk Pukkusāti think of lying down for a moment to overcome his weariness from the bare-footed journey of 192 leagues. He too entered upon the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) focusing on his breathing while sitting there.

> Herein if the object of the Buddha's visit was to teach Pukkusāti then why did he enter upon the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) instead of teaching the monk? The Buddha did not teach at once because, at that time, the monk was still tired and weary. He would not be able to appreciate the teaching. So the Buddha waited to let his weariness pass away.
>
> Other teachers say that Rājagaha was a populous royal city with the air was ringing with the ten kinds of sound, and the Buddha deferred teaching till midnight when the city would become quiet. This view is not acceptable, for certainly the Buddha could supernormally dispel even the sound travelling as far as the Brahma world. In other words, he could make that sound inaudible to the monk. In fact, the Buddha waited till the monk had recovery from his weariness.

The Buddha left Sāvatthī at noon, travelled on foot to Rājagaha which was 45 leagues away, reached the potter's hut at sunset, entered the hut with the permission of the monk and became absorbed in fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) for six hours. Arising from the absorption (*jhāna*) at midnight, he opened both eyes, which were endowed with the five kinds of sensitivity, like opening the window of a golden mansion. Then he saw the monk Pukkusāti sitting focused on breathing and absorbed in the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) like a golden statue, without any movement of the hands, legs or head, grave and imperturbable, like a firmly established door-post. The Buddha thought that the monk's posture was impressive and decided to start the conversation.

> Of the four postures, viz., walking, standing, lying down and sitting, the first three lack dignity. The hands, the legs and the head of a walking monk shake. The standing monk's body is stiff. The one lying down is also unpleasant. In fact, only the sitting posture of the monk, who, after having swept his retreat in the afternoon, spread his leather sheet, cleaned his hands and feet, sits cross-legged, is dignified. Ven. Pukkusāti sat cross-legged in the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) that was focused on breathing practice. This pleased the Buddha.

> The Buddha knew that Ven. Pukkusāti became a monk out of reverence for him. Yet, he decided to ask him because if he did not do so, there would be no conversation and no conversation would mean no teaching. So, he started the conversation in order to pave the way for the teaching.

The Buddha asked the monk to whom he dedicated his monastic life, who was his teacher and whose teaching he liked. The monk answered that he dedicated his life to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. Again, the Buddha asked him where the Worthy One, the Supremely Awakened One lived. The monk Pukkusāti replied: "My friend, there is a city called Sāvatthī in the northern [876] country. The Worthy One, the Supremely Awakened One, now lives in that city." When the Buddha asked him whether he had ever seen the Buddha, and if he were to see him now would he recognize him, Ven. Pukkusāti's reply was that he had not seen him and that he would not know him if he were to see him now.

> Herein everyone knew the Buddha from his glory. This is not surprising. But it is hard for people to know the Buddha when he went incognito as an ordinary monk on alms round with his glory hidden. So Ven. Pukkusāti answered honestly that he would not know the Buddha. He did not know, even though he stayed in the same hut with the Buddha.

Knowing that the monk's weariness had vanished, the Buddha decided to preach to the one who had dedicated his monk's life to him, the Buddha said: "Monk! I will teach you. Listen to my teaching. Bear it well in mind. I will teach you the Dhamma thoroughly."

> Up to that time, the monk Pukkusāti still did not know that his companion was the Buddha.

Pukkusāti had renounced his kingdom after reading the message of his friend King Bimbisāra and had become a monk in the hope of hearing the sweet Dhamma of the Buddha. He had made such a long journey without meeting anyone who would care to teach him. So why should he refuse to welcome respectfully the teaching of his companion? Like a thirsty man, he was very anxious to drink the water of the Dhamma. So he gladly agreed to listen to the teaching respectfully.

Then the Buddha gave the summary or contents of the Discourse giving an Analysis of the Elements (*Dhātu-vibhaṅga-sutta*, MN 140) as follows: "Monk! A person or a being has six elements, six sense organs, eighteen modes of thought and four kinds of support. He, who exists on these four supports, is free from the

current of conceit born of ego-illusion. When such current of conceit is absent in a monk, he is said to be one whose pollutants (*āsava*) are destroyed.

1. He should be mindful of insight knowledge (*vipassanā*).
2. He should speak the truth.
3. He should strive to repudiate moral defilements.
4. He should practise the Dhamma only for the extinction of defilements.

After thus stating these fundamentals of the Dhamma, the Buddha explained them one by one in detail.

Pukkusāti Attains Non-Returning

When the Buddha explained the first Dhamma, mindfulness of insight knowledge (*vipassanā*), the Buddha led the teaching up to the level of an Arahat and Pukkusāti attained the three lower fruitions on the basis of his good deeds in the past and became a noble one (*ariya*) and Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*).

For example, while a king is eating food of various tastes in a golden bowl, he takes such amount of cooked rice as would suit the size of his mouth. When the young prince sitting on his lap shows the desire to eat, the king may put in his mouth the lump of rice that he has taken for his own consumption. The child will eat only such quantity of rice as would be in accord with the size of his mouth. As for the remaining rice, the king may eat it himself or put it back into the golden bowl. In the same way, the Buddha, the lord of the Dhamma, gave a discourse leading up to the level of an Arahat, a discourse in accordance with his own intellectual powers and on the basis of his former good deeds, and the monk Pukkusāti could consume three fourths of the Dhamma food, that is, the paths and fruitions, and he became a noble Non-returner (*Anāgāmī-ariya*).

Pukkusāti had no doubt about the Dhamma before he became a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-phala*) and when he was following the Buddha's talk on aggregates, sense-organs, elements or mental impressions, etc. But he wondered whether the highly distinguished man who looked like an ordinary man and who was teaching him might be the Buddha because he had heard that the Buddhas made it a practice to go about incognito some times. However, when he attained the fruition of Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*), he had absolutely no doubt that the teacher was the Buddha.

Before he recognized the Buddha, he had addressed him as: "My friend!" he did not as [877] yet apologize to the Buddha for his mistake because the Buddha was still delivering the discourse according to the series of fundamental teachings, and the monk did not have the opportunity to offer his apology.

Pukkusāti's Request for Ordination

At the end of the discourse there followed a dialogue between the Buddha and the monk Pukkusāti, the latter said: "The Fortunate One, the teacher of Devas and humans, has come here out of great compassion for me! The Buddha who preaches the Good Dhamma has come here out of great compassion for me! The Fortunate One who understands all the Dhamma thoroughly came here out of great compassion for me." Saying thus joyously, he rose and put his head against the feet of the Buddha, and he added: "Exalted Buddha! Because of my foolishness, I have made a mistake. I thought that I should call you "friend," (*āvuso*). I have done so erroneously. Exalted Buddha! Kindly forgive me for the offence against which I should guard myself against in the future."

Buddha: "Monk! Verily because of your foolishness, you have made a mistake. You thought that I should be called "friend," and you have called me so erroneously. Monk! I forgive you for the offence because you admit your offence and make amends for it accordingly. Later you must guard yourself against it. Such atonement and such self-restraint contribute to the welfare of those who are committed to my teaching."

Pukkusāti: "Exalted Buddha, may I receive ordination in your presence."

Buddha: "Have you got your own bowl and robe?"

Pukkusāti: "No, exalted Buddha, I have not."

Buddha: "Monk! The Buddhas do not ordain those who do not have an alms bowl and robes."

Ven. Pukkusāti was very much pleased with the Buddha's teaching. He expressed his appreciation, rose from his seat, paid respect to the Buddha and went away to search for the alms bowl and robe.

> Why did not Pukkusāti receive the aims-bowl and robes that appeared supernormally for the monks whom the Buddha ordained, simply by saying: "Come, monastic!" It is said that he did not receive them because he had never donated the eight requisites to a monk in a previous life. This

explanation was not acceptable to the commentator. Certainly, as a man who had given alms and who had great aspirations, he could not be one who had never donated the eight requisites to a monk. In reality the bowls and robes created of supernormal power are meant only for the monks who were in their last existence. Pukkusāti was still subject to rebirth. So he could not have such supernormal requisites.

The Buddha did not seek the bowl and robe for Pukkusāti's ordination because he had no opportunity to ordain him. The death of Pukkusāti was imminent and he was like a Brahma in the potter's hut for temporary residence. So the Buddha did not seek the bowl and robe for him.

Pukkusāti went off in search of a bowl and robes just after dawn. Dawn came all at once with the end of the Buddha's discourse and the emission of the Buddha's six-coloured body radiance. The Buddha emitted the six-coloured radiance as soon as his teaching was over. The whole hut was brightly illuminated. The six-coloured radiance spread out in groups, as if enveloping all the quarters with gold garments or making all places bright with multi-coloured flowers. The Buddha resolved to become visible to the people of the city and when the people saw the Buddha, they spread the news of his presence in the hut and the matter was reported to King Bimbisāra. [878]

When King Bimbisāra heard the report, he went to the potter's hut and after paying respects, he asked the Buddha when he had arrived. The Buddha replied that he had arrived at sunset on the previous day. The king again asked about the object of his visit. Then the Buddha said: "Great king, your bosom friend, King Pukkusāti, read your message and after renouncing the world to become a monk, he made the journey out of regard for me, but having travelled 45 leagues beyond Sāvatthī, he entered the potter's hut and stayed here. For his spiritual welfare I have come here on foot and taught him. Pukkusāti has now attained the fruition of the three lower paths and is a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī-ariya*)."

On hearing this, the king was surprised and asked the Buddha where his friend King Pukkusāti was. The Buddha replied that he had gone out to get an alms bowl and robes for his ordination. King Bimbisāra immediately rushed out in the direction in which his friend had gone out looking for the alms bowl and robes. Meanwhile the Buddha returned to the fragrant chamber in the Jetavana monastery.

Pukkusāti's Death and Rebirth in the Brahma World

In his search for an alms bowl and robes, Pukkusāti did not go to his royal friend, King Bimbisāra, or to the merchants who had come from Takkasilā. He considered it unethical for him to search for them here and there, discriminating between the good and the bad like they were fowl. He decided to seek for real rags, not in big cities but in the fords, cemeteries, garbage heaps or narrow streets. So he tried to find torn pieces of cloths in the garbage heap in the back-lanes.

While Pukkusāti was trying to do so, a mentally deranged cow – his enemy in a previous life – rushed towards him and gored him with her horns. Weak and extremely oppressed by hunger, Pukkusāti lost his life as he was hurled into the air. When he fell to the ground, he lay on the garbage heap like a golden statue. After his death he was reborn in the Aviha Brahma abode and before long he became an Arahat Brahma.

According to the Discourse concerning Ghaṭīkāra (*Ghaṭīkāra-sutta*, SN 1.50) there were seven people who became Arahats soon after their spontaneous (*upapatti*) rebirth in the Aviha Brahma abode. They were:

1. Upaka.
2. Palagaṇḍa.
3. Pukkusāti.
4. Bhaddiya.
5. Khaṇḍadeva.
6. Bāhuraggi.
7. Siṅgiya.

King Bimbisāra thought: "My friend King Pukkusāti renounced his kingdom merely after reading my message and had made such a long and arduous journey. He has done what is hard for ordinary people to do. I will honour my friend in the way the monks are honoured." He sent his men to all the environs of the city to search for King Pukkusāti. The men found the king lying dead face down like a golden statue on the garbage heap. So they returned and reported the matter to King Bimbisāra.

King Bimbisāra went there and mourned over his friend, saying: "We did not have the opportunity to honour our great friend while he was alive. Now he has died without anyone to help him." The king had the corpse carried on a small couch, put in a proper place and not knowing how to honour a dead monk, he sent for the bathers, clothed the body in clean white garments and ornamented like a king.

Then the corpse was placed on a palanquin and honoured with all kinds of music and fragrant flowers, taken to the outskirts of the city and cremated with fragrant fire-wood. The bones were then collected and placed in a shrine (*cetiya*).

Later on, many monks in Sāvatthī went to see the Buddha. They paid respect to the master and sitting in a proper place they said: "Exalted Buddha, you have briefly taught the Dhamma to Pukkusāti. That man is now dead. What is his destination? What is his future life?"

Then the Buddha replied: "Monks, Pukkusāti was a wise man. He practised insight meditation (*vipassanā*) that accords with the transcendent Dhamma. He did not give me any [879] trouble on account of the Dhamma. Due to the extinction of the five fetters that lead to the lower sensual worlds, he will be reborn in the Aviha Brahma world and will become an Arahat in that very Suddhāvāsa Brahma world. Aviha is one of its five Pure Abodes (*Suddhāvāsa*). There is no possibility of his return to the lower sensual worlds from that world." [866]

The Buddha's Height

[The following is based on the Dhamma Verses (Dhp 196) and its commentary.]

On one occasion, a certain Brahmin citizen of Rājagaha heard that it was impossible to measure the height of the Buddha Gotama. So when the Buddha came into Rājagaha city and made his rounds for alms, he took a 60-cubit long bamboo pole and stood outside the city-gate. When the Buddha drew near the city-gate, he went up to him with the pole. The pole reached up to just below the Buddha's knee.

The next day, the Brahmin joined two 60-cubit long poles and came again to the Buddha. The joined poles did not stand higher than the waist of the Buddha who

asked him what he was doing. The Brahmin replied that he was measuring his height. Then the Buddha said: "Brahmin, even though you may join all the bamboos in the universe, you will not be able to measure my height. Certainly, I have not developed the perfections for four immesureables and 100,000 aeons to enable somebody to measure my height. I have developed them to the extent that nobody can measure my height. Brahmin, the Buddha is a person who is peerless and immeasurable." So saying, the Buddha spoke the following verse as contained in the Dhamma Verses (Dhp 196):

> *Te tādise pūjayato, nibbute akutobhaye,*
> *na sakkā puññaṁ saṅkhātuṁ, imettam-api kenaci.*
>
> The merit acquired by one who pays homage with faith (*saddhā*) to those Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and other noble ones, who have calmed the heat of defilements, who have no source whatsoever from which grief and fear derive, who are endowed with virtues excellent and visible, are incalculable to any one in the three worlds of humans, Devas and Brahmas saying: "This merit is beneficial this much, this merit is profitable this much."

At the end of the verse, 84,000 beings became noble Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna-ariya*), having the opportunity of blissfully enjoying the elixir of Nibbāna.

Rāhu, the Asura Deva King, was 4,800 leagues in height. The distance between his two arms was 1,200 leagues. The thickness of his body was 600 leagues. His palms and his soles were 300 leagues in perimeter. The portion of the finger between two joints was 50 leagues long. The distance between the two eye-brows was 50 leagues. The mouth was 200 leagues long, 300 leagues deep and 300 leagues in circumference. The neck had a girth of 300 leagues. The forehead was 300 leagues. The forehead was 300 leagues in breath and the head 900 leagues.

Rāhu, the Asura King, thought: "I am too tall, I will not be able to look down and see the Fortunate One." So he did not go to the Buddha. But, one day, he heard words about the greatness of the Buddha and so he went, hoping to see the master by any possible means.

Knowing the Asura Deva King's mind, the Buddha thought of the posture in which he should be viewed. Then since a person who is standing appears to be tall in spite of his short stature, the Buddha decided to show his body to the

Asura King in a lying posture. The Buddha told Ven. Ānanda to put a small couch outside the fragrant chamber and then he lay down on the right side on the couch like a lion king.

Rāhu then went near the Buddha but he had to look up to see the Buddha's face, just as he had to stretch his neck and look up at the moon in the sky. The Buddha asked him why he had come to see him only after a very long time. The Asura King replied that he had not come because he was under the misapprehension that he would not be able to stoop down far enough to see the exalted Buddha.

Then the Buddha said to him: "Asura King! I have not developed the perfections (*pāramī*) holding my head down, that is, by relaxing my effort. I have given alms always holding up my head, that is, without relaxing my effort." On that very day, Rāhu, the Asura King, formally become one who took refuge in the Buddha.

37a: Devadatta

Devadatta rejected by the Buddha

[Present editor: I have moved this section on Devadatta here from the end of the last chapter.]

The following story of Devadatta, from the time of his ordination to his being swallowed by earth, is condensed as far as possible, although a lengthy account could be given based on many stories about Devadatta in Pāḷi literature. [925]

Of the six Sakyan princes after their ordination:

1. Ven. Bhaddiya attained the threefold supermundane knowledge and became an Arahat during the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in that very year.
2. Ven. Anuruddha gained the divine eye (*dibbu-cakkhu*), and after hearing the Discourse on the Great Thoughts (*Mahā-vitakka-sutta*, AN 8.30), he became an Arahat.
3. Ven. Ānanda was established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) after hearing the Discourse about Ānanda (*Ānanda-sutta*, SN 22.83), containing the simile of the mirror taught by Ven. Puṇṇa Mantāni-putta.

4-5. Vens. Bhagu and Kimila later on developed insight (*vipassanā*) meditation and became Arahats.

6. Devadatta gained mundane psychic powers, remaining a worldling. He never became a noble one (*ariya*).

At another time while the Buddha was sojourning in Kosambī, he and his many disciples [880] received abundant offerings. People came into the monastery with robes, medicines and other requisites in their hands and asked: “Where is the Fortunate One? Where is Ven. Sāriputta? Where is Ven. Moggallāna? Where is Ven. Mahā Kassapa? Where are Ven. Bhaddiya, Ven. Anuruddha, Ven. Ānanda, Ven. Bhagu or Ven. Kimila?” They were always on the move, looking for the places where the 80 great disciples (*mahā-sāvaka*) stayed. But there was nobody who bothered to ask about Devadatta’s whereabouts.

Devadatta and Ajātasattu

Then Devadatta thought: "I too became a monk along with Bhaddiya and the others. They are monks of the ruling (*khattiya*) families; I too am a monk of such a family. But those who brought offerings with them asked for Bhaddiya and the others. As for me, there was not a single person who cared to ask about me even by my name. Whom should I associate with and whom should I make devoted to me so that I have abundant offerings for my own?" He continued to ponder: "King Bimbisāra was established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) together with 110,000 wealthy Brahmins the first time he saw the Buddha. It is not possible to be united with him. Nor is it possible to form an alliance with King Kosala. Prince Ajātasattu, son of King Bimbisāra, however, does not know a person's virtues or vices as he is still young. I will endear myself to him."

So thinking he went to Rājagaha and transformed himself into a boy. He adorned himself with four snakes, two on his hands and two on his legs, he also placed a snake on his neck, another one on his head and still another one on his left shoulder; he had the tails of these seven snakes interlocked as a waist band and put it on to decorate himself. Finally he came down from the sky and sat on the lap of Prince Ajātasattu.

The prince was so scared that he asked him who he was. The apparent boy said that he was Devadatta and the prince requested him to show himself as the real Devadatta. Devadatta removed the disguise and stood before the prince in his original physical form, dressed in the monk's robe and with an alms bowl in his hand. Very much impressed by this magic, Prince Ajātasattu became Devadatta's devoted follower. He regularly went with 500 chariots every morning and evening to see his teacher. He also sent 500 pots of food, each pot containing food enough for ten monks.

His ego having become inflated because of the abundant offerings that he received, Devadatta conceived the evil desire to make himself the Buddha and lead the Saṅgha. As soon as this desire arose in him, Devadatta lost his supernormal powers based on mundane absorption (*jhāna*).

Kakudha Brahma

At that time, a lay disciple of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, a Koliyan Prince named Kakudha became a Brahma after his death. Kakudha Brahma came to Ven.

Mahā Moggallāna with his body three miles long and reported how, being puffed up with self-conceit, Devadatta conceived the evil desire to make himself the Buddha and lead the Saṅgha, and how he immediately lost his supernormal powers. After making this report, Kakudha Brahma vanished on the spot.

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna went to the Buddha and informed him of what Kakudha Brahma had told him. The Buddha asked him whether he had verified the Brahma's report by means of his psychic powers of knowing another person's mind. When Ven. Moggallāna replied that he had, the Buddha said: "Moggallāna! Keep this matter to yourself! Now that man Devadatta who is empty of the path and its fruition will show himself in his true colours." Then the Buddha gave a talk on the five kinds of bogus teachers:

1. The teacher who claims to have pure morality without having it.
2. The teacher who claims to have pure livelihood without having it.
3. The teacher who claims to have pure teaching without having it.
4. The teacher who claims to have pure speech without having it.
5. The teacher who claims to have pure intellectual vision without having it.

Their respective disciples know all [881] about these five kinds of teachers. But they do not tell their lay followers about their respective teachers because if they do so, their teachers, who have been receiving the four requisites from the laity, will be displeased. So they say nothing and connive at the deception of their teachers, believing that by their deeds they will one day reveal their true colour by themselves. The disciples have to protect only such teachers and such teachers crave for the protection of their disciples. As for the Buddha, he really has pure morality and so he claims it. He really has pure livelihood, pure teaching, pure speech and pure intellectual vision and so he claims to have all these pure assets. For this reason, there is no need for his disciples to protect him in respect of morality, livelihood, teaching, speech and intellectual vision nor does he in the least want such protection.

The Buddha's Sermon about Devadatta's Gains

Then the Buddha left Kosambī city and arrived at Rājagaha where he resided in the Veḷuvana monastery. There, many monks reported to him that Prince

Ajātasattu went to Devadatta with 500 chariots in the morning and in the evening, and that he sent 500 pots of cooked food every day. Then the master said: "Monks, do not set great store by the gains of Devadatta. As long as Prince Ajātasattu goes to Devadatta with 500 chariots every morning and evening and sends 500 pots of food daily, it certainly indicates a decline of his good deeds. But their increase is not to be expected. Monks, for example, if the bile of a bear is cut and put in the nose of a wild dog, the animal will become angry and even more violent. Likewise, so long as Prince Ajātasattu goes to Devadatta with 500 chariots every morning and sends 500 pots of food everyday, it certainly indicates Devadatta's decline in doing good deeds. His doing of more and more good deeds is not to be expected, and he spoke this verse (SN 6.12):.

> *Phalaṁ ve kadaliṁ hanti, phalaṁ veḷuṁ phalaṁ naḷaṁ,*
> *sakkāro kāpurisaṁ hanti, gabbho assatariṁ yathā.*
>
> Monks, just as the banana fruit kills the banana plant, the bamboo fruit kills the bamboo plant, the reed fruit kills the reed plant, and the calf in the womb kills the mare mule; so also gains kill a man of corrupt and evil disposition.

"Monks, Devadatta's reputation for gains will lead to his self-destruction. In the same way, Devadatta's reputation for gains will lead to his self-destruction."

Devadatta's First Grudge against the Buddha

Then one day as the Buddha sat amidst a large assembly, teaching to the king and the people, Devadatta rose and covered his left shoulder with his upper robe as a sign of respect, he raised up his joined hands in adoration towards the Buddha and said: "Exalted Buddha, now you are old, far advanced in age and on the threshold of the last stage of life. Venerable sir! Let the exalted Buddha now live in peace without bothering about anything. Let him hand over the Saṅgha to me. I will lead and look after the Saṅgha."

The Buddha said: "Devadatta! That is not proper. Do not wish to look after and lead the Saṅgha." For the second time Devadatta made the same request and the Buddha rejected it. [882] When Devadatta made the request for the third time, the master said: "Devadatta! I would not hand over charge of the Saṅgha even to Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Moggallāna, then why should I hand it over to you, you evil one, you eater of spittle?"

The words of the Buddha rankled Devadatta. “The Buddha rebuked me in the presence of the king and the people with the word: “Eater of spittle (*kheḷāsaka*),” one who consumes the four impure, eater of spittle-like requisites! He exalts only Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Moggallāna.” So thinking, he was angry and displeased and after paying respects to the Buddha, he went away.

Then the Buddha made the monks pass a resolution against Devadatta in Rājagaha city. It was an act called a declaration (*pakāsanīya-kamma*) passed with an announcement (*ñatti-dutiya*) carried out by the assembly of monks after taking the proceeding proclamation (*kamma-vācā*) at which the motion is put once and followed by the declaration of the Saṅgha’s decision. Then Ven. Sāriputta was nominated by vote to be the person entrusted with the task of making the resolution public in Rājagaha. In accordance with the Buddha’s word of command, the Saṅgha nominated Ven. Sāriputta, and he made the resolution against Devadatta well-known in the city.

On hearing this resolution, those who lacked faith and wisdom blamed the monks, saying: “These monks, these sons of the Sakyan Prince, Buddha, are jealous. They are jealous of Devadatta’s gains!” But those who had faith and wisdom said: “It could not be an evil act on the part of the master to have the facts about Devadatta made public in Rājagaha.”

> Herein, a declaration (*pakāsanīya-kamma*) is an act of the Saṅgha to be performed according to the Discipline (*Vinaya*). It shows clearly that the acts and sayings of the monk, against whom the Saṅgha have passed the resolution, have nothing to do with the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha and that he acts and says so only on his own authority and of his own free will.
>
> The resolution against Devadatta is somewhat like this: “Formerly Devadatta’s behaviour was of one kind, but now it is quite different. What he does by bodily action or says by word of mouth is not to be identified with the Buddha, the Dhamma or the Saṅgha. It is to be identified only with Devadatta.” The resolution containing words to this effect was passed by the Saṅgha after taking votes.
>
> Then in accordance with the instructions of the Buddha, the Saṅgha formally nominated Ven. Sāriputta again by vote to be the person who was to declare Devadatta an unwelcome or unrepresentative person (*persona non grata*) publicly in Rājagaha. So accompanied by many monks, Ven.

> Sāriputta went into the city and made public the dissociation of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha from Devadatta by saying: "Formerly Devadatta's behaviour was of one kind, now it is quite different. What he does bodily or verbally should not be identified with the Buddha, the Dhamma or the Saṅgha. It should be identified only with Devadatta." These in brief are the noteworthy points about the declaration (*pakāsanīya-kamma*).

Prince Ajātasattu

After he has been declared a monk whose acts and words were disavowed by the Saṅgha, Devadatta thought: "Now the monk Gotama has repudiated me, I will do what is harmful to his welfare." So he went to Prince Ajātasattu and said: "Prince, people in ancient times lived long but nowadays people are short-lived. There is the possibility of your death even as a prince, so you must kill your father now and become king. I also will kill the Buddha and become the Buddha."

Prince Ajātasattu thought: "Ven. Devadatta is a powerful person. He says so perhaps because he has a reason for saying so." So he tied a dagger to his thigh; shaking with fear, he hurried into the palace in broad daylight. The ministers who guarded the king seized and searched the prince. When they found the dagger tied to his thigh, they asked him what he wanted to do. The prince said that he wanted to kill his father. The ministers again asked him at whose instigation he tried to kill the king. The prince admitted that Devadatta had incited him. [883]

Then some ministers held the view that the prince and Devadatta and all the monks should be killed. Some contended that the monks should not be killed as they did no wrong and that only the prince and Devadatta should be killed. Still the rest of the ministers maintained that the prince and Devadatta should not be killed nor should the monks be killed, that the matter should be reported to the king and action taken according to the king's instructions.

Then the ministers took the prince to the king and informed him of the prince's attempt to kill him. The king asked them about their views and the ministers stated their three different views. The king said: "How can the Fortunate One or the Dhamma or the Saṅgha be guilty of any offence? They are certainly not guilty. Has not the Fortunate One already declared that Devadatta's present behaviour is quite different from his former behaviour and has not he publicly

disavowed the acts and sayings of Devadatta?" Then the king dismissed the ministers in the first group, demoted the second group of ministers and promoted those in the third group.

Then the king asked his son why he wished to kill him. The prince said that he wanted to become king. King Bimbisāra then said: "Prince, if you want to be a king, then this kingdom is yours," and he handed over his kingdom there on the spot to Prince Ajātasattu.

As his wish was now fulfilled, Prince Ajātasattu was delighted and he told Devadatta about it. But to incite enmity in the Prince Devadatta he said: "Like a man who covers his drum and hides a fox inside it, you think that you have achieved your object. After two or three days, your father will have a second thought about your impudence and make himself king again."

The prince asked his teacher what he should do. Devadatta cruelly advised him to kill his father. The prince said that he was not desirable to kill his father with any weapon since he was of royal blood. Devadatta again gave devilish advice that in that case the prince should starve his father to death.

Ajātasattu's Act of Parricide

King Ajātasattu ordered his father King Bimbisāra to be imprisoned in a very hot and humid iron cage. He did not allow any one except his mother to see the king.

Then Queen Vedehī put some food in a golden bowl and took it into the iron cage. The king ate the food and sustained his life. King Ajātasattu asked how his father managed to keep himself alive and when he heard what his mother was doing, he ordered the ministers not to allow her to enter the cage with food again.

Then the queen hid the food in a knot of her hair and entered the cage. The King ate the food and stayed alive. When King Ajātasattu heard this, he forbade the queen to go into the cage with her hair knotted.

Then the queen put the food in her golden footwear and entered the cage. The king subsisted on the food brought by the queen in her footwear. When Ajātasattu learnt how his father was staying alive, he forbade his mother to visit the king in her footwear.

From that time on, Queen Vedehī bathed herself with fragrant water, coated her body with food made of oil, honey, molasses and butter, and putting on her double robe, she entered the iron cage. The king licked her body and in this way he kept himself alive. When the wicked Ajātasattu heard the news, he imperiously ordered the ministers not to allow his mother to enter the cage under any circumstances.

Thus forbidden to go inside the cage, the queen stood near the door of the cage and cried: "Great King! You, yourself, did not allow this wicked son Ajātasattu to be killed when he was young. You, yourself, raised your own potential enemy. Now, this is the last time that I will see you. From now on, I will not have the opportunity to see you. Forgive me if [884] I have done anything wrong." Thus muttering and weeping, she went back to her residence.

From that time on, the king had no food to eat. Walking to and fro, he stayed alive only by means of the bliss of the Stream-entry fruition (*Sotāpatti-phala*) that he had attained. His mind being thus always absorbed in that fruition, the king's body became very splendid.

The wicked Ajātasattu asked his men how his father managed to survive. His men said that the king kept himself alive by walking to and fro and that he had become more splendid than ever before in his physical appearance. Then King Ajātasattu decided to put an end to the walking exercise of his father and told the barbers to gash the soles of his father's feet, smear them with oil and salt and broil them before red-hot embers.

When he saw the barbers, King Bimbisāra thought that someone had certainly brought his son to his senses, and that the barbers had come to shave his beard. The barbers approached the king and stood there paying their respects to him. The king asked them about the object of their visit, and they informed him of their purpose. Then the king told them to do according to the desire of their master. The barbers requested the king to sit and, after paying respects to him, they said: "Great King! We have to carry out the order of King Ajātasattu. Do not be angry with us. What we have to do is most inappropriate to a good king like you." Then holding firmly the soles of his feet with their left hands and sharp razors with their right hands, they gashed the soles, smeared and rubbed them with oil and salt and then broiled them before the red-hot embers.

According to the commentaries in a previous life the king walked on a relic shrine (*stūpa*) platform with his footwear on and trod on a mat with his unclean feet. The suffering that he now underwent was the lingering effect of that unwholesome act in the past.

King Bimbisāra had to endure excruciating pain. Without harbouring any ill-will, he contemplated the wonderful attributes of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. Then withering away like a flower dumped on the shrine platform, he became an attendant of Vessavaṇa Deva King in the Catumahārājika realm, and the supreme commander of the Yakkhas having the name Janavasabha.

Herein he was called Janavasabha because as King Bimbisāra he was a noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna-ariya*) and the chief of 110,000 Brahmin merchants. *Jana-* indicates the 110,000 Brahmin merchants, and *-vasabha* means the chief.

Why did he become a low-class commander in the Catumahārājika realm although he was a great noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna-ariya*) before he died? The answer was given by the Yakkha Janavasabha himself.

According to his answer, he passed through seven lifetimes as king on earth after his demise in Catumahārājā realm and seven lifetimes in Catumahārājā after his demise on earth. Now as a noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna-ariya*) and by virtue of his many good deeds in respect of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, he could have attained a higher realm. But because he had spent seven lifetimes successively in the Catumahārājā world, his attachment to life (*bhava-nikanti*) in that realm was powerful and because of that powerful attachment he ended up in the Catumahārājā realm. This was the confessions of the Yakkha Janavasabha in the Discourse concerning Janavasabha (*Janavasabha-sutta*, DN 18). His confessions in verse read as follows:

Ito satta tato satta, saṁsārāni catuddasa,
nivāsam-abhijānāmi, yattha me vusitaṁ pure.

Here I had seven lives, and there I had seven lives, that is fourteen dwelling places in Saṁsāra that I know of, where I dwelt formerly.

The Remorse of Ajātasattu

On the very day of King Bimbisāra's death, the wife of the foolish King Ajātasattu gave birth to a son, later called Udāyabhadda. So the two messages, one reporting the birth of a son from the chief of the palace and the other

reporting the death of the king's father, [885] Bimbisāra, came to the palace at the same time.

The ministers considered it advisable to submit first the report of the birth of a son and they did so accordingly. As soon as he read the report there arose in him an intense love for his son that excited his whole body and made him ecstatic to the marrow. At the same time he became aware of his gratitude to his father, thinking that at the time of his birth his father might have also experienced intense love for his son.

King Ajātasattu then ordered his ministers to release his father at once. But the ministers said that it was impossible and submitted the report of the death of King Bimbisāra. On hearing the news, King Ajātasattu wept bitterly, went to his mother and asked her whether there arose intense love in his father at the time of his birth.

Queen Vedehī replied: "You foolish son! What do you say? During your childhood you had a whitlow on your finger. The royal nurses were unable to make you stop crying. In the end they took you to your father who was seated in the court of law. Your father kept your finger in his mouth that was afflicted with the whitlow and due to the warmth of his mouth, the tumour erupted there. Out of great love for you, your father did not spit out the pus mixed with putrid blood lest you should wake up and he swallowed it instead. Your father loved you so very much." The Queen thus told him at length how his father was greatly attached to him. King Ajātasattu wept bitterly and performed the funeral of his father.

Assassins sent by Devadatta

Then Devadatta went to King Ajātasattu and asked him to despatch men who would kill the Buddha. The king sent the assassins to Devadatta telling them to follow the instructions of his teacher. Devadatta told the first man: "Man, you go to the place where the monk Gotama is now living. You kill Gotama and come back by this way."

Then he told a couple of men to kill the first man and come back by another way. Then the third batch of four men was instructed to kill the two men and return by another way. A fourth batch of eight men was instructed to kill the

four men and come back by another way. Then still another sixteen men were told to kill the eight men and return by another way.

> The various killers were hired so who had ordered the killing of the Buddha would never be known.

Armed with a sword and a shield and a bow and a quiver of arrows, the first man went to the Buddha and stood with his body near him, trembling with fear and agitation.

Seeing him, the Buddha said: "Man, come here. Have no fear." The man got over his fear and put his sword and shield as well as his bow and arrows in a suitable place. Then having approached the Buddha, he bowed his head at the feet of the Buddha and confessed and apologized for his offence. The Buddha forgave him and gave a series of talks on generosity, morality and other good deeds that lead to the attainment of the paths and fruitions. As a result the assassin became a noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna-ariya*) and at the same time he sought supermundane refuge in the Three Treasures. Then the Buddha dismissed the assassin telling him not to go by the way instructed by Devadatta but to go by another way.

The two assassins of the second batch waited for the first assassin for a long time. Then going in the opposite direction they saw the Buddha seated at the foot of a tree. They went up to the Buddha, paid respects and sat at a proper place. The Buddha gave them a series of Dhamma talks and explained the four truths and established them in the fruition of Stream-entry. Like the first assassin, they too became noble Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna-ariya*) and thereby took supermundane refuge in the Three Treasures. [886]

Again, the Buddha dismissed these assassins, telling them to go by another way. Then the four assassins of the third batch, then the eight assassins of the fourth batch, the sixteen assassins of the fifth batch waited for the eight assassins for a long time and going in the opposite direction, they saw the Buddha as did those who went before them. They paid respects to the Buddha and sat at a proper place. The Buddha gave them a Dhamma talk on the four truths and established them in the fruition of Stream-entry. After they had gained supermundane refuge in the Three Treasures, the Buddha dismissed the men, telling them to go back by another way.

Then the first assassin approached Devadatta and said: “Sir, I cannot kill the exalted Buddha. He is so very powerful.” Devadatta said: “Enough then! Do not kill the monk Gotama. I will kill him myself.”

After having helped the assassins to gain Stream-entry, the Buddha was one day walking to and fro in the shadow of the Gijjhakūṭa Hill. Then Devadatta climbed the hill and rolled down a large rock with the intention of killing him. As it rolled down, two promontories appeared automatically and blocked the rock. A slither of the rock flew off and caused blood to flow on the foot of the Buddha.

The Buddha looked up and said to Devadatta: “You foolish man, you can now make no spiritual progress! You have caused my blood to flow with ill-will and murderous intent. You have done much evil.”

Then the Buddha said to the monks: “Monks, Devadatta has done this first heinous act having immediate result upon death (*anantariya-kamma*) because he spilled my blood with ill-will and murderous intent.”

The monks carried the Buddha to the monastery in Maddakucchi Park. There the Buddha expressed his desire to go to the monastery in Jīvaka’s Mango Grove and told the monks to take him there. Accordingly, the monks took him there.

On hearing the news, the great physician Jīvaka went to the Buddha and applied a highly potent medicine to the wound. Having bandaged the wound, he told the Buddha to keep the bandage intact until his return from his visit to a patient in the city. After calling on the patient and doing the needful for him, the physician came back but did not reach the city before the gate was closed.

Then the physician Jīvaka thought: “I have applied a powerful medicine to the foot of the exalted Buddha and bandaged the wound treating him like an ordinary patient. I have made a grave mistake. This is the time to untie the bandage. If the bandage is not untied, he will suffer intense pain the whole night.” So thinking, Jīvaka was very worried. At that moment, the Buddha called Ānanda and said: “Ānanda, the physician Jīvaka came back after dark and could not reach the city gate before it was closed. He is worried because now is the time to untie the bandage. Untie the bandage immediately.” Ven. Ānanda removed the bandage and the wound was gone, like bark detached from a tree.

As soon as the city-gate was opened, Jīvaka hurried to the Buddha even before dawn and asked him whether he suffered any pain. The Buddha said: "Jīvaka, I have overcome all pain since I gained Supreme Awakening under the Bodhi tree," and then he taught the following verse (Dhp 90):

> *Gataddhino visokassa, vippamuttassa sabbadhi,*
> *sabba-ganthappahīnassa, pariḷāho na vijjati.*

Jīvaka! There is absolutely no sorrow, no suffering in the Arahat who has been liberated from Saṁsāra, who has gone to the other shore of Saṁsāra, who is free from all grief, who has no attachment whatsoever to all things including the body, etc., the one who has removed all his fetters. [887]

Suffering (*pariḷāho*) is of two kinds, viz., physical (*kāyika*) and mental (*cetasika*) suffering. Physical suffering is due to cold, heat, etc., which occurs in the Arahat, and so he is not free from physical suffering. The physician Jīvaka had this in mind when he asked the question. But as lord of the Dhamma, the Buddha was supremely skilful in teaching, and he answered that the Arahat who possessed the above-mentioned attributes had no suffering, meaning mental suffering. Jīvaka asked whether the Buddha had any suffering and the Buddha said that he had none.

By the end of the discourse, many living beings gained the Stream-entry and so forth.

Many monks, who heard the report about Devadatta's attempt to kill the Buddha, surrounded the residence of the Buddha in one ring after another. They recited the scriptures loudly and walked up and down to guard, protect and ensure the security of the Buddha.

On hearing their recitation and the noise of their movement the Buddha asked Ven. Ānanda, in spite of his knowledge, and when he told him about the vigilant monks, he summoned the monks and said:

> *Aṭṭhānam-etaṁ, bhikkhave, anavakāso, yaṁ parūpakkamena Tathāgataṁ jīvitā voropeyya. Anupakkamena, bhikkhave, Tathāgatā parinibbāyanti.*

Monks, it is wholly impossible for anyone to kill the Buddha. He added that it was impossible for any one to kill a Buddha and that Buddhas always attained Nibbāna, and could not be killed beforehand.

Then the Buddha said to them, as he did to Ven. Mahā Moggallāna on one occasion, that there are five kinds of teachers in the world, that only these kinds of teachers need the protection of their disciples, that, as for the Buddha, he truly claimed pure morality, pure livelihood, pure teaching, pure speech and pure intellectual vision as he had all these virtues and therefore, he did not need the protection of his disciples. Finally the Buddha said to the monks: "Monks, go back to your own abode. The Buddhas are not beings whose security depends on other people's protection."

Nāḷāgiri the Elephant

The story of the sending of Nāḷāgiri occurs in the Section on the Chapter about Schism in the Saṅgha (*Saṅgha-bhedakakkhandhaka*, Vin Cv 7), and the exposition of the Short Birth Story about the Golden Goose (*Cūḷa-haṁsa-jātaka*, Ja 533). Here the latter is the basis for the following story.

Due to the treatment given by the physician Jīvaka, the Buddha recovered his fitness and as before, he went about in the glory of a great Buddha, surrounded by monks. On seeing the Buddha, Devadatta thought: "It is impossible for any men to approach and kill the monk Gotama when he sees him in the glow of his physical body at its zenith. But King Ajātasattu's elephant, Nāḷāgiri, is vicious, wild and homicidal. He does not know any good thing about the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. Only that wild Nāḷāgiri can kill the monk Gotama." So he went to the king and told him about his plan.

King Ajātasattu agreed to his plan. He summoned the mahout and ordered him to intoxicate Nāḷāgiri the elephant and send him out the next morning along the same way the Buddha was taking. King Ajātasattu had it announced by the beat of drum in the city that all citizens should do their business early the next morning and avoid going about in the streets as Nāḷāgiri [888] would be intoxicated and would be sent into the city.

Devadatta also left the palace, went to the elephant-shed and told the mahouts: "Men, we are the king's teachers who can have the king's servants promoted or demoted in their work. If you want to be promoted, then give the elephant sixteen pots of very potent liquor early in the morning and when the monk Gotama comes into the city, incite and enrage the animal with goads and spears. Let the elephant break open the shed, rush in the direction of the monk Gotama and kill him." The mahouts agreed to follow his instructions.

The news spread throughout the whole city. The Buddha's lay devotees who adored the Three Treasures approached the Buddha and said: "Exalted Buddha, in collaboration with the king, Devadatta will send the wild elephant, Nāḷāgiri, tomorrow along the same way by which you are coming. Do not come into the city for alms tomorrow but stay here in Veḷuvana monastery. We will offer meals to you and the monks in the monastery."

The Buddha did not say that he would not go into the city for alms. But he decided to teach the wild elephant the next day, perform the miracle (*pāṭihāriya*) of the teaching, subdue the heretics, and without going about for alms in Rājagaha, return to Veḷuvana with monks from the city.

> *Pāṭihāriya* means "the removal of evil deeds." There are three ways of removal: 1) Removal by teaching (*anusāsāni-pāṭihāriya*); 2) removal by performance of a miracle such as the creation of different forms (*iddhi-pāṭihāriya*); and 3) removal by knowing the listener's mental state (*ādesanā-pāṭihāriya*).

The Buddha knew that the lay followers in Rājagaha would bring many pots and bowls of food and that he could have his meal in the monastery. For this reason the Buddha accepted the invitation of the laymen. Knowing very well the acceptance of their invitation by the Buddha, the laymen decided to bring and offer food at the monastery and went away.

The Buddha taught the monks in the first watch of the night and answered the questions of Devas and Brahmas in the second watch. The third watch was divided into three periods. In the first period, the Buddha lay down on his right side like a lion-king. In the second, he was absorbed in the Arahat fruition. In the third, he was filled with infinite compassion, and after arising from that state, he surveyed the worthy beings, and saw Nāḷāgiri. The Buddha saw clearly that when he taught the elephant, 840,000 beings would realize the four truths and become liberated. So, after cleaning his body at dawn, he called Ven. Ānanda and said: "Ānanda, tell all the monks who live in the eighteen monasteries around Rājagaha to come with me into the city."

Ven. Ānanda acted according to the instructions of the Buddha. All the monks assembled in the Veḷuvana monastery. The Buddha entered Rājagaha surrounded by many monks.

Then the mahouts carried out the instructions of King Ajātasattu and Devadatta. There was a very large gathering of people. At the meeting those who had faith in the Buddha said: "Today, there will be a battle between the two bull elephants, the Buddha and Nāḷāgiri. We will witness clearly the admonition of the animal bull, Nāḷāgiri, by the Buddha bull." So saying they climbed the turreted and unturreted mansions, house roofs, etc., to wait and see the battle.

But as for the heretics, who had no faith in the Buddha, they said: "This Nāḷāgiri elephant [889] is vicious, violent and homicidal. He does not know anything good about the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. Today he will destroy the bright, yellow and golden body of the monk Gotama and terminate his life. Today we will clearly see the end of our enemy." So saying, they climbed the turreted and unturreted mansions, house roofs, etc. and waited there.

When Nāḷāgiri the elephant saw the Buddha coming, it rushed towards the Buddha like a moving mountain with its trunk raised, his ears and tails set upright, scaring the people, destroying the houses and crushing the carts to pieces.

When the monks saw the elephant rushing, they said to the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, the wild, vicious and homicidal Nāḷāgiri is coming this way. This animal does not know anything good about the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. We want the exalted Buddha, the Gracious One, to step aside and keep off the way along which the elephant is coming." Then the Buddha said: "Monks! Have no fear! I can tame Nāḷāgiri."

Then Ven. Sāriputta said: "Exalted Buddha, it is the duty of the eldest son to attend to any matter that concerns his father. Let me tame the elephant." But the Buddha turned down his request, saying: "Sāriputta, the power of the Buddha is one thing and the power of the disciples is a different matter. You need not take any trouble for me." Most of the 80 great disciples made the same request but the Buddha did not give his consent.

Then, because of his great love for the Buddha, Ven. Ānanda could no longer restrain himself. He came forward and stood in front of the master, bent on sacrificing his life for him and allowing himself to be the first trampled to death by the elephant. The Buddha said: "Keep back, Ānanda. Do not come and stand in front of me." Ven. Ānanda replied: "Exalted Buddha, this elephant is vicious, wild and homicidal. It is like the fire that destroys the world. Let it come to you

after first trampling me to death." The Buddha dissuaded Ven. Ānanda three times but the latter persisted in standing before him. Finally, he had to remove him by his psychic power and put him back amongst the monks.

At that moment, a child's mother saw the elephant and fearful of death, she fled, abandoning the child from her bosom on the ground between the Buddha and the elephant. Nāḷāgiri pursued the woman but being unable to overtake her, it turned back and approached the child. The Buddha focused his loving-kindness specifically (*odissaka-mettā*) on the elephant and in a very sweet voice of a Brahma-king, he said: "Nāḷāgiri, they served you sixteen pots of liquor and made you drunk not to catch any other being, but verily to kill me. So do not go about harassing pedestrians. Come straight to where I am." In this way the master invited the elephant.

On hearing the sweet words of the Buddha, the wild Nāḷāgiri opened both his eyes and saw the glorious body of the Buddha. He was shocked, and owing to the power of the Buddha, he became sober and dropping his trunk and flapping his ears, he went up to him and crouched at his feet.

Then the Buddha said: "Nāḷāgiri, you are an animal and I am a Buddha. From now on, do not be vicious, violent and homicidal. Try to cultivate loving-kindness towards all living beings." The Buddha stretched his right hand, and stroking the forehead of the elephant, he spoke the following two verses (Ja 533):

Mā kuñjara nāgam-āsado,
dukkhañ-hi kuñjara nāgam-āsado, *[890]*
na hi Nāga-hatassa kuñjara
sugati, hoti ito paraṁ yato.

O, Elephant Nāḷāgiri! Do not approach with murderous intent, with the desire to kill the Buddha who has never done any evil. To approach the Buddha with murderous intent is an evil that will lead to suffering. There is absolutely no possibility of good rebirth in the Deva or human worlds after the death of anyone who wants to hurt or kill the Buddha.

Mā ca mado mā ca pamādo,
na hi pamattā sugatiṁ vajanti te,
tvañ-ñeva tathā karissasi,
yena tvaṁ Sugatiṁ gamissasi.

> O, Elephant Nāḷāgiri! Do not be conceited. Do not be unmindful of the ten good deeds. Those, who are unmindful of the ten good deeds, do not have good rebirth in Deva and human worlds. You will have to do such good deeds as will ensure good rebirth.

The elephant Nāḷāgiri was overwhelmed with ecstasy. If he had not been an elephant, he would have attained the fruition of Stream-entry on the spot.

On seeing this miracle, the people gave a resounding ovation. They clapped their hands and joyously threw various ornaments over the elephant as their rewards. The ornaments covered nearly the whole body of the elephant and from that time he came to be known as Dhanapāla. At the time when Dhanapāla was tamed by the Buddha, 84,000 beings had the opportunity to sample the Dhamma, the elixer of the deathless.

The Buddha established the elephant in the five precepts. The elephant gently collected the dust at the master's feet, scattered it over his head and stepped back on its knees. He stepped at the last place within sight of the Buddha and after paying respects entered the elephant-shed. From that time he became a docile, good tempered and very tame elephant and did not harm any being for the rest of his life.

Having his wish fulfilled, the Buddha resolved that the ornaments that had accumulated be returned to their owners. He thought: "Today, I have performed a great miracle and so it is not advisable for me to go about in the city for food." Having thus subdued the heretics, he left Rājagaha city and returned to the Veḷuvana monastery, surrounded by monks like a triumphant king back from the battlefield. The citizens went to the monastery with much food and offered alms lavishly. They sang the following song joyously (Cv, PTS 2.196):

> *Daṇḍeneke damayanti, aṅkusehi kasāhi ca,*
> *adaṇḍena asatthena, nāgo danto mahesinā.*
>
> Some animal trainers train elephants, horses and cattle by beating them violently with iron spikes, sticks, spears, goads, hooks and canes. As for the Buddha, he tamed the elephant Nāḷāgiri without using any destructive weapon and removed his violent temper through loving-kindness.

Decline of Devadatta

Devadatta's attempt on the life of the Buddha caused a big outcry among the people. They loudly blamed King Ajātasattu, saying: "It was Devadatta who caused the death of our King Bimbisāra. It was Devadatta who sent the assassins. It was he who rolled down the rock; and now he has sent the elephant Nāḷāgiri to kill the master. Yet such an evil man is appointed teacher by King Ajātasattu who goes about with him."

When King Ajātasattu heard the people's reproach, he ordered the withdrawal of his regular offer of 500 pots of food to Devadatta and he stopped going to see his former teacher. The citizens, too, ceased to offer any food to Devadatta who visited their houses for alms. [891]

His gains having dwindled day by day, Devadatta decided to do something dramatic and spectacular for his living. He went to the Buddha and said: "Exalted Buddha, I beg you to lay down the following rules for the monks:

1. All monks should live in a forest hermitage for life. A monk, who lives in a monastery near a village, should be guilty of an offence.
2. All monks should eat only the food that they obtain by going on the alms round. A monk, who accepts the food which the laymen have offered after invitation, should be guilty of an offence.
3. All monks should wear only robes made of rags. A monk, who accepts robes offered by laymen, should be guilty of an offence.
4. All monks should dwell at the feet of trees. A monk, who goes to a monastery with a roof, should be guilty of an offence.
5. All monks should avoid eating meat and fish. A monk who eats meat or fish, should be guilty of an offence.

Then the Buddha said: "Devadatta, your demands are not proper or reasonable.

1. Let the monk live in a forest hermitage or in the monastery near a village according to his desire.
2. Let the monk eat the food that he gets by going on alms round or by accepting the food offered by laymen after invitation.

3. Let the monk wear robes made of rags, or robes offered by laymen according to his desire.

4. Devadatta, I have permitted the monks to dwell at the foot of trees for eight months only, but not during the Rainy Season.

5. I have permitted the monks to eat meat or fish provided they do not see or hear or have any suspicion about any creature being killed for their food.

Herein when Devadatta made the five demands, the Buddha knew instantly that his object was to create a schism in the Saṅgha. As concessions to these demands would be a hindrance to spiritual progress, the Buddha considered them unreasonable and said that a monk might live in forest hermitage if he wanted to, and so on. In this connection, a good monk should know the wish of the Buddha as well as what is proper for him.

According to the Buddha, there are four kinds of monks: The forest-dwelling monk who will gain the paths and fruitions by virtue of his great physical and intellectual strength; the monk who cannot live in the forest because of his physical weakness and who can make spiritual progress only if he practises the Dhamma in the village monastery; the monk who will make spiritual progress either in the forest hermitage or in the village monastery by virtue of his physical strength and forbearance; and the monk who at most understands the words (*pada-parama*) who will make no spiritual progress in spite of his effort either in the forest or the village monastery.

The Buddha wants only the monk of the first kind to live in a forest hermitage. The hermitage is a proper abode for him and following his example, his disciples will want to live in the forests. The Buddha wants the second type to live in a village monastery.

According to the Buddha, the monk of the third type should live only in a forest hermitage. The forest hermitage is good for him and following his example, his disciples will want to live there.

As for the monk who will not make much spiritual progress in this life (*pada-parama*), the Buddha wants him to live in a forest hermitage. Practice of austerities (*dhutaṅga*) and meditation in the forest hermitage will contribute to his attainment of the paths and fruitions in his next life and he will be a living example for his disciples. [892]

Thus, when the Buddha says is let a monk live in a monastery near a village according to his desire, he means a monk who cannot live in the forest because of his physical weakness and who will achieve his spiritual goal only if he practises the Dhamma in a village monastery. This concession also enables other monks to live in the village monastery.

If the Buddha accepted Devadatta's demands, it would rule out the possibility of spiritual progress for two kinds of monks: One who is physically weak and the monk who lived in the forest when he was young but who cannot live there in his old age owing to a decline in health and so has to live in the village monastery to achieve his spiritual goal. For these reasons the Buddha rejected Devadatta's demands.

Schism

Devadatta was delighted when the Buddha refused to comply with his five demands. Together with his followers, Kokālika, Kaṭamodaka Tissaka, the son of Queen Khaṇḍā, and Samuddadatta, he rose, paid respects to the Buddha, and went away.

The monk Kokālika, Queen Khaṇḍā's son Kaṭamodaka Tissaka and the monk Samuddadatta were Devadatta's close and trusted disciples.

Then Devadatta went to Rājagaha with his followers and propagated their doctrine. They told the people that the Buddha had rejected what they regarded as their reasonable demands for five rules that would contribute to non-attachment, etc. and that they, on their part, would live in accordance with those five rules.

People who lacked faith and intelligence extolled Devadatta and blamed the Buddha. Those who had faith and intelligence criticized Devadatta for trying to create a schism in the Saṅgha and undermine the authority of the Buddha. The monks, who heard the people's words, also criticized Devadatta and reported to the Buddha.

Then the Buddha called a meeting of the Saṅgha in connection with the matter reported by the monks and in the presence of all monks, he asked: "Devadatta, is it true that you are trying to create a schism in the Saṅgha and destroy its authority?" Devadatta replied: "Yes, venerable sir!"

Then the Buddha said: "Devadatta, what you are doing is not proper. Do not wish to see dissension in the Saṅgha. One who causes a schism in the Saṅgha

bears a very grave responsibility. One who causes a schism in a united Saṅgha commits an evil that will last one whole aeon (*kappa*). He will also suffer in hell for all that time.

Devadatta, one who restores unity to a disunited Saṅgha commits a good deed and enjoys life in the Deva realm for one whole aeon. Devadatta, what you are doing is not proper. Do not wish to see dissension in the Saṅgha. One who causes a schism in the Saṅgha bears a very grave responsibility."

Although the Buddha thus admonished him, Devadatta did not give up his attempt and carried out the preliminary plan for the schism. The next day, he decided to perform the Observance Day (*Uposatha*) service and acts of the Saṅgha (*Saṅgha-kamma*) separately. In the morning, he approached Ven. Ānanda who came into Rājagaha for alms, and he said: "Dear Ānanda, from today I will perform the Observance Day service and acts of Saṅgha without the Buddha and his monks."

When Ven. Ānanda reported the matter to the Buddha, he breathed forth the following verse (Ud 5.8):

> *Sukaraṁ sādhunā sādhuṁ, sādhuṁ pāpena dukkaraṁ,*
> *pāpaṁ pāpena sukaraṁ, pāpam-ariyehi dukkaraṁ.*
>
> It is easy for a good man to do a good deed, it is hard for an evil man to do a good deed, it is easy for an evil man to do an evil deed, [893] it is hard for a good man to do an evil deed.

Then on that Observance Day, Devadatta rose from his seat in the assembly of monks and said that the monk Gotama had rejected his demand for five rules that would lead to non-attachment, and so on, but that he would abide by the five rules and that those who liked the rules should vote for them. The votes were taken and the 500 young monks of Vajji country who lived in Vesālī and who were ignorant of the Vinaya teaching voted for the rules as they thought that the rules represented the Dhamma, Vinaya and the sayings of the Buddha. Devadatta took the 500 monks and went to Gayāsīsa.

Sending the Two Chief Disciples

Then Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, the two chief disciples, went to the Buddha and Ven. Sāriputta and informed him of Devadatta's schismatic defection and his departure for Gayāsīsa with 500 monks. The Buddha

reproached them for having no compassion for the young monks and urged them to go and save the monks from spiritual ruin. The two elders promised to do so and after paying respect to the Buddha they left for Gayāsīsa.

Then a monk came and stood crying near the Buddha. The Buddha asked him why he was crying. The monk said that the two chief disciples of his, Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Moggallāna, had gone to Devadatta, presumably because they preferred Devadatta's teaching. Then the Buddha said: "Monk, there is absolutely no reason why Sāriputta and Moggallāna should like Devadatta's teaching. In fact, they have gone there in order to enlighten the 500 young monks who have become Devadatta's followers."

At that time, Devadatta was seated teaching in the midst of many of his followers. When he saw from afar the two elders coming, he said to the young monks: "Monks look over there! I have proclaimed my doctrine very well. Even the monk Gotama's chief disciples, Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Moggallāna prefer my teaching, and they are now coming over to join me."

Then the monk Kokālika, one of the leaders of his sect, warned Devadatta: "Friend Devadatta, do not associate with Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Moggallāna. They have evil desires and they follow their evil desires." But Devadatta said: "Friend, you should not say like this. Their coming here is good for us because it is motivated by their appreciation of my teaching."

When the two Venerables came near, Devadatta said: "Come, Ven. Sāriputta, sit here," and offered to share his seat with him. But Ven. Sāriputta refused to accept his offer and took his seat in a suitable place, as did Ven. Moggallāna.

Having taught the monks the whole night, Devadatta said to Ven. Sāriputta: "Friend Sāriputta, the monks are free from sloth and torpor. You carry on with your talk on the Dhamma. My neck is stiff and cramped. Let me stretch my back." Here he imitated the Buddha in the way he urged Ven. Sāriputta to take over the teaching.

Ven. Sāriputta agreed. After spreading his big fourfold double robe, Devadatta lay down on his right side. As he was tired, unmindful and devoid of intelligence, he instantly fell asleep.

Then Ven. Sāriputta taught the 500 young monks first by making them aware of their own mental states (*ādesanā-pāṭihāriya*). This was followed by his pointing

out the things that they should avoid and the things that they should practise (*anusāsāni-pāṭihāriya*). Ven. Mahā Moggallāna taught them first by performing miracles (*iddhi-pāṭihāriya*) and then telling them what to avoid and what to follow. Therefore the 500 young monks gained the fruition of Stream-entry right then and there and became noble Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna-ariya*).

After the 500 young monks had become noble Stream-enterers, Ven. Sāriputta told them that he and Ven. Moggallāna would return to the Buddha and that those who liked his teaching might go along with them. All the monks [894] followed them and, travelling through the air by their psychic power, they reached Veḷuvana.

After the two chief disciples had gone away with the 500 young monks, Kokālika, a teacher of the sect, woke Devadatta up by hitting his chest with his knee and saying: "Get up, Devadatta! Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Moggallāna have taken away the young monks. Have I not told you that you should not associate with them, that they have evil desires and that they follow their evil desires?" Then Devadatta vomited hot blood on the spot.

Birth Stories concerning Devadatta

When the monks living in the Veḷuvana monastery saw Ven. Sāriputta returning with the 500 monks, they said to the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, when Ven. Sāriputta left for Gayāsīsa, he had only Ven. Mahā Moggallāna as his companion. Now on his return from there he has so many followers and is indeed glorious."

The Buddha said: "Monks, it is not only now that Sāriputta is glorious. When he came back to me as an animal in a previous life he was also glorious." and he recounted the Birth Story about the Deer named Lakkhaṇa (*Lakkhaṇa-miga-jātaka*, Ja 11).

Again, when the monks reported that Devadatta imitated the Buddha by trying to preach like a exalted Buddha with the two chief disciples on the right and left side, the Buddha said: "Monks, it is not only now; also a long time ago Devadatta tried to imitate me but it was in vain." Then the Buddha told them the Birth Story about the Hero Crow Vīrika (*Vīraka-jātaka*, Ja 204).

On the following days, too, the Buddha narrated the Birth Story about the Woodpecker Kandagalaka (*Kanda-galaka-jātaka*, Ja 210) in connection with Devadatta.

Again the Birth Story about the Quick Bird and a Lion (*Sakuṇa-jātaka*, Ja 308) was recounted in connection with Devadatta's ingratitude.

Then in connection with Devadatta's attempt to kill the Buddha, he told the Birth Story about the Antelope (*Kuruṅga-miga-jātaka*, Ja 21) and others.

Then one day the monks were talking about Devadatta's downfall in respect to the offerings he received from the laity and in respect of his spiritual life when the Buddha said: "Monks, it is not only now that Devadatta had his downfall. He had it also long ago," and he narrated the Birth Story about Falling Both Ways (*Ubhato-bhaṭṭha-jātaka*, Ja 139), etc.

Here is a short list of Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) which the Buddha recounted in connection with Devadatta:

Book of the Ones: The Birth Story about the Merchant from Seri (*Serivāṇi-jātaka*, Ja 3), the Birth Story about the Deer named Lakkhaṇa (*Lakkhaṇa-jātaka*, Ja 11), the Birth Story about the Antelope (*Kuruṅga-miga-jātaka*, Ja 21), the Birth Story about One with Great Virtue (*Sīlava-jātaka*, Ja 51), the Birth Story about the Lord of the Monkeys (*Vānarinda-jātaka*, Ja 57), the Birth Story about the Three Things (*Tayo-dhamma-jātaka*, Ja 58), the Birth Story about the Assertion of Truth (*Saccaṅkira-jātaka*, Ja 73), the Birth Story about the Deceitful Jackal (*Sigāla-jātaka*, Ja 113), the Birth Story about the Fool (*Dummedha-jātaka*, Ja 122), the Birth Story about the Miser (*Asampadāna-jātaka*, Ja 131), the Birth Story about Falling Both Ways (*Ubhato-bhaṭṭha-jātaka*, Ja 139), the Birth Story about the Jackal (*Sigāla-jātaka*, Ja 142), the Birth Story about Shining Forth (*Virocana-jātaka*, Ja 143) and the Birth Story about the Young Brahmin Sañjīva (*Sañjīva-jātaka*, Ja 150).

Book of the Twos: The Birth Story about the Crossbreed (*Vinīlaka-jātaka*, Ja 160), the Birth Story about the Treacherous Monkey (*Dubbhiya-makkaṭa-jātaka*, Ja 174), the Birth Story about the Jewel Thief (*Maṇi-cora-jātaka*, Ja 194), the Birth Story about the Hero Crow Vīrika (*Vīraka-jātaka*, Ja 204), the Birth Story about the Antelope (*Kuruṅga-miga-jātaka*, Ja 206), the Birth Story about the Murderous Crocodile (*Suṁsumāra-jātaka*, Ja 208), the Birth Story about the

Woodpecker Kandagalaka (*Kanda-galaka-jātaka*, Ja 210), the Birth Story about the Family Priest Dhammaddhaja (*Dhammaddhaja-jātaka*, Ja 220), the Birth Story about the Renunciant's Robe (*Kāsāva-jātaka*, Ja 221), the Birth Story about the Monkey Little Nanda (*Cūḷa-nandiya-jātaka*, Ja 222), the Birth Story about the Crocodile (*Kumbhīla-jātaka*, Ja 224), the Birth Story about the Shoes (*Upāhana-jātaka*, Ja 231), the Birth Story about (the Unjust King) Mahā Piṅgala (*Mahā-piṅgala-jātaka*, Ja 240), the Birth Story about (the Jackal) Sabbadāṭhi (*Sabba-dāṭhi-jātaka*, Ja 241) and the Birth Story about the Heavenly Musician Guttila (*Guttila-jātaka*, Ja 243).

Book of the Threes: The Birth Story about the Feathered One (*Romaka-jātaka*, Ja 277) and the Birth Story about eating Jambu Plums (*Jambu-khādaka-jātaka*, Ja 294).

Book of the Fours: The Birth Story about the Quick Bird and a Lion (*Sakuṇa-jātaka*, Ja 308), the Birth Story about the One who Spoke of Forbearance (*Khantivādī-jātaka*, Ja 313), the Birth Story about the Heavenly Flower (*Kakkāru-jātaka*, Ja 326), the Birth Story about the Black Monkey Kālabāhu (*Kāḷa-bāhu-jātaka*, Ja 329), the Birth Story about the Jackal who played the Lion (*Jambuka-jātaka*, Ja 335), and the Birth Story about the (Clever) Monkey (*Vānara-jātaka*, Ja 342).

Book of the Fives: The Short Birth Story about Prince Dhammapāla (*Cūḷa-dhammapāla-jātaka*, Ja 358) and the Birth Story about the Mynah Bird (*Sāḷiya-jātaka*, Ja 367).

Book of the Sevens: The Birth Story about the Disobedient Monkey (*Kapi-jātaka*, Ja 404) and the Birth Story about the Attendant Parantapa (*Parantapa-jātaka*, Ja 416).

Book of the Eights: The Birth Story about the King of Cetiya (*Cetiya-jātaka*, Ja 422).

Book of the Nines: The Birth Story about the Wise Partridge (*Tittira-jātaka*, Ja 438).

Book of the Tens: The Birth Story about Nigrodha the Orphan (*Nigrodha-jātaka*, Ja 445) and *Kukkuṭa-jātaka* (Ja 448).

Book of the Elevens: The Birth Story about the Devaputta named Dhamma (*Dhamma-deva-putta-jātaka*, Ja 457).

Book of the Twelves: The Birth Story about the Merchant who Traveled the Ocean (*Samudda-vāṇija-jātaka*, Ja 466). [895]

Book of the Thirteens: The Birth Story about the Mango (*Amba-jātaka*, Ja 474) and the Birth Story about the King of the Ruru Dee (*Ruru-miga-rāja-jātaka*, Ja 482).

Book of the Miscellaneous Numbers: The Birth Story about the Kinnarī Canda (*Canda-kinnarī-jātaka*, Ja 485).

Book of the Twenties: The Birth Story about the Thieving Parrot Sattigumba (*Satti-gumba-jātaka*, Ja 503), the Birth Story about Prince Somanassa (*Somanassa-jātaka*, Ja 505).

The Last Days of Devadatta

Thus while residing in Rājagaha, the Buddha recounted many Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) concerning Devadatta and then he went to Sāvatthī where he dwelt in the Jetavana monastery.

Having been ill for nine months, Devadatta had the desire to see the Buddha at the last moment. So he told his disciples to take him to the Buddha. But his disciples said: "You went about as the enemy of the Buddha when you were healthy. So we dare not take you to him now." Then Devadatta said: "My disciples, do not ruin me. As a matter of fact, it was only I who bore grudge against the Buddha. He did not have the slightest grudge against me." There is this verse in Milindapañha (Mil PTS 410):

> *Vadhake Devadattamhi, core Aṅgulimālake,*
> *Dhanapāle Rāhule ca, sabbattha sama-mānaso.*
>
> My cousin brother, the Buddha, had good-will towards his brother-in-law Devadatta who was bent on killing him, towards Aṅgulimāla the robber who adorned himself with 1,000 fingers, towards Nāḷāgiri the wild elephant, later called Dhanapāla, towards his own son, Rāhula and towards all living beings equally.

"Take me now to my brother, the exalted Buddha." Thus Devadatta again and again entreated them to let him see the Buddha. Then his disciples laid him on a couch and carried him to Sāvatthī where the Buddha was staying. When the monks heard the news that Devadatta was coming, they reported to the Buddha.

The Buddha said: "Devadatta would not be able to see me in the present existence, under any circumstances, though I may remain here." The monks were nonplussed and they did not know what to make of the Buddha's saying. Therefore, again and again they informed him of Devadatta's arrival at such and such a place. But he still insisted that whatever Devadatta did: "By no means will he see me."

But, from time to time, the monks reported the progress of Devadatta's journey saying that he was now one league away from Sāvatthī. That he was now only a mile away and that he was close upon the pond near the Jetavana monastery. Finally the Buddha said: "Devadatta will not see me even though he may get into the Jetavana monastery."

Devadatta swallowed by the Earth

The disciples bearing Devadatta laid down the couch on the bank of the pond near the Jetavana monastery and stepped into the pond to bathe. Devadatta sat up on the couch putting his two feet on the ground. Then his feet sank into the earth irresistibly. Down he went, the parts of his body sinking one after another, the ankle, the kneecap, the waist, the chest, and the neck, and the earth had gorged him up to the jaw-bones when he uttered the following verse (Mil PTS 111):

> *Imehi aṭṭhīhi tam-agga-puggalaṁ,*
> *devātidevaṁ nara-damma-sārathiṁ,*
> *samanta-cakkhuṁ sata-puñña-lakkhaṇaṁ,* *[896]*
> *pāṇehi Buddhaṁ saraṇaṁ upemi.*

I, Devadatta, on my death-bed seek refuge in the Fortunate One with these bones and this lingering life-force. With intelligent, noble, joyous mind motivated by the three noble root-conditions I seek refuge in the omniscient Buddha, the supreme one in the world, the all-seeing teacher who can discipline all worthy beings and who possesses the 32 splendid marks of a great man by virtue of his countless good deeds.

> It was because of the Buddha's fore-knowledge of Devadatta's repentance that the Buddha ordained him. Even if he had not been a monk, he would certainly have committed the same heinous crime as a layman and later on he would not have been able to do the good deed that would contribute to his liberation from Saṁsāra.

> The Buddha knew that after ordination Devadatta would do the two most evil deeds: Causing the spilling of the Buddha's blood and creating schism in the Saṅgha and that later on he would do a good deed making for his release from Saṁsāra. So the Buddha ordained him. Indeed, because of this good deed, Devadatta will be a Paccekabuddha by the name of Aṭṭhissara, after 100,000 aeons.

After uttering the verse, Devadatta entered the earth and landed in the relentless Avīci hell. It seemed as if he was to suffer relentlessly in the hell because he had wronged the Buddha. In the great Avīci hell, 100 leagues in width, Devadatta's body was 100 leagues in height. His head was inside an iron pan up to his two ears. The two legs were inside the red-hot iron bottom up to the ankles. He was roasted standing and facing east. An iron stake with the thickness of a palm tree protruding from the west side of the hell-pot pierced right through the middle of Devadatta's back, came out from the front breast and went into the east side of the hell-pot. Another iron stake came out of the south side of the hell-pot, passed through Devadatta's right side, came out from the left side and went into the north side of the hell-pot. Still another iron stake came from the iron pan, pierced right through the top of the head, came out of the bottom and went into the iron floor under the hell-pot. In this way Devadatta was roasted relentlessly in the great Avīci hell.

> In the Avīci hell: 1) The denizens are jammed in without any space; 2) the hell fires are continuous and cover the whole realm, leaving no space; and 3) the inhabitants have no respite to their suffering. They have to suffer all the time. Thus, because there is no vacant space among the inhabitants, or no cessation as regards the hell fires or suffering, the hell is called the great relentless Avīci hell.

Narration of Birth Stories after Devadatta's Death

After Devadatta was thus swallowed up by the earth, the topic of conversation among the monks was Devadatta's inability to see the Buddha although he had travelled laboriously 45 leagues for this purpose. The Buddha said that Devadatta was swallowed by the earth also in one of his former lives and told the story of the elephant Sīlava.

When the Bodhisatta was the elephant Sīlava, he put a man who had lost his way on his back and took him to a safe place. Yet the man came back thrice to cut his tusks, and when he went back with the last portion of the tusks he was

swallowed up by the earth as soon as he went out of sight of the Bodhisatta. This man, a hunter, named Mittadubbhi became Devadatta (Ja 51).

Then again the Buddha recounted the Birth Story about the One who Spoke of Forbearance (*Khantivādī-jātaka*, Ja 313) to show how King Kalābu, Devadatta at that time, was gorged by the earth when he wronged the Bodhisatta, recluse Khantivādī.

The Buddha also told the Short Birth Story about Prince Dhammapāla (*Cūḷa-dhammapāla-jātaka*, Ja 358) in which, as King Mahāpatāpa, Devadatta was swallowed by the earth for having wronged his own son, Cūḷa Dhammapāla, who was the Bodhisatta. [897]

After the death of Devadatta people were overjoyed. They set up all kinds of flags and banana plants, etc, and placed pots full of water and celebrated their riddance of Devadatta. When this was reported to the Buddha by the monks, he said that in ancient times, too, the death of Devadatta delighted many people. To illustrate his saying, the Buddha recited the Birth Story about the Unjust King Mahāpiṅgala (*Mahā-piṅgala-jātaka*, Ja 240) in which people rejoiced at the death of the evil King Piṅgala in Bārāṇasī.

The monks asked the Buddha about the afterlife of Devadatta. The Buddha said that he had landed in Avīci hell. The monks said: "Exalted Buddha, Devadatta had to suffer much in the present life and now at the end of this life also he has landed in a world of much suffering."

Then the Buddha said: "Yes, monks, that is true. All beings whether monks or laymen who are unmindful in respect of good deeds have to suffer in the present life and the afterlife." And the Buddha uttered the following verse (Dhp 17):

> *Idha tappati pecca tappati,*
> *pāpa-kārī ubhayattha tappati,*
> *pāpaṁ me katanti tappati,*
> *bhiyyo tappati duggatiṁ gato.*

Monks, the man who does evil has to suffer because of the effect of his evil act. He has to suffer both in the present life and the afterlife. Stricken by his conscience: "I have done an evil deed," he has to grieve in the present life. When he lands in the lower, evil world after his death, he has to grieve extremely because of the effect of his deed.

By the end of the discourse many beings became noble Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna-ariya*), and higher, and the discourse was beneficial to many people. [898]

37b: Ajātasattu

[The following is based on the Discourse on the Fruits of the Ascetic Life (*Sāmañña-phala-sutta*, DN 2) and its commentary.]

Birth of the Prince

When the Prince Ajātasattu was conceived in the womb of Vedehī, the Chief Queen of King Bimbisāra, the queen strongly desired to drink the blood of the king's right arm. It was hard to fulfil and she considered it inadvisable to tell anyone about it. She dared not express it openly and as a result she became lean, pale and haggard in her physical appearance. Seeing this change in the queen, the king asked what was wrong with her. The queen at first refused to answer but the king pressed for an explanation and at last she revealed the craving that had made her so unhappy.

The king was overwhelmed with love and said: "You silly queen! Why should you think it is hard to satisfy your desire?" Thus reproving her for her reticence, the king sent for a physician and after having his arm cut with a small golden knife, he had the blood taken in a gold cup, mixed it with water and made the queen drink it.

When the soothsayers heard the news, they predicted that the child in the queen's womb would become the enemy of the king, and that he would kill his father. On hearing their prediction, the queen was worried. She did not wish to bear the potential murderer of the king. So she went to the garden to carry out an abortion, but her attempt was unsuccessful. In spite of her repeated attempts, she could not get rid of her pregnancy. Later on the garden was named Maddakucchi, the garden where abortion was performed.

King Bimbisāra inquired why the queen often went to the garden and when he learnt what she was doing, he said: "We do not know as yet whether the child in your womb is a boy or a girl. Do not try to kill the child because, if you do so, our good reputation will be severely damaged all over Jambudīpa for our cruelty to our own child." He deterred the queen from killing her child and kept her under surveillance. The queen then decided to kill the child after its birth.

When the child was born, the guards took him to a safe place. He was called Ajātasattu because he was the enemy of his father, King Bimbisāra, even before his birth. *Ajāta* means "before birth," and *sattu* means "an enemy."

The prince grew up and when he was shown to the queen, she became deeply attached to him, and lost all desire to kill him. King Bimbisāra later appointed the prince as heir-apparent.

The subsequent association of Ajātasattu with his evil friend Devadatta and his killing of his father to become king have been described above in the section on Devadatta.

From the day he ordered his father to be killed, King Ajātasattu was unable to sleep. As soon as he shut his eyes, he felt like he was being pierced by hundreds of spears and he had dream-like hallucinations about his destiny that kept him shaking and muttering.

> This shows that those who have done much evil see signs of their impending descent into the lower worlds not only on their death-bed but long before the end of their lives.

The guards asked the king what ailed him but he said there was nothing. These nightmarish hallucinations plagued the king and made him reluctant to go to sleep. So every night he gave audience for a long time to keep himself awake.

King Ajātasattu adored the evil Devadatta who was a thorn in the side of the Fortunate One and so he gave alms lavishly to Devadatta and built for him a monastery in Gayāsīsa, and at the instigation of his teacher he killed his father who was a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*). In this way, he ruled out the possibility of doing any good deed leading to the Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*) path for himself and ruined himself most disastrously.

Ajātasattu decision to visit the Buddha

On hearing that Devadatta was swallowed by the earth, King Ajātasattu was afraid, lest he should share the fate of his former teacher. He could not indulge in royal pleasures, nor [899] could he sleep peacefully. He became tremulous, restless and jittery, like a young elephant pricked with a sharp iron stake, he had visions of the earth cracking, the flames from the Avīci hell flaming up, the earth threatening to swallow him up, and the custodians of hell making him lie on his back on the red-hot iron floor and poking him with iron stakes. So, trembling like a beaten fowl, King Ajātasattu could not find any support even for a moment nor could he stand firm and steady. He wanted to see the Buddha,

pay respects and ask about his problem but because of the enormity of his evil deed, he dared not go to the Buddha.

Then, when the festival of the constellation Kattikā was held in Rājagaha on the full moon night in the month of November (*Kattikā*), the whole city was decorated like a celestial city, and brightly illuminated with fire torches and flames. While seated amidst his ministers on the golden throne in the audience hall, King Ajātasattu saw the physician Jīvaka and thought: "I will take Jīvaka as my guide and go to the Buddha. But I should not admit frankly that I dare not go to the Fortunate One, and I will tell Jīvaka to take me there. Tactfully, I will extol the beauty of the night and then ask the ministers which real noble ascetic or Brahmin can inspire us with faith and devotion. When the ministers hear my words, they will glorify their respective teachers and the physician Jīvaka will glorify his teacher, the Fortunate One. Then I will go and see the Fortunate One with Jīvaka as my guide."

After planning this strategy, King Ajātasattu said: "Ministers, tonight is so delightful, being free from snow, mist, cloud, Asurinda, and smoke, the five things that disturb the beauty of the moon-lit night, or pollute the air; ministers, tonight is so beautiful, being free from the five elements; ministers, tonight is so lovely to look at, being free from the five disturbing elements; ministers, tonight our minds are calm and serene because the night is free from the five disturbing elements; ministers, tonight should be very memorable since it is free from the five disturbing elements."

Having thus extolled the full moon night, the king added: "Which ascetic or Brahmin should we see tonight, who can inspire us with faith and devotion?" By saying this, the king gave a hint to the physician Jīvaka. The king had committed a heinous crime by killing his father, a great patron of the Buddha and a noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna-ariya*) at that time, and he had done another by supporting Devadatta who did many things harmful to the Buddha. So he dared not go to the Buddha by himself. He knew that for the fulfilment of his desire to see the Buddha he must rely on Jīvaka who had built a monastery for the Buddha and who served the Buddha's medical needs.

Jīvaka did not fail to take his cue from the king. In fact, he knew it, but because the assembly included many followers of the six heretical teachers, Jīvaka thought: "As followers of ignorant teachers, they themselves are ignorant, and

they do not understand the rules to be observed at a meeting. If I start describing the noble attributes of the Fortunate One, they will rise one by one and extol their teachers and then I will never come to the description of the Fortunate One's noble attributes. As the teachings of their six heretical teachers do not have substance or anything worthy of note, the king will not be pleased with what they say and he will ask me directly. Then I will tell the king without any distraction about the noble attributes of the Fortunate One and take him to the Buddha." Thus thinking deeply, Jīvaka said nothing despite the king's hint and sat silently.

The ministers, who were the disciples of the six heretical teachers, thought: "Today the king extolled the beauty of the night of the November full moon. He really must have the desire to see one of the ascetics or Brahmins, to ask questions and hear his discourse. The king will greatly honour the teacher whom he adores and whose discourse he hears. It augurs well for the minister whose teacher becomes the king's teacher," so each of them became bent on extolling his own teacher and leading the king to him. With this intention the ministers who were disciples of Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambala, Pakudha [900] Kaccāyana, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta and Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta extolled their respective teachers.

King Ajātasattu had seen the heretical teachers before. When he first saw them, their physical appearance did not impress him in the least. On the contrary, he was much disappointed. Now, when he heard the words of his ministers, he felt like a man who sees a very sour and acid fruit brought and put in his hand when, in fact, he wishes to eat a golden coloured, sweet, delicious, ripe mango. He longed to hear the sweet Dhamma concerning the absorptions (*jhāna*), super knowledges (*abhiññā*), the three characteristics of existence (*tilakkahaṇa*), etc., and so when in addition to his disappointment with the heretical teachers' physical appearance he heard their followers praising them, he became much dispirited and said nothing.

Although he was displeased with their speech, King Ajātasattu thought: "If I show my anger and have these ministers seized by the neck and turned out of the palace hall, other people will not have the courage to say anything, fearing that the king treats in the same way every one who speaks." So, although he did not like their words, the king did not reproach them but remained silent.

King Ajātasattu thought: "Only the ministers whom I do not wish to listen to are talking. Physician Jīvaka, who I wish to hear, is silent like the Garuḷa bird that has swallowed the brain of a Nāga. I am so unfortunate!" Then he had an afterthought: "Jīvaka is a disciple, an attendant of the Fortunate One. So he is quiet and lives in silence like a disciplined ascetic. He will not speak if I do not ask him. So I must act like a man, who, when trampled by an elephant, has to clasp the animal's foot."

So thinking, the king said directly: "Friend Jīvaka, why are you keeping silence? These ministers never tire of glorifying their teachers. Do you not have a teacher like these ministers have? Do you have no teacher because you are a commoner without any official post or privileges granted by my father? Or do you have no teacher because of lack of faith?"

Thus the king asked Jīvaka directly, about the reason for his silence. Jīvaka thought: "The king wants me to speak of the attributes of my teacher. Now is not the time for me to remain silent. But it is not proper for me to describe the noble attributes of the Buddha just as these ministers extol their teachers in a posture of reverence to the king."

So Jīvaka rose, bowed most respectfully in the direction of the teacher's residence in Jīvaka's mango grove, raised his joined hands above his head and said: "Great King! Do not think that I am the devotee of just a so-called, self-styled ascetic (*samaṇa*) of doubtful characteristics. Certainly, at the time of my teacher's conception in his mother's womb, at the time of his birth, at the time of his renunciation, his becoming a Buddha, and his teaching of the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*), the 10,000 world-element shook and quivered. In this and that place, the Fortunate One performed the miracle of fire and water. In this and that place, he came down to earth from the realm of Tāvatiṁsa. I will tell you about the Fortunate One's noble attributes to the best of my ability. Listen to me attentively."

With this preamble, Jīvaka went on to give an account of the Buddha: "Great King, Deva among the people! My teacher, the possessor of such attributes as Arahat and Sammā-sambuddha now lives with 1,250 monks in the mango grove monastery that we have donated to him.

Our teacher, the Fortunate One, is a Arahat because he possesses the attributes of morality (*sīla-guṇa*), mental concentration (*samādhi-guṇa*), wisdom (*paññā-*

guṇa), liberation (*vimutti-guṇa*) and knowledge and insight into liberation (*vimutti-ñāṇa-dassana-guṇa*) that make him worthy of special honour by humans, Devas and Brahmas. He is a Fortunate One (*Bhagavā*) because he possesses the sixfold glory. Such good reputation of our teacher, the Fortunate One has spread beyond the highest abode of the universe known as Bhavagga in the formless (*arūpa*) worlds. [901] I want you, Great King, to see our teacher, the Fortunate One. If you see our teacher, your mind will certainly become calm and serene."

Even as he heard the noble attributes of the Buddha, King Ajātasattu was overwhelmed with the five kinds of ecstasy. So, he wished to see the Buddha instantly and knowing that there was no one except Jīvaka who could arrange transport for his visit to the Buddha at that time, he told Jīvaka to go and prepare the elephant transport.

> Herein, there are various kinds of transport, such as horses, chariots, etc., but the elephant transport is the best of all transports. King Ajātasattu decided that he should go to the supreme Buddha by means of the supreme transport. Horses and chariots are noisy, making sounds that are audible in the distance. But the elephant makes no noise although it may not go quickly. The king considered it advisable to go to the quiet and calm Buddha by means of quiet and calm elephants. So he told Jīvaka to harness the elephants.

Then physician Jīvaka had 500 female elephants and the state elephant adorned with all trappings. The king did not tell him explicitly to prepare the female elephants for transport. But being intelligent, he got the female elephants ready with all equipments. In doing so, he was motivated by the reflection: "The king wants to go and see the Fortunate One tonight. But kings have many enemies. If anything untoward happens to the king on the way, people will blame me and say that I lead the king out of the palace at an untimely hour of the night, heedlessly taking advantage of his compliance with my wish. Moreover, they will also blame the Fortunate One, saying that the Fortunate One preaches, taking advantage of his influence over people without regard for proper time. Therefore, I will make my plan so that the Fortunate One and I may be above reproach and the king may be well-protected."

Again he thought: "Men are never in fear of women. So I will make the king go happily, surrounded by women." After having 500 female elephants adorned

with full trappings, he had the 500 female courtiers dressed as men and instructed them to accompany the king, each armed with swords and spears.

Still another thought occurred to Jīvaka: "On account of his heinous crime of parricide, there is no special good deed for this King Ajātasattu that will contribute to the attainment of the paths and fruitions in his present life. It is customary with the Buddhas to preach only when they see someone credited with extraordinarily good deeds, which may serve as a support of spiritual progress (*upanissaya-paccaya*). Now, I will assemble the people. Then the Buddha will preach the Dhamma in view of the former good deeds of someone in the assembly, the good deed essential to his spiritual uplift. The discourse will benefit many people." Instantly, he sent a message to every part of the city, announcing also by the beat of drum, the king's plan to visit the Buddha and hear the Dhamma, and that people are to go along with the king for his security according to their official position.

Then the people thought: "It is said that our king will go and see the Buddha. What kind of Dhamma will he preach? What can we profit by making merry in this planetary festival? We will go to the monastery where the Buddha is going to preach to the king." Then all of them waited for the king on the road with fragrant flowers in their hands.

After having done all the necessary things, Jīvaka told the king that the elephants were ready and that it rested with him to choose the time for his journey.

Ajātasattu's Visit to the Buddha

Then King Ajātasattu mounted the royal elephant and with a female courtier dressed as a man and seated on each of the 500 female elephants, and with fire-torches lighted, he set out from Rājagaha with great royal pomp and splendour and went to Jīvaka's mango grove, which was then the residence of the Buddha.

> Herein, "Great royal pomp and splendour," may be explained as follows: [902] King Ajātasattu was the ruler of two countries, Aṅga and Magadha, each 300 leagues in width. He was a great monarch and although no arrangements were made in advance for his visit to the Buddha, as arranged by Jīvaka, 500 female courtiers came out instantly dressed as men, with swords suspended from their shoulders and with ruby-handled spears in their hands.

> Moreover 16,000 female dancers also accompanied the king. Behind those dancers, their attendant elderly women went along on foot. Behind the elderly women were the eunuchs who guarded the palace; behind the eunuchs were 60,000 ministers exquisitely attired in various garments and walking on foot.
>
> Also walking on foot behind the ministers were about 90,000 provincial princes, adorned with various ornaments and fully armed like young men possessed of magical powers (*Vijjā-dhara*). Behind the princes were 10,000 Brahmins, who, having bathed, smeared themselves with unguent and adorned themselves with golden flowers, wore expensive waist garments and donned expensive double robes covering the left shoulder. Raising their right hands and chanting: "May the Great King overcome all dangers!" they went on foot.
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> Behind the Brahmins were the musicians; behind them were the royal archers; behind them was the elephant-brigade; behind them was a big cavalry; behind the cavalry was the chariot-division; behind the chariot-division was the infantry and behind the infantry were the members of eighteen assemblies dressed and adorned with various ornaments befitting their official position.
>
> Thus, as instructed by Jīvaka, the troops, ministers, etc. were deployed in such a way that the arrow shot from the end of the procession could not reach the king. As for him, he walked close by the king, very vigilant to save the king's life promptly in case of emergency.
>
> The fire-torches were so numerous that they could not be counted by hundreds or thousands. With such royal pomp and splendour the king went to the residence of the Buddha.

King Ajātasattu came out of the city, but as he approached the mango grove he became scared. He trembled with great fear and his hair stood on end. He was much frightened because the silence in the monastery raised doubts in him about Jīvaka's intent. As a matter of fact, Jīvaka had told him before that he would have to approach the Buddha quietly. So the king had banned music, and the musicians had only held their musical instruments during their journey, they had not spoken loudly and they all had travelled without talking and only showing signs with their hands when necessary.

Now in the grove, not even the sneezing of a monk was to be heard, and kings usually delighted only in places where there was sound. King Ajātasattu became

weary and sick of the deep silence and suspicious of Jīvaka. He thought: "This Jīvaka says that there are 1,250 monks in his grove. But I don't hear even anyone even sneezing in this place. Jīvaka may not be speaking the truth. Perhaps, he has deceived me and taken me out of the city. Perhaps, he wants to seize me and usurp my throne with the help of the army. Certainly, Jīvaka is strong enough to match the strength of five elephants. He is also hanging about me and there is no armed attendant near me. Oh! It is all over with me!"

Thus scared, King Ajātasattu was unable even to mask his fear with his royal demeanour and he clearly expressed his fear to Jīvaka by asking: "Jīvaka! You are not deceiving me are you? You are not handing me over to my enemies, are you? Why is it that among so many monks numbering 1,250, there is no sneezing, no coughing and no talking?" [903]

Then physician Jīvaka said: "Great King, be not afraid. I do not deceive you. I will not hand you over to your enemies. Great King, go ahead. Within the circular hall there are oil lamps burning brightly."

> Herein Jīvaka thought: "The king does not know that I never take life. If I do not console him, he will come to ruin here." So he consoled the king to allay his fear effectively by telling him twice not to be afraid and assuring him that he was not being deceived. Then to make his assurance more weighty he told the king twice to go forward and said the oil lamps were burning brightly in the hall. The implication of this last remark was that the illumination in the hall left no doubt about the presence of good people and the absence of insurgents and robbers who always went about in the dark. Jīvaka's speech was then deeply meaningful indeed.

Ajātasattu's Questions on the Monastic Life

Then King Ajātasattu went by elephant as far as possible and at the gate of the monastery he dismounted. As soon as he put his feet on the ground, the power and glory of the Buddha pervaded his whole body. He sweated so profusely that he was nearly forced to change his garments. He remembered his parricide and became overwhelmed with fear. So he dared not go directly to the Buddha. Instead, he took Jīvaka's hands and like a visitor looking around the monastery, he complimented Jīvaka, saying: "You have built this building wonderfully!" When they came to the entrance of the circular meeting-hall, the king asked Jīvaka where the Buddha was: In fact, it was customary with kings to affect ignorance and ask in spite of their knowledge.

Then Jīvaka thought: “The king is like a man who stands on earth and asks where the earth is; like a man who looks up to the sky and asks where the sun and the moon are; like a man who stands at the foot of Mount Meru and asks where Mount Meru is. I will now show him the Buddha.” So Jīvaka raised his joined hands towards the Buddha and said: “Great King, that person seated before the monks, leaning against the middle pillar and facing east is the Fortunate One.”

Then King Ajātasattu approached the Buddha and paid his respects. Standing aside, he looked again and again at the monks who were serene and dignified like a very clear lake, silent without any coughing or sneezing, their eyes calmly fixed on the Buddha without casting a single glance at the gorgeous gathering of the king and his people. The king marvelled and exclaimed: “The monks are so serene. May my son, Prince Udāyibhadda, have such serenity!”

> Herein King Ajātasattu’s exclamation should not give one the impression that he wanted his son to lead a monastic life and become serene. In fact, at the sight of the monks, he became clear in his consciousness and remembered his son. Naturally, getting an object that is hard to come by or seeing something marvellous reminds one of one’s beloved relatives or friends. The king uttered the above words because he remembered his son, and not because he wanted to have his son ordained.
>
> In another sense, his exclamation was due to his worry about his son and his desire for the prince’s serenity. For he thought: “The day will come when my son, seeing that I am still young, asks me where his grandfather is. If he comes to know somehow or other that his grandfather was killed by his father, he will also get it into his head to kill me and become king.”
>
> In spite of his worry about his son and his desire to make the prince serene, the king was in fact destined to be killed by his own son. In the lineage of King Ajātasattu there were five cases of parricide: 1) Prince Ajātasattu killed his father, King Bimbisāra; 2) Prince Udāyi killed his father, King Ajātasattu; 3) Prince Mahāmuṇḍika killed his father, King Udāyi; 4) Prince Anuruddha killed his father [904] Mahāmuṇḍika; and 5) Prince Nāgadāsa killed his father, King Anuruddha. Then the people of the country unanimously resolved to have nothing to do with these kings who disgraced their lineage and they made away with King Nāgadāsa, and appointed a new family to reign.

Before the king made his exclamation, the Buddha had divined the thought of King Ajātasattu as he stood in silence before him. The Buddha knew that the king dared not speak to him, that he remembered his son as he looked again and again at the monks and that unless he broke the ice, he would not have the courage to say anything. So deciding to speak first, the Buddha said just after the king's exclamation: "King! Your mind is now with your beloved one."

Then King Ajātasattu thought: "Oh! Marvellous indeed is the greatness of the Fortunate One! There is no one equal to me in having wronged the Fortunate One. I killed my father, his greatest supporter who was a noble one (*ariya*); and a supporter of the Buddha. Not only that, misguided by Devadatta, I sent assassins to kill the Buddha. Perhaps Devadatta thought he had my support when he rolled the rock from the Gijjhakūṭa down the hill when trying to kill the Buddha. I have done so much evil and yet now the Buddha has started a conversation with me. The Buddha indeed firmly possesses the unshakeable (*tādi*) attributes in terms of five characteristics. Therefore, we will never ignore the Fortunate One and never seek refuge or a teacher elsewhere again."

> The five unshakeable (*tādi*) characteristics are: 1) Equanimity without any love or hatred in the vicissitudes (*loka-dhamma*) whether desirable (*iṭṭha*) or undesirable (*aniṭṭha*) of life; 2) repudiation of defilements; 3) having crossed over the current of Saṁsāra; 4) freedom from lust, hatred, etc.; 5) possession of morality, faith, etc. which makes him worthy of being pointed out as a man of moral integrity, faith, etc. The Great Exposition (*Mahā-niddesa*, PTS 1.114) has an elaboration.
>
> Alternatively: 1) The ability to have desirable perception (*iṭṭha-saññā*) at will, in regard to undesirable (*aniṭṭha*) beings or phenomena; 2) the ability to have undesirable perception (*aniṭṭha-saññā*) at will, with regard to desirable (*iṭṭha*) beings and phenomena; 3) the ability to have desirable perception at will, in regard to both desirable and undesirable beings and phenomena: 4) the ability to have undesirable perception at will, in regard to both desirable and undesirable beings and phenomena; and 5) the ability to have equanimity at will, in respect of both the pleasant and undesirable beings and phenomena. These five noble powers (*ariyiddha*) are the five unsakeable (*tādi*) characteristics.

So thinking, he was much delighted and in response to the Buddha's remark, he said: "Exalted Buddha, I love my son, Prince Udāyibhadda, dearly. May my son, Prince Udāyibhadda, have the same serenity that the monks now have."

King Ajātasattu reflected: “If after paying respect to the Fortunate One, I go to the monks, here and there, and pay respect to them, I will have turned my back to the Fortunate One and that will mean a lack of reverence to him on my part. Certainly, a man who, after paying respects to the king, goes to the crown prince and pays respect, show lack of respect for the king.” So after paying his respects to the Buddha, the king bowed to the monks with both hands raised from the place where he was standing and sat down at a proper place.

Then King Ajātasattu said: “Exalted Buddha, if you permit me to ask, I would like to ask you a few questions about a certain thing.”

The Buddha said: “Great King, you may ask me about anything you like,” thereby extending to the king the invitation of the omniscient Buddhas.

> An invitation for questions is of two kinds: The invitation by omniscient Buddhas and the invitation by their disciples. When someone wants to ask an omniscient Buddha about something, the Buddha [905] says confidently and without any reservation: “Ask me about anything you like. I will answer all your questions thoroughly.” This kind of invitation is made only by Buddhas and the intellectually mature Bodhisattas. As for their disciples, they do not say: “Ask me about anything,” but they say with reservation: “I will answer your question if I can, only after I have heard it.”

On being thus invited by the Buddha in the manner of omniscient Buddhas, King Ajātasattu became much delighted and enthusiastic and he asked the following questions: “Exalted Buddha, there are many skilled occupations and craftsmen. They belong to warriors riding elephants, warriors riding horses, warriers riding chariots, archers, flag-bearers, military strategists, commandos who slip behind the lines of the opposing army and cut off the enemies’ heads, princes distinguished in fighting, daredevils who make speedy attacks on the enemy, warriors who are valiant like bull-elephants, very brave warriors, warriors clad in armour, trustworthy servants, cooks, barbers, bath attendants, butlers, flower stringers, laundry workers, weavers, makers of reed mat walls, potters, arithmeticians, and those who count by their fingers; besides these, there are many other similar craftsmen. These people live long, profiting by their skills. By means of their skills they make themselves, their parents, their wives and children and their friends comfortable and vigorous. Moreover, they give alms to monks and Brahmins so as to be reborn in the Deva realm in the afterlife.

Exalted Buddha, can one point out the benefits of a monastic life like those of skilled occupations, benefits which one can realize by himself in the present life?"

Then the Buddha thought: "In this place are many princes and ministers who are the followers of heretical teachers, those who are outside the pale of my teaching. If I give my discourse in two parts, showing the impurity of their teachers' doctrines in the first part (*kaṇha-pakkha*) and the purity of my doctrine in the second part (*sukka-pakkha*), these people will blame me, saying that I talk only about the doctrinal conflicts and controversies of the monks from the time of the arrival of their king who has come here with great effort to listen to the Dhamma. As a result, they will not hear the Dhamma respectfully. If the king himself talks about the doctrine of the heretics, the people will not blame me. They will let me say what I like. In fact, people naturally follow the king (*issarānuvattako hi loko*). Now I will make it the king's responsibility to describe the teaching of the heretics." Then the Buddha asked the king if he remembered having put the question to any other ascetics and Brahmins.

The king said that he did and the Buddha asked him how they had answered the question and urged him to state their answers if he did not mind it. The king said: "Sir! I do not mind doing so in a place where the Fortunate One or a man like the Fortunate One is sitting."

> What is implicit here in the king's reply is this: It is troublesome or hard to tell a pretentious person to be wise about anything because he is apt to criticize every sentence and every word. The real wise man, however, extols the speech that he hears if it is flawless and he corrects the language, sentences and words if there are flaws in the speech. The Buddha has no peer in the world in respect of real wisdom. Hence the king's reply as mentioned above.

Thus urged by the Buddha to recount the answers given by the heretical teachers, the king told him how he once approached the six heretical teachers: Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambala, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta and Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta and asked them about the advantages of being an ascetic in the present life. The six teachers described only their respective doctrines like a man who, being asked about a mango tree, describes a jack fruit tree, or vice versa. The answers were at variance with the question but although the king was disappointed with the heretical teachers, he considered it

inadvisable for a king like him to rebuke such religious persons as monks and Brahmins in his country. So he neither accepted nor rejected their sayings. Nor did he show his displeasure by word of mouth. Instead, he got up and went back without taking note of [906] their words and now he asked the Buddha about the present advantages of a monastic life.

Then the Buddha gave an elaborate talk on the advantages of monkhood in the present life. For example: 1) A man-slave was honoured by the king after his ordination; 2) a farmer who paid taxes to the king was honoured by the latter after he became a monk; 3) to show the higher advantages of monkhood, the Buddha referred to the life of a man of either low or high caste who had heard his teaching, inspired with faith, who became a monk and practiced the lower morality, the medium morality and the higher morality. Then he guarded his senses, developed his mindfulness, was easily contented, rejected the hindrances and gained the first absorption (*jhāna*); 4) the second meditation; 5) the third meditation; and 6) the fourth meditation. Still making further progress, he attained insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*), psychic powers (*manomayiddhi-ñāṇa*), supernormal powers (*iddhi-vidha-ñāṇa*), the divine-ear (*dibba-sota-ñāṇa*), penetrative knowledge of the mind of others (*ceto-pariyāya-ñāṇa*), remembrance of former existences (*pubbe-nivāsānussati-ñāṇa*), knowledge of the dying and reappearance of other beings (*cutupapāta-ñāṇa*) and extinction of all mental intoxicants (*āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*) or the knowledge of the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) (7-14). Thus, the monk gained as the present advantages of his life the eight kinds of progressively higher, extraordinary knowledge up to Awakening.

> [For a full understanding of the teaching given on that occasion please read the Discourse itself in full.]

Ajātasattu goes for Refuge

When the Buddha described in detail the present advantages of the ascetic life with becoming an Arahat as its apex, King Ajātasattu followed the whole talk attentively, expressing his appreciation verbally from time to time. He thought: “In the past, I did not ask many ascetics and Brahmins about these matters and like a man who pounds husks of grain, I have never received anything substantial. Marvellous indeed is the greatness of the exalted Buddha! He has answered these questions, enlightning me very much as if with the brilliance of

1,000 oil-lamps. For a long time, ignorance has deceived me, making me blind to the greatness and power of the Fortunate One."

Overwhelmed with ecstasy arising from the contemplation of the Buddha's attributes, the king clearly showed his faith in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha in the following words: "Venerable sir, very delightful indeed is the teaching! Just as in the world what has been upside down is set right, just as what has been covered is uncovered, just as a man who has lost his way is shown the right way, just as torches are lighted in order that those who have eyesight may see various visual forms in the darkness, so also, you have in many ways made the Dhamma very clear to me, venerable sir! I seek refuge in the Fortunate One, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. Let the Fortunate One regard me, from today, as a lay devotee who has gone for refuge (*saraṇa-gamana*) for life.

Venerable sir! I am overwhelmed with guilt stemming from foolishness, confusion and ignorance. For the sake of kingly pleasures, I have killed my father, a great monarch who practised justice and ruled righteously. Let the Fortunate One forgive me for the offence, regarding it as an offence that will make me mindful and vigilant in future."

Thus the king sought refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha and apologized for his offense. Then the Buddha said: "King! You are indeed overwhelmed with guilt arising from your foolishness, confusion and ignorance. You have killed your father, the great monarch who practised justice and ruled righteously. But we forgive you that offence because you admit it and make amends for it. If a man admits his offense, atones for it accordingly and guards himself against it in future, then such atonement and self-restraint means spiritual progress under the my teaching."

Then King Ajātasattu said: "Very well, venerable sir! We will now go. We have many things to do." The Buddha replied: "King! You may go as you wish." The king accepted the Buddha's teaching [907] with much pleasure, extolled it with delight, rose from his seat, paid his respects and went away.

Note on Going for Refuge

Herein a note on going for refuge (*saraṇa-gamana*) will be included here.

There are seven points regarding going for refuge:

1. Refuge.

2. Going for refuge.
3. Person established in refuge.
4. Forms of refuge.
5. Fruit of refuge.
6. Contamination of refuge.
7. Destruction of refuge.

1. Refuge (*saraṇa*). The Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha are the threefold refuge (*saraṇa*) because those who seek its protection, overcome their fear, alarm, physical and mental suffering and various miseries in the lower worlds after death. In other words, the Buddha helps beings overcome various perils by contributing to their welfare and averting their misfortunes. So does the Dhamma by making beings free from hardships of life and consoling them. And so does the Saṅgha by making them gain a great benefit even from a few good acts. Hence the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha constitute the real threefold refuge that ensures that beings have freedom from all suffering.

2. Going for refuge (*saraṇa-gamana*). This consists of great wholesome consciousness (*mahā-kusala-citta*) that makes one inclined towards the Three Treasures by removing defiling and unwholesome mental states through devotion and veneration to the Three Treasures, great consciousness of action (*mahā-kiriya-citta*) regarding the Arahats, and path consciousness (*magga-citta*) regarding the noble ones established in the path (*maggaṭṭha-ariya*). All these forms of consciousness are called going for refuge (*saraṇa-gamana*). Conviction that refuge in the Three Treasures is the real factor that eliminates fear and suffering by means of such consciousness is going for refuge. This is the definition.

3. Person established in refuge. A person who has the consciousness described above is one who is established in the threefold refuge. Thus we should first understand the three aspects: 1) Refuge; 2) going for refuge; and 3) the person established in going for refuge.

4. Forms of refuge. It is of two forms: Supermundane and mundane. Supramundane going for refuge is implicit by way of fulfilment of the function in a single thought-moment when the noble ones (*ariya*) realize the four truths

and attain the paths, thereby overcoming all defilements and focusing their minds on Nibbāna.

> By this is meant the supermundane going for refuge (*saraṇa-gamana*) is path-consciousness, path-consciousness is focused on Nibbāna, and this means uprooting the defilements that make the going for refuge impure. So, although the path-consciousness arises from the focus not on the Three Treasures but on Nibbāna, the fulfilment of its function involves the recognition of the Three Treasures as the real refuge. In other words, at the moment of path-consciousness, one is also possessed of the supermundane going for refuge.
>
> For example, it is said that one knows the four truths at the moment of path-consciousness. Having Nibbāna as its object, the path-consciousness is concerned only with the truth about the end of suffering. But it also roots out ignorance that makes us blind to the four truths. Thus although the noble one (*ariya*) focuses his mind only on Nibbāna, he becomes aware of the three other truths that do not directly concern Nibbāna: the truths about suffering, the cause of suffering and the way to [908] the cessation of suffering.

The mundane going for refuge arises in an ordinary person (*puthujjana*) when he contemplates the attributes of the Buddha, the Dhamma and Saṅgha in the effort to remove the defilements (*upakkilesa*) that defile the going for refuge. Basically this going for refuge means faith in the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha or right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) based on faith or a mental factor of wisdom (*paññā-cetasika*). As one of the ten meritorious actions (*puñña-kiriya*), it is called straightening one's views (*diṭṭhi-uju-kamma*).

Here faith too is termed going for refuge and so is the faith and wisdom combined. Mundane consciousness, with regard to the threefold refuge, is of two kinds: Intelligent consciousness (*ñāṇa-sampayutta-saraṇa-gamana*) and unintelligent consciousness (*ñāṇa-vippayutta-saraṇa-gamana*). The former is the consciousness of children who recite the refuge-formula at the advice of their parents. Here it is only a matter of faith (*saddhā-cetasika*). The intelligent going for refuge is based on the knowledge of the noble characteristics of the Three Treasures and here faith and wisdom are jointly mentioned as going for refuge because they are easily felt. The actual going for refuge, however, is the consciousness that is led by faith and wisdom. Again, the mundane going for refuge is of four kinds:

1. Going for refuge by giving up oneself to the Three Treasures (*atta-sanniyyātana-saraṇa-gamana*).
2. Going for refuge by finding one's support in the Three Treasures (*tapparāyaṇa-saraṇa-gamana*).
3. Going for refuge by becoming a pupil of the Three Treasures (*sissa-bhāvūpagamana-saraṇa-gamana*).
4. Going for refuge by showing great reverence to the Three Treasures (*paṇipāta-saraṇa-gamana*).

Of these four:

1. Giving oneself up to the Three Treasures involves a declaration as follows: "From today onwards I give myself up to the Buddha; I give myself up to the Dhamma; I give myself up to the Saṅgha."

2. Finding one's support in the Three Treasures involves supplication as follows: "From today onwards kindly recognize me as one who finds support in the Buddha, in the Dhamma and in the Saṅgha."

3. Becoming a pupil of the Three Treasures involves supplication as follows: "From today onwards, kindly recognize me as a residential pupil (*antevāsika*) of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha."

> In the Birth Story about King Mahājanaka (*Mahā-janaka-jātaka*, Ja 539), the Bodhisatta pointed out a lifeless mango tree bearing fruit and another mango tree bearing no fruit as his teachers because they instructed him for his welfare. Therefore, one speaks of the Dhamma as one's teacher and speaks of oneself as its pupil.

4. Showing great reverence to the Three Treasures involves supplication as follows: "From today onwards kindly recognize me as one who worships, welcomes, raises one's hands in adoration and venerates only the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha."

One who adopts any of these four modes of seeking refuge is one who fulfils one's going for refuge.

Alternatively:

1. A declaration, uttering: "I give myself up to the Buddha, to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha," or "I offer my life to the Three Treasures," or "I have offered

my body to the Three Treasures," or "I have offered my life to the Three Treasures," or "I am aware of my approach to the Buddha as my refuge till the end of my life, to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha," or "The Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha are my refuge," all these utterances of declaration constitute going for refuge by giving up oneself to the Three Treasures. [909]

2. The going for refuge that is marked by the desire to seek protection and shelter in the Three Treasures, as in the case of the Yakkha Āḷāvaka, the Deva kings, Hemavata and Sātāgiri. This is termed going for refuge by finding one's support in the Three Treasures.

3. In the story of Pippali, a youth who later became well-known as Ven. Mahā Kassapa, he donned the robe by himself and set out from his Brahmin village of Mahātittha to visit the Buddha. On his way, he saw the Buddha at the foot of the banyan tree called Bāhuputtaka between Rājagaha and Nāḷanda. The Buddha was waiting for him from a distance of three miles. As soon as Pippali saw the Buddha, he decided that: "This noble ascetic must be the teacher (*satthā*) of Devas and humans, the good wayfarer (*Gracious One*) who has really attained Nibbāna through excellent practice, and the Perfectly Self-Awakened One (*Sammā-sambuddha*) who has rightly penetrated the right doctrines by himself. Then he took refuge in the Buddha by uttering: "If I am to see the teacher of Devas and humans, I will see only you. If I am to see the good wayfarer, I will see only you. If I am to see the Perfectly Self-Awakened One, I will see only you. I will see no other person with my eye of wisdom as my teacher, good wayfarer and as the Perfectly Self-Awakened One." His utterances indeed amounted to going for refuge by becoming a pupil of the Three Treasures.

4. In the Discourse concerning Brahmāyu (*Brahmāyu-sutta*, MN 91), after the Buddha had answered the eight questions put to him by the Brahmin Brahmāyu, the latter was much impressed and so after rising, he bowed his head to the feet of the Buddha. He also sucked the Buddha's feet with his mouth and massaged them vigorously, saying: "Gotama! I am the Brahmin Brahmāyu," and thus mentioning his name. This gesture of the Brahmin Brahmāyu showing deep reverence for the Three Treasures is going for refuge by showing great reverence to the Three Treasures.

In short, there is no uniform gesture for the four kinds of going for refuge. There are many kinds of bodily and verbal actions by which one can show

reverence for the Three Treasures. The commentary distinguished between four kinds of going for refuge (*saraṇa-gamana*) and explained the four kinds of reverences.

Reverence may be of four kinds, reverence for relatives, reverence from fear, reverence for the teacher, and reverence for one who, as one of the Three Treasures or refuges, is worthy of excellent offerings. The going for refuge necessarily presupposes the fourth kind of reverence. It has nothing to do with the others.

Indeed reverence with faith is essential to going for refuge. This consciousness erodes only when there is reverence for the bogus Buddha, bogus Dhamma and bogus Saṅgha in place of three genuine Treaures.

1. So a Sakyan or a Koliyan Prince has no going for refuge if he reveres the Buddha, regarding the Buddha as a senior member of their family.

2. Neither is it going for refuge, if a man reveres the Buddha out of fear that as a powerful teacher honoured by kings, the Buddha might do harm to him if he showed no respect.

3. A man may remember having learnt some craft from the Buddha when he was still a Bodhisatta and now he reveres the Buddha, regarding him as his former teacher. Another man may have heard the Buddha's discourse on, say, the apportionment of one's wealth, i.e., a wise person should spend one fourth of his income on enjoying life, two fourths to be invested in business, and the remaining fourth to be saved for an emergency, see the Discourse on Taking Up (*Ādiya-sutta*, AN 5.41). So he looks up to the Buddha as his teacher and reveres him for the advice with regard to his material welfare. Neither of these two men's reverence has anything to do with going for refuge.

4. But a certain man reveres the Buddha, believing that he was the real Treasure, the real [910] refuge, worthy of alms given as foundations for welfare hereafter. Only this man has a true going for refuge.

For a layman or a laywoman who seeks refuge in the Buddha, recognizing the Buddha as a being worthy of excellent offering (*agga-dakkhiṇeyya-puggala*), his or her going for refuge is not adversely affected even though he reveres a relative of an alien, heretical Saṅgha, to say nothing of revering a non-heretical monk or a layman in his family. So also a layman or a laywoman who has

sought refuge in the Buddha will not have his or her vow damaged by revering the king out of fear. The same is true in the case of a layman paying respect to a heretic who happens to be his former teacher.

5. Fruit of refuge. The chief immediate benefits of supermundane going for refuge are the four fruitions of the path gained by the noble ones (*ariya*). The subsequent benefit is extinction of the round of births and deaths in Saṁsāra. In other words, it is the total extinction of the illusions of permanence, pleasantness and substantiality as regards the impermanent, unpleasant and insubstantial psychophysical phenomena, etc., which are the benefits of mundane going for refuge.

6. Contamination of refuge. Mundane going for refuge gets debased owing to ignorance, doubt and misconceptions about the noble attributes of the Three Treasures. It is not bright, vast and great. The supermundane going for refuge is free from corruption. It is always clean and pure.

7. Destruction of refuge. Supramundane going for refuge can never be destroyed. The noble one (*ariya*) who is established in it does not point out as his or her teacher anyone other than the three refuges even in the next life. It is only the mundane going for refuge that tends to come to destruction. Its destruction is of two kinds: disastrous destruction and non-disastrous destruction. The destruction is disastrous when one reveres and seeks refuge in other heretical teachers in one of the ways described above, thereby giving rise to craving, wrong belief, etc. When the destruction follows death, it is not disastrous because it does not involve doing any evil.

> The vow taken by Buddhists nowadays as regards taking refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha is mundane. Like the observance of the moral precepts, its duration is not fixed and it ends only with death. This end is not disastrous because it does not involve craving, wrong belief and other unwholesome states of consciousness.

Note on the Lay Devotee

Some brief notes on the lay devotee (*upāsaka*) may be mentioned as follows:

1. Definition of a lay devotee.
2. Function of a lay devotee.
3. Morality of a lay devotee.

4. Livelihood a lay devotee.

5. Failure of a lay devotee.

6. Success of a lay devotee.

These six aspects should be understood.

1. Definition of a lay devotee. A lay devotee is he who seeks refuge in the Three Treasures, irrespective of his birth, high or low.

2. Function of a lay devotee. His function is to follow the Three Treasures: the Buddha, the Dhamma and Saṅgha. He follows the Three Treasures; therefore he is a lay devotee (*upāsatī ti upāsako*), a devotee of the Three Treasures. [911]

3. Morality of a lay devotee. His morality is the observance of the five moral precepts.

4. Livelihood of a lay devotee. His livelihood excludes the five kinds of wrong trades: 1) Trade in weapons; 2) trade in human beings; 3) trade in meat and fish; 4) trade in alcohol; and 5) trade in poison. Avoiding these five wrong trades, he earns his living righteously by tending cattle, buying and selling goods and farming.

5. Failure of a lay devotee. His failure lies in the destruction of his observance of the five precepts and right livelihood. If his observance of the precept is impaired, or if he earns his living by taking up one of the five wrong trades, his life as a lay devotee is ruined. Moreover, there are five things that make his life rough, nasty and disgusting: 1) Lack of faith; 2) lack of morality; 3) performance of and indulgence in worldly rites and rituals with regard to what has been seen, heard or experienced as conceived by the foolish and the ignorant; 4) disbelief in the law of productive deeds (*kamma*) and belief in rituals; and 5) performance of good deeds to the Saṅgha of the Buddha only after seeking recipients in the sects of the heretics. These five deeds lead a lay devotee to failure.

6. Success of a lay devotee. His success consists in the fulfilment of his morality and right livelihood. He is a lay devotee as long as his morality and right livelihood remain intact. Besides, if he maintains the following five practices, he is said to be successful as a lay devotee. The five practices are: 1) Faith that makes one a lay devotee comparable to a jewel, a lay devotee comparable to a

paduma lotus, and a lay devotee comparable to a *puṇḍarika* lotus; 2) unimpaired morality; 3) non-indulgence in earthly rituals; 4) belief in one's own productive deeds, good and bad; and 5) performance of good deeds to the Saṅgha before seeking recipients in the systems of the heretics. These five lead a lay devotee to his success.

King Ajātasattu's Loss and Gain

Not long after King Ajātasattu's departure the Buddha addressed the monks: "Monks, the king has destroyed his own position. Monks, if King Ajātasattu had not killed his father, King Bimbisāra, the righteous monarch, who ruled his kingdom lawfully, the Stream-entry path would have occurred to him on the spot and he would have become a noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna-ariya*)."

The Buddha added: "Monks, if he had not put his father to death, he would have attained the Stream-entry path while seated here as he heard this Discourse on the Fruits of the Ascetic Life (*Sāmañña-phala-sutta*, DN 2). But now, on account of his association with his wicked friend, his potentiality to attain that path has been injured. Nevertheless, since he has taken refuge in the Three Treasures and since his refuge, which is my threefold teaching, is supreme, he may be compared to a man who, after having been sentenced to death for murder, escapes the death penalty by getting good support and by giving just a handful of flowers as a small fine. Although he ought to suffer in the Avīci hell for his heinous crime of parricide, he will suffer only in the Lohakumbhī hell after his death, for he has the good support in my teaching. He will land in that hell and remain there for 30,000 years and come up and stay on the surface for 30,000 years. Then, after 60,000 years, he will be released from Lohakumbhī.

> Herein Ajātasattu's gain is mentioned according to the commentary. One may ask: "Had he benefited from his hearing of the Discourse on the Fruits of the Ascetic Life (*Sāmañña-phala-sutta*)?" The answer is: Yes, he had, and the benefit is enormous. From the moment of his parricide he had known no sleep, by day or by night, for there appeared to him [912] signs of his suffering in his rebirth. After listening to the sweet and soothing the Discourse on the Fruits of the Ascetic Life he slept well whether by day or by night. And he lavishly honoured the Three Treasures.
>
> No other worldling had faith (*pothujjanika-saddhā*) that was equal to Ajātasattu's. Sound sleep, merit accrued from his honour done to the Three Treasures, possession of the unique faith of a worldling, etc. were his gain

that was realised in his present life. The benefits after life would be his attainment of Parinibbāna after becoming a Paccekabuddha, by the name of Vijitāvī.

Note on Ajātasattu's Awakening

If it is true that King Ajātasattu could have gained the Stream-entry path-knowledge instantly but for his parricide, how can he become a Paccekabuddha and attain Parinibbāna? If it is true that he will become a Paccekabuddha and attain Parinibbāna, how could he have gained the state of a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*)?

The Awakening of a Paccekabuddha consists in the fulfilment of five things: 1) A human life (*manussatta*); 2) being a male (*liṅga-sampatti*); 3) discernment leading to freedom from the pollutants (*vigatāsava-dassana*); 4) principal service (*adhikāra*); and 5) aspiration (*chandatā*).

The Awakening of a disciple requires only two factors: 1) Principal service (*adhikāra*) and 2) aspiration (*chandatā*). As regards the duration of time for their fulfilment of the perfections (*pāramī*), it takes two immeasurable periods (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and 100,000 aeons for the Awakening of a Paccekabuddha, one immeasurable period and 100,000 aeons for that of a disciple. In realising the four truths, the former has no teacher while the latter has.

Are not the two kinds of Awakening basically different from each other? The answer is that they cannot be different. For Ajātasattu will fulfil whatever is necessary for the attainment of Awakening as a Paccekabuddha, only after suffering for 60,000 years in the Lohakumbhī hell. Indeed those who seek Awakening as a disciple will gain it as Paccekabuddhas, if circumstances are not favourable for them to become disciples, but they must have resolved to gain release as Paccekabuddhas.

This is the answer given by the first school of teachers. According to them, although the king had the potential for gaining release as a disciple, he could not do so in the present life because of his association with his evil friend, Devadatta, which made circumstances unfavourable and damaged the prospects for his attainment of the path of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*). But later on he will fulfil everything that will contribute to his becoming a Paccekabuddha and he will gain release.

But according to other teachers, Ajātasattu had resolved to gain only the Awakening as a Paccekabuddha. But in the absence of any definite

prediction of a Buddha, even those who have performed the deeds necessary for becoming a Paccekabuddha cannot gain maturity of their Awakening in their capacity as Paccekabuddhas; instead they will attain Awakening as disciples in the presence of a Buddha. Hence the Buddha said: "Monks, if he had not put his father to death, he would have attained Stream-entry path while being seated here as he heard this Discourse on the Fruits of the Ascetic Life."

Of the three kinds of future personages: the Bodhisatta, the future Paccekabuddha and the future disciple, only the Bodhisatta is free from the five deeds with immediate result (*pañcānantariya-kamma*); the other two future ones are not. Though Devadatta had been assured that he would become a Paccekabuddha, because of his grudge that he had long harboured, he committed two deeds with immediate result (*ānantariya-kamma*) by creating schism (*Saṅgha-bhedaka-kamma*) and causing a Buddha's blood to flow (*lohituppādaka-kamma*) which were very serious crimes. Taking these into consideration, it may be understood that future Paccekabuddhas and future disciples are not so invulnerable. It may also be understood therefore that King Ajātasattu missed his opportunity to gain Stream-entry knowledge in the present life because of his parricide and that he will later on become a Paccekabuddha by the name of Vijitāvī in accordance with the law of Paccekabuddha Awakening (*Paccekabuddha-bodhi-niyāma*). This is the view of the other teachers. You can choose between these two views what you think is more reasonable. These notes are based on the sub-commentary. [913]

38a: The Buddha's Parents in a Previous Existence

[The following is based on the Birth Story about the City of Sāketa (*Sāketa-jātaka*, Ja 68) and its commentary.]

The Brahmin Couple

On one occasion, after residing in Sāvatthī for the Rains Retreat, the Buddha set out on a journey, taking into consideration the opportunities that would be provided by it, such as promoting his health, prescribing fresh rules of conduct for the Saṅgha, taming through dialogues and discourses those who deserved to be tamed, and discoursing on his own birth stories (*jātaka*) wherever the situation was appropriate. Travelling in stages, the Buddha arrived at Sāketa at evening and entered the Añjana forest for the night's stay.

On hearing the news of the arrival of the Buddha, the townsfolk of Sāketa thought that it was not proper to go and visit him at night. They waited till the next morning, then, taking flowers, perfumes and other offerings with them, they approached the Buddha, made their obeisance, and exchanging courteous words of greeting with him, remained there till it was time for him to go on the daily alms round.

When it was time to go on alms round the Buddha, in the company of the monastics, entered Sāketa. At that time, a wealthy Brahmin of Sāketa was leaving the town when he saw the Buddha near the town's gate. On seeing him, the Brahmin felt an intense filial love for him and weeping with joy and uttering: "My son, I have not seen you for such a long time," he drew near to him.

Even while the Brahmin was drawing near him, the Buddha said to the monastics: "Monastics, let the Brahmin of Sāketa alone; let him do as he pleases." And as a mother cow would treat her own calf, the Brahmin viewed the Buddha at close range from the front, from the back, and from the left side and from the right side, then embracing him, he said: "Oh, my son! My son! So long have I not seen you! So long have you been away!"

It may be noted here that if the Brahmin were to be restrained from these outpourings of affection, he would not be able to contain the intense feeling and would probably have died of heart-break.

The Brahmin of Sāketa said to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, I am able to offer food to the Fortunate One and the company of monastics. May the Fortunate One, out of compassion, do me the favour of accepting the offering." The Buddha indicated his consent by remaining silent. The Brahmin led the way to his place holding the Buddha's alms bowl in his hands. He sent word to his wife at home to say: "My son is coming! Spread out a suitable place for his stay." The wife did as she was told by her husband and stood all agog to receive the Buddha. As she saw the Buddha nearing her house, she went to him, and saying: "My son, it is a long time that I have not seen you," and she fondled the Buddha's feet and wept with joy. She requested the Buddha to proceed to her home where the Brahmin couple respectfully offered food to the Buddha and his company of monastics. After he had finished his meal, the Brahmin took the alms bowl and washed it himself.

The Buddha then discoursed to the Brahmin couple in a way fitting to them and at the end of the discourse they became noble (*ariya*) Stream-enterers. They requested the Buddha: "May the Fortunate One and his company of monastics, during their sojourn at Sāketa, receive offering of alms food only at our home." The Buddha replied: "Brahmin couple, it is not the custom for Buddhas to have a permanent place to receive alms food as you request." Thereupon, the Brahmin couple requested the Buddha: "In that case, venerable sir, may the Fortunate One and his company of monastics go for alms elsewhere but take the meals at our home only, and go back to the monastery after giving us a talk on the Dhamma." To this request the Buddha consented as a special favour.

From that time forward, the Brahmin came to be called by the people: "The Buddha's father," and the wife of the Brahmin: "The Buddha's mother." The clan of Brahmin Sāketa also earned the name of: "The Buddha's clan."

Thereupon, Ven. Ānanda asked the Buddha: "Venerable sir, I know your [915] parentage through Queen Mahā Māyā Devī and King Suddhodana, and yet why is it that the Brahmin of Sāketa and his wife are called the Buddha's parents?" And the Buddha explained: "Ānanda, this Brahmin couple were my parents in the past 500 existences; besides, they have been my elder uncle and aunt for 500 existences; they have also been my younger uncle and aunt for 500 existences. The Brahmin couple call me their son due to the extraordinary affection that has existed in the past." The Buddha then uttered this verse (Ja 68):

Pubbeva sannivāsena, paccuppanna-hitena vā,
evaṁ taṁ jāyate pemaṁ, uppalaṁ va yathodake.

Due to having lived together in previous existences and having done some beneficial things for each other, there arises love between two persons. It is like the case of the water lily or any other water plant that grows in the marsh where mud and water jointly cause its arising.

The Buddha spent his days in Sāketa for as many persons as there were in that town that deserved to gain Awakening. Then he proceeded on his way to Sāvatthī. The Brahmin couple further sought guidance from the monastics from whom they got appropriate instructions and in due course attained the three higher paths after which they realized Nibbāna without any substrata of existence remaining (*anupādisesa-parinibbāna*).

When the Brahmin couple passed away, the Brahmin community of Sāketa assembled together with the common objective of paying due respects to one of their members. Similarly, the Stream-enterers, the Once-returners and the Non-returners, all noble ones (*ariya*) who had been associates in the practice of the path with the Brahmin couple, assembled together with the common objective of paying their respects to one of their members. Those two groups of people placed the remains of the Brahmin couple on a bier with gabled roofs, and amidst floral tributes and sprinkling of perfumes about the bier, they carried it out of the town.

The Buddha in his daily routine viewed the sentient world with his Buddha-eye consisting of knowledge that discerns the natural bent and latent proclivities of individuals (*āsayānusaya-ñāṇa*) and knowledge of the maturity and immaturity of the faculties of beings (*indriya-paro-pariyatti-ñāṇa*) for that day and came to know about the passing away, in total cessation, of the Brahmin couple; and seeing that his presence and teaching at the funeral of the deceased ones would lead to the Awakening of the multitudes attending the funeral, he left Sāvatthī for the cemetery at Sāketa, carrying his alms bowl and double robe himself.

On seeing the Buddha, the people said: "The Fortunate One has come to attend to the funeral of his father and mother," and paid their obeisance to him. The townsfolk brought the bier to the cemetery in reverential ceremony. They asked the Buddha: "Venerable sir, what is the proper way to venerate the Brahmin couple who had been noble (*ariya*) lay disiples?"

The Buddha replied in the following verse, revealing the fact that the deceased couple had become Arahats and that they deserved the veneration that was due to Arahats (Dhp 225):

> *Ahiṁsakā ye munayo, niccaṁ kāyena saṁvutā,*
> *te yanti accutaṁ ṭhānaṁ, yattha gantvā na socare.*
>
> The Arahats who do not harm others are always restrained in their physical, verbal and mental actions. Having gone to Nibbāna through path-knowledge, they are free from sorrow. They have realized the four paths and fruitions and attained the deathless Nibbāna. [916]
>
> The commentary to the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) says that at the end of that verse a great number of people attained Stream-entry and even higher stages of path-knowledge.

After uttering the above verse the Buddha delivered the Discourse on Ageing (*Jarā-sutta*, Snp 4.6) that he knew would benefit the audience at that time. By the end of the discourse, 84,000 beings perceived the four truths and became noble ones.

38b: The Destruction of the Sakyans

[The following is based on the Dhamma Verses (Dhp 47) and its commentary.]

The Story of Viṭaṭūbha

Prince Pasenadi, son of King Mahā Kosala of Sāvatthī, Prince Mahā Licchavī, son of King Licchavī of Vesalī, and Prince Bandhula, son of King Malla of Kusinārā were on their way to Takkasilā to get their education under a famous teacher there, and met at a rest house outside the city. They introduced themselves, learned one another's names, parentage and clan, and also the purpose of their journey, and they became friends. After having completed their education under the guidance of a great teacher in due time, they bid farewell to the teacher and left Takkasilā together and returned to their respective homes.

Of these three princes, Prince Pasenadi demonstrated his prowess and skill before his royal father, King Mahā Kosala, who was so pleased with his son's capabilities that he anointed him king and so the prince became King Pasenadi of Kosala.

Prince Mahāli of the Licchavīs also demonstrated his prowess and skill before the Licchavīs so arduously that both of his eyes went blind. The Licchavī princes felt very sorry at the fate of their teacher Prince Mahāli and conferred among themselves to afford suitable status to him without abandoning him. They unanimously resolved to name him as lord of a certain toll gate which had a yearly revenue of 100,000 pieces of silver. Prince Mahāli lived on the revenues collected at the toll gate and took charge of educating and training the 500 Licchavī princes.

When Prince Bandhula demonstrated his prowess and skill before the Mallas he was tricked by someone; an iron rod was secretly concealed inside one of the bamboos which he was to cut with his sword. There were 60 bundles of 60 bamboos each standing before him. His royal father commanded: "Now son, cut these bamboos with your sword," by way of testing the prince's might. Prince Bandhula leapt up to a height of 80 cubits and cut down the 60 bundles of bamboos one by one. At the last bundle he noticed a strange frictional noise from inside the bamboo which had the concealed iron rod inside.

Discovering the nature of the dirty trick played upon him, he threw away his sword and wailed: “Oh, there was not a single one out of this big crowd of my kinsmen and friends who would, out of kind regard for me, warn me of this trick. Had I been forewarned, I could very well have cut that iron rod too without letting it betray its presence there by its noise.” Then he said to his royal parents: “I shall kill all the Malla princes and make myself king.” To this the parents replied: “Dear son, it is a time-honoured tradition with us Mallas to rule by turns. We do not approve of your idea.” On being repeatedly refused approval, Prince Bandhula became frustrated and said: “Then I will go and live with my friend King Pasenadi of Kosala,” and he went to Sāvatthī.

When King Pasenadi of Kosala learned of the arrival of his friend Prince Bandhula, he went out to greet him and escorted him into the city with much pomp and honour. King Pasenadi of Kosala made Bandhula his commander-in-chief and Bandhula sent for his royal parents and let then live in Sāvatthī. This is an account of the three princes: Prince Pasenadi, Prince Mahāli of the Licchavīs, and Prince Bandhula of the Mallas.

King Pasenadi of Kosala

One day, King Pasenadi of Kosala was standing on an upper floor of his multi-gabled palace, looking towards the high road in the city when he saw thousands of monastics going to the houses of Anāthapiṇḍika, the rich man; Cūḷa Anāthapiṇḍika, the rich man; Visākhā, the supporter of the Pupphārāma monastery; and Suppavāsā, the rich man’s wife, to [917] collect alms food. He asked his men where these monastics were going and they reported to him that 2,000 monastics daily collected their alms food: daily food, ticket food,[232] or sick-monastic’s food at the house of Anāthapiṇḍika; and 500 each at the houses of Cūḷa Anāthapiṇḍika, Visākhā and Suppavāsā. The King was impressed. He also wanted to be a regular supporter of alms food to the Saṅgha. He went to the Jetavana monastery and invited the Buddha and 1,000 monastics to the palace and offered food for seven days where he personally served the food. On the seventh day, he said to the Buddha: “Venerable sir, may the Fortunate One and 500 monastics come to the palace to receive our food offerings every day.” The

[232] Specially arranged food offering given at the donor’s home.

Buddha replied: “Great King, it is not the custom of Buddhas to receive alms food from the same supporter every day. People like to see the Buddha visit their home too.”

“In that case, venerable sir, may the Fortunate One let one regular monastic, together with 500 other monastics, come to the palace for daily alms food offering.” The Buddha assigned Ven. Ānanda to head 500 monastics to go to the palace for the daily alms food.

The King attended to the offering of food to the monastics personally for seven days without assigning these duties to anyone. On the eighth day, he was preoccupied with state affairs and forgot to offer alms food to the Saṅgha.

As it was not the custom in the royal palace to carry out anything without orders, the attendants just provided seats to the monastics but no offering of food took place for lack of orders. Many of the monastics were disappointed and left, after saying: “We cannot remain here.” On the next day also, the King forgot to feed the Saṅgha and many of the monastics left the palace. On the third day also, the same thing happened and all the monastics left and only Ven. Ānanda remained.

Noble ones endowed with great past merits take things with wise circumspection. They foster the lay supporters’ faith in the teaching. There are certain disciples of the Buddha beginning with Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Mahā Moggallāna who were two chief disciples; Ven. Khemā and Ven. Uppalavaṇṇā who were the two chief female disciples; Citta, the rich man, and Prince Hatthaka Āḷavaka who were two foremost lay disciples; and Nandamātā, wife of the rich man of Veḷukaṇṭhakī; and lady Khujjuttarā who were two foremost female lay disciples who were acclaimed by the Buddha as foremost in their own right, and were endowed with the ten perfections (*pāramī*) to a certain extent and were, therefore, noble persons of great past merit, blessed with their previous aspirations. Ven. Ānanda also had fulfilled the ten perfections over 100,000 aeons (*kappa*) and was a noble one of great past merit, blessed with previous aspirations. He was circumspect by nature. So, being desirous of fostering the faith of the supporters, he alone remained in the palace for the daily food-offerings.

The palace officials prepared a suitable place and made food offerings to the sole monastic, Ven. Ānanda. King Pasenadi of Kosala came to the palace after every other monastic had left the palace. On seeing the food for the Saṅgha left

untouched, the King asked: "Have the revered ones not come?" and the officials replied that only Ven. Ānanda came. The King was angry because he felt that the monastics had let such a big amount of food go to waste. He went to see the Buddha and complained: "Venerable sir, I had prepared food offerings for 500 monastics but only Ven. Ānanda came. All the food remains untouched. How is it, venerable sir, that those monastics have such disregard for our invitation to the palace?"

Thereupon, the Buddha did not say anything against the monastics but said: "Great King, these monastic disciples are not very well acquainted with you. Probably that is why they did not go to your palace." On that occasion, the Buddha presented a discourse to the monastics, the Discourse about Families (*Kula-sutta*, AN 9.17), setting out nine reasons for monastics that make it not proper to go to the lay supporters, and nine reasons that make it proper to go to the lay supporters. [918]

The Discourse about Families

"Monastics, homes of lay supporters who come under these nine conditions should not be visited by monastics, if they have never been there, or if they happen to be there already, they should not stay there. Now, these are the nine improper conditions:

1. If the lay supporters do not respectfully welcome you.
2. If they do not make obeisance respectfully to the monastics.
3. If they do not respectfully offer proper seats.
4. If they hide from monastics their property worth offering to monastics.
5. If they offer only a little whereas they possess much.
6. If they offer inferior things whereas they have superior things.
7. If they do not offer things respectfully but do so disrespectfully.
8. If they do not come near the monastics to listen to the teaching.
9. If they do not listen to a monastic's discourse respectfully.

Monastics, homes of lay supporters who are of the above nine improper conditions should not be visited by monastics, if they have never been there; and if a monastic happens to be at such a home already, he should not stay there.

Monastics, homes of lay supporters who come under nine conditions ought to be visited by monastics if they have never been there, and if they happen to be there already, they should stay there. Now, these are the nine proper conditions:

1. If the lay supporters welcome you respectfully.
2. If they make obeisance respectfully to the monastics.
3. If they respectfully offer proper seats.
4. If they do not make any secret of their property worth offering.
5. If they have much to offer they offer much.
6. If they have superior things to offer they offer them.
7. If they offer things respectfully.
8. If they come near the monastics to listen to the teaching.
9. If they listen to a monastic's discourse respectfully.

Monastics, lay supporters who have the above nine proper conditions should be visited by monastics if they have never been there and if a monastic happens to be at such a house, he should stay there.

Great King, those monastics left you probably because they are not on intimate terms with you. Wise ones of the past are known to have gone to their intimate ones in times of serious illness, near unto death, although they were respectfully looked after by people not intimate to them." On being requested by King Pasenadi of Kosala to tell that story, the Buddha related to him the Birth Story about the Ascetic Kesava (*Kesava-jātaka*, Ja 346).

> This story was also referred to when Brahma Baka was tamed by the Buddha and was mentioned earlier. See chapter 35, the section on Baka Brahma.

After hearing the Buddha's discourse, King Pasenadi of Kosala saw the need to become intimate with the Saṅgha and thought of some way to fulfil this aim. He struck on the idea of marrying one of the Sakyan princesses. "If I were to raise a Sakyan Princess to the status of Chief Queen," he thought, "the Fortunate One

would become my relation and his disciples would consider me as an intimate." Thereupon, he sent an ultimatum to the Sakyan princes demanding the hand of a Sakyan princess in marriage to him. When the royal messengers charged with the mission asked: "Which princess, the daughter of which Sakyan prince, did his majesty specify?" The King said: "Any Sakyan princess would do, provided her ancestry is ascertained by you." [919]

At the city of Kapilavatthu, the Sakyans held a council to answer the ultimatum. They did not like to go to war with their rival kingdom, for if they refused to comply with King Pasenadi's demand their kingdom would certainly be invaded. Since the Kosala were a different clan from the Sakyans, they could not give in marriage anyone of their own kin to a non-Sakyan. It was Prince Mahānāma the Sakyan who conceived a way out of the dilemma. "I have a very beautiful girl born of one of my slaves named Nāgamuṇḍā; the girl is called Vāsabhā Khattiyā. Let us give her away." They agreed. A formal reply was then given to the delegation from Kosala: "We shall comply." – "The daughter of which Sakyan Prince are you going to give?" – "It is the daughter of Mahānāma, the Sakyan Prince, cousin of Buddha Gotama, son of Amitodāna. Vāsabhā Khattiyā is the name of the princess."

The delegation returned to Sāvatthī with the favourable news. King Pasenadi of Kosala was pleased and said: "Go and bring the Sakyan Princess without delay. But mark this: kings as a rule are crafty. A slave's daughter might be posed as a princess. So you must ascertain her genuineness by watching her at table, make sure she eats together with her Sakyan father."

The delegation went again to Kapilavatthu and announced: "Our King of Kosala will accept only a princess who eats together with you Sakyans." – "Very well, friends," said Mahānāma the Sakyan. When it was meal time, Vāsabhā Khattiyā, fully attired and adorned as a princess, was brought to the dining table where Mahānāma the Sakyan was sitting, and there it was made to appear that the two ate together. The delegation was satisfied with what they saw and returned to Sāvatthī with the girl.

> This neat trick was carried out thus: When the Sakyans were confronted with the dining test required by King Pasenadi of Kosala, the Sakyans were quite at a loss about what to do. But Mahānāma reassured them with the instruction that after the bogus princess was being seated at Mahānāma's dining table, and the prince was just about to put his first

> morsel into the mouth, an intervention was to be made with an urgent message which must be seen by him forthwith. The plan got the approval of the Sakyans and was carried out accordingly. Thus was the delegation from Sāvatthī taken in by the trick.

Back at their capital, the delegation reported to the king what they had witnessed. King Pasenadi of Kosala was delighted. After the customary anointing ceremony he made Vāsabhā Khattiyā, the Chief Queen, and she was waited on by 500 court ladies. Not long afterwards, the Chief Queen, who became very dear to the king, gave birth to a son with golden complexion.

When it was time for the young prince to be named, the Kosalan King sent a royal message to the royal grandfather Mahānāma, the Sakyan, informing him of the birth of a son and asking him to suggest a suitable name for the princeling. It so happened that the messenger who took the royal message to the Sakyan court was slightly hard of hearing. After reading the Kosalan King's message, Mahānāma remarked: "Vāsabhā Khattiyā was previously a girl of great personal influence. And now after giving birth to a son she is going to be a favourite (*vallabhā*) of the Kosalan King!" Now, the joyous expression favourite, i.e. an intimate darling, *vallabhā* in the local dialect, sounded as *viṭaṭūbha* to the Kosalan messenger who took that word as the name to be given to the Kosalan Prince. He reported to King Pasenadi of Kosala: "Viṭaṭūbha is the name, your majesty, that the royal grandfather suggests for the princeling." The King mused: "Possibly, Viṭaṭūbha is a clan name of yore with us," and he named his son Viṭaṭūbha. Then with a view to pleasing the Buddha, the King made Viṭaṭūbha, commander in-chief, even in his tender age.

Viṭaṭūbha was brought up as a prince in all regal style. When he was seven years old, he came to notice how other princes were receiving dolls and other children got presents from their maternal grandparents and so he asked his mother, Chief Queen Vāsabhā Khattiyā: "Mother, other princes get children's presents, such as dolls and the like, from their [920] maternal grandparents. But I have received none from my maternal grandparents. Why is it? Have you no parents?" The mother replied: "Dear son, the Sakyans are your maternal grandparents. But they live far away from us. That is why they cannot send you any gifts."

When Viṭaṭūbha was sixteen, he said to his mother: "Mother, I would like to see my maternal grandparent's palace." And the mother discouraged him with the words: "Dear son, it is not advisable for you to do that. After all, what use is

there in your seeing your maternal grandparent's palace?" But Prince Viṭaṭūbha was insistent and after many repeated requests, the mother could do nothing but yield to his wish.

Viṭaṭūbha informed his father, the king, of his intended journey and left Sāvatthī, leading a big army. Chief Queen Vāsabhā Khattiyā had in the meantime sent a secret message to the Sakyans asking them to keep up appearances when Viṭaṭūbha arrived so that the whole conspiracy would not in any way be betrayed. This message gave the timely opportunity for the younger Sakyan princes, i.e., who were junior to Viṭaṭūbha to leave the city and remain in the remote country during his visit because they could not make obeisance to Viṭaṭūbha as would be normally expected. Those Sakyans, who were to receive Viṭaṭūbha, met him on arrival at Kapilavatthu, at the royal rest house.

There Viṭaṭūbha was introduced to his maternal grandfather and maternal uncles to whom he had to make obeisance. Having done his turn of paying respects, he saw no one paying him respects. "Why is there no Sakyan to pay respects to me?" he asked. The Sakyan elders then said: "Dear son, your younger cousins have gone on a visit to the country." Then they entertained Viṭaṭūbha lavishly.

After staying two or three days in Kapilavatthu, Viṭaṭūbha left the city with his big army. When every visitor had gone, a slave girl came to cleanse with diluted milk the seat where Viṭaṭūbha had sat at the royal rest house, all the while cursing: "Fie! Profaned is this place, profaned by Viṭaṭūbha, the son of the slave girl Vāsabhā Khattiyā." These words were overheard by one of Viṭaṭūbha's men who had come back to the place to fetch his arms that he had forgotten to take away with him. He asked how far the girl's curse was true and was told that Vāsabhā Khattiyā was the child born of Mahānāma the Sakyan and his slave girl Nāgamuṇḍā. The Kosala soldier related this news to his comrades and it soon became the talk of the town that the Chief Queen Vāsabhā Khattiyā was a daughter of a slave girl.

When Viṭaṭūbha learned this news, he was quick to understand the situation. "Well, let the Sakyans cleanse my seat with diluted milk now, when I become king, I will wash my seat with the blood from the Sakyan's throats!" he said to himself, bearing an ominous grudge against the Sakyan clan.

After arriving back at the capital, the king's ministers reported the news to the king. King Pasenadi of Kosala was very angry with the Sakyans. "This presenting a slave girl for my queen is preposterous; it is an insult against my honour!" he roared and withdrew all the rank and status accorded to his Chief Queen and commander-in-chief, allowing them only the rank and status of slaves.

Two or three days later, the Buddha paid a visit to the royal palace of King Pasenadi of Kosala where he sat on the specially arranged seat. The king made his obeisance to the Buddha and said to him: "Venerable sir, the kinsmen of the Fortunate One have deceived me. They have sent me a slave girl's daughter, saying that she was a princess. I have discovered this and have therefore downgraded both mother, Vāsabhā Khattiyā, and son, Viṭaṭūbha, to the rank and status of slaves."

The Buddha said: "Great King, the Sakyans have done a wrong thing, they ought to have given you a princess as befitting your lineage. However, Great King, I wish you to consider this: Vāsabhā Khattiyā was a daughter of Mahānāma the Sakyan; and moreover she has been anointed as Chief Queen by you who are of royal blood. Viṭaṭūbha is of your own blood. What does maternal lineage matter? It is paternal lineage that counts. This important fact was recognized by wise people of past and therefore, a firewood-gatherer, a poor peasant girl, was made the Chief Queen, and the boy born of this Chief Queen of humble origin became King Kaṭṭhavāhana of Bārāṇasī, a city with an area of twelve leagues." [921]

When King Pasenadi of Kosala had heard the story of Kaṭṭhavāhana, he was satisfied with the dictum that only paternal lineage is of real significance. Accordingly he reinstated the Chief Queen and the commander-in-chief to their previous ranks and status.

> [To avoid repetition this story will be told later under Ven. Mogharāja's story in chapter 43.41.]

Bandhula and his wife Mallikā

The commander-in-chief of King Pasenadi of Kosala was Bandhula, a Malla Prince. His wife Mallikā was the daughter of King Malla of Kusinārā. Even after some years of wedlock, the couple did not beget any offspring. Bandhula therefore sent Mallikā to her father's home. Mallikā thought that it would be

well if she visited the Buddha before leaving Sāvatthī. So, she went to the Jetavana monastery and made obeisance to the Buddha. On being asked where she was going, Mallikā told the Buddha how she was being sent home to her father because she failed to produce any children. Thereupon, the Buddha said: "In that case there is no need for you to go home to your father. You should go back to the home of the commander-in-chief." Mallikā was very happy with these words and, making her obeisance to the Buddha, she went back to her husband. Bandhula asked her why she had come back. She told him what the Buddha had said to her. Bandhula pondered: "The Fortunate One is far-sighted. He must have fore-knowledge about Mallikā's probable pregnancy." And so he let her stay with him.

Not long afterwards, Mallikā became pregnant. She had an intense craving as is often the case with pregnant women. She told her husband about it. She wanted to bathe in the auspicious royal lake where the Licchavīs usually were anointed king and she also wanted to drink its water. Bandhula said: "Very well," and putting her on his chariot and, taking his great bow that needed 1,000 men to harness it, they left Sāvatthī and entered Vesālī from the city gate assigned to Mahā Licchavī for the enjoyment of tolls collected at that gate. Mahā Licchavī's house was just close by.

Mahā Licchavī recognized the sound of Bandhula's chariot thumping on the threshold of the city gate. He had great foreboding: "Disaster is afoot today for the Licchavīs," and he warned them. The auspicious royal lake was very heavily guarded, inside as well as outside. It was covered with iron netting so that even birds could not gain entry to it.

Bandhula, the commander-in-chief, alighted from his chariot, drove away the guards with his cane and cut open the iron netting with his scimitar. He and his wife entered the lake, bathed there and, coolly putting her in the chariot, headed home by the same route that he had come.

The guards reported the matter to the Vajjī princes. Infuriated, the Vajjis mounted on 500 chariots and gave chase. When the chase was reported to Mahā Licchavī, he called out: "Young Licchavī princes, don't do that! Bandhula, the commander-in-chief will destroy you." To that the princes replied: "Sir, we cannot stand it. We must catch him!"

Mahā Licchavī had known the might of his schoolmate, Bandhula, and warned the Vajjī princes thus: "Well, princes, if you must give chase, when you see Bandhula's chariot depressed down to the wheel hub, turn back from wherever you saw it. If you don't turn back, but still pursue him, do turn back when you hear a great roaring sound. If you don't turn back, but still pursue him, you will see holes at the front of each of your chariots. Turn back wherever you see these holes, don't go any further."

The Licchavī's ignored the advice and proceeded in hot pursuit. When Mallikā saw they were being pursued, she told Bandhula what she saw. "Well, watch well. When all the 500 chariots are seen as one, when they all are in a straight line, do tell me!" he said. Mallikā informed her husband when the pursuing chariots were seen as a single line. Then Bandhula, the commander-in-chief, gave the reins of the horse to her saying: "You hold them!" Then he stood in the chariot and drew his great bow that needed 1,000 strong men to draw it. At that moment, the chariot sank to the level of the wheel [922] hub. The Licchavīs saw this but did not heed Mahā Licchavī's warning and drove on. Bandhula, as the commander-in-chief, after proceeding a while, pulled at the bow string producing a thunderous sound. The Licchavīs heard it but did not heed Mahā Licchavī's warning and did not turn back. Then Bandhula sent an arrow which pierced through all the 500 pursuing chariots, it passed through the chest of the Licchavī princes and struck the ground.

The Licchavī princes were still unaware that they had been shot and cried: "Hey, Bandhula, stop!" all the while still following Bandhula. Then Bandhula, the commander-in-chief, halted a while and said: "All of you Licchavīs are dead men. I need not fight with dead men!" – "But we do not look like dead men, do we?" – "Then take off the mail armour from the last Licchavī Prince."

When they did as they were told, the lifeless body of the rearmost Licchavī Prince dropped to the floor of the chariot. Then Bandhula told them to drive home and prepare for the funeral of all of them. "Before taking off your mail armour, you may say your last word to your wives," he added. The Licchavīs did as they were told. All of them perished.

Bandhula the commander-in-chief drove back home with his wife Mallikā. She bore him twin sons sixteen times so that the couple had 32 robust sons, all brave and strong. They had their training completed in all the arts when they were

allotted 1,000 men each as their followers. Whenever Bandhula, the commander-in-chief, appeared in court, he and his 32 sons, together with 32,000 strong warriors would fill the whole courtyard.

Bandhula is Murdered

One day, there arose an uproar at the court of justice complaining that a miscarriage of justice had taken place. The matter was reported to Bandhula, the commander-in-chief, who then went to the court of justice, heard the case afresh, and passed judgment, declaring who the rightful owner was. The people joined in their loud approval of the righteous judgment.

King Pasenadi of Kosala heard the sound and asked what it was. On being told about it, the king was very pleased and placed him in charge of the court of justice; the former justices were all removed from service. Bandhula thus got an additional duty as judge which he discharged with uprightness.

The disgraced judges, being deprived of their usual bribes, plotted against Bandhula, the commander-in-chief. They conspired to make false allegations that Bandhula was aspiring to the throne. The king believed the words of the disgraced judges. He was greatly ill at ease. He wanted to do away with Bandhula but since Bandhula was a popular figure he dared not put Bandhula to death in the city. So he invented a wicked ploy. He had his trusted men stage an uprising at the border regions. Bandhula, the commander-in-chief, and his 32 sons were ordered to put down the fake uprising, and to bring back the insurgents. The king sent along his chosen generals with Bandhula, with orders to murder Bandhula and all his sons.

When Bandhula got to the so-called area of unrest, the king's men inserted themselves as insurgents fled. Bandhula carried out measures to turn the remote region into flourishing settlements, and returned to the city. When they were a good distance away from the city, the captains, who were sent along with them, beheaded Bandhula and his 32 sons.

Mallikā's Story

On that day, Mallikā, the wife of the commander-in-chief, was preparing to offer a meal to the two chief disciples, Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Mahā Moggallāna together with 500 monastics at her home. Early that morning, she

had received a message that her husband Bandhula, the commander-in-chief, and her 32 sons had been beheaded. She kept the news to herself, having slipped the note containing the message inside her jacket. While she was attending on the two chief disciples at table, her maids, after having offered rice, were bringing ghee to the table, when they accidentally broke the vessel containing ghee. The two chief disciples witnessed this. Ven. Sāriputta asked Mallikā: "What has the nature of breaking up, has broken up. Don't let it prey on [923] your mind." Thereupon, Mallikā produced the grim message from inside her jacket and said: "Venerable sir, they sent me this message to tell me that my 32 sons, together with their father, have been beheaded. Even that news I did not allow to prey on my mind; how would this pot of ghee prey on my mind?"

Ven. Sāriputta gave a discourse beginning with the verse (*Salla-sutta*, Snp. 3.8): *Animittam-anaññātaṁ maccānaṁ idha jīvitaṁ*, "unsignalled and unknown here is the life of mortals." Then he rose from his seat and returned to the Jetavana monastery.

When the offering of food to the Saṅgha was finished Mallikā sent for her 32 daughters-in-law and said: "Dear daughters-in-law, your husbands, though faultless, have suffered the consequence of their past deeds. Do not be oppressed by sorrow, grief and lamentation. Also do not bear malice against the king." These words were overheard by the king's secret agents who reported to the king that Bandhula and his sons were free of guilt. The king was remorseful. He went to Mallikā's house and apologized to Mallikā and her 32 daughters-in-law. Then he asked Mallikā to name any boon she would like.

Mallikā said: "Great King, let the boon be considered as having been granted to me." After the king had returned, she offered special alms food to the Saṅgha for the benefit of her dear departed ones. Then she took her bath and went to see the king. She bowed before the king and said: "Great King, you have granted me leave to name a boon. I have no other wish than your permission to allow me and my 32 daughters-in-law to return to our respective parents." The king gave his assent gladly. Mallikā sent home her 32 daughters-in-law to their respective parents' homes and she herself returned to hers.

Mallikā lived in her parents' home in Kusinārā for a long time. Later, when the Buddha passed away and she learned that his remains were being carried to Kusinārā by the Mallas, she got the idea to honour the Buddha by adorning the

Buddha's body with the famous Great Creeper (*Mahā-latā*) gown which she had not worn since the death of her husband. She took it out from its place, cleaned it with perfumed water and awaited the arrival of the Buddha's remains.

The Great Creeper gown was a very rare piece of adornment which only three persons had the good fortune to possess. According to the commentary on the Long Discourse about the Emancipation (*Mahā-parinibbāna-sutta*, DN 16), that was: Visākhā; Mallikā, wife of Bandhula, the commander-in-chief; and the daughter of a rich man of Bārāṇasī, Devadāniyā the thief; according to the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 53) it was possessed only by these three ladies in the whole human world.

When the remains of the Buddha were being carried past her house, she requested the carriers of the bier: "Please! Please wait a moment," and she respectfully encased the Buddha's body in the Great Creeper gown which covered the body neatly from head to sole. The golden-hued body of the Buddha, clothed in the great gown, wrought with the seven kinds of gems made a gorgeous spectacle.

Mallikā's mind was filled with delight in seeing the magnificence of the Buddha's body. Her conviction in the Three Treasures soared. She made this wish: "Exalted Buddha! May I, in my faring on in this journey in Saṁsāra, be always perfect in my personal appearance even without the need to embellish myself."

After she passed away, Mallikā was reborn as a celestial being in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm. On account of her wish she was endowed with unrivalled beauty. She had a dress magnificently finished with the seven kinds of gems and also a mansion of like description see the commentary to Mallikā's Heavenly Mansion (*Mallikā-vimāna*, Vv. 658-663).

The Passing of King Pasenadi

King Pasenadi of Kosala let the nephew of Bandhula, named Dīghakārāyana, succeed him as commander-in-chief. This token of his high regard for Bandhula did not, however, appease the nephew who kept awaiting his opportunity to revenge the death of his innocent [924] uncle.

The king was never happy again after the assassination of the innocent Bandhula. A feeling of guilt possessed him, so much so that he did not find

pleasure in his kingly luxuries. At that time, the Buddha was sojourning at the market town of Medāḷupa, in the province of the Sakyans. The King of Kosala, wishing to see the Buddha, put up a rustic tent built of branches of trees in the vicinity of the Buddha's monastery and stayed there. Leaving the regal paraphernalia with the commander-in-chief Dīghakārāyana there he entered the Buddha's chamber alone.

> The reason for the king's leaving his regal paraphernalia with Dīghakārāyana were: 1) He considered it improper to look ostentatious in the presence of the Buddha; and 2) he intended to have a private dialogue with the Buddha which he believed would gladden him. When the regal paraphernalia was sent to the palace, it was understood by the royal attendants that they did not need to wait on the king in the meantime and that they should return to the palace.

As the Kosalan King went alone to the Buddha's monastery, Dīghakārāyana felt uneasy with the thought: "This king had previously had private conference with Gotama the recluse," after which my uncle Bandhula and his 32 sons were assassinated; now he is again in conference with Gotama the recluse. What might this mean? Might I be the target this time?"

As soon as the king had entered the Buddha's chamber, Dīghakārāyana, the commander-in-chief, took the regal paraphernalia to Viṭaṭūbha, cajoled and coerced Viṭaṭūbha to accept kingship then and there. Then he left a charger, a scimitar and a royal maid for Pasenadi of Kosala with a note saying: "Do not come after us if you wish to stay alive!" After that he took Prince Viṭaṭūbha to the palace in Sāvatthī as the new king with the white umbrella held above him.

When the Kosalan King came out of the monastery after having cordial conversation with the Buddha, he saw none of his army, so he asked his maid, who told him what she heard and saw. Thereupon, he headed for Rājagaha to muster help from his royal nephew, King Ajātasattu with the object of deposing Viṭaṭūbha the usurper. On his way, he had to make do with a meal of broken rice and to drink unfiltered water. As he was of a delicate constitution, that food proved indigestible for him. It was late in the evening when he got to the city of Rājagaha. The city gates were already closed. So he had to spend the night at a rest house outside the city, intending to see his nephew King Ajātasattu the next morning.

That night, the Kosalan King suffered from indigestion due to the upset condition of his phlegm, bile and wind. He could answer the call of nature only two or three times before he became totally exhausted. He slept on the bosom of the young maid who was his sole company. He died at dawn the next day.

> At the time of death, the Kosalan King was 80 years of age, the same age the Buddha was when he passed away, see the Discourse on Shrines to the Dhamma (*Dhamma-cetiya-sutta*, MN 89).

When the young maid found that the king had passed away, she wailed loudly: "My Lord, the Kosalan King, who had ruled over the two provinces of Kāsi and Kosala, had died uncared for outside the city in this rest house where the homeless make it their home." On hearing her lamentation people came to know about the death of the Kosalan King. They reported it to King Ajātasattu who came out and saw his dead uncle. He arranged for a fitting funeral with much ceremony. Then he mustered his troops by the beat of the gong, intending to capture Viṭaṭūbha.

The ministers of King Ajātasattu pleaded at his feet, saying: "Great King, if your royal uncle, the Kosalan King, were alive, your visit to Sāvatthī would be proper. But now that Viṭaṭūbha, your younger cousin, is on the throne, and he had also a right through kinship to the throne, your expedition is not advisable." Ajātasattu accepted the ministers' advice.

King Viṭaṭūbha remembers his Grudge

King Viṭaṭūbha, after ascending the throne at Sāvatthī, remembered his grudge against the Sakyans. He left the city at the head of a big army to make war against and destroy the Sakyans. Early in the morning, the Buddha viewed the world of beings with his Buddha-eye [925] and saw that danger was imminent for his kinsmen the Sakyans. He thought it right and proper to protect them. So after going on alms round, he took a rest in his scented chamber in a noble resting posture like a lion, lying on his right side. In the evening he went to Kapilavatthu by his psychic power and reappeared sitting at the foot of a tree with bare branches in the vicinity of the city of Kapilavatthu.

Not far away from that tree there was a shady banyan tree near the boundary between Kapilavatthu and Viṭaṭūbha's country. When Viṭaṭūbha saw the Buddha, he made obeisance to him and said: "Venerable sir, how is it that the Fortunate

One is sitting underneath this skeleton of a tree when it is still hot? May you come and sit underneath a shady banyan tree which is near our boundary." The Buddha replied: "Great King, so be it. Shelter provided by kinsman is cool enough." Viṭaṭūbha was not slow to take the hint. He surmised rightly that the Buddha was there to give his benign protection to his kinsmen. So he withdrew his forces after respectfully making obeisance to him. The Buddha reappeared in the Jetavana monastery by his psychic power.

But Viṭaṭūbha did not forget the insult he had suffered at the hands of the Sakyans. He took out another expedition against the Sakyan city. On this occasion too the Buddha was there and he was obliged to withdraw. For the third time he led a mighty force towards the Sakyan territory, only to meet with the Buddha before he could start operations and again he had to withdraw.

When King Viṭaṭūbha set out for the fourth time the Buddha saw that the time for the evil misdeeds of the Sakyan was taking effect and so he did not intervene. The past misdeeds of the Sakyans consisted in spreading poison in a stream on a certain day in their previous existence.

Viṭaṭūbha came with a big army intent on destroying the Sakyans. The Buddha's kinsmen, on the other hand, were averse to taking life, they would rather give up their own life than destroy life. They knew that they were past masters in archery, so they thought of frightening away the enemy by their feats in archery. They put on mail armour and came out pretending to join battle. They sent arrows into the enemy which did not hit anyone but passed through their shields or through holes in their ear lobes which had been pierced while young for wearing earrings.

When Viṭaṭūbha saw the arrows, he thought that the Sakyans were shooting them in earnest. "They say the Sakyans don't destroy life," he said, "but now they are trying to kill us with their arrows!" One of his men said: "Lord, inspect your forces and you will know." – "The arrows come in the direction of our men." – "But there is no one hit on this side, Great King, would your majesty make a count of your men," replied the man boldly. The king ordered to make a count and found that no one had fallen.

Viṭaṭūbha withdrew his forces a little and ordered his men: "Men, slay all those who say they are Sakyan. But spare my grandfather Mahānāma and those who are together with him. Thereupon Viṭaṭūbha's forces made a dash for the kill.

The Sakyans did not see anything to hold on to. Some of them stood holding on to tufts of grass while others stood holding on to clusters of reed. When asked by the enemy: "Are you not Sakyan?" these Sakyans did not and could not utter a lie, those Sakyan holding on to the grass replied: "These are not Sāka (teak trees), but only grass," and those Sakyans holding on to the reeds replied: "These are not Sāka (teak trees), but only reed." Those Sakyans and Mahānāma together with the Sakyans that remained together with him were spared. Those who held onto the grass later came to be known as Grass Sakyans, and those who held onto the reeds as Reed Sakyans. All other Sakyans were put to the sword, not even infants were allowed to live. Viṭaṭūbha then cleansed his seat with the enemy's blood drawn from their throats. Thus was the Sakyan clan exterminated by Viṭaṭūbha.

Mahānāma the Sakyan was captured alive. On his way to Viṭaṭūbha's country, when it was time for the morning meal, they dismounted and the table was laid; Viṭaṭūbha informed [926] Mahānāma to join him. Persons of royal blood as a rule never share a meal with sons of a slave. Mahānāma therefore, noticing a pond nearly, said: "Grandson, I need to wash up before I eat." – "Then, grandfather, take a bath," replied Viṭaṭūbha.

Mahānāma knew that if he refused to eat with Viṭaṭūbha, he would be put to the sword. "It were better to take my own life," he reflected. So he untied his coil of hair, made a knot at the end of his hair which was spread out, and putting both his big toes together inside the hair, he dived into the water. Mahānāma was possessed of such merit that his presence underneath the water caused warmth in the realm of the Nāgas. The King of the Nāgas looked for the strange phenomenon that was warming his abode and on seeing the plight of Mahānāma, he appeared before him and letting him sit on his hood, carried him down to the realm of the Nāgas where Mahānāma survived for twelve years.

Viṭaṭūbha meets his Fate

King Viṭaṭūbha was left waiting for the return of his royal grandfather. "He should be back any time," he kept on saying to himself. When he had waited rather too long, he thought: "Something is wrong," and he had his men wade into the water, dive into it, and search around the pond. As it was already dark, he sent his men all around to search any possible nook and corner with oil lamps. When he had left no stone unturned, he gave up the search at that locality,

assuming his grandfather must have fled from him, he and his army left the place.

He arrived at the river Aciravatī at nightfall and it was too late to enter the city. So he and his army had to camp on the river bank for the night. Some of his men lay on the sandbank to rest while others lay on higher ground. Among the first group there were some who had not committed evil deeds in the past; among the second group there were some who had done evil deeds in the past. It so happened that to both groups, swarms of white ants made their stay impossible. They were driven to seek fresh quarter for the night. Those who had done no bad actions in the past, who were lying on the sand bank, therefore found it necessary to move to high ground; those who had done bad actions in the past, who were lying on high ground, found it necessary to move to the sand bank.

After the people had made these shifting of locations, there arose black rain clouds and all of a sudden there was a deluge that caused the Aciravatī to burst its banks. Viṭaṭūbha and his army were carried away in the floods down to the ocean where they were devoured by fishes and turtles.

The Past Evil Actions of the Sakyans

The massacre of the Sakyans became a subject of lively talk among the people. “Men,” they would say, “the massacre of the Sakyans was absolutely uncalled for, and the brutality they suffered – even their small children not being spared -– is most improper.” This sort of popular opinion came to the ear of the Buddha, who said: “Monastics, the Sakyans met with a seemingly undeserved fate in their present existence. However, if their present fate is considered against their past evil action, they met the kind of death appropriate to the cause thereof.” The monastics requested the Buddha to relate the nature of their past evil action. And the Buddha briefly related to them, how in a certain existence in the past, they had united themselves in one mind and spread poison into a stream causing mass destruction of fish in it.

Again, the following day, at the assembly of monastics for hearing the teaching, the monastics were discussing the fate of Viṭaṭūbha: “Friends, Viṭaṭūbha together with his company, after slaying such a great number of the Sakyans, became victims of fishes and turtles in the ocean even before achieving his ambition.” When the Buddha came to the assembly and asked the monastics:

"Monastics, what was that you were talking about when I came?" They told the Buddha about their subject of discussion. Then the Buddha said: "Monastics, just as all the villagers in a sleeping village are swept away by a great flood, so also, even before their ambitions in life are fulfilled, all living beings who are forgetful and sleeping have their lives cut short and are carried away by death to the ocean of the four lower worlds." Then the Buddha uttered this verse (Dhp 48): [927]

> *Pupphāni heva pacinantaṁ, byāsatta-manasaṁ naraṁ;*
> *Atittañ-ñeva kāmesu, antako kurute vasaṁ.*
>
> Monastics, like one who gathers the choicest flowers, a person, who hankers after sense-pleasures, craving for what he has not got and clinging to what he has got, is carried away by death and to the ocean of the four lower worlds, just as a whole village that are soundly asleep are swept away to the ocean by a great flood.

By the end of the discourse many beings attained the fruitions such as Stream-entry. This discourse is therefore a very beneficial discourse for all.

The Two Mallikās Differentiated

The following is based on the commentary on the Birth Story about the Portion of Gruel (*Kummāsa-piṇḍa-jātaka*, Ja 415).

There were at the time of the Buddha two Mallikās in Sāvatthī, one was Mallikā, wife of Bandhula, the commander-in-chief; the other was Mallikā, Queen of the Kosalan King. The former was a Mallan Princess of Kusinārā about whom we have mentioned earlier. We shall now describe Queen Mallikā in a brief way.

This future queen was daughter of a flower seller in the city of Sāvatthī. She was a maiden of great beauty, with a large store of great past merits. One day, when she was sixteen, she went flower-gathering in the company of other girls, carrying three barley cakes in a flower basket.

As the group of girls were leaving the city, they met the Buddha, surrounded by a wondrous aura of six hues, in the company of many monastics, who was entering the city. Mallikā was deeply moved by the glory of the Buddha and in a state of devotional faith she offered her three barley cakes to the Buddha. The Buddha accepted the alms in the alms bowl which was donated by the four great guardians of the four quarters.

Mallikā paid her obeisance at the feet of the Buddha, with her mind filled with delightful satisfaction (*pīti*), derived from reflection on the attributes of the Buddha and stood at a suitable distance. The Buddha looked at her and gave a smile. Ven. Ānanda asked the Buddha the reason for his smile. "Ānanda," said the Buddha, "on account of her offering of these three barley cakes with the volition of the first impulsion this young girl will become the Chief Queen of the Kosalan King this very day."

Mailikā was overjoyed to hear the words of the Buddha and went to the Park with her companions. It was the day when the King of Kosala fought a battle with his nephew Ajātasattu and was defeated. He escaped on horseback and on hearing the singing of Mallikā, he turned towards the park, being attracted by the girl's voice. Where all the other girls fled with fear at the sight of the king, Mallikā, who was destined to become queen felt no fear. Instead, she came forward and took the reins of the king's charger in her hand.

Still sitting on horseback, he asked the girl whether she was married or not. On learning that she was unmarried, he dismounted and as he was tired from the heat of the sun and the wind, he took a rest on Mallikā's bosom. After having rested, he took the girl on horseback and entered the city accompanied by his army. He had the girl escorted to her parents' home. That evening, he sent the royal carriage to Mallikā's house for the use of Chief Queen, and she was brought to the palace with pomp and ceremony. Then placing her on a ceremonial seat wrought with precious gems, she was anointed Chief Queen. From that day, Mallikā became the beloved Chief Queen.

> Thus the two Mallikās should be known: Mallikā the Kosala Queen was the daughter of a [928] flower-seller; Mallikā, the wife of Bandhula, the commander-in-chief, was the daughter of one of the Malla princes. [929]

39a: The Discourse about Āṭānāṭiya

[The following is based on the Discourse about Āṭānāṭiya (*Āṭānāṭiya-sutta*, DN 32) and its commentary.]

The Four Great Kings

At one time, the Buddha was staying in the monastery on the Gijjakūṭa Hill near Rājagaha. During that time the Four Great Kings of the four quarters: Dhataraṭṭha, Virūḷaka, Virūpakkha and Kuvera held a conference at the celestial city of Āṭānāṭiya, the abode of Kuvera. After they had carefully arranged for the defences of Tāvatiṁsa, the abode of Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, against the Asuras, at the four directions, by employing hordes of Yakkhas, Gandhabbas, Kumbhaṇḍas, and Nāgas, they composed verses called the Āṭānāṭiya Safeguard (*Āṭānāṭiya-paritta*, aka as *Āṭānāṭiya-sutta*, DN 32) on the subject of the seven Buddhas preceding Buddha Gotama. "Whosoever disregards and goes against the authority of the Buddhas' doctrine and the authority of our commandments shall be meted out specific punishments," they proclaimed. They also placed at the four quarters a large number of Yakkhas, Gandhabbas, Kumbhaṇḍas, and Nāgas for their own protection. Around midnight, they went to the Buddha in resplendent appearance, their personal radiance flooding the entire Gijjhakūṭa Hill. After having approached the Buddha, and paying respects to him, they sat at a suitable distance.

> It was unusual for Devas to sit in the Buddhas' presence, they usually remained standing. But here they were sitting, out of reverence for the Āṭānāṭiya Safeguard.

The company of Yakkhas who came with the Four Great Kings behaved in different ways in the presence of the Buddha; some of them made obeisance to him and sat in a suitable place; some exchanged words of felicitations and sat in a suitable place; some raised their joined palms in his direction and sat in a suitable place; some declared their names and lineage and sat in a suitable place; some sat down while remaining silent.

At that assembly of Devas, Vessavaṇa addressed the Buddha in these words: "Venerable sir, among the very powerful Yakkhas, some have pious faith in the Fortunate One while others have not. It is the same with Yakkhas of middling powers and those of small powers. Venerable sir, most Yakkhas do not have

reverence for the Fortunate One because the Fortunate One preaches restraint from killing, stealing, unlawful sexual conduct, lying and taking intoxicants, whereas Yakkhas generally do not refrain from killing, stealing, unlawful sexual conduct, lying and taking intoxicants. For these Yakkhas who lack morality the five moral precepts is anathema.

Venerable sir, there are many monastic disciples of the Fortunate One who dwell in monasteries in remote places. These remote places are permanent residences of very powerful Yakkhas, who do not show reverence to the Fortunate One. To win their confidence, to serve as a protection for the male monastic disciples, female monastic disciples, male lay disciples and female lay disciples of the Fortunate One, to let them be free from the harassment of Yakkhas; and for a peaceful, carefree life in all the four bodily postures for everyone, may the Fortunate One teach the Āṭānāṭiya Safeguard (*Āṭānāṭiya-paritta*) to the disciples."

> Herein, Vessavaṇa acted as spokesmen for the Four Great Kings because he was well acquainted with the Buddha and was also an accomplished speaker.

The Buddha accepted Vessavaṇa's proposition by remaining silent. Seeing that the Buddha approved his suggestion, Vessavaṇa recited the Āṭānāṭiya Safeguard thus:[233]

> *"Vipassissa ca namatthu, cakkhu-mantassa sirīmato.*
> *Sikhissa pi ca namatthu, sabba-bhūtānukampino.*
>
> "May you revere Vipassī, the glorious visionary, may you revere Sikhī, who has pity on all beings.
>
> *Vessabhussa ca namatthu, nhātakassa tapassino,*
> *namatthu Kakusandhassa, Māra-senāpamaddino.*
>
> May you revere Vessabhū, the austere one, cleansed of corruptions, may you revere Kakusandha, who has crushed Māra's army.
>
> *Koṇāgamanassa namatthu, Brāhmaṇassa vusīmato,*
> *Kassapassa ca namatthu, vippamuttassa sabbadhi.*

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[233] [The original publication didn't include a translation, I have added my own in here].

May you revere Koṇāgamana, the accomplished Brahmin, may you revere Kassapa, who is free in every respect.

Aṅgīrasassa namatthu, Sakya-puttassa sirīmato,
yo imaṁ Dhammaṁ desesi, sabba-dukkhā panūdanaṁ.

May you revere Aṅgīrasa, the glorious son of the Sakyans, he who taught this Dhamma, which is the dispelling of all suffering.

Ye cāpi nibbutā loke, yathā-bhūtaṁ vipassisuṁ,
te janā apisuṇātha, mahantā vīta-sāradā.

Those who are emancipated in the world, who have insight into things as they are, those people free from malicious speech, who are great and fully mature.

Hitaṁ Deva-manussānaṁ, yaṁ namassanti Gotamaṁ,
vijjā-caraṇa-sampannaṁ, mahantaṁ vīta-sāradaṁ:

They will revere that Gotama, who is of benefit to Devas and men, who has understanding and good conduct, who is great and fully mature.

Yato uggacchati sūriyo, Ādicco maṇḍalī mahā,
yassa cuggaccha-mānassa, saṁvarī pi nirujjhati,
yassa cuggate sūriye, divaso ti pavuccati.

From where the sun comes up, the son of Aditi, the great circle, while that one is coming up, the darkness of night comes to an end, and after the sun has come up, it is said to be the daytime.

Rahado pi tattha gambhīro, samuddo saritodako,
evaṁ taṁ tattha jānanti, samuddo saritodako.

There is a deep lake in that place, an ocean where the waters have flowed, thus in that place they know there is an ocean where the waters have flowed.

Ito sā purimā disā, iti naṁ ācikkhatī jano,
yaṁ disaṁ abhipāleti, Mahārājā yasassi so.

From here that is the easterly direction, so the people declare, that direction is watched over by a resplendent Great King.

Gandhabbānaṁ adhipati, Dhataraṭṭho ti nāmaso,
ramatī naccagītehi, Gandhabbehi purakkhato.

He is the master of the Gandhabbas, Dhataraṭṭha, such is his name. He delights in song and dance, he is honoured by Gandhabbas.

Puttā pi tassa bahavo, eka-nāmā ti me sutaṁ,
asīti dasa eko ca, Inda-nāmā mahabbalā.

He also has a great many sons, all of one name, so I have heard, they are 80 and ten and one, Inda by name, ones of great strength.

Te cāpi Buddhaṁ disvāna, Buddhaṁ ādicca-bandhunaṁ,
dūrato va namassanti, mahantaṁ vīta-sāradaṁ:

They, having seen the Awakened One, the Buddha, kinsman of the sun, from afar, do reverence him, who is great and fully mature.

Namo te purisā-jaññā, namo te purisuttama,
kusalena samekkhasi, amanussāpi taṁ vandanti,
sutaṁ netaṁ abhiṇhaso, tasmā evaṁ vademase.

Reverence to you, excellent one! Reverence to you, supreme one! You have looked on us with goodness, the non-human beings worship you, we have heard this repeatedly, therefore we should speak like this:

"Jinaṁ vandatha Gotamaṁ, jinaṁ vandāma Gotamaṁ,
vijjā-caraṇa-sampannaṁ, Buddhaṁ vandāma Gotamaṁ!"

"You should worship the victor Gotama, we should worship the victor Gotama, who has understanding and good conduct, we should worship the Buddha Gotama!"

Yena petā pavuccanti, pisuṇā piṭṭhi-maṁsikā.
pāṇātipātino luddā, corā nekatikā janā.

There they say go the departed, who speak maliciously, backbiters, killers of creatures, hunters, thieves, and fraudulent people.

Ito sā dakkhiṇā disā, iti naṁ ācikkhatī jano,
yaṁ disaṁ abhipāleti, mahā-rājā yasassi so.

From here that is the southerly direction, so the people declare, that direction is watched over by a resplendent great king.

Kumbhaṇḍānaṁ adhipati, Virūḷho iti nāmaso,
ramatī naccagītehi, kumbhaṇḍehi purakkhato.

He is the master of the Kumbhaṇḍas, Virūḷha, such is his name. He delights in song and dance, he is honoured by Kumbhaṇḍas.

Puttā pi tassa bahavo, eka nāmā ti me sutaṁ,
asīti dasa eko ca, Inda-nāmā mahabbalā.

He also has a great many sons, all of one name, so I have heard, they are 80 and ten and one, Inda by name, ones of great strength.

Te cāpi Buddhaṁ disvāna, Buddhaṁ ādicca-bandhunaṁ,
dūrato va namassanti, mahantaṁ vīta-sāradaṁ:

They, having seen the Awakened One, the Buddha, kinsman of the sun, from afar, do reverence him, who is great and fully mature.

Namo te purisā-jaññā, namo te purisuttama,
kusalena samekkhasi, amanussāpi taṁ vandanti,
sutaṁ netaṁ abhiṇhaso, tasmā evaṁ vademase.

Reverence to you, excellent one! Reverence to you, supreme one! You have looked on us with goodness, the non-human beings worship you, we have heard this repeatedly, therefore we should speak like this:

"Jinaṁ vandatha Gotamaṁ, jinaṁ vandāma Gotamaṁ,
vijjā-caraṇa-sampannaṁ, Buddhaṁ vandāma Gotamaṁ!"

"You should worship the victor Gotama, we should worship the victor Gotama, who has understanding and good conduct, we should worship the Buddha Gotama!"

Yattha coggacchati sūriyo, ādicco maṇḍalī mahā,
yassa coggacchamānassa, divaso pi nirujjhati,
yassa coggate sūriye, saṁvarī ti pavuccati.

That place where the sun goes down, the son of Aditi, the great circle, while that one is going down the light of day comes to an end, and after the sun has gone down, it is said to be nighttime.

Rahado pi tattha gambhīro, samuddo saritodako,
evaṁ taṁ tattha jānanti, samuddo saritodako.

There is a deep lake in that place, an ocean where the waters have flowed, thus in that place they know there is an ocean where the waters have flowed.

Ito sā pacchimā disā, iti naṁ ācikkhatī jano,
yaṁ disaṁ abhipāleti, Mahā-rājā yasassi so.

From here that is the westerly direction, so the people declare, that direction is watched over by a resplendent Great King,

Nāgānañ-ca adhipati, Virūpakkho ti nāmaso,
ramatī naccagītehi, Nāgeheva purakkhato.

He is the master of the Nāgas, Virūpakkha, such is his name, he delights in song and dance, he is honoured by Nāgas.

Puttā pi tassa bahavo, eka-nāmā ti me sutaṁ,
asīti dasa eko ca, Inda-nāmā mahabbalā.

He also has a great many sons, all of one name, so I have heard, they are 80 and ten and one, Inda by name.

Te cāpi Buddhaṁ disvāna, Buddhaṁ ādicca-bandhunaṁ,
dūrato va namassanti, mahantaṁ vīta-sāradaṁ:

Ones of great strength, they, having seen the Awakened One, the Buddha, kinsman of the sun, from afar, do reverence him, who is great and fully mature.

Namo te purisā-jañña, namo te purisuttama,
kusalena samekkhasi, amanussā pi taṁ vandanti,
sutaṁ netaṁ abhiṇhaso, tasmā evaṁ vademase.

Reverence to you, excellent one! Reverence to you, supreme one! You have looked on us with goodness, the non-human beings worship you, we have heard this repeatedly, therefore we should speak like this:

"Jinaṁ vandatha Gotamaṁ, jinaṁ vandāma Gotamaṁ,
vijjā-caraṇa-sampannaṁ, Buddhaṁ vandāma Gotamaṁ!"

"You should worship the victor Gotama, we should worship the victor Gotama, who has understanding and good conduct, we should worship the Buddha Gotama!"

Yena Uttara-kuruvho, Mahā-neru sudassano,
manussā tattha jāyanti, amamā apariggahā.

Where delightful Uttarakuru is, and the good looking Great Mount Neru, the men who are born in that place are unselfish, without possessions.

Na te bījaṁ pavapanti, napi nīyanti naṅgalā,
akaṭṭha-pākimaṁ sāliṁ, paribhuñjanti mānusā.

They do not sow the seed, and nor are there ploughs led along, the rice that men enjoy the use of there matures in untilled ground.

Akaṇaṁ athusaṁ suddhaṁ, sugandhaṁ taṇḍulapphalaṁ,
tuṇḍikīre pacitvāna, tato bhuñjanti bhojanaṁ.

Without husk powder or chaff, pure, sweet smelling grains of the finest rice, having cooked it on hot rocks without smoke, they then enjoy their food.

Gāviṁ eka-khuraṁ katvā, anuyanti diso-disaṁ,
pasuṁ eka-khuraṁ katvā, anuyanti diso-disaṁ.

Having made their cows solid-hooved they go about from place to place, having made their kine solid-hooved they go about from place to place.

Itthiṁ vā vāhanaṁ katvā, anuyanti diso-disaṁ,
purisaṁ vāhanaṁ katvā, anuyanti diso-disaṁ.

Having made women their vehicle they go about from place to place, having made men their vehicle they go about from place to place.

Kumāriṁ vāhanaṁ katvā, anuyanti diso-disaṁ,
kumāraṁ vāhanaṁ katvā, anuyanti diso-disaṁ.

Having made girls their vehicle they go about from place to place, having made boys their vehicle they go about from place to place.

Te yāne abhiruhitvā,
sabbā disā anupariyāyanti, pacārā tassa rājino.

Having mounted their various carriages, the messengers of that king go around in all directions.

Hatthiyānaṁ assayānaṁ, dibbaṁ yānaṁ upaṭṭhitaṁ,
pāsādā sivikā ceva, Mahārājassa yasassino,
tassa ca nagarā ahu, antalikkhe sumāpitā,

Being furnished with elephant-, horse- and divine-carriages, and for that great and resplendent king there are palaces and palanquins, and there are cities for him also, that are well-built in the heavens, called:

Āṭānāṭā, Kusināṭā, Parakusināṭā, Nāṭasuriyā, Parakusiṭanāṭā.
Uttarena Kasivanto, Janogham-aparena ca, Navanavutiyo Ambara-
ambara-vatiyo, Āḷakamandā nāma rājadhānī.

Āṭānāṭā, Kusināṭā, Parakusināṭā, Nāṭapuriyā, Parakusitanāṭā. To the North is Kasivanta, and on the other side is Janogha, Navanavutiya, Ambaraambaravatiya, and the king's capital named Ālakamandā.

Kuverassa kho pana, mārisa, Mahārājassa Visāṇā nāma rājadhānī, tasmā Kuvero Mahārājā, Vessavaṇo ti pavuccati.

The Great King Kuvera's capital, dear sir, is named Visāṇā, therefore is the Great King also called Vessavaṇa.

Paccesanto pakāsenti: Tatolā, Tattalā, Tatotalā, Ojasi, Tejasi, Tatojasī, Sūro Rājā, Ariṭṭho, Nemi.

These each individually inform the King: Tatolā, Tattalā, Tatotalā, Ojasi, Tejasi, Tatojasi, Sūra, Rājā, Ariṭṭha, Nemi.

Rahado pi tattha Dharaṇī nāma, yato meghā pavassanti, vassā yato patāyanti, sabhāpi tattha Sālavatī nāma, yattha Yakkhā payirupāsanti.

There is a lake in that place also, named Dharaṇī, and from there the clouds rain down, from there the rains spread, there also is the public hall named Sālavatī where the Yakkhas assemble.

Tattha nicca-phalā rukkhā, nānā dija-gaṇā yutā,
mayūra-koñcābhirudā, kokilādīhi vagguhi.

There the trees are always in fruit, and have a crowd of birds of diverse kinds, resounding with peacocks and hens, and also with the lovely cuckoos.

Jīvañjīvaka-saddettha, atho oṭṭha-vacittakā,
kukkuṭakā kuḷīrakā, vane pokkhara-sātakā.

There is the pheasant who calls out: Live on! And the bird who calls out: Lift up your minds! There are the jungle fowl, and golden cocks, and in the wood the lotus crane.

Suka-sāḷika-saddettha, daṇḍa-māṇavakāni ca,
sobhati sabba-kālaṁ sā, Kuvera-naḷinī sadā.

There are the sounds of parrot and mynah, and birds who have young mens' faces, and Kuvera's lotus pond is ever attractive, all of the time.

Ito sā uttarā disā, iti naṁ ācikkhatī jano,
yaṁ disaṁ abhipāleti, Mahā-rājā yasassi so.

From here that is the northerly direction, so the people declare, that direction is watched over by a resplendent Great King,

Yakkhānañ-ca adhipati, Kuvero iti nāmaso,
ramatī naccagītehi, Yakkheheva purakkhato.

He is the master of the Yakkhas, Kuvera, such is his name, he delights in song and dance, he is honoured by Yakkhas,

Puttā pi tassa bahavo, eka-nāmā ti me sutaṁ,
asīti dasa eko ca, Inda-nāmā mahabbalā.

He also has a great many sons, all of one name, so I have heard, they are 80 and ten and one, Inda by name, ones of great strength.

Te cāpi Buddhaṁ disvāna, Buddhaṁ ādicca-bandhunaṁ,
dūrato va namassanti, mahantaṁ vīta-sāradaṁ:

They, having seen the Awakened One, the Buddha, kinsman of the sun, from afar, do reverence him, who is great and fully mature:

Namo te purisā-jaññā, namo te purisuttama,
kusalena samekkhasi, amanussā pi taṁ vandanti,
sutaṁ netaṁ abhiṇhaso, tasmā evaṁ vademase.

Reverence to you, excellent one! Reverence to you, supreme one! You have looked on us with goodness, the non-human beings worship you, we have heard this repeatedly, therefore we should speak like this:

"Jinaṁ vandatha Gotamaṁ, jinaṁ vandāma Gotamaṁ,
vijjā-caraṇa-sampannaṁ, Buddhaṁ vandāma Gotamaṁ!"

"You should worship the victor Gotama, we should worship the victor Gotama, who has understanding and good conduct, we should worship the Buddha Gotama!"

Then Vessavaṇa said: "Venerable sir, this is the Āṭānāṭiya Safeguard (*Āṭānāṭiya-paritta*) which is to be used as a protection for male monastic disciples, female monastic disciples, male lay disciples, female lay disciples, to let them be free from the harassment of Yakkhas, and for a peaceful, carefree life in all the four bodily postures for everyone. Venerable sir, if a Yakkha, or a Gandhabba, or a Kumbhaṇḍa, or a Nāga were to possess with intention to harass any one of the male monastic disciples, or female monastic disciples, or male lay disciples, or female lay disciples who has learnt this Safeguard well, that Yakkha will not

enjoy the respect and reverence in the village or town which is my prerogative. Venerable sir, that Yakkha cannot have a mansion of his own or get my permission to reside permanently in my city called Āḷakamandā."

After mentioning to the Buddha, the disqualification that surrounds a recalcitrant Yakkha, Gandhabba, etc., Vessavaṇa went on to say that just as there were recalcitrant men who defied the authority of the king, there were also recalcitrant Yakkhas who did not obey the authority of the Four Great Kings and that, in case those recalcitrant Yakkhas were to possess and harass the four classes of the Buddha's disciples, male monastic disciples, female monastic disciples, male lay disciples and female lay disciples, 38 Deva generals, such as Inda, Soma, Varuṇa, would be invoked and reported to, describing details. After that, Vessavaṇa bid the Buddha farewell in these words: "Venerable sir, we have many affairs to attend to, we shall go now." The Buddha said: "Great guardian kings, you know the time to go."

Then the Four Great Kings rose from their seats, made obeisance to the Buddha and vanished from there. The company of Yakkhas, who arrived together with the Four Great Kings, bade farewell to the Buddha in different ways as on their arrival, some rose to make obeisance to the Buddha and vanished from there; some exchanged memorable words of felicitation and vanished from there; some raised joined palms in the direction of the Buddha and vanished from there and some just vanished without saying anything.

On the next morning, the Buddha related to the monastics the story of the visit of the Four Great Kings and recited the Āṭānāṭiya Safeguard. Then he said: "Monastics, learn the Āṭānāṭiya Safeguard; study it again and again, commit it to memory. Monastics the Āṭānāṭiya Safeguard is beneficial to all. It will serve as [933] a protection for male monastic disciples, female monastic disciples, male lay disciples, female lay disciples; it will enable them to free themselves from harassment by Yakkhas, and to lead a peaceful, carefree life in all the bodily postures."

Ritual for the Recitation

The reciter of the Āṭānāṭiya Safeguard (*Āṭānāṭiya-paritta*) must have a thorough knowledge of the Safeguard, both in word and meaning. He must be able to enunciate every word correctly. Should there occur any flaw in enunciating it or any deficiency in reciting it, the efficacy of the

Safeguard will not be as great as it should be. Its efficacy depends on the overall efficiency in the reciting.

If the reciter has any selfish motive for personal gain in the learning and reciting the Safeguard, the objective of the Safeguard, will not be achieved. The reciter should be primarily motivated by a desire to gain liberation from the round of rebirths, and recite the Safeguard in an attitude of good will to all.

In driving out a Yakkha that has possessed a person, the Discourse on Friendliness Meditation (*Metta-sutta*, Khp 9, Snp 1.8), the Discourse through the Top of a Banner (*Dhajagga-sutta*, SN 11:3), the Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*, Khp 6, Sn 2:1) should be tried first. Only if the reciting of those discourses for even whole days fail, should the Āṭānāṭiya Safeguard (*Āṭānāṭiya-paritta*) be recited.

Some teachers advise that the reciting monastic should abstain from cakes made from dough, fish, meat and non-vegetarian foods, nor should he dwell at a cemetery. The reason is that Yakkhas are fond of those kinds of food, and like to frequent cemeteries so that they could get better opportunity to possess men.

The place where the Safeguard is to be recited should be plastered with fresh cowdung. A clean seat should be spread for the reciter, who should see to his personal cleanliness.

The monastic who is to recite the Safeguard should be brought to the assigned place at the house of the victim, surrounded by an armed guard. The recital should not be made in an open space. It must be made in a fully enclosed room, well guarded with armed men. The reciter should have an attitude of good will to all, including the recalcitrant Yakkha. The diffusion of loving-kindness (*mettā*) is the internal security for the reciter, while an armed guard is the external security. These precautions are necessary for a trouble-free recital.

First of all, the victim must be established in the five precepts. Only after being established in the five precepts, should the Safeguard be recited for his protection. These measures should put an end to the harassment by Yakkhas.

If the Yakkha does not release the victim at the end of the recital, the victim should be carried to the monastery and laid on the relic shrine (*stūpa*) precincts. An offering, at the place where the victim is lying,

should be made to the Buddha together with offerings of lights. The shrine precincts must then be swept clean. Auspicious verses of the Discourse on the Blessings (*Maṅgala-sutta*, Khp 5, Snp 2.4) should then be recited as a preliminary measure. Then a loud proclamation should be made calling upon all monastics residing within the monastic area to assemble on the shrine precincts.

There should be a certain tree in a grove in the vicinity of the monastery where a guardian tree Deva is traditionally said to reside. A person should be sent to that tree to act as official messenger from the congregation of monastics, where he should say: "Yakkhas, your presence is wanted by the Saṅgha." The Yakkhas who reside in that area, including the Yakkha who has possessed the victim, cannot neglect the formal invitation because they do not dare to disregard the authority of the Buddha and the Four Great Kings.

Then the victim must be asked: "Who are you?" Addressing the victim here is addressing the Yakkha that has possessed him. When the Yakkha reveals his name, the monastics should say: "Friend so-and-so, we share our merit in our offerings of flowers, seats, and alms food to the Buddha. The Saṅgha have recited auspicious verses for your benefit; these verses are the friendly gift of the Saṅgha to you. Now, out of respect for the Saṅgha, release this victim."

The recalcitrant Yakkha should respond to the request of the monastic congregation, made in loving-kindness. If he does not respond, then an invocation should be made to the 38 [934] Deva generals, such as Inda, Soma, Varuṇa, etc. and they should be told in these terms: "Deva generals, as you know, this Yakkha has disregarded our request made in loving-kindness. So we have to use the authority of the Buddha." Having let the Deva generals know the necessity of resorting to the Āṭānāṭiya Safeguard (*Āṭānāṭiya-paritta*) in those terms, a recitation of the Safeguard should be made. This is the procedure where the victim is a lay person.

In the case of a monastic being possessed by a Yakkha, the place for the congregation of monastics should be cleaned; a loud proclamation about the convening of the monastic congregation made, sharing of merit made to the recalcitrant Yakkha, for the offerings of flowers, etc., to the Buddha and a genial request made to him to withdraw. Only when the Yakkha remains unresponsive should the Āṭānāṭiya Safeguard be recited. This is the procedure for monastic victims.

39b: Sakka's Questions

Introduction

[The following is based on the Discourse about Sakka's Questions (*Sakka-pañha-sutta*, DN 21) and its commentary.]

At one time, the Buddha was residing at the Indasāla Cave where the Indian Ash tree stood on the slope of the Vediyaka hill, north of Ambasaṇḍa Brahmin village, which lay to the east of the city of Rājagaha, in the province of Magadha.

> The Brahmin village was known as Ambasaṇḍa because it was situated by the side of a Mango Grove. The Vediyaka hill got its name from a grove of gracefully straight and round trees like columns of sapphire growing around the hill. Indasāla Cave got its name from the Indian Ash tree (*Indasāla*) that stood at its entrance. It was originally a natural stone cave which was later embellished with engravings.

Signs of Imminent Death appear to Sakka

As the Buddha was staying at the Indasāla Cave on the slope of the Vediyaka hill near Rājagaha, there appeared to Sakka the five signs that proclaim the approaching death of a Deva; Sakka knew these signs well and said to himself: "Alas, my lifespan has ended." These five are:

1. The flowers adorning his person withered.
2. His dress becomes soiled.
3. His armpits sweat.
4. His personal appearance declines.
5. Listlessness sets in.

When the five signs of imminent death appear to Devas, those with little merit in store are gravely concerned about their next existence. Those Devas with vast stores of merit remember their previous good deeds of giving, observing moral precepts and achieving concentration, and being assured of a good destination in the higher Deva realms, remain unperturbed.

As for Sakka, he was fearful and despondent, for he would now lose all the greatness of a Sakka: the Tāvatiṁsa Realm, which is 10,000 leagues wide; the

Vejayanta palatial mansion that is 1,000 leagues tall; the Sudhammā Assembly Hall, 300 leagues wide, for listening to the Dhamma; the coral tree (*paricchattaka*) which is 100 leagues high; the Paṇḍukambala stab of emerald, which is 60 leagues long, 50 leagues wide and 15 leagues high; 25 million celestial dancers; his follower Devas who are denizens of Catumahārājika realm and Tāvatiṁsa Realm; and the celestial parks known as Nandana Park, Cittalatā Park, Missaka Park, Phāsuka Park.

Then Sakka pondered: "Is there any ascetic or brahmin outside the Buddha's teaching who can allay my worries and fears of death and help perpetuate my lordship of Devas?" He saw none. He continued pondering and he thought of the Buddha: "The Buddha can allay fears and worries that oppress hundreds of thousands of Sakkas like myself." Thus he had a strong desire to see the Buddha.

"Where is the Fortunate One residing just now?" he considered. He saw that the Buddha was residing at the Indasāla Cave. He then said to his companions, the Tāvatiṁsa Devas: "Friends, the Fortunate One is residing at the Indasāla Cave where the Indian Ash tree stands on the slope of the Vediyaka hill near Rājagaha. Friends, it were well if we go there to see the Fortunate One." The Tāvatiṁsa Devas said: "Very well, Lord."

> Herein, the time and circumstances of Sakka's seeing the Buddha may be noted. A [935] few days ago, Sakka had paid a visit to the Buddha at the Jetavana monastery, in the company of his close attendants such as Mātali, but without a big retinue. At that time the Buddha saw that Sakka was not yet ripe for Awakening and that after two or three days' time he would become obsessed with death after seeing signs of the end of his life coming near, and then he would visit him in the company of Devas from both the Catumahārājika and Tāvatiṁsa Realms to ask fourteen questions and that, at the end of the question concerning equanimity, he would attain Stream-entry along with 80,000 Devas of Catumahārājika and Tāvatiṁsa Realms. Seeing this situation, the Buddha dwelled in the absorption (*jhāna*) on the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) so that Sakka did not get an opportunity to meet with him on that day.

On his part, Sakka was thinking: "About three days back the Fortunate One did not give me audience because I went to see him alone. Perhaps, I am not endowed with sufficing conditions of ripened merit to gain Awakening. It is customary for the Fortunate One to go to the end of the 10,000 world-element to

preach the doctrine if there is someone who has sufficing conditions for Awakening. This time, if I go to the Fortunate One along with a company of followers, there must be at least one of them who is endowed with sufficing conditions and the Fortunate One will discourse to him. In that way, I shall have my opportunity to hear the discourse which will set my troubled mind at ease." That was why he called the Tāvatiṁsa Devas to accompany him.

Then Sakka, on second thoughts, considered that it would not be wise for him to go straight to the Buddha in the company of Devas from Catumahārājika and Tāvatiṁsa. "It would look somewhat lacking in grace on my part. This Deva Pañcasikha is well acquainted with the Fortunate One, being used to rendering personal service to the Fortunate One. He has the privilege of seeing the Fortunate One and asking questions freely. It would be well if I were to send him first to inform of my coming to the Fortunate One and obtain his permission, then only I will put my questions to the Fortunate One." Accordingly, he said to Pañcasikha: "Pañcasikha, the Fortunate One is now residing at Indasāla Cave on the slope of the Vediyaka hill near Rājagaha. It would be well if we approach the Fortunate One there."

"Very well, Lord," said Pañcasikha. Then taking his lute known as Beluvapaṇḍu, and strumming it in an accompaniment to a song, thereby letting the other Devas know that Sakka was about to go somewhere, he stood by the side of Sakka.

At the musical signal of Pañcasikha, the Tāvatiṁsa Devas got ready to go. Then just as soon as a strong man was to flex his bent arm, or bend his spread-out arm, they suddenly appeared on the Vediyaka hill lying to the north of Ambasaṇḍa Brahmin village, eastwards from Rājagaha in the province of Magadha.

At that time, the Vediyaka hill and Ambasaṇḍa Brahmin village were aglow with celestial lights. People living in that area were in awe with wonder at the extraordinary glowing of lights. "Today the Vediyaka hill seems aflame! There are so many glowing lights on the Vediyaka hill and above the Ambasaṇḍa Brahmin village! What is going on?" People were talking in great wonder, with goose flesh forming on their skin.

> It should be noted that the visit to the Buddha by Sakka and company was rather too early. Although they were there after nightfall, it was even before children had gone to bed. It was the custom of Devas and Brahmas

to visit the Buddha around midnight. But at this time Sakka was so uneasy at the thought of death so he made the visit in the first watch of the night.

Then Sakka said to Pañcasikha: "Pañcasikha, Buddhas generally dwell in absorption (*jhāna*). If it is the time when the Fortunate One is dwelling in absorption, it is not a proper time for a person like me who is not free of greed, hatred and delusion. Go now and ask permission of the Fortunate One for me to see him. Having got permission, we shall approach the Fortunate One."

"Very well, Lord," said Pañcasikha. Then carrying the Beluvapaṇḍu lute in his left arm, he drew near to the Indasāla Cave. He took up his position not too close to the Buddha and [936] not too far away, just a suitable distance away from where the Buddha could hear his music.

Pañcasikha's Songs

From that appropriate position Deva Pañcasikha played his lute, singing songs on the subjects of the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, the Arahat, and of sensual pleasures.

The word-for-word renderings in the original Myanmar, beautiful and learned, are penned by the Sibhani Sayadaw who presided over the Fifth Buddhist Council in Mandalay. He was awarded Narindābhisiri Saddhammadhaja Mahā Dhammarājādhirājaguru and Narindābhisiri Saddhammajotipāladhaja Mahā Dhammarājādhirājaguru title by King Mindon and Narindhābhidhaja-atulādhipati siri-pavara Mahā Dhammarājādhirājaguru title by King Thipaw. The Sayadaw wrote the Burmese meaning of the songs in his treatise: *Kavi-maṇḍana-medanī*. Only the gist of each song is given here in English prose.

Vande te pitaraṁ bhadde, Timbaruṁ sūriya-vacchase,
yena jātāsi kalyāṇī, ānanda-jananī mama.

My noble lady of glowing complexion like the radiant sun offspring of lord Timbaru! You are as fair as fair can be, possessing the five qualities of feminine beauty, the source of my delight. Out of my fondness for you, I worship your father Timbaru.

Vāto va sedataṁ kanto, pānīyaṁ va pipāsato,
Aṅgīrasi piyāmesi, Dhammo arahatā-m-iva.
Āturasseva bhesajjaṁ, bhojanaṁ va jighacchato,
Parinibbāpaya maṁ bhadde, jalantam-iva vārinā.

My lady with glowing complexion! Just as a man who sweats welcomes a cool breeze; just as a thirsty man welcomes drinking water; just as the Arahat welcomes the Dhamma; just as one afflicted by malady welcomes medicine, just as one famished welcomes food, so also I, the Deva with five knots, adore you. Just as water quells the blaze, my noble lady! Let your smile quell the fire of passion in me!

Sītodakaṁ pokkharaṇiṁ, yuttaṁ kiñjakkhareṇunā,
nāgo ghammābhitatto va, ogāhe te thanūdaraṁ.

Just as a tusker oppressed by heat wishes to descend into the cool waters of a lily pond, so also I would fain descend into your soft bosom.

Accaṅkuso va nāgo va, jitaṁ me tuttatomaraṁ,
kāraṇaṁ nappajānāmi, sammatto lakkhaṇūruyā.

My noble lady! Just as a tusker in musk, defying the pike that checks him, is blinded by passion, I too, am infatuated with your graceful thighs. [937]

Tayi gedhita-cittosmi, cittaṁ vipariṇāmitaṁ,
paṭigantuṁ na sakkomi, vaṅkaghasto va ambujo.

My lady of radiant complexion! How I wish to possess you! Just as a fish that has swallowed the hook is unable to cast it out, so also my fervour for you is irreversible, how my mind flutters!

Vāmūru saja maṁ bhadde, saja maṁ mandalocane,
palissaja maṁ kalyāṇi, etaṁ me abhipatthitaṁ.

My lady with lovely thighs! May you, my beloved, embrace me gently. You are perfection personified! How I yearn for your tender embrace!

Appako vata me santo, kāmo vellita-kesiyā,
aneka-bhāvo samuppādi, arahanteva dakkhiṇā.

Previously, I had known little sensual desire. But since I have set my eyes on you, the possessor of long hair bent at the tips, sensual desire has risen by leaps and bounds in me, just as the fervent enthusiasm that arises in one who makes offerings to an Arahat.

Yaṁ me atthi kataṁ puññaṁ, arahantesu tādisu,
taṁ me sabbaṅga-kalyāṇi, tayā saddhiṁ vipaccataṁ.

Maiden blessed with the five feminine charms! In me there is past merit on account of serving Arahats, the stable ones. May that merit now result in my nuptial tie with you.

Yaṁ me atthi kataṁ puññaṁ, asmiṁ pathavi-maṇḍale,
taṁ me sabbaṅga-kalyāṇi, tayā saddhiṁ vipaccataṁ.

Maiden blessed with the five feminine charms! In me there is past merit, such as alms offerings, done upon the entire expanse of this great earth. May that merit result in my nuptial tie with you.

Sakya-putto va jhānena, ekodi nipako sato,
amataṁ muni jigīsāno, tam-ahaṁ sūriya-vacchase.

The sage, son of the Sakya clan, born of King Suddhodana and Queen Mahā Māyā, who delights in meditation and who resorts to seclusion, who is wise and mindful, desires the deathless Nibbāna, my lady of radiant complexion! Likewise I desire you. [938]

Yathā pi muni nandeyya, patvā sambodhim-uttamaṁ,
evaṁ nandeyyaṁ kalyāṇi, missībhāvaṁ gato tayā.

O embodiment of elegance! The sage, having attained supremely perfect wisdom through the seven purities, delights in his Awakening. So also, it would delight me greatly, if I were to be joined with you.

Sakko ce me varaṁ dajjā, Tāvatiṁsānam-issaro,
tāhaṁ bhadde vareyyāhe, evaṁ kāmo daḷho mama.

My beloved! If Sakka, lord of Tāvatiṁsa, were to grant me a boon of my choice, I would opt for you, rather than for lordship of Devas. My noble Lady! So firm is my fondness for you.

Sālaṁ va na ciraṁ phullaṁ, pitaraṁ te sumedhase,
vandamāno namassāmi, yassā setādisī pajā.

My lady of great intelligence! Like the sudden blooming forth of the coral tree you came into existence, as the illustrious daughter of lord Timbaru, whom I worship on account of you.

At the end of Pañcasikha's songs, the Buddha praised him: "Pañcasikha, your lute is in perfect harmony with your singing, neither the lute nor the singing dominate or are rivals to each other."

The Buddha praised Pañcasikha not because he enjoyed the music, but for some other purpose. For he, being an Arahat, was neutral towards all pleasurable or painful sensations because he was possessed of equanimity in six ways, as shown in the Discourse concerning Koṭṭhika (*Koṭṭhika-sutta*, SN 22.133). Yet he openly praises Pañcasikha to let him know that he approves of the Deva's action. If he did not give express approval, Pañcasikha might have withdrawn wrongly thinking that he was not welcome. In which case Sakka would not have the opportunity to put his questions, and to hear the Buddha's answers to him that would lead to the Awakening of both Sakka and his company.

After praising Pañcasikha, the Buddha asked him: "Pañcasikha, when did you compose these verses on the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, the Arahat and sensual pleasures?"

Pañcasikha replied: "Venerable sir, at one time the Fortunate One was staying at the foot of the Ajapāla banyan tree, near the bank of the River Nerañjarā, in the Uruvelā forest in the eighth week after the Buddha's Awakening. Venerable sir, during that time I fell in love with Sūriyavacchasā, daughter of lord Timbaru. She, on her part, was in love with Sikhaṇḍī, son of Mātali, Sakka's charioteer. Venerable sir, when I saw that I was going to lose Sūriyavacchasā, I went to the mansion of lord Timbaru and played my Beluvapaṇḍu lute, singing these verses on the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, the Arahat, and sensual pleasures." Venerable sir, on my playing the lute and singing those verses, Sūriyavacchasā said to me: 'Lord, I had never seen the Fortunate One myself, but while I was dancing at the gathering of the Tāvatiṁsa Devas at the Assembly Hall for listening to Dhamma, I had heard of the Fortunate One. Today, you are singing in praise of the Fortunate One, and so you get your opportunity of meeting me.' Venerable sir, since that day [939] I never got the opportunity to see her again."

Sakka enters the Buddha's Presence

Sakka was glad that Pañcasikha was conversing cordially with the Buddha and said to him: "Pañcasikha, go and say to the Fortunate One on my behalf: 'Sakka, lord of Devas, and his ministers with their retinues make obeisance with their heads at the feet of the Fortunate One.' " – "Very well, lord," said Pañcasikha, and having approached the Buddha, he repeated it to him.

Thereupon, the Buddha said: "Very well, Pañcasikha, may Sakka, his ministers and their retinues be well. Indeed, may all beings – human beings, Devas, Asuras, Nāgas, Gandhabbas – be well."

> This is the customary mode of response of the Buddha to the arrival of mighty Devas.

When the Buddha had said that, Sakka entered the Indasāla Cave and made obeisance to him and stood at a suitable distance. Pañcasikha and other Tāvatiṁsa Devas also followed Sakka into the cave, made their obeisance to the Buddha and stood at a suitable distance.

The Indasāla cave was not big enough to accommodate this crowd. However, at that time, the cave became not only spacious enough for the big crowd but its floor, which was normally uneven was then even; the darkness inside also gave way to the dazzling lights of the Devas, but the lights were not as magnificent as the Buddha's aura which surrounded him to a range of 80 cubits, so the Devas' lights were outshone by the Buddha's radiance.

Then the Buddha said to Sakka: "Wonderful indeed Sakka, unprecedented it is Sakka, that Sakka of the Kosiya clan finds time to come here amidst his multifarious duties."

Sakka said: "Venerable sir, I have been intending to see the Fortunate One for a long time but various matters concerning the Tāvatiṁsa Devas held me back."

> In this context: "Various matters concerning the Tāvatiṁsa Devas," may be explained here. Sakka as lord of Devas, has to act as judge or arbiter in disputes between Tāvatiṁsa Devas. Devas are born as full grown adults, as male or female in the bosom of Deva parents. Their spouses also appear on the bed simultaneously. Female attendants to those spouses of Devas appear surrounding the bed. Slaves also appear inside the mansion. For this kind of clear-cut case no disputes arise as to ownership. Devas that appear at the boundary between two mansions form a bone of contention regarding the question of who owns these Devas. Disputes arise on that account, which are referred to Sakka for a decision.
>
> Sakka would then adjudge ownership of those Devas that appear nearer to one of the disputant's mansions. Where the distance of the appearance of a certain Deva is the same, the Deva that was born facing either of the disputants' mansions is declared by Sakka as belonging to that mansion. If that Deva was born without facing any of the two mansions then the case

has to be concluded by declaring that neither side wins the dispute, and that the Deva in question belongs to Sakka. This is the nature of Sakka's duty in matters concerning Tāvatiṁsa Devas. Besides those duties, the normal life of Devas in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures could also take up much of Sakka's time.

Then Sakka continued: "Venerable sir, on another occasion, about three days ago, the Fortunate One was staying at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī, in the chamber built of celestial wood, donated by King Pasenadi of Kosala. I had gone there in the hope of paying my respects to the Fortunate One but at that time the Fortunate One was dwelling in meditation. Bhūjatī, Queen of Vessavaṇa, the great guardian king, was standing in worship by the Fortunate One at that time. I said to her: "Sister, say to the Fortunate One on my behalf: 'Venerable sir, Sakka, lord of Devas, and his ministers with their retinues make obeisance with their heads at the feet of the Fortunate One.' To this, Bhūjatī replied to me: 'Lord Sakka, this is not the time to see the Fortunate One; he is in solitary seclusion.' Then I said to her: [940] 'Sister, in that case, when he rises from fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*), say to him, on my behalf: "Venerable sir, Sakka, lord of Devas, and his ministers with their retinues make obeisance with their heads at the feet of the Fortunate One." ' How is it, venerable sir, did Bhūjatī report to you my message and do you recall it?"

The Buddha said: "Sakka, lord of Devas, that Devakaññā did report to me your message and I do recall it. As a matter of fact, I rose from the absorption in the meditation of fruition simultaneously with the sound of the rolling of your chariots wheels."

There were four principal mansions where the Buddha resided in the Jetavana monastic compound, namely: 1) Karerimaṇḍalamāla, with the magnificent array of musk rose trees at its entrance and whose boughs and branches intertwined with one another, provided a pleasant cool shelter as if an arbor had been put up; 2) Kosamba cottage, with the great Ceylon oak tree whose foliage provided shelter at its entrance; 3) the monastic building built of scented wood known as the Gandhakuṭi; and 4) the monastic building built of celestial wood, called Salaḷāgāra monastery. Each of them cost 100,000 pieces of silver. The Salaḷāgāra monastery was donated by King Pasenadi of Kosala; the other three were donated by Anāthapiṇḍika.

Prior to the discourse on Sakka's questions, when the Buddha was residing in the Salaḷāgāra monastery, Sakka had paid a visit to the monastery but as his faculties were not fully ripe yet, the Buddha did not receive him, so he continued to dwell in fruition absorption for a predetermined duration.

Bhūjatī was a Queen of Vessavaṇa, the Great King. She was a Once-returner, a noble one (*ariya*) at the second stage of Awakening, and so did not find Deva pleasures agreeable to her. She spent her time in paying respects to the Buddha with her joined palms raised above her head.

Sakka returned home after leaving his message with Bhūjatī, after paying his respects toward the Buddha in Salaḷāgāra monastery. As he drove away skywards, the wheels of his chariot filled the whole Jetavana monastery compound with a strange musical sound as though the five kinds of musical instruments were playing. At that very moment, the Buddha rose from dwelling in fruition attainment. That being so, the Buddha's first sense cognition thought was the sound of the chariot. However, it must be noted that the Buddha did not rise from meditation absorption due to that sound; it was the predetermined time for arising.

Sakka continued: "Venerable sir, I have learnt from those Tāvatiṁsa Devas, who were there previous to me, that during the time of the appearance of Buddhas, who are Arahat and Perfectly Self-Awakened, the number of Asuras decline and the number of Devas swell. Venerable sir, I have personally observed this fact that when the Buddha, who is Arahat and Perfectly Self-Awakened, appeared in the world, the number of Asuras declined and the number of Devas swelled.

Gopaka

Venerable sir, in this city of Sāvatthī, there was once a Sakyan Princess named Gopikā, who had faith in the Three Treasures and who was in the habit of observing the five precepts. She disliked being a female and conducted herself well with a view to being reborn as a male. She was reborn in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm as my son. He is known as Deva Gopaka in Tāvatiṁsa Realm.

Venerable sir, three monastics, on the other hand, practised the noble practice under the Buddha but, at their death, they were reborn as Gandhabbas, Devas inferior to Tāvatiṁsa Devas. These Gandhabbas enjoy sensual pleasures fully

and they come to the gathering of Devas in the Assembly Hall to entertain the Tāvatiṁsa Devas with their music.

To them [941] Deva Gopaka said: "Revered sirs, with how much attention did you listen the Fortunate One's teachings? As for me, I was a mere woman in my former human existence, who could only observe the five precepts, but being greatly dissatisfied with being a woman, I conducted myself well with a view to becoming a male at the next rebirth, with the result that I am now reborn as a son of Sakka, lord of Devas. In this Tāvatiṁsa Realm I am known as Deva Gopaka. As for you, revered Sirs, you were monastics who practised the noble path under the Buddha, and yet you are now reborn as Gandhabbas, and are inferior to Tāvatiṁsa Devas. That seems to be a very unsatisfactory matter to me."

On hearing these words of rebuke which sounded as a warning to the three Gandhabbas, two of them gained mindfulness that set them up at the first absorption (*jhāna*) there and then, and they were subsequently reborn in the Brahmapurohita realm. The third one continued enjoying himself in the sensuous sphere."

> In this story of Deva Gopaka, the destination of the three former monastics is remarkable. Although they had conducted themselves well as monastics, they were reborn as Gandhabbas, and were called Devas who had been ascetics in their former existence. This was because they had in the past been Gandhabbas for many existences so that they had in them a liking for that existence (*bhava-nikanti*). Gandhabba Devas belong to one of the realms of the Four Great Kings.

When Gopaka met the three ascetic Devas, he reflected on what previous merit they were endowed with as they had such attractive appearances. He saw that they had been monastics in their previous existence. Then he reflected whether they had been established in morality, and saw that they had indeed been established in morality. He further reflected whether they had further merit and saw that they had attained absorption (*jhāna*). He again reflected where these monastics lived and saw that they were the monastics who went to then Sakyan lady Gopikā's house for daily alms food.

He reviewed their case thus: "Persons established in morality can wish for any of the six Deva realms. These monastics do not have rebirth in the higher Deva realms. Further, persons who have attained absorption usually are reborn in the

Brahma realms. These monastics do not get reborn in the Brahma realms. As for me, I followed their instruction and am now born as Sakka's own son. These monastics who are reborn as inferior Devas as Gandhabbas are the struck-to-the-bone (*aṭṭhi-vedha*) type of persons who need goading to the extreme." That was why he said the words of rebuke: "Revered sirs, with how much attention did you listen the Fortunate One's teachings?"

> Struck-to-the-bone (*aṭṭhi-vedha*) persons who need goading to the extreme is a reference to the Discourse about the Goad (*Patoda-sutta*, AN 4.113), where four types of trained horses and four types of trained men are described.

Four Types of Trained Horses

1. The horse that responds just by seeing the shadow of the goad (*chāya-diṭṭha*).
2. The horse that responds only when struck on the hair (*loma-vedha*).
3. The horse that responds only when his skin is pierced (*camma-vedha*).
4. The horse that responds only when he feels the pain deep in the bones (*aṭṭhi-vedha*).

The Four Types of Trained Men

1. On hearing that so and so in such and such place is suffering from illness, or has died, he gains religious urgency (*saṁvega*), and he strives to gain insight and path-knowledge (*chāya-diṭṭha*).
2. On witnessing someone suffering from illness or dying in his presence, he gains religious urgency, [942] and he strives to gain insight and path-knowledge (*loma-vedha*).
3. On witnessing one of his own family suffering from illness or dying in his presence, he gains religious urgency, and he strives to gain insight and path-knowledge (*camma-vedha*).
4. Only on meeting with some serious illness himself does he gain religious urgency, and only then he strives to gain insight and path-knowledge (*aṭṭhi-vedha*).

Deva Gopaka placed those three monastics in the fourth category above and therefore considered that they needed goading to the extreme. In Sakka's story, two of them gained mindfulness that set them up at the first absorption there and then, and they were reborn in the Brahmapurohita realm. This needs some explanation. On hearing the words of Gopaka, two out of the three ascetic Devas thought: "Normally, we ought to be rewarded for our service in entertaining them, but now, instead of any rewards, we are being scolded right from the start, like salt sprinkled onto a hotplate. How is this?" Reflecting on their past existence, they saw vividly that they had been monastics, that they had pure morality, that they had attained absorption, and that they used to go to Gopikā, the Sakyan lady's residence, for daily alms food.

They reflected on their situation thus: "Persons who are established in morality can wish for any of the six Deva realms. Persons who have attained absorption (*jhāna*) usually are reborn in the Brahma realms. Yet we have not been able to get rebirth in the higher Deva realms or in the Brahma realms. The young lady, who followed our instructions, is now reborn in a higher Deva realm. Although we were monastics and practised the noble path under the Fortunate One, we are reborn as Gandhabbas, which are an inferior class of Devas. This is due to our liking for Gandhabba existence where we had been repeatedly reborn before. That is the reason why this Deva Gopaka is speaking words of rebuke." Then two of them took these words to heart and regained mindfulness of the first absorption (*jhāna*) and, based on that concentration, they contemplated on the impermanence, suffering and non-self nature of mind and matter, conditioned by causes, and attained Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-phala*) there and then.

A Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-puggala*) has a class of supermundane consciousness that does not fit well with the five aggregates pertaining to the Gandhabba existence of the sensuous sphere; that class of consciousness is superior to that of the sense sphere existence. Hence as soon as the path of Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-magga*) was attained, these two noble Devas passed away from the Deva existence and were reborn in the Brahmapurohita realm, the middle plane of the three fine-material realms, because they had attained the first absorption (*jhāna*) which is the medium class of meditation. Although it is said that they were reborn in the Brahmapurohita realm, their bodies did not appear in that Brahma realm. They remained in Tāvatiṁsa Realm at the Assembly Hall for the

discussion of the Dhamma in the form of Brahmapurohita Brahmas instead of in Gandhabba forms.

The third Gandhabba was unable to give up his clinging to the Gandhabba existence and so remained in his present existence as a Catumahārājikā Deva.

After Sakka, lord of the Devas, had related in prose to the Buddha the story of Deva Gopaka, he further spoke in fifteen verses on the same subject. Then in three more verses, he sang in praise of the Buddha's attributes, the teaching of the Buddha, and the purpose of his visit which was to attain the supermundane paths and fruitions like that attained by those two Brahmas. He then concluded his last three verses with a request that if the Buddha would permit him to put certain questions and hear the Buddha's answers on them. The last of Sakka's eighteen verses is as follows:

> *Tassa Dhammassa pattiyā, āgatamhāsi mārisa,*
> *katāvakāsā Bhagavatā, pañhaṁ pucchemu mārisā.* *[943]*

> Venerable sir, you who are free from all forms of suffering (*dukkha*), we have come here for the benefit of gaining the supermundane Dhamma that those two Brahmas gained. Venerable sir, who is free from all forms of suffering, if the Fortunate One would, out of compassion, permit us, we would ask some questions.

Then the Buddha reflected: "This Sakka has long been virtuous. Whatever question he might like to ask, it will be of benefit to him. He is not going to ask unbeneficial questions. If I answer his questions he will understand readily."

Magha and his 33 Friends

> The commentary to DN 21 elaborates on the passage: "This Sakka has long been virtuous," by relating the past existence of Sakka, when he had lived a virtuous life as Magha, a young man in the village of Macala, in the province of Magadha. That was at a time before the advent of the Buddha.

Early one morning, Magha went to an open space in the village, where the villagers met to discuss community affairs, to tidy the ground. Another man found the ground inviting and spent his time there. Magha was glad that his effort was useful to others. So he selected a spacious place in the centre of the village, swept it clean, spread it with clean sand and, in the cold season, he

collected faggots and made small fires there. The villagers, young and old, gathered there to warm themselves by the fireside.

One day, Magha thought about the ease and comfort enjoyed by the king, his ministers and officials in the city. He also thought about the Moon Deva and the Sun Deva up in the skies. What previous actions had they done so that these great people on earth and the great Devas in the sky enjoy such ease and comfort? Surely they must have done purely meritorious deeds that have led to their present state. Reasoning correctly thus, he decided to go on doing purely meritorious deeds in the footsteps of those great persons.

He woke up early in the morning, took his breakfast of rice gruel, and taking the necessary tools and implements, he went to the crossroads where the four main roads met. He removed rocks that stood in the way, cut down trees that were growing too close by the roadside to allow free carriage way, and levelled the roadway. He set up a rest house at the road junction, dug a rectangular pond, built bridges and spent the whole day earning merit and retired only at sunset.

Seeing Magha's daily routine, a villager asked him: "Friend Magha, you leave the village early in the morning and come back only late in the evening. What have you been doing?"

"Friend," said Magha, "I am doing purely meritorious deeds, I am paving the way to the Deva realm."

"What do you mean by purely meritorious deeds?"

"Don't you know what are purely meritorious deeds?"

"No, I don't."

"Haven't you seen the glorious state of the king, the king's ministers and officials when you visit the city?"

"Yes, I did."

"Well, the king and those great people enjoy their elite status because in the past they have done purely meritorious deeds. I am doing the sort of work that leads to a similar state. Have you not heard of the Moon Deva and the Sun Deva?"

"Yes, I have."

"I am paving the way to the Deva realm."

"Friend Magha, are you doing these works all by yourself? Are you the only person fit for this sort of work? Could not other people also do it?"

"Friend, there is nothing that forbids anyone to do it."

"In that case, friend Magha, let me know when you go to the countryside tomorrow." [944]

The next day Magha had a partner in his good works. In due course he had by his side 33 strong youths who volunteered on his projects. This team of Magha and 33 youths had a common mind in seeking merit. They went about together mending roads, digging tanks, building rest houses and bridges. They executed their projects with might and main, generally finishing a particular work within the same day.

The Village Chief plans Magha's Ruin

The chief of Macala village was a rogue. He found Magha's social undertakings unacceptable because he himself sold liquor in the village and when there occurred fighting and quarrels, he increased his income through fines collected as penalty. His trade was dwindling when youths did not visit his place for drinks but went out on social projects. Therefore, he tried to use his official position to cause the ruin of Magha and his comrades. He misinformed the king that a band of people had been causing trouble in his village. When asked by the king what lineage those criminals belonged to, the chief of Macala said: "Great King, they come from good families." – "How come men of good families turn bad? Why did you keep the news till now?" – "Great King, I was afraid that they might turn on me. May your majesty pardon me for this!"

The king believed the chief's words and ordered the arrest of the so-called criminals, despatching a contingent of his men with him. Magha and his party, after returning from their work and having had their evening meal, were discussing the next day's plan for meritorious deeds in the village centre when the chief surrounded them, placed them under arrest by the king's orders' and they were taken to the king.

The wives of those youths heard the news of their arrest and said: "That serves them right. These men of ours have been giving lame excuses for shirking their household duties and spending their time in the countryside everyday."

When Magha and his party were presented to the king, without investigating them, he passed the order that the band be trampled to death by the royal elephant. As they were taken to the place of execution, Magha said to his comrades: "Friends, will you listen to my words?" – "Dear Magha, we are in this plight through listening to your words! Nevertheless, we shall continue to do so. What is your advice?" – "Friends, death comes to all wayfarers in this Saṁsāra. Now, are you robbers as alleged by the village chief?" – "Certainly not," they replied.

"Friends, asseveration of the truth is the only reliance for all people in the world. So, declare the truth like this: 'If we are robbers as alleged by the chief, let the elephant trample on us; if we are not robbers, let the elephant not trample on us.' "

The 33 youths made their asseveration as instructed. The royal elephant, far from trampling on them, dared not even come near them but trumpeted in fear and ran away. The mahout goaded the elephant with the spike and other sharp points to come back to the site but to no avail.

When the situation was reported to the king, he ordered: "In that case, conceal the criminals under matting and let the elephant trample over them." The king's men did as ordered but this time the royal elephant showed even greater fright, trumpeted doubly loud and ran away.

The King rewards Magha and Company

When the king learned the miraculous news he summoned the chief of Macala village [945] and asked: "Is it true that the royal elephant refused to trample these men?"

"That is true, your majesty. This is because their leader Magha knows a mantra that frightens elephants."

Thereupon the king sent for Magha and asked: "Is it true that you know a mantra that frightens elephants?"

Magha replied: "Your majesty, I know no such mantra. What my associates and I did was to make a solemn declaration: 'If we are robbers and enemies of the king let the elephant trample on us, if we are not, let the elephant not harm us.' " Then the king asked: "What sort of activities did you engage yourselves in?"

"Your majesty, we repair roads, build rest houses for travellers at road junctions, dig tanks and build bridges, or repair old bridges. We go to various places to carry out this kind of undertaking." – "Why do you think the village chief reported falsely against you?" – "Your majesty, the chief used to enjoy a good income from selling liquor when the youth of the village were forgetful and wanted to enjoy themselves. But since we engaged ourselves in useful works and are not forgetful as before, the chief lost his usual income. That was the reason for his reporting against us."

Then the king said: "Magha, the royal elephant, though a mere animal, understands your good qualities whereas I, even though a human being, did not understand them. From now on, you be the chief of Macala village. I present you with my royal elephant. Let the slanderer, that old chief, be your slave. From now on, do meritorious deeds on my behalf too." And he lavished the group with rich rewards.

On their happy journey home they rode the elephant by turns. Magha said to his friends: "Friends, meritorious deeds are generally aimed at future existence. But here we are reaping the merit of our good deeds, even in the present, like the brown lily growing in the water. Let us do good deeds with still greater zeal."

Then he said further: "What sort of meritorious work shall we do now?" And all agreed, after discussion, that they would build a big rest house at the road junction as a permanent shelter for travellers coming that way. "But let us make it a point that our wives have no share whatever in our good deeds. They have been unkind to us. They failed to understand us. Instead of thinking about our release, they even showed delight at our misfortune."

The 34 youths, headed by Magha, each gave a morsel of rice and a bunch of grass a day to feed the elephant which was sufficient for the animal. As the group cut down trees for timber, the elephant dragged them and placed them on the work site. The group began in earnest, shaping the timber for the construction of a big rest house.

Magha's Four Wives

Magha had four wives by the names of Sūjā, Sudhammā, Cittā and Nandā. Of these four, Sudhammā asked the chief carpenter the reason why Magha and his party were spending the whole day in the forest. The chief carpenter told her

about the rest house construction project. Sudhammā requested him to arrange for her contribution in the project but he told her that Magha and his party had decided against contributions of any kind from their wives. Thereupon, Sudhammā bribed the chief carpenter with eight pieces of silver to make sure she could contribute to the project.

The chief carpenter agreed. He went to the village centre and loudly proclaimed to Magha and his party that it was time to start work for the day. When he was sure that everyone in the party was on his way to the forest, he said: "Boys, you go ahead. I have some business that is keeping me back." He went in another direction and chose a tree fit for making a ridge-pole. He sent it to Sudhammā and said: "Keep this until I send someone for it."

The construction project progressed from stage to stage: Collection of timber, site [946] clearing, foundation-work, structural frame and scaffolding were all ready and in place, except the rafters. At that juncture, the chief carpenter announced that to fix the rafters he needed a ridge-pole but that he didn't have a piece of timber of a special kind for the purpose. The working party blamed the man for his forgetfulness and asked him where to find one at this belated stage. "Let us try and inquire at our kinsmen's places," said the chief carpenter. Magha and his party went into the village asking whether anyone had got some suitable piece of timber for making a ridge-pole.

Sudhammā said she had got one. The party of workers asked the price for it, but she said: "I don't want any price, but let it be my contribution." Magha scoffed at the idea. "Come men, let's go," he said, "this woman must not be allowed to contribute. We will get one from the forest." So saying, they left the village.

Back at the work site, the chief carpenter, sitting on the scaffolding for fixing the ridge-pole, asked: "Where's the timber for the ridge pole?" Magha and his friends explained the situation. The chief carpenter then looked up to the sky and said: "Young men, today is a very auspicious day; another equally auspicious day will not be around at least for another year. You have collected all the timber in this structure with so much trouble. If we were to leave it unroofed, it will rot as it is. Let Sudhammā have her contribution and share the result of the merit in the Deva realm. Please get the timber for the ridge-pole from her house."

In the meantime, Sudhammā had an inscription made that read: "This is the Sudhammā Rest House," carved on the lower surface of the ridge-pole which was wrapped up with a piece of new cloth. Magha's men then came back and said: "Sudhammā, please bring the ridge-pole. Let things take their course. We shall now share the merit with you." Sudhammā, in handing over the ridge-pole, warned them: "Don't take off the cloth-wrapping until eight or sixteen rafters have been fixed to the ridge-pole!"

The builders obeyed her warning. They removed the cloth-wrapping on the ridge-pole only after it had been put in place, needing only to be nailed down. Then an observant villager, looking up the building, noticed the inscription. "What is written there?" A literate villager read it out to them: "It reads: 'This is the Sudhammā Rest House.' "

At that, Magha and company protested loudly: "Remove that ridge-pole, men! We, who have laboured all along, have got none of our names on this building, whereas, Sudhammā, by putting in a piece of timber a cubit long got her name for the whole rest house." But even while they were protesting, the chief carpenter nailed down all the fixtures at the ridge-pole, thus putting the finishing work.

The builders later on marked out three portions on the floor space of the big rest house: one for the king and his officers, one for the common people and one for the sick.

There were 33 flooring boards used in the building of the rest house, each assigned to one of Magha's men. The elephant was given the instructions by Magha that whenever a guest arrived and sat on the board assigned to one of the 33 co-builders, the elephant was to take the guest to the house of that co-builder where the guest would get every care and attention. These instructions were satisfactorily followed by the elephant so that every guest who came to the rest house got food, lodging and massage services at the co-builders' house for the day.

Contributions by Magha's Family: 1) Magha had a coral tree planted not far away from the rest house. Beneath the tree, he laid a big stone slab; 2) Nandā, one of Magha's wives, dug a big tank not far away from the rest house; 3) Cittā, another wife of Magha, created a garden in the vicinity; 4) Sūjā, the senior-most wife of Magha, was not interested in works of merit. She spent much of her time

in front of the mirror, tending to herself in order to look beautiful. Magha said to her: "Now Sūjā and Sudhammā had the opportunity to contribute their mite in the building of the rest house; Nandā has a tank to her credit; and Cittā has created a garden. But you have done no meritorious deeds. Please do some good deed for the benefit of others. Sūjā replied: "My [947] lord, for whom did you perform these good deeds? Are your good deeds not mine also?" She was not interested. She went on her way, being concerned only about her beauty.

Magha lived a full lifespan and at the death of that existence he was reborn in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm as Sakka, lord of Devas. His 33 friends, at their death, were also reborn in Tāvatiṁsa Realm as Sakka's close assistants.

Of the four wives of Magha, Sudhammā, Cittā and Nandā, at their death, were reborn as the three queens of Sakka. The senior-most wife of Magha, Sūjā, who did not listen to Magha's advice, but spent her time embellishing herself, at her death was reborn as a paddy bird in a ravine.

Sakka's Grand State

Sakka's Vejayanta palace was 700 leagues high; the flag post on the top of it is 300 leagues high. As the result of planting the coral tree when he was Magha, the celestial coral tree, 300 leagues in diameter of foliage, with a trunk of fifteen leagues girth, and a height of 100 leagues, arose in Tāvatiṁsa Realm. For his former deed of laying a stone slab for the use of the public, there arose his majestic Paṇḍukambala rock throne of emerald colour which was 60 leagues in length, 50 leagues in width and 15 leagues in height.

Having previously donated timber for the construction of the rest house, the Sudhammā Assembly Hall, where the discussion of the Dhamma took place, arose in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm, much to the fame and honour of Queen Sudhammā.

Likewise, for her former donation for the public use of a tank, Nandā tank arose in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm, much to the credit of Queen Nandā; and for her donation for public use of a garden, Cittalatā Park, 60 leagues wide, appeared in Tāvatiṁsa Realm to perpetuate the name and fame of Queen Cittā.

Sakka sat at the Sudhammā Assembly Hall on a golden throne one league long, with a white umbrella three leagues wide held above him, surrounded by 33 assistants or celestial chieftains and three Deva queens, while 25 million

celestial dancers kept Sakka and his queens entertained. His following comprised Devas of Catumahārājika and Tāvatiṁsa Realms.

Sūjā's Story

Magha was glad that his three former wives in the human existence were now Deva queens but where had Sūjā been reborn? He reviewed the destiny of his former wife and saw that she was a paddy bird in a ravine. "Alas! This girl disregarded my words and is now having an ignoble existence," Sakka said to himself, and he went to the place where Sūjā the paddy bird lived.

Sūjā recognized Sakka as Magha of her previous existence and she held down her face in despondency. "You foolish girl!" he scolded her, "you spent all your time preening yourself. And now you are afraid to look up to me. Sudhammā, Nandā, and Cittā are now Deva queens. Come with me and see our happy state." So saying, he took her to Tāvatiṁsa Realm where she was put in the Nandā Park. He then resumed his seat on the golden throne at the Vejayantā Palace.

The Deva dancers asked Sakka: "Where have you been just now, Lord?" Sakka was reluctant to answer. But when pressed further by them, he told them the truth. He said that Sūjā, having been reborn a paddy bird in a ravine, had been brought back with him and that she was now staying at the Nandā Park.

The Deva dancers, who had been servants at Sūjā's household in their past existence, went to the Nandā Park to see their former mistress. They poked fun at her funny appearance: "Look at Sūjā's beak, it's like a spike for hunting crabs!" Poor Sūjā was deeply hurt when [948] those girls, who had been her household servants in the human world and whom she had treated with disdain, were now so scornful of her. She entreated Sakka to send her back to her own place: "What use is there for me with these palaces glittering with gold and gems? This Nandā Park has no attraction for me. All beings feel at home only where they are born. Send me back to the ravine. That is where I belong."

Sakka complied with her wish. Before leaving her at the ravine he asked: "Now, will you listen to my word?" And Sūjā replied: "Yes, I will, my Lord." – "Then take upon yourself to observe the five precepts. Observe them well without the slightest flaw. I will then make you chief of those Devakaññā in two or three days."

Sūjā, the paddy bird, was observing the five precepts when, two or three days later, Sakka came to test her virtue. He took the form of a fish and floated spine downwards in front of Sūjā in a stream. Thinking that it was a dead fish, Sūjā seized it by the head when its tail fluttered. Sūjā said: "Oh, it's a live fish!" and let it go. Then Sakka standing in the sky, cried out: "Good! Good! You observe the five precepts well. For this virtuous conduct, I shall make you chief of the Devakañña two or three days hence."

Sūjā, as a paddy bird, lived a lifespan of 500 years. Since she would not eat live fish, she was mostly starving during that time. Although she was failing in her health due to starvation, she never breached the five precepts. At her death, she was reborn as the daughter of a potter in the city of Bārāṇasī.

Sakka reviewed the fate of Sūjā, the paddy bird, and seeing that she was now a potter's daughter, he thought of helping her in life as it was not appropriate for him to take her to Tāvatiṁsa Realm straight from the potter's house. So he turned himself into an old man selling golden cucumbers. He was not however selling them for any amount of money: "I will sell them only to those who have morality," he said to the would-be buyers, who said: "Old man, we do not know what is meant by morality. Name your price for these." But the old man insisted: "They will go only to those who observe morality." The villagers said among themselves: "Let's go, men, this old man is mad!" And so they left.

The potter's daughter asked them: "You went to buy cucumbers. Where are the cucumbers?" – "Dear girl, that cucumber vendor is mad. He says he will sell his cucumbers only to those who observe morality. Perhaps he has got daughters who were fed on morality. But, as for us, we do not even know what morality means."

On hearing this strange news, Sūjā rightly surmised that these golden cucumbers must have been meant for her only, so she went to the old man and said: "Father, give me the cucumbers." – "My little girl, do you observe morality?" – "Yes, father, I observe morality well, without a flaw." – "These solid gold cucumbers are for you then," said the old man who was Sakka in disguise. After leaving the whole cart of golden cucumbers in front of the potter's house, he returned to Tāvatiṁsa.

The potter's daughter observed the five precepts throughout her life and, on her death, she was reborn as the daughter of the Asura Vepacitti. Thanks to the

observance of morality in her two previous existences as a paddy bird and as a potter's daughter, she possessed great beauty and charm. Asura Vepacitti planned to marry his daughter to a suitable husband, and called an assembly of Asuras.

Sakka reviewed the destiny of Sūjā again. He saw that Sūjā was now born as an Asura and that her marriage was being planned. "Now is my chance to get Sūjā." He thought, and setting his mind on eloping with her, he went to the assembly of Asuras in the guise of an Asura. As he sat in the midst of the Asuras no one noticed the stranger. [949]

Asura Vepacitti handed his daughter a garland saying: "Choose the bridegroom by throwing this garland above the head of anyone you fancy." Sūjā looked around and, on seeing Sakka in the guise of an Asura, she was inflamed with love, a love that had bound the two in many previous existences. "This is my bridegroom, my husband," she declared, throwing the garland above Sakka's head.

Thereupon, seizing Sūjā's arm firmly, Sakka went up into the sky. Then only the Asuras know that it was Sakka and raised a cry: "Friends, hold him! Hold this old Sakka! He is our enemy. We will never give up Sūjā to this old Sakka."

Asura Vepacitti asked his followers: "Who is it that has taken away my daughter?" – "My Lord, it is that old Sakka!" Then he said to his followers: "This Sakka is the most powerful person besides myself, so make way."

Sakka succeeded in his amorous venture. He made Sūjā chief of the 25 million celestial dancers in Tāvatiṁsa. Thereafter, Sūjā said to her husband: "My Lord, I have no relatives here in Tāvatiṁsa. So take me wherever you go." Sakka conceded to this wish.

The First Question on Envy and Stinginess

The Buddha had known the virtue of Sakka since the latter's previous existence as Magha, the young man of Macala village. That was why he bethought himself: "Whatever question Sakka might like to ask, it will be of benefit to him; he is not going to ask unbeneficial questions. If I answer his questions, he will understand readily." Then the Buddha replied to Sakka in verse:

Puccha Vāsava maṁ pañhaṁ, yaṁ kiñci manasicchasi,
tassa tasseva pañhassa, ahaṁ antaṁ karomi te.

Vāsava, lord of Devas, whatever question you may like to ask, put it to me. I, the teacher of the three worlds, will clear any doubts and uncertainties concerning your questions.

Having obtained the Buddha's express consent, Sakka asked in verse his first question thus:

Venerable sir, all beings, whether Deva or human, Asura, Nāga, or Gandhabba, have an earnest desire to be free from enmity, danger, enemies, sorrow and anger. However, they live in enmity and danger amidst enemies, sorrow and anger. What is the factor that fetters them thus?

To that question the Buddha answered as follows:

Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, all beings, whether Deva or human, Asura, Nāga, or Gandhabba, have an earnest desire to be free from enmity, danger, enemies, sorrow and anger. However, they live in enmity and danger amidst enemies, sorrow and anger. This is due to envy (*issā*) and stinginess (*macchariya*).

Envy and Stinginess

Here envy (*issā*) means begrudging other's well-being and status.

1. It has the character of feeling displeased with another's gain, whether already acquired or about to acquire. When the sign or character of the displeasure in someone who begrudges another [950] person's gain is noticed, the fact of the arising of envy in that person should be known through the knowledge of Abhidhamma, the ultimate truth about mental phenomena.

2. Envy has the function of dissatisfaction with others prosperity. It is the function of envy to feel distressed to get annoyed, when someone sees or hears of another's gain.

3. Envy is manifest to the insight of the yogi, as turning away from others' well-being. To the yogi, who has insight into mental phenomena, the result of envy is manifested as the turning away in disgust from the

success and well-being of others. Of the four kinds of manifestation, this is the manifestation of result.

4. The proximate cause of envy is other people's well-being or status. Envy arises due to another person's prosperity. If one has no occasion to see or hear of another person's wealth, there is no cause for envy to arise.

The character of envy that reveals itself as begrudging others well-being and status should be explained regarding both lay persons and monastics. To wit, someone may have acquired through his own effort and qualities, in any form of enterprise, valuable things, such as vehicles or horses or cattle or precious stones.

Another person, with envy in him, may find it an eyesore to see that successful man prosper. He is very displeased with the other man's good fortune. "When will this fellow meet his downfall? How I wish he would become a pauper!" Such evil thoughts occupy the envious person. And if the successful man does meet with bad fortune, the envious one rejoices to see it.

An envious monastic sees another monastic surrounded by fame and followers on account of the latter's learnedness and efforts such as teaching the doctrine. The one with envy is all the time thinking about the decline of the successful monastic. If the latter does sink in popularity, the former is pleased. In this manner, the character of envy should be known as begrudging other's well-being and feeling displeased with other's gains.

It is in the nature of envy to feel irritated by some gain that someone is enjoying as a matter of fact. Even the likelihood of someone meeting with some good fortune cannot be tolerated by envy. Envy longs for another person's failure and downfall.

Stinginess, Miserliness or Meanness

Stinginess (*macchariya*) is also called meanness. It is a mean attitude concerning one's own possessions.

1. It is characterized by a secretiveness about one's gains or status already enjoyed or about to enjoy. One oppressed by stinginess, an evil state of mind, is secretive about his success.

2. Stinginess functions as a reluctant attitude about one's own good fortune; the reluctance is the attitude that no one should enjoy similar

fortune. One oppressed by stinginess is loath to share his gains or status with someone else. This meanness is the function of stinginess.

3. Stinginess is manifested as unwillingness to share one's gain or status with any other person. If perforce when there is occasion to share it, the stingy person feels very strongly against it. Or put it in another way, if it comes to sharing his property with someone or making any donation to someone, he would part with a very tiny portion of it reluctantly.

4. The proximate cause of stinginess is one's own possession or rights.

To a wise one with insight, stinginess is manifested as meanness about one's property or rights. This is the natural manifestation. Considered from another angle, stinginess manifests itself in anger when one is forced to part with one's property or rights. This is manifestation by way of function, how the manifestation works itself out. Or yet viewed in another way, [951] it manifests itself as parting with only an insignificant part of one's possession under unavoidable circumstances, i.e., giving away merely a trifle which does not amount to a really meaningful gift. This is the manifestation as result.

Five Kinds of Stinginess or Meanness

1. Stinginess or meanness about living place: monastery, dwelling place, park, day resort, night camp, etc. (*āvāsa-macchariya*).

2. Stinginess or meanness about one's circle of friends or relatives, i.e., unwillingness to see one's or one's relatives' friends on friendly terms with others (*kula-macchariya*).

3. Stinginess or meanness to share any form of gain with another (*lābha-macchariya*).

4. Stinginess or meanness in being painful to see others look as attractive in appearance as oneself or gain as fair a reputation as oneself (*vaṇṇa-macchariya*).

5. Stinginess or meanness to share doctrinal knowledge with others (*Dhamma-macchariya*).

1. "Living place," may mean any living space for monastics, whether the whole monastic complex or a room or space allotted for residing in by day or by night. A monastic, who has a specific place to dwell, lives in comfort as a monastic and

enjoys the four monastic requisites of food, robes, lodging, medicines. A stingy or mean monastic cannot agree to the idea of sharing his living place with some other monastic who fulfils his monastic obligations, big or small. If that other monastic happens to get a chance of living there, the stingy one is wishing that the newcomer leave soon. This attitude or state of mind is called stinginess or meanness about living quarters.

However, if the co-resident of a living place is quarrelsome, the unwillingness to share with him is not counted as stinginess.

2. Stinginess about one's friends or followers. The relatives and lay supporters of a monastic form the subject of stinginess or meanness here. A stingy monastic wants to monopolise them. He does not wish any of them going to the monastery of another monastic or let them have any relationship between them and another monastic.

However, if the other monastic is of an immoral type (*dussīla*), the unwillingness to see that happen does not amount to stinginess. As immoral monastic is likely to debase his lay supporters; so the unwillingness to have relations with one's own relatives and lay supporters is proper. It is stinginess only when that other monastic is a virtuous one.

3. Any form of gain includes the four monastic requisites, which are robes, alms food, dwellings and medicines. When, on seeing a virtuous monastic receiving the four requisites, a monastic harbours such thoughts as: "May that one be deprived of these gains," this is stinginess or meanness about gain.

However, where the unwillingness to see another monastic receive the four requisites is justifiable, there is no evil of stinginess or meanness. It is justifiable where that other monastic is in the habit of misusing the four requisites, thus destroying the faith of the supporters, or if that monastic does not make proper use of them but hoards them without giving them away in time so that they turn unusable, having gone stale or gone to rot.

4. Beauty refers to personal appearance or attributes. Meanness regarding beauty means displeasure at another person's good looks or attributes in the sense that no one must have the same good looks or the same good attributes as oneself. The mean monastic hates to discuss about other's personal attractiveness or good name concerning morality, practice of austerity, or practice of Dhamma.

5. Dhamma is of two kinds: learning the canon (*pariyatta-dhamma*) and [952] attainment of the noble path culminating in paths, fruitions and Nibbāna (*paṭivedha-dhamma*). The latter is the property of noble ones (*ariya*) who are never stingy or mean about their insight knowledge. In fact they are desirous of sharing it with all beings: humans, Devas and Brahmas. They wish all beings to acquire the noble path they have gained for themselves. Therefore the expression stinginess about Dhamma can mean only stinginess or meanness about learning (*pariyatta-dhamma*). Here the meanness lies in not wanting other people to know what one has acquired by learning the difficult and obscure passages in the Pāḷi text and its commentaries. One wishes to remain the sole authority in the matter of learning.

However, the unwillingness to share the book knowledge may be justified on two counts: 1) Where the learner's integrity is doubtful while the purity of the Dhamma needs to be safeguarded; 2) where the value of the Dhamma is carefully considered and the type of person needs to be saved in his own interest.

These two exceptions need to be understood properly.

1. In the first case, there are some persons in the world who are fickle-minded and change from one faith to another, from ascetic and Brahmin to a heretical ascetic. If such an unreliable monastic were to be taught the canon, he might distort the subtle teachings of the canon to suit his own purpose. He might misinterpret the meanings of scriptural terms such as meritoriousness and demeritoriousness. He might put the Buddha's teachings into the mouth of some heretic and claim that they were what the heretic teacher said. There would be confusion. Therefore keeping the canon from those unreliable monastics so as to preserve the purity of the Dhamma is justified.
2. In the second case, where the learner monastic is of the type of person who is likely to claim Awakening even though not yet an Arahat, that would be for his ruination. Keeping the canon from such an unreliable monastic is also justifiable. It is in his own interest that the profound Dhamma is not imparted to him, so that the non-sharing of learning in such cases is not stinginess or meanness.

Stinginess exists in the case of a teacher where he is afraid that his pupil might outshine him, or excel him in the interpretation of the Dhamma, and so withholds the learning.

Evil Consequences of Stinginess

1. One who acts with stinginess in dwelling (*āvāsa-macchariya*) is reborn as a demon or hungry spirit, and due to the meanness about his living quarters, he is destined to carry the filth of that dwelling place on his head wherever he goes.
2. One who is stingy about relatives and followers (*kula-macchariya*) feels painful to see his relatives and lay supporters making offerings to other monastics. The greater the degree of stinginess, the greater the pain there is. In extreme cases, thinking his relatives and lay supporters have turned away from him, the stingy monastic suffers heart-burn to such an extent that he may vomit blood, or his entrails may come out.
3. Stinginess about monastic requisites (*lābha-macchariya*), whether in respect of those of the Saṅgha or of a sect of the Saṅgha, not sharing them with fellow monastics, leads to rebirth as a demon or a hungry spirit or as a python.
4. Stinginess about personal appearance or attributes (*vaṇṇa-macchariya*), that makes one self-admiring and deprecating of others, leads to ugliness in appearance in future existences.
5. Stinginess regarding one's learning (*pariyatti-dhamma-macchariya*), keeping one's knowledge to oneself, leads to rebirth as a [953] dullard, an ignoramus, a stupid person.

Or, explained in another way:

1. One who acts with stinginess in dwelling (*āvāsa-macchariya*) leads to rebirth in the Niraya hell where the stingy one is baked on hot iron sheets. This is because he had prevented others from enjoying the peace and comfort of the living quarters.
2. One who is stingy about relatives and followers (*kula-macchariya*) results in a dearth of good fortune in future existences. This is the result

of denying others their rights, or receiving offerings at the homes of the lay supporters.

3. Stinginess about monastic requisites (*lābha-macchariya*) leads to rebirth in the Niraya hell where the stingy one wallows in human excreta. This Niraya is particularly nauseating. This kind of result follows the stingy one because he had deprived others of the pleasure of the enjoyment concerning the monastic requisites.

4. Stinginess about personal appearance or attributes (*vaṇṇa-macchariya*) results in a complete lack of presentable appearance and good attributes in future existences. A detestable appearance and an abominable reputation is what he inherits for his past meanness. Whatever good he might do, goes unnoticed by anyone like arrows shot in the dark night.

5. Stinginess regarding one's learning (*pariyatti-dhamma-macchariya*) sends the monastic down to the hell of hot ashes.

Envy

Envy arises from consideration of other people's property. Stinginess arises from consideration of one's own property. Since the object of thought differs, envy and stinginess cannot arise together.

In the world enmity, punishment and antagonism between persons arise due to envy and stinginess which are two evil fetters. These fetters are eliminated only by Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*). Unless envy and stinginess have been eliminated by Stream-entry knowledge, people's wish for freedom from enmity and so on will never be fulfilled; they will live miserably surrounded by enmity and so on. This is the explanation to the Buddha's answer to the first question. Why is it that all beings live in enmity and danger amidst enemies, sorrow and anger although they have an earnest desire to be free from them?

On hearing the Buddha's answer Sakka was delighted and said: "Venerable sir, that indeed is so. Fortunate One, that indeed is so. Having learnt the Fortunate One's answer, all my doubts are cleared, all uncertainties have left me."

The Second Question on Envy and Stinginess

After receiving with delight the Buddha's answer, Sakka put his next question thus: "Venerable sir, what is the cause of envy and stinginess? What is their

origin? What is their genesis? What is their source? When what factor is present, do envy and stinginess arise? When what factor is not present, do envy and stinginess not arise?"

To this question the Buddha replied as follows: "Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, envy and stinginess have objects, like living beings or conditioned formations that one likes and objects that one dislikes as their cause, as their origin, as their genesis, as their source. When objects that one likes and objects that one dislikes are present, envy and stinginess arise. When objects of like and dislike are not present, envy and stinginess do not arise."

> Herein, a living being or conditioned formation that one wants to possess is an object of one's liking, irrespective of its intrinsic nature of disagreeableness. This is because defilements delude the mind into liking something that is of a disagreeable nature. A living being or conditioned formation belonging [954] to another person is an object of one's dislike even though it is a good thing. This is because for one who looks at it in anger, with a biased mind, that good thing appears hateful.

Stinginess arises on account of objects that one likes. Envy arises on account of objects that one dislikes. In another mode of explanation, both envy and stinginess arise out of likes and dislikes. This will be elucidated as follows: For a monastic, a co-resident pupil or some living thing of his fancy may be there as an object of his liking. For a lay person, there are his children and his possessions, such as elephants, horses or cattle, which are objects of his liking. When the monastic or the lay person is away from them, even for a short time, he feels uneasy. When the monastic or the lay person sees someone else having similar objects, there arises in that monastic or lay person envy against the other person. If some other person were to come and ask that monastic or lay person to loan him that favourite pupil of the monastic, or the children or elephant or horse of the lay person, for some purpose, even for a short time, the monastic or lay person would refuse, saying: "I cannot loan him to you. He will get tired or feel bored." In this manner, there arises both envy and stinginess on account of some object of one's liking.

Again, for monastics, there are monastic requisites, such as alms bowl or robes, which are objects that he likes. For lay persons, there are various possessions, such as clothing and ornaments, which are objects that he or she likes. When that monastic or lay person sees someone else having similar objects of that

other person's liking, that monastic or lay person has an evil thought: "Oh it would be well if that person did not have those agreeable things!" This is envy. If someone were to ask that monastic or lay person to loan, for a short time, that property of his fancy, the monastic or lay person would refuse, saying: "Ah! That is not possible. I value that thing so much that I very seldom use it myself." This is how an object of one's liking gives rise to stinginess.

Furthermore, whether for a monastic or a lay person, there are persons or things such as a wayward pupil or child, or an inferior article in his or her possession. Although those persons and things are actually not likable persons or things, yet, due to the deluding nature of defilements, these very persons and things become objects of their liking. That monastic or lay person feels satisfaction about those persons or things. "Who else can have such valuable assets?" they think. Thus entertaining thoughts of self-admiration on account of greed (*lobha*) for these possessions, envy, the evil desire to deny others of those kinds of possessions, arises. This is envy that springs from self-esteem and that arises due to the likelihood or possibility of other persons coming into possession of the kind of things one possesses.

In another way: As in the aforesaid case where one entertains thoughts of self-admiration on account of greed for their possessions of no intrinsic worth, one wishes: "May that person not have those things!" Thus envy arises. This is envy that springs from what other people already possess.

> This latter explanation is not given in detail since it has already been shown in the commentary. The former explanation is made in an inferential way which is suitably modified to be in line with the sub-commentary thereto, and the sub-commentary to the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA). If someone came and asked for a loan of these persons or things of one's liking even for a short time, the owner is not willing to part with them. This is how persons or things that ought not to be cherished can also become a source of envy and stinginess.

The Third Question on Like and Dislike

Sakka received with delight the Buddha's answer and asked the next question: "Venerable sir, what is the cause of like and dislike? What is their origin? What is their genesis? What is their source? When what factor is present, do [955] like and dislike arise? When what factor is not present, do like and dislike not arise?"

And the Buddha answered thus: "Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, like and dislike have greedy craving (*chanda-taṇhā*) as their cause, as their origin, as their genesis, as their source. When greedy craving is present, like and dislike arise. When greedy craving is not present, like and dislike do not arise."

> Herein, *chanda* is synonymous with desires or wishes. *Chanda* is used in two ways: wishing to see, hear, smell, taste, touch or to know, and craving for sense objects. The former is a wholesome factor called desire to do (*kattu-kamyatā chanda*) which has the mental concomitant desire (*chanda*), a wish to do. The latter is craving (*taṇhā*) which has the mental concomitant greed (*lobha*), hankering after various sense objects. What is meant here is the latter type, greedy craving (*lobha-taṇhā-chanda*).

Five Kinds of Craving

1. Craving developed while seeking objects of sense pleasure (*pariyesana-chanda*).
2. Craving developed while acquiring objects of sense pleasure (*paṭilābha-chanda*).
3. Craving developed while enjoying objects of sense pleasure (*paribhoga-chanda*).
4. Craving developed while storing and securing sense pleasures (*sannidhi-chanda*).
5. Craving developed while bestowing rewards or gifts (*visajjana-chanda*), i.e. giving out one's property with expectation of reciprocal gain, as the bestowing of salaries and awards by rulers upon their men in the belief that these men will render them service by attending upon them and safeguarding them.

Greedy craving causes likes or dislikes. When one gets what one craves for, one likes and has a fondness for the thing acquired. When one fails to get what one craves for, one hates that object of one's craving, and dislike arises in him.

The Fourth Question on Greedy Craving

After listening with delight to the Buddha's answer, Sakka put his next question thus: "Venerable sir, what is the cause of greedy craving (*chanda-taṇhā*)? What

is its origin? What is its genesis? What is its source? When what factor is present, does craving arise? When what factor is not present, does craving not arise?"

The Buddha gave the answer: "Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, greedy craving has deliberation (*vinicchaya-takka*) as its cause, as its origin, as its genesis, as its source. When there is deliberation (*vinicchaya-takka*), greedy craving arises. When there is no deliberation, greedy craving does not arise."

> In this matter, thinking (*vitakka*) is not mere thinking about something in general. It is making up the mind about something after due deliberation (*vinicchaya-vitakka*). In making up the mind, the Buddha has pointed out the decision may be made in two ways: 1) A decision that is influenced by kinds of craving (*taṇhā-vinicchaya*) and 2) judgment made through the 62 wrong views (*diṭṭhi-vinicchaya*).

A decision influenced by craving cannot come to a judgment as to good or bad, agreeable [956] or disagreeable. That is because, as the saying goes, one man's food is another man's poison. For example, an earth-worm is a delicacy for certain rulers of the remote regions whereas it is nauseus to those of the middle region or kingdoms. Venison is a delicacy for rulers of the middle region whereas it is disagreeable to those of the remote regions. Decisions influenced by craving are not correct decisions. After having acquired something, whether it relates to a visible object, a sound, an odour, a taste, a tangible object, one considers how much will go to others and how much will be kept for oneself. This manner of making a decision is the function of deliberation (*vinicchaya-vitakka*).

Where one makes up one's mind about something that has been acquired after deliberating on it, and becomes attached to whatever is decided on by oneself, craving arises in respect of that object. That is the explanation of the Buddha's answer that deliberation is the cause of greedy craving.

The Fifth Question on Deliberation

Having learnt with great satisfaction the Buddha's answers, Sakka put another question thus: "Venerable sir, what is the cause of deliberation (*vinicchaya-vitakka*)? What is its origin? What is its genesis? What is its source? When what factor is present, does deliberation take place? When, what factor is not present, does deliberation not take place?"

And the Buddha replied: "Sakka, Lord of the Devas, deliberation has illusory perceptions (*saññā*) associated with proliferation (*papañca-dhamma*), which tends to prolong Saṁsāra, as their cause, as their origin, as their genesis, as their source. When there are illusory perceptions, deliberation takes place. When there are no illusory perceptions, deliberation does not take place."

> There are 3 types of craving: Craving for sense pleasure, craving for becoming, craving for non-becoming; or, alternatively, craving for sense pleasure, craving for form and craving for the formless.[234] As each type of craving arises with respect to six objects of sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, mind, it expands to 18 types. Again as each of them is concerned with 3 moments of past, present and future, it becomes 18 x 3 = 54 in number, which, when considered for both internal and external aspects, multiplies to 108.
>
> Herein, there are three kinds of illusion that tend to proliferate in the mind, they are, craving (*taṇhā*), conceit (*māna*) and wrong views (*diṭṭhi*). They are called proliferations (*papañca-dhamma*), because they tend to prolong the round of rebirth, and one who is under their spell, is called one who is attached to the world, who is egoistic, who is deluded. In other words, these three factors are hindrances that make one conceited and forgetful. In our present context, the illusion of craving is meant. There are six kinds or categories of illusory perceptions (*saññā*), according to the six sense objects, viz., perceptions about visible objects (*rūpa-saññā*), perceptions about sounds (*sadda-saññā*), perceptions about odours (*gandha-saññā*), etc. Deliberation or reason is developed based on those illusory perceptions.

The Sixth, Seventh, and Eighth Questions on Meditation

Then having learnt with much delight the Buddha's answer, Sakka asked further: [957] "Venerable sir, by what practice does a monastic destroy the proliferating perceptions (*saññā-papañca*), and get to Nibbāna where all perceptions cease?"

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[234] For details, see the translation of the Book of Analysis (*Vibhaṅga*) by Ashin Thiṭṭhila.

Contemplation of Sensations

1. Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, I declare that mentally agreeable sensations (*somanassa-vedanā*) are of two types: that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted to.

2. Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, I declare that mentally disagreeable sensations (*domanassa-vedanā*) also are of two types: that which should be resorted to and that which should not be resorted to.

3. Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, I declare that mentally neutral sensations (*upekkhā-vedanā*) are of two types: that which should be resorted to, and that which should not he resorted to.

1. Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, I have said earlier: 'I declare that mentally agreeable sensations are of two types: that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted to.' The reason for this statement is this: If you understand that in resorting to a certain pleasant sensation, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not resort to that pleasant sensation. Mentally agreeable sensations that tend to increase demeritoriousness and decrease meritoriousness should not be resorted to. The same should be understood to apply to the two other kinds of sensation.

Of the two types of mentally agreeable sensation, if you understand that in resorting to a certain pleasant sensation, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should resort to that mentally agreeable sensation. Mentally agreeable sensations that tend to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness should be resorted to. The same should be understood to apply to the two other kinds of sensation.

Of the type of mentally agreeable sensations that should be resorted to, there is one that arises together with initial application of the mind and with sustained application of the mind (*savitakka-savicāra-somanassa*); and there is also the one that arises without initial application of the mind and without sustained application of the mind (*avitakka-avicāra-somanassa*). Of these two the one without sustained application of the mind (*avitakka-avicāra-somanassa*) is superior.

Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, it is for this reason that I have said: 'I declare that mentally agreeable sensations are of two types: that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted to.'

2. Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, I have said earlier: 'I declare that mentally disagreeable sensations (*domanassa-vedanā*) are of two types: that which should be resorted to and that which should not be resorted to.' The reason for this statement is this: If you understand that in resorting to a certain mentally disagreeable sensation, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not resort to that unpleasant sensation.

Of those two types of mentally disagreeable sensations, if you understand that in resorting to a certain unpleasant sensation, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should resort to that unpleasant sensation.

Of the types of mentally disagreeable sensations that should be resorted to, there is the one that arises together with initial application of the mind and with sustained application of the mind (*savitakka-savicāra-domanassa*); and there is one that arises without initial application of the mind and without sustained application of [958] the mind (a*vitakka-avicāra-domanassa*). Of these two, the one without initial application of the mind and without sustained application of [958] the mind is superior.

Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, it is for this reason that I have said: 'I declare that there are two types of mentally disagreeable sensations that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted to.'

3. Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, I have said earlier: 'I declare that mentally neutral sensations (*upekkhā-vedanā*) are of two types: that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted to.' The reason for this statement is this: If you understand that in resorting to a certain mentally neutral sensation, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not resort to that mentally neutral sensation.

Of those two types of mentally neutral sensations, if you understand that in resorting to a certain mentally neutral sensation, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not resort to that neutral sensation.

Of those two types of mentally neutral sensation, if you understand that in resorting to a certain mentally neutral sensation, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should resort to that neutral sensation.

Of the type of mentally neutral sensations that should be resorted to, there is one that arises with initial application of the mind and with sustained application of the mind (*savitakka-savicāra-upekkhā*); and there is also one that arises without initial application of the mind and without sustained application of the mind (*avitakka-avicāra-upekkhā*). Of these two, the one that arises without initial application of the mind and without sustained application of the mind is superior.

Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, it is for this reason that I have said: 'I declare that mentally neutral sensations are of two types: that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted to.'

Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, a monastic, who practises thus, is one who works for the extinction of proliferating perceptions, the group of perceptions associated with the proliferation factor (*papañca*) that leads to Nibbāna where all perceptions cease."

When the Buddha answered thus giving an analytical exposition of meditation of sensation, Sakka was delighted and said, expressing his approval: "Venerable sir, that indeed is so. Fortunate One, that indeed is so. Having learnt the Fortunate One's answer, I am rid of all doubts about this question, all uncertainties have left me."

> In this connection, the commentary discusses, as follows, some interesting points on the subtleties of the Dhamma.

In the present question, Sakka asks the Buddha about the practice that leads to Nibbāna in a subjective manner. The Buddha answers in an objective way about the three kinds of sensation, that is, the method of insight-development through contemplation of agreeable (*somanassa-vedanā*), disagreeable (*domanassa-vedanā*) and neutral sensations (*upekkhā-vedanā*). Since the Buddha's answer consists of contemplation of three sensations, the commentary speaks of three questions: Questions about agreeable sensations (*somanassa-paṇhā*), questions about disagreeable sensations (*domanassa-paṇhā*), and questions about neutral sensations (*upekkhā-paṇhā*), one on each of the three sensations.

The question asked by Sakka was: "By what practice does a monastic work towards Nibbāna?" The Buddha does not give a straight answer, such as: "In this way, a monastic practices the way leading to Nibbāna." Instead he replied: "Sakka, agreeable sensations are of two types: that which should be resorted to, and that which should not be resorted to." This might strike as incongruent to those not conversant with the Buddha's various methods of teaching.

The commentary elucidates this problem in the following way: [959] In this sixth question of Sakka, is the Buddha's answer relevant to Sakka's question, one might ask? The answer: Yes, it is.

And the explanation is this: Sakka asks subjectively about a practice towards attaining Nibbāna. It is a personal question. The Buddha gives the answer to suit the temperament of Sakka for working towards Nibbāna. The answer revolves around contemplation of the mind, which is suited to Sakka's mental make-up. The Buddha opens up the subject of meditation of mental phenomena with contemplation on the three kinds of sensations. Therefore, the answer is a relevant answer.

To expand this: For Devas, the mind is a more appropriate subject for contemplation than the body. Amongst the mental aggregates, sensations are the most vivid to perceive. The physical composition of Devas is more subtle than that of human beings. Being a result of superior deeds (*kamma*), their digestive capacity is also remarkably greater than that of human beings so that very rich Deva nutriment can easily be digested. This means a need for regular feeding. When a Deva misses a meal, he feels the pangs of hunger very acutely. In fact, it can lead to dissolution of the body like a lump of butter placed on a heated slab.

This shows that, to a Deva, the truth of painful sensation (*dukkha-vedanā*) is very easy to perceive. Similarly, pleasant sensation is due to superior kinds of Deva; pleasures that may be indulged in to greater and greater degree are also easy to perceive. This also holds true for neutral sensation (*upekkhā-vedanā*) which is peaceful and wholesome. That is why the Buddha chooses the contemplation of the three kinds of sensations, agreeable sensations, disagreeable sensations and neutral sensations as a suitable practice for Sakka.

This will be elaborated further: There is meditation for insight (*vipassanā*) into the physical aspect of one's body and meditation for insight (*vipassanā*) into the mental aspect of one's body. Of these two main methods, the Buddha prescribes

the former to those who have the capacity to perceive physical phenomena. It may be taught briefly or in an elaborate way. Usually, the essential nature of the four primary elements is taught in detail as the meditation subject (*catu-dhātu-vavatthāna-kammaṭṭhāna*) on physical phenomena. To those who have the innate capacity to perceive mental phenomena, a suitable subject on mental phenomena is taught. In such a case, the physical basis of the mind has to be contemplated first before proceeding to the contemplation of mental phenomena. In the case of Sakka too, this was the procedure: physical phenomena was first touched upon briefly. However, in the recorded text of the teaching that preliminary aspect is not specified and the discourse on mental phenomena alone is recorded.

With Devas, mental phenomena are better perceived. So the three kinds of sensation are taught first. When mental phenomena is contemplated at the outset, there are three approaches:

1. Through contact (*phassa*).
2. Through sensation (*vedanā*).
3. Through mind (*citta*).

The three approaches are adopted only at the initial stage of meditation. Once the nature of mental phenomena is grasped and when the impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and unsubstantiality (*anatta*) of mental phenomena is contemplated upon, all mental phenomena are comprehended. To explain this further:

1. With some yogis, after contemplation of the body has been mastered in a brief manner or in an elaborate manner, contact (*phassa*), which is a mental phenomenon, falls on the physical phenomena that is under contemplation and becomes evident.
2. With some yogis, the sensation experienced in respect of the physical phenomena, which is under contemplation, becomes evident.
3. With some yogis, the consciousness which cognizes the physical phenomenon under contemplation, becomes evident. In these three ways, the interrelationship between mind and body comes to be understood by the yogi. [960]

Comprehending Contact

1. Contact, sensation, perception, volition, and consciousness are a group of five key mental concomitants that arise together. In the discussion on the three types of yogis, the one who vividly perceives contact (*phassa*) between mind and matter does not comprehend contact alone. Rather, he comes to realize the sensation (*vedanā*), which experiences the contact, is also there; that perception (*saññā*), which perceives the object of contemplation, is also there; that volition (*cetanā*), which brings into play all associated mental factors, is also there; that consciousness (*viññāṇa*), which cognizes the object of contemplation, is also there. Thus the five closely related mental factors headed by contact are comprehended.

2. The yogi, who perceives sensation, does not comprehend sensation alone. Rather, he comes to realize that, along with the arising of that sensation, there arises contact between the mind and the physical phenomena under contemplation; he also realizes that there also arises perception which perceives it; that there also arises volition which motivates the associated mental factors; and that there also arises consciousness which cognizes the object of contemplation. Thus the five mental factors headed by contact are comprehended.

3. The yogi, who perceives consciousness, does not comprehend consciousness alone. Rather, he understands that besides the consciousness, there also arises contact whereby the mind meets the object of contemplation; that there also arises sensation which experiences the contact; that there also arises perception which perceives the object; and that there also arises volition that motivates the associated mental factors. Thus the five mental factors headed by contact are comprehended.

Having comprehended contact and its four associated mental factors (*phassa-pañcamaka*), the yogi contemplates on what is the basis of their arising. Then he discerns that the five mental factors have the corporeal body as their basis. The body, in the ultimate sense, is the corporeality that has arisen, made up of the primary four elements (*bhūta-rūpa*) and secondary elements (*upādāya-rūpa*). Thus, the truth that contact and its associating four mental factors arise dependent on the body is understood. The basis, where the mental factors arise, is seen in its reality as physical phenomena or matter (*rūpa*); and that the five

associated factors headed by contact is mental phenomena or mind (*nāma*); and that there is just mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*) and nothing else. Between the two interrelated phenomena, matter comprises the aggregate of corporeality; mind comprises the four mental aggregates. Thus, there are just the five aggregates (*khandha*). Indeed, there is no aggregate apart from mind and matter; there is no mind or matter apart from the five aggregates.

The yogi then contemplates: "What is the cause of the arising of the five aggregates?" He understands fundamentally and truly that the five aggregates arise due to ignorance (*avijjā*), craving (*taṇhā*) and deeds (*kamma*). Thus, he understands that the continued phenomenon of the five aggregates is the effect of this cause: Ignorance, craving and deeds, and that apart from cause and effect there is nothing that can truly be called a person or a being, and that all are aggregates of conditioned phenomena. Thus, having comprehended that mind and matter arise from a cause, the yogi continually contemplates on the impermanence, suffering, and non-self (*anicca, dukkha, anatta*) of mind and matter, thereby gaining insight into the mind-matter complex stage by stage. This effort and its rewards indicate strong insight (*balava-vipassanā*).

The yogi, who has advanced to this high level of insight, becomes very eager to attain the paths and fruitions. He strives for the development of insight, encouraging himself with the thought: "I am going to achieve the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna even today." When four appropriate factors: weather, associates, food, and discourse that are conducive to his Awakening are present together, he attains path-knowledge. And even at one sitting of meditation, the culmination of insight development may be realized and he becomes an Arahat.

In the above manner, the Buddha has already shown how a yogi, to whom contact is [961] comprehended, or sensation is comprehended, or consciousness is comprehended, may gain Awakening through proper insight development.

In the Discourse about Sakka's Questions the Buddha discourses on contemplation of mental phenomena, concentrating on sensation (*vedanā*) as the meditation subject appropriate for Sakka. This is so because Devas, including Sakka, will not find either contact (*phassa*) or consciousness (*viññāṇa*) as comprehensible as sensation (*vedanā*). Therefore, sensation is an appropriate subject of meditation for Devas for gaining insight into mental phenomena.

To explain this further: The arising of pleasant sensation (*sukha-vedanā*) and unpleasant sensation (*dukkha-vedanā*) is very evident. When pleasant sensation arises, the whole body is permeated with it. One gets excited. There is a feeling of ease, as if being fed with butter refined 100 times over, or being applied on the skin with oil refined 100 times over, or relieving heat by taking a bath with cool clear water contained in 1,000 pots. It causes the person who experiences it to exclaim: "Oh! This is pleasant, really pleasant!"

When unpleasant or painful sensation arises also, it pervades the whole body causing great agitation and discomfort. It is as though lumps of red hot iron were inserted into the body, or as though molten iron were poured down over one's body, or as though a bundle of burning faggots were thrown into a forest of dried trees and grass. It causes the person experiencing it to groan painfully: "Oh! This is painful, really painful!" Thus, the arising of pleasant sensation and unpleasant sensation is quite evident.

This is not the case with neutral sensation (*upekkhā-vedanā*), which is not so evident. It is as though hidden by darkness. In the absence of any pleasant sensation or painful sensation, the yogi can only use his reason to understand the neutral sensation which is neither-pleasant-nor-unpleasant. It is like a hunter chasing a deer, making a reasoned guess where the deer's hoof prints appear at one end of a slab of rock as ascending it, and appear at the other end while descending therefrom, and coming to the conclusion that the deer must have walked across the rock. Where pleasant sensation has been clearly noted in the yogi's awareness, and later unpleasant sensation also has been clearly noted, the yogi can, by applying his reason, judge that during the moments when two kinds of sensation are not felt, there has arisen in him a neutral sensation that is neither-pleasant-nor-unpleasant. In this way the yogi comprehends neutral sensation (*upekkhā-vedanā*).

Thus, the Buddha first taught Sakka contemplation of physical phenomena and then proceeded to the subject of the three sensations as a method of contemplating mental phenomena. This method, whereby a discourse on the contemplation of physical phenomena is followed by a discourse on the three sensations as a meditation subject, is a common method used by the Buddha to suit the hearer in each situation. It can be found, besides the present discourse to Sakka, in many other discourses, including: The Long Discourse about the Ways of Attending to Mindfulness (*Mahā-sati-paṭṭhāna-sutta*, DN 22), the Discourse

about the Ways of Attending to Mindfulness (*Sati-paṭṭhāna-sutta*, MN 10), the Short Discourse on the Destruction of Craving (*Cūḷa-taṇhā-saṅkhaya-sutta*, MN 37), the Long Discourse on the Destruction of Craving (*Mahā-taṇhā-saṅkhaya-sutta*, MN 38), the Short Discourse giving an Elaboration (*Cūḷa-vedalla-sutta*, MN 44), the Long Discourse giving an Elaboration (*Mahā-vedalla-sutta*, MN 43), the Discourse to Raṭṭhapāla (*Raṭṭhapāla-sutta*, MN 82), the Discourse to Māgaṇḍiya (*Māgaṇḍiya-sutta*, MN 75), the Discourse giving an Analysis of the Elements (*Dhātu-vibhaṅga-sutta*, MN 140), the Discourse on what is Conducive to the Imperturbable (*Āneñja-sappāya-sutta*, MN 106) and the whole of the Thematic Discourses about Feeling (*Vedanā-saṁyutta*, SN 36).

The commentary says: "In the Discourse about Sakka's Questions (*Sakka-pañha-sutta*), meditation on the physical phenomena, being simply an object of sensation, is not expressly mentioned. Probably this is why it is not on record in the Pāḷi text." This statement is rather terse and obscure. Its purport will, therefore, be brought out here: The commentary means: "The Fortunate One taught Sakka and other Devas contemplation of physical phenomena first and then proceeded with contemplation of mental phenomena through the three sensations which was the way they could understand the Dhamma, considering their capacity to comprehend." This statement might be challenged by certain persons pointing out the fact that there is no mention in the text that the Buddha taught contemplation of physical phenomena to Sakka. The answer lies in the fact that Devas are highly perceptible to mental phenomena, and among all mental phenomena, sensation is best understood by them. It is the Buddha's method in teaching those with a strong capacity to understand mental phenomena, to make a preliminary [962] discourse on physical phenomena just to provide a grounding for understanding mental phenomena, on which latter subject he would dwell at length. In the present case, Sakka and his company had a strong capacity to understand mental phenomena and so the Buddha mentioned physical phenomena simply as an object of sensation, showing them what constitutes physical phenomena. And having stated it in a most brief manner, the Buddha taught the three kinds of sensation in an elaborate manner. Therefore, it must be noted that physical phenomena forms just a preliminary subject as object of sensation, and hence this is not recorded in the text. This is the purport of the terse commentarial statement referred to above.

[An elaborate section of the meditation of feelings has been removed to the Further Explanations as it breaks the flow of the text too much.]

The Story of the Elder Mahāsīva

Monastics should also practice the meditation of sensations, or feelings, but if, even after very rigorous practice, a monastic still does not attain the Arahat fruition, despondency sets in his mind. He reflects: "Alas, I am still not one of those who are invited to assemble at the yearly congregation where the Invitation of the Pure (*Visuddhi-pavāraṇā*) is performed." He feels very sad like the monastic elder Mahāsiva of Gāmantapabbhāra, and tears may flow down his face.

In Śrī Laṅkā, there once lived a monastic elder named Mahāsīva who had eighteen groups or sets of monastics learning at his feet. Thirty thousand of his pupils had become Arahats under his tutorship. One of the 30,000 Arahats thought to himself: "I have acquired infinite qualities in terms of morality, and so on. How about the qualities attained by my teacher Mahāsīva?" And he knew that his teacher was still a worldling. He reflected thus: "Alas, our teacher Mahāsīva has been the support of others, but is not the support for himself. I will now admonish our teacher." So thinking, he travelled through psychic power in the air, descended near the elder's monastery, and went to Mahāsīva, who was sitting in a secluded place. He made obeisance to the teacher and sat down at a suitable distance.

The teacher said to this pupil: "Observer of the ascetic practice of eating from one bowl only, what calls you here?"

> This is a term of endearment used by elders of the past to monastics who practise insight-meditation.

The pupil said: "Venerable sir, I come to learn from you a discourse of appreciation (*anumodanā*) for use at an offering ceremony." [966]

"It is not possible to learn it here, friend."

"May I learn it at the place where you usually stop and consider the direction you should make for the day's alms gathering?"

"Other monastics will be putting their questions to me there."

"May I learn it on the alms round?"

"There too, other monastics will be putting their questions."

"May I learn it where the venerable elder robes himself fully with the upper robe, or while rearranging the robes for going into the village, or where the alms bowl is made ready for alms gathering, or at the place of taking the gruel meal at the rest house after the alms round?"

"At those places, monastic elders will be asking questions to clear up their doubts concerning the commentarial literature."

"May I ask you on your return from the alms round?"

"Then also other monastics will be asking questions."

"May I ask on the way from the village to the monastery?"

"Then also other monastics will be asking questions."

"May I ask after your meal at the monastery? Or at the place of seclusion when the venerable elder washes his feet? Or at the time the venerable elder washes his face?"

"At those times, also other monastics usually ask questions, friend. From this time till the next day's dawn, there are monastics coming to me endlessly without a moment's break, friend."

"May I then ask at the time the venerable elder is cleaning his teeth and washing his face?"

"Impossible friend, other monastics will be asking their questions."

"May I ask when the venerable elder enters the monastery and sits there?"

"Then also, there will be other monastics asking questions."

"Venerable sir, as a matter of fact, there should be a moment to spare when the venerable elder sits in meditation in the monastery after having washed his face, during the moments of shifting the sitting posture for three or four times. From what the venerable elder says, would there be no time to die too? Venerable sir, you are like the leaning board providing others support, but not being one's own support. My real purpose in coming to you is not to learn a discourse from you." So saying, he disappeared.

Mahāsīva retires into the Forest

Ven. Mahāsīva then saw the real purpose of that monastic's visit: "This monastic does not want to learn the teaching. He came here to admonish me. But this is not the time for me to go out into seclusion in the forest. I must wait till morning," he said to himself. He made ready to leave with his bowl and robes which he kept handy. He taught the whole day and the first and middle watches of the night. When, in the third watch of the night, one of the pupils was leaving, he slipped out together with him, letting everyone think he was one of the pupils. Other pupils awaiting the next class thought that the teacher was out to answer the call of nature. The student monastic who went out together also took the teacher for a co-student.

Ven. Mahāsīva was confident that the Arahat fruition should not take more than a few days to attain, and he would come back from forest seclusion after becoming an Arahat. So he did not bid farewell to his pupils when he left the monastery on the thirteenth day of Visākha, and went to a cave known as Gāmantapabbhāra, a cave which was in the vicinity of a village. By the full moon day, he had not became an Arahat. "I thought I could attain the Arahat fruition in a few days," he thought, "but the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period has arrived. I will spend the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) here and will accomplish my task by the end of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), by the Invitation day (*Pavāraṇā*)." So, regarding three months as though it were three days, he went into ardent practice. But at the end of the [967] three months he was still unable to attain the Arahat fruition. Mahāsīva reflected: "I had come here hoping to attain the Arahat fruition in three days, but three months have passed without my attaining it. My fellow monastics have joined the Saṅgha congregation of Arahats now." He felt miserable and tears streamed down his face.

Then he pondered: "Perhaps I have been indulgent: I have alternated the four bodily postures: lying, sitting, standing and walking, in my meditation work. I will now renounce the lying posture and will not wash my feet until I attain the Arahat fruition." So he put away his cot in a corner and resumed meditation. Another Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) passed by, and no Awakening was at hand. Each Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) ended not with Awakening but with tears, tears of noble desire unfulfilled. In this way, 29 years marked by 29 assemblies of the Arahats at the end of each Rains Retreat went by.

Young boys from the village noticed the ruptures that had developed on both of the Mahāsīva's feet and they tried their best to patch them up with thorns. Then they joked among themselves: "Oh, how I envy those ruptured feet."

A Devakañña comes to the Rescue

On the full moon day, in the month of the October (*Assayuja*), in the thirtieth year of his ardent practice, Mahāsīva sat leaning against a board and took stock of the situation. "I have been trying for 30 years, and the Arahat fruition is still beyond my reach. Clearly, Awakening is not for me in this life. How I miss the opportunity of attending to the congregation of Arahats together with my fellow monastics." An unpleasant sensation (*domanassa-vedanā*) overwhelmed him. Tears came rolling down his face.

At the time, a Devakañña stood before him sobbing. The monastic elder asked: "Who is there weeping?"

"I am a Devakañña, venerable sir."

"Why do you weep like this?"

"Venerable sir, I think weeping is the way to attainment of path and fruition and I am weeping following your example in the hope of attaining one path and fruition or two."

At this, the old monastic's pride was rudely shaken. He said to himself: "Now, Mahāsīva, you have made yourself the laughing-stock of a young Devakañña. Does it become you?" A strong feeling of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) overtook him. He redoubled his endeavour and soon became an Arahat along with the four discriminative knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*).

Now that he felt relaxed mentally, he thought of stretching himself awhile. He cleaned up his cot, filled his water pots, and sat at the head of the walkway, reminding himself of the need to wash his feet that he had neglected for these 30 years.

Sakka washes Mahāsīva's Feet

Ven. Mahāsīva's pupils remembered their teacher in the thirtieth year of his departure and saw by their special powers that he had become an Arahat. Knowing what had crossed in the teacher's mind, they said: "It is ridiculous to let our teacher trouble himself to wash his own feet while pupils like ourselves

are living." Thinking thus, all 30,000 Arahat-pupils travelled in the direction of the cave where Ven. Mahāsīva was sitting, all of them vying with one another to get the opportunity of washing their teacher's feet.

Ven. Mahāsīva however insisted that he must do the job, which he had neglected for 30 years himself. At that juncture, Sakka thought to himself: "The monastic elder is insisting on washing his feet himself, refusing to have them washed by his 30,000 Arahat pupils. It is absurd that the revered one should bother to wash his own feet while a lay supporter like myself is living. I will go there and do the job." He took his Queen Sūjā with him and appeared at the scene. Putting his queen in front, he announced to the 30,000 Arahat monks: "Make way, venerable sirs, a woman is coming." He then made obeisance to Ven. Mahāsīva and sat squatting before him, and said: "Venerable sir, let me wash [968] your feet."

"Sakka of the Kosiya clan, I have left my feet unwashed for 30 full years. Human bodies smell bad by nature. The smell is so pungent that even for a Deva staying 100 leagues away from a human body, its smell is as obnoxious as carrion tied around his neck. So leave the washing to me."

Sakka replied: "Venerable sir, as for us the natural smell of the human body is obscured by the fragrance of your morality, which rises beyond the sense sphere Deva realms (*kāmāvacara*) and reaches the topmost realm of the Brahmas. Venerable sir, there is no fragrance that surpasses the fragrance of morality. Your morality has compelled us to render personal service to you." Then Sakka took firm hold of the elder's ankle with his left hand and washed his soles with his right hand till they glowed like the soft soles of a child. After doing this personal service to the elder, Sakka made obeisance to him and returned to his celestial abode.

In this way, a yogi, who finds himself unable to become an Arahat, feels, as in the case of Ven. Mahāsīva: "Ah, how I miss the opportunity of holding congregation with fellow monastics who are Arahats." He becomes despondent suffering disagreeable sensations (*domanassa-vedanā*). When he attains meditation or insight knowledge or path and fruition as the outcome of, or caused by, that unpleasant feeling which he considers either as associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, or not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the

mind. Such attainment is called, figuratively, unpleasant sensation with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, or unpleasant sensation without initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. It should be noted that the Buddha termed these attainments as figures of speech, taken from the point of view of result or that of cause.

Thus, according to the yogi's view of the unpleasant sensation, either as associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, or as not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, when in due course the unpleasant sensation leads to meditation or insight knowledge, or the paths and fruitions, these attainments are called, figuratively, unpleasant sensation with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, or unpleasant sensation without initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind.

In this context, where a monastic contemplates the meditation, whether neighbourhood absorption (*upacāra-jhāna*) or the first absorption (*paṭhama-jhāna*), called unpleasant sensation with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind (*savitakka-savicāra*), as impermanent, suffering and unsubstantial, he considers: "Where does this unpleasant sensation originate?" He comes to understand that it has its origin in the body as its base. From this understanding, he progresses, stage by stage, to Awakening.

If there is another monastic who contemplates the second absorption (*dutiya-jhāna*), the third absorption (*tatiya-jhāna*), etc. which are called unpleasant sensation which is not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind (*avitakka-avicāra*), as impermanent, suffering and unsubstantial, by stages he becomes an Arahat.

In the above two cases, both have unpleasant sensation as the object of insight meditation but the unpleasant sensation, which is not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, is superior to the unpleasant sensation which is associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. Regarding the insight knowledge gained from the meditation also, the former is superior to the latter. Regarding the fruition of the final path-knowledge (*Arahatta-phala*) also, the former is superior. That is why the Buddha says that, of the two types of unpleasant sensation, the one that is not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained

application of the mind is superior. These are points to note concerning unpleasant sensation (*domanassa-vedanā*). [969]

3. The neutral sensation (*upekkhā*) which tends to increase demeritoriousness and decrease meritoriousness, and is therefore not to be resorted to, means home-dependent neutral sensations (*geha-sita-upekkhā*). It means strong attachment to sense-pleasures. When some agreeable object arises at the six doors: the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, one is unable to overcome the defilements and falls prey to that sense object just as a fly is caught by a piece of jaggery. One who relishes sense-pleasures is imprisoned by them.

Repeated resort to home-dependent neutral sensations tends to increase demeritoriousness and decrease meritoriousness. That is why the Buddha said that home-dependent neutral sensations should not be resorted to.

The neutral sensation which tends to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness, and should, therefore, be resorted to, means neutral sensations that depend on renunciation (*nekkhamma-sita-upekkhā*). It is a neutral attitude to both agreeable and disagreeable objects arising at the six sense spheres: the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. Agreeable sense objects are not attached to. Disagreeable objects do not cause anger or vexation. Neither-agreeable-nor-disagreeable sense objects do not cause delusion (*moha*) due to having an unbalanced attitude. The yogi contemplates all the six sense objects as impermanent, suffering, and subject to change and thus discerns all of them as they really are. This neutral attitude is a form of neutral sensation which arises with wisdom in the mental process of the yogi. In other words, this evenness of attitude is also called indifferent feeling or specific neutrality (*tatra-majjhattatā*). It means having a detached attitude to both agreeable and disagreeable sense objects. Neutral feeling (*vedanupekkhā*) and having a balanced attitude, or specific neutrality (*tatra-majjhattatā*), are taken as neutral (*upekkhā*).

That being so, resorting to the six kinds of neutral sensation inclined to renunciation, six neutral sensations that rely on renunciation, at all times, i.e. from the time of becoming a monastic, throughout all the stages of monastic practice beginning with the practice of the ten reflections (*anussati*), till the attainment of meditation, up to the fourth absorption (*jhāna*), decreases

demeritoriousness and increases meritoriousness. Therefore the Buddha said neutral sensations that rely on renunciation should be resorted to.

Of the two types of neutral sensations that rely on renunciation: the one associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind (*savitakka-savicāra-upekkhā*), the neutral sensation that arises at all times, from the time of becoming a monastic throughout all the stages of insight-development through various contemplations, up till the attainment of the first absorption (*paṭhama-jhāna*) and the one not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind (*avitakka-avicāra-upekkhā*), at the attainment of the second absorption (*dutiya-jhāna*), the first one is superior to the second.

The above passage compares the Arahat fruition attained by two monastics, in two ways of monastic practice:

The first monastic, in contemplating a neutral sensation associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, considers: "On what does this neutral sensation depend?" And he comes to the right understanding that it arises dependent on the body. From that understanding, he proceeds to gain insight knowledge, stage by stage, until he becomes an Arahat.

The second monastic, contemplating the neutral sensation not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind that arises at the second, the third, and the fourth absorptions (*jhāna*) gains insight knowledge, stage by stage, until he becomes an Arahat.

Of those two monastics, the neutral sensation that serves as the object of meditation of the second monastic, being not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, is superior to the neutral sensation that serves as the object of meditation of the first monastic which is associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. Regarding the thoughts that arise in the two monastics during their meditation, the thoughts that arise in the second monastic, being not associated [970] with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, are superior to the thoughts of the first monastic which are associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. Regarding the attainment of the Arahat fruition won through contemplation of the neutral sensation, the attainment of the second monastic, being not associated with

initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, is superior to that of the first monastic which is associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind.

Sakka established in Stream-Entry

Having discoursed on pleasant sensation, unpleasant sensation and neutral sensation that lead to Awakening, the Buddha concluded the teaching with these words: "Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, a monastic, who practises thus, is one who works out the extinction of proliferating perceptions associated with craving (*taṇhā*), conceit (*māna*) and wrong view (*diṭṭhi*) that prolongs the suffering in Saṁsāra leading to Nibbāna where all perceptions cease." At that moment, Sakka attained the fruition of Stream-entry.

The benevolent desire of the Buddhas is the noblest intention to bestow the highest blessing, the superior or exalted mind, never of inferior or lower type. Wherever the Buddhas make a discourse to an individual or to a congregation, they always show the way to becoming an Arahat. Amongst the hearers, some attain Stream-entry, some become Once-returners, some become Non-returners, and some become Arahats, according to the sufficing condition, or, the ripeness of their past merit.

To bring in a simile here: The Buddha is like the royal father, the hearers of his teaching are like the princelings. The father makes morsels of food in the size that he usually takes, and feeds them into the mouths of the princelings. The princelings take in as much food, only of what as their mouths can receive. Similarly, the Buddha disseminates the Dhamma in the highest level of becoming an Arahat, then from amongst the hearers some attain the first fruition, some the second, some the third, and some the fourth, according to their capacity for understanding.

Sakka is reborn as Sakka a Second Time

After attaining Stream-entry, Sakka passed away in the presence of the Buddha and was reborn as Sakka for a second time.

There is an important point to note in this connection: When a Deva passes away no corpse remains as is the case with a human being. The body ceases to exist and disappears just like a flame disappears. Whereas, when a human being dies, the corporeality born of productive deeds (*kammaja-rūpa*) disappears first.

Seventeen thought-moments after the disappearance of corporeality born of productive deeds, mind-born corporeality (*cittaja-rūpa*) disappears. Within a few moments, nutriment-born corporeality (*āhāraja-rūpa*) disappears since no external nutriment sustains it. Temperature-born corporeality (*utuja-rūpa*) however stays on for a long time, taking its own process. With Devas it is totally different. This is so because Devas have a type of rebirth quite different from human beings. They are born instantly as adults. When their corporeality born of productive deeds dissolves, the remaining kinds of corporeality, i.e. mind-born, temperature-born, and nutriment-born corporeality, all these dissolve simultaneously. The result is that there are no physical remains when a Deva passes away. The body vanishes there and then.

> The difference in the fact of the presence of the human dead body and the absence of the Deva dead body at their passing away is a matter that requires some basic understanding[235] of the arising of the aggregates of a human being and those of a Deva at the [971] moment of conception.
>
> At the moment of conception or rebirth (*paṭisandhi*) of a human being, three corporeality units (*kalāpa*), each a mere speck of an atom, come into being: the body decad (*kāya-dasaka-kalāpa*), the sex decad (*bhāva-dasaka-kalāpa*) and the base decad (*vatthu-dasaka-kalāpa*). The corporeality born of productive deeds and the mind-born corporeality, temperature-born corporeality and nutriment-born corporeality arise at the due moment. Whenever these four types of corporeality advance to the stage of static moment (*ṭhiti-khaṇa*), each unit of the element of heat (*tejo-dhātu*) inherent in those corporeal units continuously produces temperature-born corporeality, resulting in a multiplication of temperature-born clusters (*utuja kalāpa*) and the growth of the human body.
>
> This continuous increment of the temperature-born corporeality has the effect of constituting most of the bulk of the human body so much so it is virtually the owner of the house of the human body, turning the three other types of corporeality: *kamma*-born, mind-born, and nutriment-born corporeality into mere guests at the house. This is the nature of

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[235] Readers could enhance their understanding of this chapter by studying A Manual of Abhidhamma by Nārada Thera, Chapter Six, which deals with an Analysis of Matter, containing sections on the enumeration of matter, the classification of matter, the manner of the arising of material phenomana, etc.

> corporeality in human beings as well as all other womb-born beings. When they die, the corporeality born of productive deeds, the mind-born corporeality and the nutriment-born corporeality in them vanish away, like guests in the house leaving the body; but temperature-born corporeality, which is like the owner of the house, remains for a comparatively long time.
>
> In the case of Devas, corporeality born of productive deeds, arising at the moment of instant rebirth, constitutes the whole of the Deva body which is three miles long, and is like the owner of the house while the three other types of corporeality: Mind-born, temperature-born, and nutriment-born corporeality are like guests at the house, sharing space within the Deva body.
>
> Therefore, Devas and Brahmas, who are reborn instantly as adults, do not leave behind any remains of their body at death. The three types of corporeality other than corporeality born of productive deeds, like guests who cannot stay on in the house when the house is no more, vanish when the corporeality born of productive deeds dissolves at death. This is a profound matter. It is intelligible only to those who have a grounding in the phenomenal processes of mind and matter.

Since Sakka passed away and was reborn as Sakka even while listening to the discourse, no one among his celestial company knew that it was not the same Sakka. Only Sakka himself knew it, besides him the Buddha knew it by his all-knowing wisdom.

The Ninth, Tenth and Eleventh Questions on Restraint

Sakka now thought: "The Fortunate One has made it very clear to me about pleasant sensation, unpleasant sensation and neutral sensation just as clear butter oil has been extracted out of a lump of butter. But path and fruition evidently is the result for which there must be a cause by way of appropriate practice. Certainly, the supermundane paths and fruitions cannot be had merely by asking, like a bird soaring up the sky. There must be a practice that leads to the supermundane. I shall now ask the Fortunate One the preliminary practice whereby the Arahat fruition is attained."

So he asked the Buddha: "Venerable sir, in which way does a monastic practise the morality of restraint according to the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara-sīla*)?"

On being asked thus, the Buddha replied: "Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, there are two kinds of bodily conduct: That which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted. There are two kinds of verbal conduct: That which should be [972] adopted, and that which should not be adopted. There are two kinds of quests: That which should be taken up, and that which should not be taken up.

Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, I have said: 'There are two kinds of bodily conduct: That which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted.' The reason for my saying so is this: If you understand that in adopting a certain mode of bodily conduct demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not adopt such a mode of bodily conduct.

> Bodily conduct that tends to increase demeritoriousness and decrease meritoriousness should not be adopted. The same interpretation should be made in respect of the next two statements.

Of the two kinds of bodily conduct, if you understand that in adopting a certain mode of bodily conduct demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases you should adopt such a mode of bodily conduct.

Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, that is the reason why I said: 'There are two kinds of bodily conduct: That which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted.'

> Bodily conduct that tends to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness should be adopted. The same meaning should be taken in respect of the next two statements.

Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, I have said: 'There are two kinds of verbal conduct: That which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted.' The reason for my saying so is this: If you understand that in adopting a certain mode of verbal conduct, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not adopt such a mode of verbal conduct.

Of those two kinds of verbal conduct, if you understand that in adopting a certain mode of verbal conduct, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should adopt such a mode of verbal conduct.

Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, that is the reason why I said: 'Sakka, there are two kinds of verbal conduct: That which should be adopted, and that which should not be adopted.'

Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, I have said: 'Sakka, there are two kinds of quests: That which should be taken up, and that which should not be taken up.' The reason for my saying so is this: If you understand that in taking up a certain quest, demeritoriousness increases and meritoriousness decreases, you should not take up such a quest.

Of those two kinds of quests, if you understand that in taking up a certain quest, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases, you should take up such a quest.

Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, that is the reason why I said: 'Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, there are two kinds of quests: That which should be taken up, and that which should not be taken up.'

Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, a monastic who practises thus is one who practises the morality of restraint according to the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara-sīla*)."

When the Buddha answered thus, Sakka was delighted and said, expressing approval: "Venerable sir, that indeed is so. O Fortunate One, that indeed is so. Having learnt the Fortunate One's answer, I am free of all doubts about this question, all uncertainties have left me."

> In question six, seven, and eight, Sakka asked about the practice that leads to Nibbāna through the cessation of proliferating perceptions, and the Buddha replied with a discourse on the three kinds of sensation that are the fundamentals of the practice leading to Nibbāna. He distinguished between sensation that should be resorted to and sensation that should not be resorted to. Of those two types of sensation, the sensation that should not be resorted to is not the practice leading to Nibbāna; only the sensation that should be resorted to is the practice that leads to Nibbāna.
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> Yet why does the Buddha discuss about the sensation that does not lead to Nibbāna? This is a likely question to be asked by one who does not see the Buddha's purpose. However, the Buddha knows the disposition of Sakka such that if Sakka understands the need for abandoning the sensation that should not be resorted to, recognising it as a defiling factor, then he would

be prepared to cultivate the sensation that should be resorted to, recognizing it as a cleansing factor. Thus, the discussing of both [973] types of sensation is conducive to Sakka's understanding. The Buddha's method helped Sakka to adopt the proper practice.

In the present question on the morality of restraint according to the Rules, the mode of bodily conduct that should not be adopted, the mode of verbal conduct that should not be adopted, and the kind of quest that should not be taken up, do not in themselves constitute the morality of restraint according to the Rules. Yet, only if one is able to abandon them, can one fulfil the practice of bodily conduct that should be adopted, verbal conduct that should be adopted, and the kind of quest that should be taken up because all of them are factors that cleanse the mind. That is why the three defiling factors are discussed along with the three cleansing factors in pairs. This method, the Buddha knows, suits the disposition of Sakka in taking upon himself the proper practice.

Only when factors that ought not to be resorted to are made clear, do factors that ought to be resorted to become a mode of practice. This is the reason for the Buddha's discussion of the pairs of useless and useful factors in the present set of questions on the morality of restraint according to the Rules, just as in the previous set of questions on sensation.

In the present set of answers, only bodily conduct that should be adopted, verbal conduct that should be adopted, and the kind of quest that should be taken up, constitute the morality of restraint according to the Rules. The bodily conduct, the verbal conduct, and the quest that should not be resorted to are defiling factors, and they must first be seen as such by Sakka.

Regarding the kind of quest that should be taken up, it may be spoken of in connection with the course of action (*kamma-patha*) or in connection with the prescribed form of training precept.

1. The bodily conduct that should not be resorted to are the three evil bodily actions: killing, stealing and sexual misconduct. This is speaking in terms of courses of action. Physically committing the breach at the body-door of the moral precepts laid down by the Buddha constitutes bodily conduct that should not be adopted. This is speaking in terms of precept. Bodily conduct that should be adopted are: refraining from killing, refraining from stealing and refraining from sexual misconduct. This is speaking in terms of courses of action. Physically restraining at

the body-door from transgressing the moral precepts laid down by the Buddha constitutes bodily conduct that should be adopted. This is speaking in terms of precept. The same distinction should be understood in respect of verbal conduct.

2. Verbally committing one of the four evil verbal actions, such as false speech, divisive, harsh and frivolous speech is verbal conduct that should not be adopted. Refraining from transgressing the four evil verbal actions in one's speech is verbal action that should be adopted.

3. Quest (*pariyesana*) involves physical and verbal actions. It is covered by bodily conduct and verbal conduct, except that in defining the eight precepts with right livelihood as the eighth (*ājīva-aṭṭhamaka-sīla*),[236] the specific term quest needs to be mentioned because these eight precepts involve actions at the body-door and verbal-door, and not without effort. Quest is essentially the effort needed in making the quest.

4. Quest is of two kinds, ignoble and noble. The two kinds of quest are described in the Discourse on the Heap of Snares (*Pāsarāsi-sutta*, MN 26), which is also known as the Discourse on the Noble Quest (*Ariya-pariyesana-sutta*). The gist of the teaching is this: Where someone, who himself is subject to birth, ageing, death and destruction, seeks things animate, such as a wife, children, servants, cattle, poultry, etc., and inanimate, such as gold and silver, etc., which are also subject to birth, ageing and death, or, arising, decay and dissolution, this amounts to an ignoble quest (*anariya-pariyesana*), the quest that should not be taken up. If someone who is himself subject to birth, ageing and death, sees the fault in seeking things animate or inanimate, and seeks the deathless Nibbāna where no rebirth occurs, this is called a noble quest (*ariya-pariyesana*), and this is the quest that should be [974] taken up.

5. Explained in another way: There are five ways of seeking gains that are not proper for monastics, namely: 1) By scheming, such as creating a

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[236] Refraining from killing living creatures, taking what has not been given, sexual misconduct, false speech, divisive speech, harsh speech, frivolous speech and wrong livelihood.

favourable or highly admirable impression of oneself with the lay supporters; 2) by flattering or extolling the lay supporters; 3) by hinting at a suitable occasion for making offerings; 4) by belittling the lay supporters for their alleged close-fistedness; and 5) by pursuing gain with gain by making gifts to lay supporters with the expectation of receiving offerings from them in return.

There are also six places which a monastic should not resort to:

1. A spinster's house.
2. A hermaphrodite's house.
3. A liquor seller's house.
4. A prostitute's house.
5. A widow's or divorcee's house.
6. A monastery of female monastics.

Not resorting to the five ways of seeking gains mentioned above, the six places described above, and the 21 ways that are not allowable quests (*anesanā*), all these make up the kinds of quests that should not be taken up (*anariya-pariyesana*). Refraining from all these improper kinds of quest, and living on the food collected at the daily alms round, is a righteous way of seeking gains which constitutes a noble quest (*ariya-pariyesana*).

Where a certain bodily conduct is not to be resorted to, if it is an act of killing, the conduct is improper right from the beginning, such as the procuring of lethal weapons or poison, or any effort connected with it. In the case of bodily conduct that should be resorted to, all the actions connected with it are proper right from the beginning. If one is unable to perform a deed that should be resorted to, at least the intention should be made, for that intention may be carried through if circumstances permit, bringing it to a successful conclusion.

1. Bodily conduct that can cause a schism in the Saṅgha, like Devadatta's conduct, is improper conduct that should not be resorted to. Paying devotion to the Three Treasures twice or thrice a day, like the habit of Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, is conduct that should be resorted to.

2. Verbal conduct, such as giving orders to kill someone, like that of Devadatta sending marksmen on a mission of assassination, is conduct that should not be resorted to. Extolling the virtues of the Three Treasures, like the habit of Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, is verbal conduct that should be resorted to.

3. Ignoble quest, such as that of Devadatta, is quest that should not be taken up. Noble quest, such as that of Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, is a quest that should be taken up.

Whereas Sakka puts only one question concerning morality of restraint according to the Rules, the Buddha's answer is threefold: bodily conduct, verbal conduct and quest; the commentary speaks of it as three questions.

The Buddha's concluding statement. "A monastic who practises thus …" purports to say that the monastic who refrains from bodily conduct, verbal conduct and quest that ought not be resorted to, and who takes up bodily conduct, verbal conduct and quest that should be taken up, is one who practises the supreme monastic practice of morality, incumbent on a monastic, which constitutes the necessary conditions that precedes the Arahat fruition.

The Twelfth Question on Restraint of the Faculties

After receiving the Buddha's discourse with delight, Sakka put the next question: "Venerable sir, how does a monastic practise so as to keep his faculties well guarded?"

The Buddha answered as follows: "Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, there are two kinds of visible objects cognizable by the [975] eye, those that should be resorted to, and those that should not be resorted to. There are two kinds of sound cognizable by the ear … two kinds of odour cognizable by the nose … two kinds of taste cognizable by the tongue … two kinds of tangible objects cognizable by the body … two kinds of mental object made up of mind and matter cognizable by the mind, those that should be resorted to, and those that should not be resorted to."

When the Buddha had made this brief exposition, Sakka said to him: "Venerable sir, what the Fortunate One has said in brief, I understand the meaning at length as follows: Venerable sir, if a certain visible object, cognizable by the eye, tends to increase demeritoriousness and decrease meritoriousness, that visible object

should not be resorted to. If, on the other hand, a certain visible object cognizable by the eye, tends to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness, that visible object should be resorted to.

Venerable sir, if a certain sound cognizable by the ear … a certain odour cognizable by the nose … a certain taste cognizable by the tongue … a certain tangible object cognizable by the body … a certain thought about mind or matter, cognizable by the mind, tends to increase demeritoriousness and decreases meritoriousness, that thought should not be resorted to. If, on the other hand, a certain thought about mind or matter tends to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness, that thought should be resorted to. Venerable sir, being able to understand the meaning in detail of what the Fortunate One has said briefly, I am now rid of all doubts; there is no uncertainty in me."

> Sakka had benefitted from the previous discourses of the Buddha on the three kinds of sensation and on the three kinds of what is to be resorted to and what should not be resorted to. When the present brief answer from the Buddha was given, he had the right understanding based on the Buddha's previous preachings and accordingly began to address the Buddha about his understanding.
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> The Buddha remained silent, allowing Sakka to go ahead with what he had to say about the meaning of the brief statements. It was not the custom of the Buddha to allow such a thing, if the hearer of a discourse is not competent enough to state how he understands it, or to allow a competent hearer, if he is not willing to come forward with an explanation of what he understands of it. Here Sakka was competent as well as willing, hence the Buddha's permission.

Now to elaborate on the various sense objects as to their worthiness or unworthiness:

1. If a certain visible object tends to arouse defilements such as attachment (*rāga*), in the mind of a monastic who sees it, that visible object is an unworthy one, and he should not look at it. If a certain visible object arouses in him a sense of repulsiveness, a perception of repulsiveness (*asubha-saññā*), or strengthens the conviction in him of the truth of the Dhamma, in the teaching, or arouses the perception of impermanence

(*anicca-saññā*), then that visible object is a worthy one, and he should look at it.

2. If a certain song, beautifully composed, that is heard by a monastic tends to arouse defilements such as attachment (*rāga*) in him, that sound is an unworthy one, and he should not listen to it. If, on the other hand, a certain song, even coming from a potter's girl, enables the monastic, who hears it, to reflect on the law of cause and effect and [976] strengthens his conviction in the truth of the Dhamma, tending to disenchantment with sentient existence and thoughts of renunciation, then that sound is a worthy one, and he should listen to it.

3. If a certain odour tends to arouse defilements such as attachment (*rāga*) in the mind of a monastic who smells it, that odour is an unworthy one, and he should not smell it. If a certain odour causes the monastic who smells it, to gain a perception of loathsomeness of the body, that odour is a worthy one, and he should smell it.

4. If a certain taste tends to arouse defilements such as attachment (*rāga*) in the mind of a monastic who tastes it, that taste is an unworthy one, and he should not taste it. If a certain taste causes the monastic, who tastes it, to gain a perception of loathsomeness (*āhāre paṭikūla-saññā*) of the food swallowed or if it sustains him to gain the noble truth, like in the case of the novice Sīva, the nephew of Ven. Mahā Sīva, who became an Arahat while taking his meal, then that taste is worthy one, and he should eat it.

   In this connection, we have looked for the name of novice Sīva in the sub-commentary and in the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) but do not find it. In the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*), there is, however, the story of novice Bhāgineyya Saṅgharakkhita who became an Arahat while taking his meal.

5. If a certain tangible object tends to arouse defilements such as attachment (*rāga*) in the mind of a monastic who touches it, that tangible object is an unworthy one, and he should not touch it. If a certain tangible object, which is proper for a monastic, causes the monastic still training himself to attain the Arahat fruition through exhaustion of the pollutants (*āsava*) completely, like in the case of Ven.

Sāriputta, and so on, or is conducive to zeal, or serves as a good model for future monastics, then that tangible object should be resorted to.

It is noteworthy in this connection that many monastics during the Buddha's time denied themselves the luxury of lying down; for instance, Ven. Sāriputta never lay down on a bed for 30 whole years; Ven. Mahā Moggallāna for as many years; Ven. Mahā Kassapa for 120 years; Ven. Bākula for 80 years; Ven. Anuruddha for 50 years; Ven. Bhaddiya for 30 years; Ven. Soṇa for 18 years; Ven. Ānanda for 15 years; Ven. Raṭṭhapāla for 12 years; Ven. Rāhula for 12 years; and Ven. Nālaka, who practised moral perfection (*moneyya*) for as long as he lived.

6. If a certain Dhamma object about mind or matter tends to arouse defilements such as attachment (*rāga*) in the mind of a monastic who thinks about that object; or tends to arouse covetousness in him, that thought is an unworthy one, and he should not entertain such a thought. If a certain thought promotes kind feelings towards others, such as: "May all beings be well, be free from trouble, etc.," as in the case of the three elders whose story is told below, that thought is a worthy one, and he should nurture such a thought, such a Dhamma object.

The Three Monastic Elders

Once, three elders made a vow among themselves on the eve of the Rains Retreat period not to indulge in demeritorious thoughts such as sensuous thoughts during the three month Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period and decided to stay in a certain monastery for their Rains Retreat.

At the end of the Rains Retreat, on the Saṅgha assembly day, on the full moon of October (*Assayuja*), the Saṅgha elder who was the most senior of the three elders, put this question to the youngest of the three elders: "How far did you allow your mind to wander during the three months of the Rains Retreat?" To which, he replied: "Venerable sir, during these three months, I did not allow my mind to wander beyond the precincts of the monastery." The monastic's admission implied that his mind wandered sometimes within the monastery precincts, which may mean that he thought of visible objects that came into the monastery precincts, but since there were no female visitors, his mind had had no occasion to have unbridled thoughts. [977]

The Saṅgha elder then asked the second elder: "Friend, how far did you allow your mind to wander during the three months of the Rains Retreat?" To which the second elder replied: "Venerable sir, during these three months, I did not allow my mind to wander beyond my room."

Then the two junior elders asked of the Saṅgha elder: "Venerable sir, how far did you allow your mind to wander during the three months of the Rains Retreat?" To which, the Saṅgha elder answered: "Friends, during these three months, I did not allow my mind to wander outside of my body." That indeed was true, the Saṅgha elder did not do anything physically, verbally or mentally, without being mindful, without having first reflected on the action that he was about to undertake, so that there was no moment left for his thought to wander forth outside the body. The two junior elders said to the senior-most elder: "Venerable sir, you are wonderful!" The type of thought that occurred to these three elders is of the worthy type; a monastic may well entertain such thoughts.

The Thirteenth Question on the Various Elements

Thus having received the Buddha's discourse with delight, Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, further asked his next question: "Venerable sir, do all ascetics and Brahmins have the same teaching, the same practice, the same view, and the same ultimate goal?"

To this, the Buddha replied: "Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, not all the ascetics and Brahmins have the same teaching, the same practice, the same view, and the same goal."

> Herein, Sakka puts this question because he has known, prior to his becoming a noble one (*ariya*), that the so-called ascetics and Brahmins have diverse teaching, practices, views and goals which he now understands as vain. He wants to know the reasons why there are such a diversity of teachings, practices, views and goals among them.

Sakka further asked: "Venerable sir, what is the reason for the diversity of teachings, practices, views, and goals among the ascetics and Brahmins?"

And the Buddha replied: "Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, beings in this sentient world are of various dispositions. Whatever attracts their fancy, these beings hold on to it, firmly believing it to be the only truth, and rejecting all other

views as vain. That is why all the ascetics and Brahmins have no common teaching, no common practice, no common view, and no common goal."

> Individual dispositions differ among persons. When one wants to go, another wants to stand; when one wants to stand, another wants to lie down. It is difficult to find two individuals of the same disposition. If dispositions differ among one another, regarding even postures, how could views, practices and teachings be the same among them? The Buddha points out this diversity as the reason for the differences in teachings, practices, views and goals among ascetics and Brahmins.

The Fourteenth Question on the Final Crossing Over

Further, Sakka asked this question to the Buddha: [978] "Venerable sir, do all ascetics and Brahmins attain the indestructible Nibbāna, where they can find refuge, and where all bonds are overcome? Do all of them practise the noble (*ariya*) path which is the right practice for the attainment of the indestructible? Do they have the indestructible as the final goal?"

> Sakka's question is about Nibbāna as the ultimate reality, and about whether holders of diverse views take up the practice of the noble path to attain Nibbāna.

The Buddha answered: "Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, not all ascetics and Brahmins attain the indestructible Nibbāna, where they can find refuge and where all bonds are overcome. Not all of them practise the noble path which is the right practice for the attainment of Nibbāna; nor have the indestructible as their final goal."

> Since individual dispositions differ among the so-called ascetics and Brahmins, their teachings, practices, views and goals differ. Therefore, how could they attain Nibbāna, the ultimate reality, as their common goal? The Buddha makes this clear in his reply that only those who practise the noble path can attain Nibbāna.

Sakka then put his last question thus: "Venerable sir, what is the reason that not all ascetics and Brahmins attain the indestructible Nibbāna, where they can find refuge, and where all bonds are overcome? Why is it that they do not practise the noble path which is the right practice for the attainment of the indestructible? Why is it that not all of them have the indestructible as their final goal?"

And the Fortunate One replied: "Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, those monastics who are free from defilements through the noble path which causes the extinction of craving attain the indestructible Nibbāna where they find refuge and where all bonds are overcome. They are the ones who practise the noble path which is the right practice to attain Nibbāna, the indestructible. They have the indestructible Nibbāna as their final goal. Not all ascetics and Brahmins attain the indestructible Nibbāna where they find refuge and where all bonds are overcome, because not all of them practise the noble path which is the right path to attain the indestructible Nibbāna. Not all of them have the indestructible Nibbāna as their final goal."

> Thus took place a verbal exchange between the noblest of noble ones (*ariya*) and Sakka, a noble one (*ariya*), on the subject of Nibbāna, the ultimate reality. They spoke the language of the noble ones which is as magnificent as a fully blossomed Sāla tree. For us worldlings, that language and its meanings are not comprehensible because our field of knowledge does not go beyond the sense faculties. In other words, our range of perception is limited to our senses only. The point the Buddha makes here is that only Arahats, who have been liberated from defilements through the path that destroys craving, attain Nibbāna, the ultimate reality. Not all ascetics and Brahmins attain Nibbāna. The Buddha's teaching has Nibbāna, the ultimate reality, as its culmination. Hence, when the question of Nibbāna has been dealt with fully, there is an end of all questions.

On hearing the Buddha's reply, Sakka was delighted and said: "Venerable sir, that indeed is so. O Fortunate One, that indeed is so. Having learnt the Fortunate One's answer, I am free of all doubts about this question. I have no uncertainties now!" [979]

After receiving the Buddha's discourse with much delight, Sakka, the Lord of the Devas said to him: "Venerable sir, craving is a disease, an open sore, a dart or thorn. Craving attracts all beings back into endless existences, thereby sending them now to high planes of existence and then to low planes of existence.

Venerable sir, whatever question I did not have the opportunity to ask of the so-called ascetics and Brahmins outside this teaching, the Fortunate One has given me the answer. The Fortunate One has by this answer cleared all the darts of doubt that had long been troubling me."

The Buddha then asked Sakka: "Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, do you remember having put these questions to other ascetics and Brahmins?"

"Yes, I do, venerable sir."

"What were their answers? If it is not too much trouble, may I know?"

"When the Fortunate One, or someone as great as the Fortunate One, sits before me, there is no trouble for me to answer."

"Very well, then Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, let us hear what you have to say."

"Venerable sir, I have put these questions to those ascetics and Brahmins whom I took for forest dwellers. They were not only unable to answer my questions but even asked me who I was that I could ask such profound questions. I said I was Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, and then they were interested and asked me what merit I had acquired to become Sakka. I told them the seven meritorious deeds, as I had learned them, that lead to becoming Sakka. Then they were greatly pleased, saying: 'We have seen Sakka in person, and we have also got Sakka's answer to our questions!' Indeed, venerable sir, those ascetics and Brahmins were merely my pupils. I had never been their pupil.

Venerable sir, I am now a noble (*ariya*) disciple of the Fortunate One, a Stream-enterer, who is forever safe against the four miserable existences of the downfall (*apāya*) and whose fortunate destiny is thus assured, and who is on the way to the three higher paths."

The Satisfaction of Sakka

Then the Buddha asked Sakka whether he had previously experienced such delightful satisfaction of this nature. Sakka replied: "Yes, venerable sir, I remember having experienced such delightful satisfaction of this nature previously."

"What kind of delightful satisfaction do you remember having experienced before?"

"Venerable sir, in the past, there took place a great battle between the Devas of Tāvatiṁsa and those of the Asuras. The Tāvatiṁsa Devas were the victors. Then, as victor, I was very glad to reflect on the fact that the Tāvatiṁsa Devas would now have the special privilege of enjoying both their own food pertaining to the Tāvatiṁsa Realm as well as the food pertaining to the Asura realm. However,

venerable sir, my delightful satisfaction, then, was pleasure bolstered up with armed might. It was not helpful for disenchantment with the wheel of existence, for destroying desire, for cessation of the round of rebirth, for abandoning attachment, for special apperception, for an understanding of the four truths, for the realization of Nibbāna.

Venerable sir, the delightful satisfaction that I now have, on hearing the Fortunate One's discourse, is of a superior kind that does not need bolstering up with armed might. It is indeed conducive to disenchantment with the wheel of existence, to destroying desire, to cessation of the round of rebirth, to abandoning attachment, to special apperception, to an understanding of the four truths, to the realization of Nibbāna." [980]

Then the Buddha asked: "Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, what benefits do you see in your present status so that you speak of its great delight?"

"Venerable sir, I see six great benefits in my present noble state and that is why I extol it so much. The six are:

> *Idheva tiṭṭha-mānassa, Deva-bhūtassa me sato,*
> *puna-r-āyu ca me laddho, evaṁ jānāhi mārisa.*

Venerable one, who is free from suffering, even while I have been listening to your discourse in this Indasāla Cave, I have been reborn as Sakka, by the name of Maghava, and will live 36 million years, by human reckoning, in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm. May the venerable one, who is free from suffering, take note of it. Venerable sir, this is the first benefit that is behind my extolling my noble state.

> *Cutāhaṁ diviyā kāyā, āyuṁ hitvā amānusaṁ,*
> *amūḷho gabbham-essāmi, yattha me ramatī mano.*

Venerable one, who is free from suffering, when I die from the Deva existence and have relinquished the 36 million years' life, by human reckoning, of Tāvatiṁsa Deva existence, I shall, without any bewilderment at death, be reborn in the human world in a high class or clan of my own preference, venerable sir, this is the second benefit that is behind my extolling my noble state.

> When a noble one (*ariya*) passes away and takes another rebirth, he is never in a bewildered state. Mindful and with clear comprehension, he passes away from one existence to another, which is always in a fortunate

destination. If reborn in the human world, he always belongs to the royal warrior caste or Brahmin caste. Sakka has a desire for such noble birth when he reappears as a human being.

Svāhaṁ amūḷha-paññassa, viharaṁ Sāsane rato,
ñāyena viharissāmi, sampajāno paṭissato.

Venerable one, who is free from suffering, taking delight in the teaching of the Perfectly Awakened One, enjoying physical health I will dwell in mindfulness and clear comprehension befitting a noble one. Venerable sir, this is the third benefit that is behind my extolling my noble state.

Ñāyena me carato ca, Sambodhi ce bhavissati,
aññātā viharissāmi, sveva anto bhavissati.

Venerable one, who is free from suffering, in me who thus dwells in the noble practice of a noble one, if Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmi-magga*) arises, then, to gain still higher path-knowledge of the Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-magga*) and the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*), I shall dwell in still further practice of the path. When Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmi-magga*) is attained that will be my last human existence. Venerable sir, this is the fourth benefit that lies behind my extolling my noble state.

Cutāhaṁ mānusā kāyā, āyuṁ hitvāna mānusaṁ,
puna devo bhavissāmi, Deva-lokamhi uttamo.

Venerable one, who is free from suffering, when I pass away from human existence and leave behind the human body, relinquishing the human life, I shall be reborn in the Tāvatiṁsa Deva [981] realm as the Lord of Devas. Venerable sir, this is the fifth benefit that lies behind my extolling my noble state.

Te paṇīta-tarā devā, Akaniṭṭhā yasassino,
antime vatta-mānamhi, so nivāso bhavissati.

Venerable one, free from suffering, those Devas, the noble Brahmas of the Akaniṭṭhā realm, the topmost of the planes of existence, are superior in all respects, such as lifespan and knowledge, to all other Devas and Brahmas. They have a big following. When I have my last existence, I shall be reborn in that Akaniṭṭhā Brahma realm. Venerable sir, this is the sixth benefit that lies behind my noble state.

The six benefits that Sakka enjoys on hearing the discourse in the Indasāla Cave are:

1. Attaining Stream-entry at Indasāla cave; passing away and instant rebirth, also at Indasāla cave, as Sakka again.

2. On passing away from that Sakka existence, rebirth in a noble lineage in the human world in a non-bewildered state, his path to final Awakening as an Arahat being limited to seven existences only.

3. Continued practice of the path in his future existences without bewilderment.

4. Attaining Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmi-magga*) in a human existence which will be his last human existence.

5. On passing away from that last human existence, being destined to become Sakka for the third time.

6. Attaining Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-magga*) as Sakka, and being reborn in progressively higher existences in the five Pure Brahma realms namely: Aviha realm, Atappa realm, Sudassa realm, Sudassī realm, Akaniṭṭhā realm; and to become an Arahat in the Akaniṭṭhā realm.

The sixth benefit, which is to result in rebirth in the five Brahma realms should be noted here particularly for the immense durations of sublime existence in the pure abodes: As a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-puggala*), Sakka will enjoy the ecstasy of a pure Brahma in the Aviha realm for 1,000 aeons (*mahā-kappa*); passing away from that realm, he will be reborn in the Atappa realm for 2,000 aeons; then in the Sudassa realm for 4,000 aeons: then in the Sudassi realm for 8,000 aeons; and finally, in the Akaniṭṭhā realm for 16,000 aeons. Thus he will enjoy a total of 31,000 aeons of ecstasy in a Brahma existence.

In the matter of the kind of extraordinarily prolonged existence full of ecstasy there are only three that are outstanding as noble (*ariya*) disciples under Buddha Gotama's teaching: Sakka, Anāthapiṇḍika and Visākhā. They enjoy a similar lifespan.

Sakka concluded with these words: "Venerable sir, it is because I see these six benefits that I extol the delightful satisfaction of my attainment."

Then Sakka repeated his former experience with the forest-dwelling ascetics and Brahmins who failed to answer his questions, but how he had to teach them

the seven modes of conduct leading one to become a Sakka. Then he sang in praise of the Buddha in the following verses:

Taṇhā-sallassa hantāraṁ, Buddhaṁ appaṭipuggalaṁ,
ahaṁ vande Mahā-vīraṁ, Buddham-ādicca-bandhunaṁ.

To the Buddha, the unrivalled one, knower of the four truths, kinsman of the sun, having Gotama clan as common lineage, or, in another sense, being father of the sun in the propagation of the supermundane, the one possessed of great endeavour, who has destroyed all the darts of craving, the Perfectly Awakened One, I make my obeisance with raised [982] palms.

Yaṁ karomasi brahmuno, samaṁ devehi mārisa,
Tad-ajja tuyhaṁ kassāma, handa sāmaṁ karoma te.

Venerable one, who is free from suffering, formerly we paid our tribute to Brahma, as with other Devas; but from today onwards, we shall give our offerings to you. Now, we pay our obeisance to you!

Tvam-eva asi Sambuddho, tuvaṁ Satthā anuttaro,
Sadevakasmiṁ lokasmiṁ, natthi te paṭipuggalo.

Venerable one, who is free from suffering, you alone are the Perfectly Awakened One, teacher of Devas and humans. There is none to equal you, in personal glory or in the embodiment of the Dhamma in all the worlds of sentient beings including the world of Devas.

After singing in praise of the Buddha in those three verses, Sakka said to Pañcasikha: "Pañcasikha, through your good offices, we have the privilege of seeing the Arahat, the Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddha. I am greatly indebted to you for this. I appoint you to your father's office as chief of the Gandhabbas. You will be the next chief of the Gandhabbas. I also betroth you to Sūriyavachasā, the maiden of exquisite features whom you deeply yearn for."

Sakka's Joyous Utterance

After that, Sakka was so glad that he slapped the good earth as though a person were to slap his friend's arm in intimate affection and uttered these words of joyous expression thrice:

Namo tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā-sambuddhassa

39b: Sakka's Questions – 1480

Homage to the Fortunate One, the Worthy One, the Perfectly Self-Awakened

> In this connection, Sakka slapped the good earth because he attained the supermundane, while he remained on the earth and also because this great earth has produced such a marvellous personage as the Buddha, so that he had a profound regard for the good earth.

After listening to the Buddha's answers, Sakka acquired the eye of the Dhamma, being able to dispel certain defilements and thereby understand that: "Whatever is in the nature of arising, that has the nature of perishing." He thus attained Stream-entry, as also did the 80,000 Devas who were in his company then.

This discourse, being a series of answers to questions given by Sakka, is known as Sakka's Questions. [983]

40a: The Last Days 1, In Magadha

As we have said earlier on, the Buddha spent the first 20 Rains Retreats (*Vassa*) at various places, and taught the noble doctrine that led to the liberation of the multitudes and spent the latter 24 Rains Retreat in Sāvatthī only. After the end of the Rains Retreat, he set out on journeys of three kinds and tamed those worthy of taming. The number of discourses and dialogues are as varied as they are wide so that they cannot be treated fully within the confines of this work.

Just as a drop or two of sea water would suffice to understand that the sea is salty, so also in this book, only a few examples from the discourses can be given that should give the reader a fair idea of the richness of the doctrine. Scholars, who wish to gain further knowledge from the Buddha's extensive teachings, are advised to read from the translations of the canon, with the help of the commentaries and sub-commentaries. We shall henceforth confine our narrative to the events and discourses that belong to the period extending from around the 44th Rains Retreat onwards which was the period close to his realization of Parinibbāna.

At one time, when the Buddha had completed his 44th Rains Retreat the Buddha of illustrious attributes was staying at the mountain abode, up on Gijjakuṭa Hill, near Rājagaha.

The place name Gijjakuṭa means Vulture Peak and was probably derived from the shape of the peak, or from the fact that it was the roosting place of vultures.

King Ajātasattu and the Vajjians

At that time, King Ajātasattu of Rājagaha was keen on invading Vesālī, the country of the Licchavīs. "I will exterminate them however powerful and mighty they may be, play havoc with them, cause their ruin," he kept saying, being a haughty monarch, as he was.

The reason for his deep-seated hatred of the Licchavīs could be traced to some unhappy incidents: Rājagaha and Vesālī were two flourishing cities on either side of the river Ganges which flowed east, with Rājagaha on the southern side and Vesālī on the northern side. There was a caravan station known as Paṭṭanagāma, the present-day Patna, which was around that place. With Paṭṭanagāma in the middle, the region extending about half a league came under

the domain of King Ajātasattu while the region of the same extent towards the other side of that region came under the domain of the Licchavīs.

There were rich deposits of precious materials on the hillside near Paṭṭanagama. As King Ajātasattu learnt about the treasures and was making plans to go there, the Licchavīs reached there first and took away all the treasures. When King Ajātasattu arrived and learnt that the Licchavīs had taken them, he went back home in great fury.

In the following year too, the Licchavīs were ahead of King Ajātasattu in getting there and enjoyed the find. King Ajātasattu's anger knew no bounds. He was obsessed with the thought of exterminating, destroying and ruining the mighty Licchavīs. In all his four bodily postures he cursed them aloud. He even went so far as giving orders to his men to plan an expedition.

On second thoughts, however, he restrained his action. "War is disastrous for both sides. There is no clash of arms that does not result in loss of life and property. By taking wise counsel, I may avoid harsh consequences. There is no one in the world greater in wisdom than the Buddha. Just now the Buddha is staying near my city, on a mountain abode at Gijjakuṭa Hill. I shall send a minister to him and seek his advice about my [984] proposed expedition. If my plan is of any benefit to me, he will remain silent; if it is against my own good, he would say: "What good is it for the king to go on such an expedition?"

Reflecting thus, he said to the Brahmin Vassakāra, his chief minister: "Here, Brahmin, go to the Fortunate One. Pay homage at his feet and convey my message. Enquire after his health whether the Fortunate One is free from any affliction and disease, whether he is well and fit and at ease. Say to the Fortunate One: 'Venerable sir, King Ajātasattu of Magadha, son of Queen Vedehī, pays homage at your feet. He enquires after the Fortunate One's health, whether the Fortunate One is free from affliction and disease, whether the Fortunate One is well and fit and at ease.' Then say to him: 'Venerable sir, the king wishes to make war against the Vajjī princes, the Licchavīs of Vesālī, and is making declarations that he will exterminate the Vajjī princes, however powerful and mighty they might be, and that he will play havoc with them and cause their ruin.' And then carefully note what the Fortunate One says and report it back to me. The Fortunate One never speaks falsely."

"Very well, your majesty," said the Brahmin Vassakāra and he went to the Gijjakuṭa Hill amidst a splendid formation of carriages. Once there, he descended from the carriage, and approached the Buddha, and after exchanging greetings and concluding courteous words of felicitation, sat at a suitable distance. Then he said to the Buddha: "Revered Gotama, King Ajātasattu of Magadha, son of Queen Vedehī, pays homage at your feet. He enquires after your health, whether you are free from affliction and disease, whether you are well and fit, and whether you are well and at ease. Revered Gotama, King Ajātasattu wishes to make war against the Vajjī princes, the Licchavīs of Vesalī, and is making declarations that he will exterminate the Vajjī princes, play havoc with them, and cause their ruin."

At that time, Ven. Ānanda was at the back of the Buddha, fanning him.

> In this connection it may be pointed out that the Buddhas, by virtue of their infinite merit, do not feel too cold nor too hot. Ānanda's fanning the Buddha was merely an act of veneration.

Seven Factors of Growth and Non-Decline for Kings

The First Factor of Growth and Non-Decline

When the Buddha had heard the Brahmin's words he did not say anything to him but entered into a dialogue with Ven. Ānanda, saying: "Ānanda, do the Vajjian princes hold meetings frequently? Do they have meetings many times? What have you heard?" – "Venerable sir, I have heard that the Vajjian princes hold meetings frequently, and that they have meetings many times." – "Ānanda, so long as the Vajjī princes assemble frequently and have many meetings, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

> "Frequent meetings," means three or more meetings every day. "They have meetings many times," means never skipping a day without a meeting.
>
> The advantages of frequent meetings is that fresh information is always forthcoming from the eight directions. If up-to-date information is not forthcoming, unrest at remote places and border areas might go unnoticed at the capital; so also breach of law and order in the country might not be duly reported. If no prompt action is taken against lawless elements this will be taken as laxity on the part of those in authority and the law and order situation will deteriorate. This is a sure way of decline for rulers.

If, on the other hand, frequent meetings are held, up-to-date information from all over the country can reach the capital and prompt action can be taken whenever necessary. The bad people will then know that they do not stand any chance against this sort of efficient administration and will disperse. This is a sure way of prosperity for rulers. [985]

The Second Factor of Growth and Non-Decline

"Ānanda, do the Vajjian princes assemble in harmony and do they disperse in harmony? Do they act in harmony in discharging their duties in the affairs of the Vajjian country? What have you heard?" – "Venerable sir, I have heard that the Vajjian princes assemble in harmony and disperse in harmony, and that they act in harmony in discharging their duties in the affairs of the Vajjian country." – "Ānanda, so long as the Vajjian princes assemble and disperse in harmony and act in harmony in discharging their duties in the affairs of the Vajjian country, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

"To assemble in harmony," means never appearing late at the appointed hour of meeting on any excuse. When the time for the meeting is announced by gong or by bell, all turn up in time, leaving aside whatever activities they may be engaged in. If one happens to be taking his meal, he must leave the table at once in the middle of his meal; if one happens to be dressing himself, he must attend the meeting even though not fully dressed yet.

"To disperse in harmony," means leaving the meeting chamber all at the same time after the meeting has concluded. If some have left the meeting chamber and others were to remain, the ones who have gone might harbour suspicion against those who remain, with the uneasy thought that they stay behind to make important decisions behind their back. This sort of suspicious speculation is poisonous for the ruler's mind.

In another sense: "To disperse in harmony," means to be keen to undertake what is to be undertaken, as the follow up action consequent to the deliberations and decisions at the meeting. For example, if a rebellion needs to be quelled and someone is to take charge, everyone is eager to shoulder the responsibility.

"Harmony in discharging duties," means rendering every possible assistance to one another. For example, if one of the members is found to be falling short of his duty, the others would send their sons or brothers to render help. Where a visitor needs to be entertained, the responsibility is

not shirked but all join in the task. In meeting their individual social obligations too, whether for happy occasions or sad occasions, all the members act as one whole family.

The Third Factor of Growth and Non-Decline

"Ānanda, do Vajjian princes abstain from enacting ordinances that have not been enacted previously, and do they abstain from revoking what has been enacted previously, and do they follow the time-honoured Vajjian traditions and practices? What have you heard?" – "Venerable sir, I have heard that the Vajjian princes abstain from enacting ordinances that have not been enacted previously, and that they follow the time-honoured Vajjian traditions and practices." – "Ānanda, so long as the Vajjian princes abstain from enacting ordinances that have not been enacted previously, and abstain from revoking what has been enacted previously, and follow the time-honoured Vajjian traditions and practices, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

"Enacting ordinances," means imposing taxes and fines. Not imposing fresh taxes and fines that were not done before, and not revoking traditional taxes and fines is an important principle for rulers. Whenever fresh taxes and fines are enacted the people naturally resent it. They may even feel that they are fleeced and in that case they may leave the country in disgust and turn to robbery and crime in remote places, or some of the discontented may join gangs of bandits, cause strife in out of the way areas.

Revoking traditional taxes and fines will result in loss of revenue. This will render the [986] rulers unable to meet state expenditures. The armed forces and civil servants will have reductions in their remuneration. This will lower their efficiency and the standards of their services will fall, affecting the might of the army.

"Following Vajjian traditions and practices," means acting in accordance with the traditional code of justice. For instance, execution of accused persons without trial is a flagrant disregard of tradition and practice.

If the time-honoured Vajjian traditions and practices are disregarded and people are executed without trial, relatives of the victims of injustice will bear grudges against the rulers. They may go to remote places and resort to crime themselves or may join gangs of bandits and roam the country. These are causes of decline for rulers.

40b: The Last Days 2, In Vajji – 1486

In a country where the ordinances enacted are the same ones that have been traditionally enacted, the people will accept them without murmur. They will feel happy about their obligations and go about their normal activities such as agriculture and trading.

Where rulers do not revoke traditional taxes and fines their revenues in kind and in money are flowing in every day. The armed forces and civil servants enjoy their usual remuneration as they are properly provided for and made happy. Their services remain as trustworthy and dependable as in the olden days.

In the Vajjian system of justice, there were stages of careful scrutiny in the administration of criminal justice. When a man was brought before the authorities and was accused of theft, he was not put into custody but was properly examined. If there was no proof of theft, he was allowed to go. If someone was suspected of a crime, he was handed to the officials of the justice department where he was given a proper hearing, and if found not guilty, he was released. If the judges suspected him of the crime, he was referred to a panel of learned persons who were well versed in social ethics. If the panel of learned persons found him not guilty he was released. If they considered him not free of fault, he was then referred to a review board of eight jurors who belonged to the eight categories of families with an honourable tradition and who were free from the four kinds of improper official conduct. If the review board found him not guilty, he was released, but if he was not free from blame, he was committed to the king through the commander-in chief and the heir-apparent. If the king found him not guilty, he was released. If he was not free from blame, the traditional criminal code was read in his presence. The code contained specific descriptions of acts of crimes with specific punishments attached to them. The king ascertained the nature of the crime the man had committed that answered the description in the list of crimes in the code, and the prescribed punishment was meted out to him.

The observance of the Vajjian tradition described above was very reassuring to the people. When one of their kith and kin was punished for a crime the people did not blame the Vajjian princes. They knew the king had dispensed justice and that the fault lay with the perpetrator only. Being satisfied that they had full protection of the law, they went about their normal business honestly. This adherence to the time-honoured system of justice is thus a factor of progress for rulers.

The Fourth Factor of Growth and Non-Decline

"Ānanda, do Vajjian princes treat their elders with courteous regard, deference, esteem and veneration, and do they consider that the advice of elderly people is worth listening to? What have you heard?" – "Venerable sir, I have heard that the Vajjian princes do treat their elders with regard, deference, esteem and veneration, and that they consider the advice of elderly people is worth listening to." – "Ānanda, so long as the Vajjian princes treat their elders with regard, deference, esteem, and veneration, and consider that the advice of elderly people is worth listening to, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

> The terms: "Regard, deference, esteem and veneration," all denote a deep sense of respect, indebtedness, genuine affection and humility. "To listen to their advice," means to seek their counsel twice or thrice every day.
>
> If young princes do not have a sense of respect for their elders and do not go to them for advice, they will be ignored by the elders, and lacking proper guidance, they will tend to [987] indulge themselves in sensual pleasures and forget their princely duties, thus leading to their ruin.
>
> Where princes hold their elders in esteem, the latter will advise them on state craft, pointing out the traditional practices. In military strategy, they have practical experience so that in a given situation they can give sound guidance, such as how to advance, and how to retreat. Drawing on the rich experience and mature wisdom of their elders, the princes can thus carry on their proud tradition, perpetuating their national glory.

The Fifth Factor of Growth and Non-Decline

"Ānanda, do the Vajjian princes refrain from carrying away by force women and girls, and keeping them? What have you heard?" – "Venerable sir, I have heard that the Vajjian princes do not carry away by force women and girls, and keep them." – "Ānanda, so long as the Vajjian princes refrain from carrying away by force women and girls, and keeping them, they are bound to prosper, there is no reason for their decline."

> Herein, where the rulers forcibly take any woman or girl without consent, the people will be very angry. "They have taken away a mother from our house!" "They have taken away our girl whom we have nurtured with such great devotion!" "They have kept them at the palace!" People will complain. They will leave the country, go to the remote regions and

become criminals themselves, or they may join gangs of bandits and roam the country. This is a cause of decline for rulers.

Where the rulers do not forcibly take away women and girls and keep them, the people are free from molestation and anxiety and they go about their usual business. They contribute to the wealth of the rulers. So, restraint of rulers is a factor for their progress.

The Sixth Factor of Growth and Non-Decline

"Ānanda, do the Vajjian princes hold in respect, reverence, honour and veneration their traditional shrines within and without the city? Do they see to it that appropriate offerings and oblations are made at those shrines as of yore, without remiss? What have you heard?" – "Venerable sir, I have heard that the Vajjian princes hold in respect, reverence, honour, and veneration their traditional shrines within and without the city. They see to it that appropriate offerings and oblations are made at those shrines as of yore, without remiss." – "Ānanda, so long as the Vajjian princes hold in respect, reverence, honour, and veneration their traditional shrines within and without the city, and see to it that appropriate offerings and oblations are made at those shrines as of yore, without remiss, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

Where the rulers do not venerate the traditional shrines whether inside or outside of the city and are remiss in making the customary offerings and oblations that are due to them, the guardian spirits do not afford them protection. Although the guardian spirits are not able to cause fresh misfortune to the people, they can aggravate the existing misfortune such as a worsening in coughs and headaches. In times of war, they do not join forces against the enemy. Thus the rulers stand to meet with decline.

Where rulers do not neglect the customary offerings and oblations that are due to guardian spirits at the traditional shrines, the latter give them protection. Although the guardian spirits are not able to bring fresh fortunes to the people, they can attenuate the existing misfortune such as causing immediate relief in coughs and headaches. In times of war, they join forces with the local combatants. They may cause delusion in the enemy, thinking that the local army is twice or thrice its actual numbers; or they may show up terrifying sights before the enemy. Keeping the traditional guardian spirits in a good mood through customary offerings and oblations is therefore a factor of prosperity for rulers. [988]

The Seventh Factor of Growth and Non-Decline

"Ānanda, do the Vajjian princes see to it that Arahats are given suitable protection and security so that those Arahats who have not yet visited the Vajjian country may go, and so that those Arahats who have already arrived may live in the Vajjian country in a genial atmosphere? What have you heard?" – "Venerable sir, I have heard that the Vajjian princes make careful provisions for the protection of and security for Arahats so that those Arahats who have not yet visited the Vajjian country may go, and so that those Arahats who have already arrived may live in the Vajjian country in a genial atmosphere." – "Ānanda, so long as the Vajjian princes see to it that Arahats are given suitable protection and security so that those Arahats who have not yet visited the Vajjian country may go, and so that those Arahats, who have already arrived may live in the Vajjian country in a genial atmosphere, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

> In this matter: "Protection," means necessary measures to ensure safety and "security," means safeguarding the peaceful and friendly atmosphere. For noble persons, their protection and security need not be provided using a powerful armed guard. What is needed is to make sure that annoyance is not caused to these noble ones by such improper ways as felling of trees near their monastery, hunting or fishing in the vicinity. Careful provisions for the protection and security are intended to guarantee a genial atmosphere for Arahats. They reflect the friendly attitude of the Vajjian princes towards the noble ones.
>
> Where the rulers of a country do not have a friendly attitude towards Arahats who have not yet visited their country, it is due to their lack of faith in the Three Treasures. In that case when monastics visit their country they would not welcome them, would not go to them and pay homage, would not converse with them cordially, would not ask questions concerning the doctrine, would not listen to their discourse, would not make offerings to them, would not hear the joyous remarks of the recipient monastics, and would not arrange for their stay. They earn the reputation that such and such a ruler has no faith in the Three Treasures as when monastics visited their country, they would not welcome them … would not arrange for their stay. Due to this ill-repute, monastics do not travel near the city gate of such a ruler, and if they cannot avoid using the road that passes by the city of that ruler, they would not enter the city. And thus there is no arrival of Arahats, who have not yet visited that city.

If those monastics, who have already visited that city, do not find a genial atmosphere, the monastics will feel that they have visited a wrong place. "Who would live in such an unfriendly city where the rulers are so disrespectful?" they would say, and leave the place. Where a place is shunned by monastics due to non-arrival of monastics and departure of monastics who have already visited there, the place becomes devoid of monastics. Where monastics do not stay guardian spirits do not stay either.

Where guardian spirits do not stay demons have the run of the place. Where the demons thrive strange diseases that are not known previously are caused by them. Opportunity for earning merit on account of seeing virtuous persons, seeking answers to doctrinal points, etc., is lost. This state of affairs is a cause of decline for rulers.

The happy consequences of caring for the virtuous may be understood on the basis of the above unhappy consequences arising out of a lack of such care.

Then the Buddha said to the Brahmin Vassakāra, chief minister of Magadha: "Brahmin, on one occasion I taught the Vajjian princes these seven principles of progress while I was staying at the Sārandada shrine in Vesālī. Brahmin, so long as these seven factors of growth and non-decline remain with the Vajjian princes, and so long as the Vajjian princes carefully abide by these seven principles, they are bound to prosper; there is no reason for their decline."

Then the Brahmin Vassakāra replied to the Buddha: "Revered Gotama, careful abidance to just one of those factors of growth would ensure the prosperity of the Vajjian princes, allowing no cause whatsoever for their decline. How much more so, if they carefully abide [989] by all the seven factors! Revered Gotama, it is not likely that King Ajātasattu will conquer the Vajjian country simply by making war upon it unless he can successfully seduce the Vajji princes or sow seeds of dissension among them. O revered Gotama, we shall go now. We have many affairs to attend to." – "Brahmin, you know the time to go." Then the Brahmin Vassakāra, being greatly pleased with the Buddha's words, expressed his delight, rose from his seat and departed.

The Sārandada shrine was a pre-Buddhist shrine set up to propitiate a Yakkha of that name. With the advent of the Buddha, a monastery was built on the site, hence the monastery was known as Sārandada shrine.

The Brahmin's suggestion of seduction was meant to resort to acts of friendliness towards the enemy with lavish presents and messages of goodwill and amity. When the enemy was led into thinking that Ajātasattu was a real friend and remained unprepared for war, then only the chief minister would advise the king to attack.

His second idea of sowing seeds of dissension also was another strategy to weaken the enemy. Both of these ideas flowed out of the Buddha's seven factors of growth. It might be asked: "Did the Fortunate One know that the Brahmin Vassakāra would benefit from the discourse?"

The answer is, "Yes." – "Then why did the Fortunate One make the discourse?" He made the discourse out of compassion for the Vajjian princes.

To elaborate: The Buddha knew with his supreme wisdom that if he did not give the discourse to the Brahmin, King Ajātasattu would invade the Licchavī country, capture the Licchavī princes and destroy them in two or three days time. By giving the discourse, King Ajātasattu would first use the strategy of sowing dissension among the Licchavī princes and move to destroy them only after three years.

Three more years of survival would provide the Licchavīs opportunities for more meritorious deeds that would establish them in good stead. Hence the discourse was given out of great compassion by the Buddha.

The Fall of Vesālī

When Brahmin Vassakāra returned from the Buddha and got back to the palace King Ajātasattu asked him: "Brahmin, what did the Fortunate One say?" – "Your majesty, according to Buddha Gotama, the Vajjians cannot be captured unless through deceit or through causing disunity amongst them." – "If we employ deceit, we shall have to suffer losses in our armed forces. We had better try to cause disunity amongst them. But Brahmin, how should we go about it?"

"In that case, hold a meeting at the palace and announce your intention to make war with the Vajjians. Then I shall pretend to disapprove of the idea and leave the council chamber. At that, you should feign anger with me and blame me openly. Thereafter, I shall send gifts to the Vajjians in open daylight which you should promptly find out and confiscate. Then branding me as a traitor, you should, instead of inflicting physical punishment, appear to choose to disgrace me, shave my head and expel me from the city. Then I shall speak out defiant

words to the effect that: 'I know the defence system of your city; I will lead the Vajjians to destroy the city walls and ransack the city.' At those impertinent words from me you should show great anger and order my immediate departure." King Ajātasattu carried out Vassakāra's scheme in detail. [990]

The Licchavī princes learnt that Vassakāra had left Rājagaha. But they had fear of him as he was known as a crooked person. "Let him not cross the Ganges to our shore," they protested strongly. However, some of the Licchavīs said: "Vassakāra is in his plight because he spoke in our defence." So the Licchavīs allowed the Brahmin to cross the Ganges.

Brahmin Vassakāra came to the Licchavī princes and on being asked the reason for his banishment he told them what had taken place at the Rājagaha court. The Licchavīs were sympathetic with Vassakāra. They thought he was treated too severely for such a small offence. "What was your official status at the Rājagaha court?" They asked of Vassakāra. "I was the Minister of Justice."

"Then you can have that post at our court," the Licchavīs told him. Vassakāra proved himself a very competent judge. The Licchavīs then learned the princely arts from him.

When Brahmin Vassakāra had established himself as the royal teacher, he started to put his scheme into effect. He would call up a Licchavī Prince in private and ask some trifling thing such as: "Do youths under your royal highness do cultivating?" – "Yes, they do," would be the natural answer. "Do they yoke a pair of oxen?" – "Yes, they do."

The dialogue did not go further. The two parted. But when one of the Licchavīs who saw the private discussion asked the Licchavī who had conversed with Vassakāra about the subject of their discussion, and was told the truth, the inquirer naturally could not believe it. "There must be something that he is keeping to himself," he thought. A wedge had been thus placed between the two princes.

On another day, Brahmin Vassakāra took another Licchavī Prince into private and asked: "Your Royal Highness what did you have for breakfast today?" And that was all. When some other Licchavī princes asked about the meeting and was told the truth it struck them as unbelievable. Another wedge had been laid at another place.

On another occasion, Brahmin Vassakāra asked another Licchavī Prince in private: "Your Royal Highness is said to be in straitened circumstances, is that true?" – "Who told you so?" asked the prince. "Prince so and so told me." And so ill-will between two innocent Licchavī princes was created.

Yet on another occasion, Brahmin Vassakāra said to another Licchavī Prince in private: "Your Royal Highness is called a coward by someone." – "Who dares call me a coward?" asked the prince. "Prince so and so did." Thus enmity arose between two innocent Licchavī princes.

After three years of insidious scheming, Brahmin Vassakāra brought the Licchavī princes to such a state that no two princes had faith in the other. Then to test the effectiveness of his scheme, he had a public proclamation made by the beat of the gong, for an assembly of the Licchavī princes. Each bearing a grudge against another, none of the princes was prepared to work together in unison as before. "Let the well-to-do princes attend; we are the wretched ones," some would say, or "Let brave men go; we are but cowards." And on these diverse grounds of disunity, the assembly did not take place.

Brahmin Vassakāra then sent a secret message to King Ajātasattu that it was the time to attack Vesālī. Ajātasattu gave the war cry by the beat of the gong and marched out of Rājagaha. [991]

The ruling princes of Vesālī heard the news. "We will not let them cross the Ganges!" they declared and an assembly was called, but nursing old grudges, no one attended. "Let the brave ones go," etc., they would say in derision.

When Ajātasattu's forces had crossed the Gangā, the ruling princes of Vesālī declared: "We will not let them enter our city. We will close our city gates and stand firm. Come! Let's set our defences now!" They shouted and tried to convene an assembly. Yet there was no response.

Ajātasattu's army met no resistance whatsoever from Vesālī whose city gates remained open. They massacred all the Licchavī princes and returned to Rājagaha as conquerors.

> The events leading to the fall of Vesālī and its utter destruction took place during the three years, beginning with the year of the passing away of the Buddha and two years after that. The story is reproduced here as described in the commentary in this connection. May the reader, the virtuous follower of the Buddha, visualize in his imagination the scene of Brahmin

Vassakāra learning from the Buddha the seven factors of growth and non-decline for rulers at the mountain abode of the Buddha atop mount Gijjhakūṭa, and his departure in all satisfaction from there.

Seven Factors of Non-Decline for the Monastics

The First Set of Seven Factors of Non-Decline

Even when the Buddha was giving a discourse on the seven factors of growth for rulers to Brahmin Vassakāra, he had in mind making a similar discourse for the guidance of monastics, in the interest of the prolongation of his teaching, which will be conducive to release from the round of existences, and realization of Nibbāna and hence are more beneficial than the seven factors of growth for rulers which are merely mundane principles.

Accordingly, soon after the Brahmin Vassakāra had left, the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Go, Ānanda, and let all the monastics living around Rājagaha gather in the Assembly Hall."

"Very well, venerable sir," said Ven. Ānanda and arranged for a full gathering of monastics. He sent monastics endowed with special powers to inform those monastics who dwelled at some distance from Rājagaha, and went personally to those monastics who were living near by. When the monastics had gathered in the Assembly Hall, Ven. Ānanda approached the Buddha, made obeisance to him, and standing at a suitable distance, said to him: "Venerable sir, the community of monastics is assembled. It is time for the Fortunate One to go, as and when he wishes."

Then the Buddha went to the Assembly Hall and, taking the seat prepared for him, addressed the monastics thus: "Monastics, I shall expound to you the seven factors of non-decline. Listen and pay attention to what I am going to say in detail." – "Very well, venerable sir," the monastics responded, and the Buddha gave this discourse:

1. Monastics, so long as the monastics hold frequent meetings and have many meetings, they are bound to make progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

2. Monastics, so long as the monastics assemble and disperse in harmony, and attend to the affairs of the Saṅgha in harmony, they are bound to make progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

3. Monastics, so long as the monastics do not prescribe rules that had not been prescribed by the Buddha, and observe well the training rules (*Vinaya*) prescribed by the Buddha, they are bound to make progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

4. Monastics, so long as the monastics show respect, deference, esteem, and [992] veneration towards the elders, who are of long standing and are senior in the monastic life, who have acquired the position of leadership among the Saṅgha, and consider that the advice of those elders is worth listening to, they are bound to make progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

5. Monastics, so long as the monastics do not yield to the power, to the influence of craving (*taṇhā*), which arises in them and which leads to rebirth, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

6. Monastics, so long as the monastics are willing to go into seclusion in remote forest dwellings, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

7. Monastics, so long as the monastics remain established in mindfulness themselves so that those co-practitioners of the monastic practice who cherish morality and who have not yet come might come, and those of similar nature who have already come might live in peace and comfort, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

Monastics, so long as these seven factors of non-decline remain with the monastics, and so long as the monastics live by them, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline."

The above seven factors are called the first set of seven factors of non-decline of monastics.

1. Of these seven the first factor of assembling often is essentially the same as the first principle of progress taught the Vajjians. Unless monastics meet

together often they cannot get to know what is going on at various monasteries. For instance, a certain monastic boundary hall (*sīma*) in a certain monastery may be flawed for having mixed boundaries so that valid Saṅgha functions cannot be held in them, or that certain monastics at a certain monastery are practising medicine, or acting as messengers for lay persons, or taxing the patience of their lay supporters by too many requests; or are pursuing gain with gain, etc. When the laxity of monastic conduct is not taken note of by the Saṅgha, evil monastics may take undue advantage of it, and multiply their numbers with adverse consequences for the teaching.

By the Saṅgha frequently meeting in assembly and promptly, a faulty monastic boundary hall (*sīma*) can be put right by Saṅgha acts so that it can function according to the Vinaya. When evil monastics have formed a community of their own, noble monastics who have attained paths and fruitions can be despatched to teach them the ways and practices of the noble ones (*ariya-vaṁsa-dhamma*); evil monastics can be chastised by sending monastics adept at the Discipline. In such cases, evil monastics will know that the Saṅgha is vigilant and that they cannot thrive. Thus the progress for the monastics in the threefold training is assured.

2. "Monastics assembling in harmony," means promptly responding to a call for the Saṅgha congregation to carry out any Saṅgha business such as clearing the relic shrine (*stūpa*) precincts or doing repair work to the shrines, or making vows or imparting instructions under the Discipline. On no account should the signal for the gathering of the monastics be treated lightly. All personal engagements, such as stitching robes, or baking an alms bowl, or repairing the monastery, should be dropped for the moment to attend the assembly. This attitude of always giving priority to the business of the Saṅgha assembly assures harmony in monastic assemblies.

"Dispersing in harmony," means to rise from the meeting all at once and to break up without exception. If some monastics were to stay on, those who have left the Assembly Hall might harbour suspicions against those staying behind. They might think: "Those monastics have real business to discuss between themselves only," and misunderstandings may [993] arise.

"Dispersing in harmony," may also mean rising up together eagerly to take responsibility to carry out the resolutions made at the assembly such as

participation in Saṅgha acts concerning monastic boundary halls (*sīma*) or volunteering for chastising an errant monastic.

"Attending to the affairs of the Saṅgha in harmony," means a readiness, on the part of every monastic, to live as a community, never being selfish. For instance, if a guest monastic arrives, he should be given a warm welcome instead of being directed to another monastery, or making undue inquiries about his identity. This is particularly important in respect of a sick monastic needing shelter and attention. Finding monastic requisites, such as alms bowl, robes, medicine for the needy is also an act of harmonious discharge of a monastic's obligations. Where there is a dearth of learned monastics at a certain place and there is the danger of the Pāḷi text or the correct meaning thereof going to extinction, the monastics of that place should find a competent monastic to teach the text and interpret the meaning thereof, and he should be looked after properly, by way of the four monastic requisites.

3. In the third factor of non-decline, prescribing a monastic undertaking which is not in accordance with the doctrine amounts to prescribing something that had not been prescribed by the Buddha. An example of such an undertaking: There is a certain provision in the Discipline called a Sitting-Blanket (*Nisīdana-santhata*) rule or an Old Blanket (*Purāṇa-santhata*) rule in the Pārājika Pāḷi (PTS 3.232). When the Buddha was staying in Sāvatthī at the Jetavana monastery, he said to the monastics: "Monastics, I wish to remain in seclusion for three months. No monastic shall come to me except the one who brings my meals." The monastics then made an undertaking among themselves that any monastic who went to the Buddha, other than the one bringing food for him, should be liable to a confession (*pācittiya*) offence, and breach of this offence should be conveyed to the Saṅgha. Now this is overdoing the Buddha's orders. These monastics had no right to classify a breach of the Buddha's words on that particular occasion as one of a confession (*pācittiya*) offence, nor any right to declare by their own undertaking the breach a cause for confession. Such an undertaking is against the Dhamma-Vinaya, and amounts to prescribing something which the Buddha had not prescribed.

Disregarding what the Buddha prescribed is best illustrated by the case of the Vajjiputtaka monastics of Vesālī when they tried to introduce ten unlawful rules of their liking, in flagrant disobedience to the Buddha's Vinaya rules. That event

took place on the hundredth year of the Buddha's passing away see the Council of the Seven Hundred (*Satta-satikakkhandhaka*, Vin Kandh 22).

During the time of the Buddha, there were monastics Assaji and Punabbasuka who intentionally infringed minor rules of the discipline. However trifling the offence might be, non-observance of what the Buddha prescribed is still a non-observance.

In the story of an Old Blanket (*Purāṇa-santhata*), the Arahat Upasena, the brother of Ven. Sāriputta, refrained from making a novel undertaking a monastic rule of conduct. This is a case of not prescribing rules that had not been prescribed by the Buddha.

Ven. Yasa, who headed the Second Council, taught the Dhamma-Vinaya to the monastics. This is an instance of not disregarding the training rules prescribed by the Buddha.

On the eve of the First Council, a lively discussion took place among the Saṅgha whether minor offences should be dropped from the code of Vinaya because the Buddha, when his passing away was near, gave this option to the Saṅgha after he was gone. Ven. Kassapa, as head of the First Council, made a formal proposal at the Saṅgha congregation to uphold all minor offences as prescribed by the Buddha. This is a case of observing well the training rules prescribed by the Buddha.

4. With reference to this factor of non-decline, elders would give spiritual guidance only to those monastics who are courteous and reverential [994] towards them and who approach them twice or thrice every day. To those who willingly seek guidance by showing their admiration, the elders would impart practical wisdom handed down from generations of teachers and essential points in the doctrine that are fit to be taught only to sincere and devoted pupils. If the monastics do not show due respect and regard to the elders, they will be deprived of the five benefits such as morality, and the seven properties of the noble ones (*ariya*), and so stand to have a great loss and decline.

Those monastics who are courteous and reverential towards the elders and approach them twice or thrice every day, gain knowledge from them in many ways. They get practical instructions in insight meditation, such as: "You should go forward thus, being mindful and with clear comprehension, you should go backward thus; you should look straight ahead thus; you should look sideways

thus; you should bend the arm thus; you should stretch out the folded arm thus; you should carry the double robe and alms bowl thus, etc."

The elders would impart to them practical wisdom, which was handed down from generations of teachers, and the essential points in the doctrine, which were worthy to only sincere and devoted pupils. They would teach them the thirteen ascetic practices and warn them against the pitfalls in doctrinal controversy by explaining to them the moot points contained in the ten Points of Controversy (*Kathā-vatthu*). Thus, being established as good pupils of worthy teachers, these monastics will gain the five benefits such as morality, fulfilling the task of Awakening, the fruit of becoming a monastic.

5. As regards the fifth factor of non-decline, a monastic who goes about from village to village, town to town, always at the heels of their supporters for the sake of acquiring the four monastic requisites, is one who yields to the power of craving. One who yields to craving is on the decline in the benefits of monastic practice such as morality. One who does not yield to craving progresses spiritually, beginning with morality.

6. As regards the sixth factor of non-decline, a remote forest dwelling is a place away from human settlements, but not necessarily in a forest. One must be willing to dwell in seclusion in such a place. In a monastery close to a town or village, when a monastic rises from absorption (*jhāna*), he hears human voices, male, female or children's voices which spoil his concentration.

At a forest abode, one wakes up in the morning to the sounds of animals and birds, which makes for peace and contentment and creates a delightful satisfaction (*pīti*) and by wisely reflecting on that delightful satisfaction, one can attain the Arahat fruition. Thus the Buddha speaks in praise of a monastic sleeping at a remote forest dwelling even more than a monastic in meditation absorption living near a town or a village. This is because he sees the potential to become an Arahat in the forest-dwelling monastic. That is why he says that as long as monastics are willing to dwell in seclusion in a forest abode, they are bound to progress spiritually and that there is no reason for their decline.

7. Regarding the seventh factor of non-decline, resident monastics who do not welcome co-practitioners of the monastic practice who cherish morality, are those who lack faith in the Three Treasures. This type of monastic would not greet guest monastics on arrival, would not offer a seat, nor would fan them to

cool them and would not do any act normally expected of a host monastic. A monastery, where such monastics live, earns the reputation it deserves, that such and such a monastery is a place where monastics lacking in faith in the Three Treasures live, that it is unfriendly to guest monastics, and inhospitable. That reputation keeps away guest monastics from entering that monastery even though they may happen to be passing by it. Therefore, virtuous monastics who have not been there, will never go there. Those virtuous monastics, who have not been there, not knowing the inhospitable nature of the monastery, will soon find out that the place is not the right [995] one for them to stay long, and will go away in disgust. In this way that monastery will become a place where other virtuous monastics do not care to settle down. The result is that the resident monastics of that monastery will lack any opportunity of seeing virtuous ones who can share with them the doctrine which could dispel doubts in them, teach them the training precepts, and preach to them the excellent doctrine. These resident monastics will then hear no new discourse, nor will they try to retain through constant recitation whatever they have learnt. Thus the benefits of the monastic life such as morality will dwindle day by day.

Resident monastics, who wish to see guest monastics arrive at their monastery, are those that have faith in the Three Treasures, so they would cordially greet those virtuous monastics who visit them, would offer lodging, and ask them to join them on the alms round. They get an opportunity to learn the doctrine from the guest monastics and have their doubts dispelled. They can hear discourses on the excellent doctrine. The monastery resided in by this type of monastic earns a good reputation as a place where monastics with faith in the Three Treasures live, as a hospitable place that honours virtuous guest monastics. That reputation attracts virtuous monastics to it. When they arrive, the resident monastics do whatever acts of hospitality are due. They would pay respects to the visiting monastics who are senior to them, or would sit on their own seats around the visiting monastics who are junior to them, and then ask whether the visitor plans to stay or to move on to another place. If the visitor says he intends moving on, the resident monastics would invite him to stay on, pointing out that the place is a suitable one for them and that alms gathering would also be no problem for him. If the visitor agrees to stay on, then the resident monastics get the privilege of learning the Discipline, if the visitor is proficient in the Vinaya; or learning the Doctrine (*Suttanta*), if the visitor is proficient in the discourses. Abiding by

the instructions given by the virtuous visitors, the resident monastics become Arahats with the four discriminative knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*). As for the virtuous guest monastics, they say gladly: "When we first came here, we thought of staying only a few days but since the resident monastics make our stay pleasant, we shall stay here for ten or twelve years." Thus the benefits of the monastic life such as morality increase.

The Second Set of Seven Factors of Non-Decline

Further, the Buddha said to the monastics: "Monastics, I shall expound to you another set of seven factors of non-decline. Listen and pay good attention. I shall explain in detail." – "Very well, venerable sir," the monastics responded. And the Buddha said this:

1. Monastics, so long as the monastics do not delight in and concern themselves with mundane activities or transactions they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
2. Monastics, so long as the monastics do not delight in and seek enjoyment in idle talk they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
3. Monastics, so long as the monastics do not delight in and seek enjoyment in slothfulness, and are not fond of sleeping, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
4. Monastics, so long as the monastics do not seek enjoyment in the company of associates, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
5. Monastics, so long as the monastics do not have any evil desire to make pretentious claims to attainment or to virtue, and do not yield to such evil desire, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
6. Monastics, so long as the monastics do not associate with evil friends or evil [996] companions, and are not favourably disposed towards evil companionship, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

7. Monastics, so long as the monastics after comprehending the truth in a small way do not stop halfway, before attaining Awakening, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

Monastics, so long as these seven factors of non-decline remain with the monastics, and so long as the monastics live by them, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline."

1. Of those seven factors, the first factor: "Mundane activities," means assigning a robe for use, stitching robes, reinforcing the layers of a robe, making a needle-container, stitching a sling for the alms bowl, stitching the girdle, stitching a water-strainer, making a circular stand for the alms bowl, making a potsherd for scraping the feet, or making a broom, etc.

Some monastics devote all their time to these matters. This, pointed out as the first factor, is not proper. A monastic should apportion his time for such matters, but he should have time for learning, studying, cleaning the relic shrine (*stūpa*) precinct, etc., as well as to allow some time for meditation. A monastic who uses his time judiciously is not one who enjoys worldly affairs.

2. "Idle talk," means speaking fondly about women or about men, and any other flippant speech that is not conducive to the paths and fruitions. A monastic, who indulges in such petty talk all the time, is one who seeks enjoyment in idle talk. A monastic, who discourses on the doctrine by day and by night, who answers doctrinal questions, is called: "A reticent monastic, one who is disciplined in speech."

The Buddha has said: *Sannipatitānaṁ vo bhikkhave dvayaṁ karaṇīyaṁ dhammī vā kathā ariyo vā tuṇhī-bhāvo*, "for you, monastics, there are only two things to do when you meet one another: talk about the doctrine, or remain silent in deep contemplation."

3. A monastic, who is given to sloth and torpor even while going, sitting or lying down, is one who seeks enjoyment in slothfulness and is fond of sleeping. A monastic, who might have a cat-nap due to earnest effort at monastic practice that tires his body, is not one who is slothful or is fond of sleeping.

4. A monastic, who feels uneasy in being alone but is fond of company of one or more to talk to, is one who seeks enjoyment in company. A monastic, who

delights in being alone in all the four bodily postures and who is perfectly at ease while alone, is not one who is fond of company.

5. A monastic, lacking morality, may claim morality; such a monastic is called one who has an evil desire. A monastic, who does not have pretention to morality, is not one who has an evil desire.

6. A friend is one whom one loves; a companion is one who lives, goes or eats together with oneself.

7. A monastic who does not rest contented with purity of morality, or attainment of insight knowledge, or attainment of absorption (*jhāna*), or attainment of Stream-entry, or attainment of Once-returning, or attainment of Non-returner, but relentlessly strives to become an Arahat is one who is bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for his decline.

The Third Set of Seven Factors of Non-Decline

Further, the Buddha said to the monastics: "Monastics, I shall expound to you another set of [997] seven factors of non-decline. Listen and pay good attention. I shall explain it in detail." – "Very well Sir," the monastics responded and the Buddha said this:

1. Monastics, so long as the monastics are instilled with confidence or faith grounded on conviction, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
2. Monastics, so long as the monastics have a conscience about wrong doing (*hiri*) they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
3. Monastics, so long as the monastics have concern about wrong doing (*ottappa*), they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
4. Monastics, so long as the monastics have vast learning, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
5. Monastics, so long as the monastics are diligent, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
6. Monastics, so long as the monastics are established in mindfulness, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

7. Monastics, so long as the monastics are endowed with insight wisdom (*vipassanā-paññā*), they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

Monastics, so long as these seven factors of non-decline remain with the monastics, and so long as the monastics live by them, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline."

1. Of these seven factors, the first factor of non-decline is conviction or faith (*saddhā*). It is of 4 kinds:

1. Faith in the not yet attained (*agamanīya-saddhā*) refers to the strength of conviction that arises in a Bodhisatta due to the noble striving after perfection in ten ways (*pārami*), charity (*cāga*) and good conduct (*cariyā*), without external prompting, which puts unshakable faith in anything that deserves faith.
2. Faith based on attainment (*adhigama-saddhā*) refers to the unassailably firm conviction of a noble one (*ariya*) in the four noble truths due to having penetrative knowledge of the path.
3. Clear faith (*pasāda-saddhā*) refers to the depth of conviction in the Three Treasures such as that of Mahākappina. When he heard the words: "Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha," he had a deep faith in the noble qualities of the Buddha such as: "The Buddha has analytical knowledge of all things," and so on, and this faith arose in him without being tutored by others about the attributes of the Buddha, the Dhamma, or Saṅgha.
4. Trusting faith (*okappana-saddhā*) refers to conviction after considered judgment regarding the Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha when others make mention about them. After well considered judgment, the holder of this kind of faith has unshakable conviction in the Three Treasures like that of a noble one (*ariya*) who has realized the truth.

In the present context about the first factor of non-decline, clear faith and trusting faith are meant.

2-3. In the second and third things that prevent decline, the distinction between conscience (*hiri*) and concern (*ottapa*) should be understood by means of this analogy: Let us say, there are two balls of iron, the first is cool but is smeared

with human excreta, the second is just a red hot iron ball. A wise man would not touch the first iron ball lest he would pollute his hand, and he would not touch the second one lest his hand would get burnt. Likewise, a wise [998] person abhors wrong doing because he detests it for its shameful quality; his sense of conscience to do wrong doing is called conscience (*hiri*). He is concerned about wrong doing because he is full of apprehension about the consequences, both here and in the hereafter; his concern about doing wrong doing is called concern (*ottappa*).

4. In the fourth thing that prevents decline: "A person of vast learning" means one who is well read in the Pāḷi texts and doctrine (*pariyatti*), and one who has penetrative knowledge of the truth, that is, one who has gained supermundane knowledge (*paṭivedha*). In the present context the first meaning should be taken.

Of the type of persons well-read in the canon, there are these four kinds:

1. A monastic who needs no guidance in the interpretation of the canon.
2. A monastic who is fit to head a monastery.
3. A monastic who can give advice and instructions to female monastics.
4. A monastic who, like Ven. Ānanda, is conversant with the whole of the canon and can explain and discourse on any point in them.

In the context regarding the fourth thing that prevents decline, this fourth kind of learned person is meant. Only such a person can become established in the good practice (*paṭipatti*), the good penetration (*paṭivedha-saddhamma*), because being well read is the foundation for both of them.

5. In the fifth thing that prevents decline, the diligent person fulfils two aspects of diligence, physical and mental. "Physical diligence," refers to a loner who shuns company and cultivates, in all the bodily postures, the eight subjects on which diligence should be built. "Mental diligence" refers to a yogi who distances himself from the six sense objects and dwells in the eight stages of absorption (*jhāna*), and who, in other moments, in all the bodily postures, allows no defilements to enter his mind which is constantly vigilant. So long as monastics are diligent both physically and mentally, they are bound to prosper; there is no possibility for them to decline.

6. In the sixth thing that prevents decline: "Established in mindfulness," means persons who have such power of awareness as being able to remember all deeds or words that they had done or spoken long ago, as in the case of Ven. Mahā Gatimbhaya Abhaya, Ven. Dīghabhāṇaka Abhaya, and Ven. Tipiṭaka Cūḷābhaya.

Ven. Mahā Gatimbaya Abhaya was a precocious child. At the traditional ceremony for feeding him with the auspicious milk rice, on the fifth day after he was born, he made the sound: "Shoo! Shoo!" to scare away the crow that tried to poke its head into the rice-bowl. When he grew up and later became an elderly monastic, his pupils asked him: "Venerable sir, what earliest physical or verbal action of yours do you remember?" he related the event of his shooing away the crow when he was just five days old.

When Ven. Dīghabhāṇaka Abhaya was just nine days old, his mother, in trying to kiss him, bent down over his fac, and her big hairdo adorned with lots of Spanish jasmine buds came loose, letting handfuls of the flower buds drop on his bare chest. He remembered how that dropping of buds caused him pain. When asked by his pupils about his earliest memories, he recounted this event that he experienced as a nine-day old child.

When Ven. Tipiṭaka Cūḷābhaya was asked about his power of memory, this great elder said: "Friends, there are four gates to the city of Anurādhapura. After the closing of three of these gates, when only the fourth gate was allowed to be used by the people, I would ask the name of each person going out in the morning. When they re-entered the city by the same gate in the evening, I could call up all of their names."

7. In the seventh thing that prevents decline: "Insight," means the comprehension of the rising and dissolution of the five aggregates (*udayabbaya-paññā*). In another sense, mindfulness or awareness mentioned as the sixth thing that prevents decline and insight mentioned in the seventh refer to right mindfulness and insight which are the foundation of insight development, that is, having awareness and perception while meditating. [999]

The Fourth Set of Seven Factors of Non-Decline

The Buddha then continued with the further seven factors of non-decline thus:

1. Monastics, so long as the monastics cultivate mindfulness (*sati*), a factor of Awakening, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
2. Monastics, so long as the monastics cultivate investigative knowledge of phenomena (*dhamma-vicaya*), a factor of Awakening, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
3. Monastics, so long as the monastics cultivate effort (*viriya*), a factor of Awakening, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
4. Monastics, so long as the monastics cultivate delightful satisfaction (*pīti*), a factor of Awakening, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
5. Monastics, so long as the monastics cultivate serenity (*passaddhi*), a factor of Awakening, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
6. Monastics, so long as the monastics cultivate concentration (*samādhi*), a factor of Awakening, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.
7. Monastics, so long as the monastics cultivate equanimity (*upekkhā*), a factor of Awakening, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

Monastics, so long as these seven factors of non-decline remain with the monastics, and so long as the monastics live by them, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline."

In these seven factors of Awakening which should be cultivated by monastics for progress, the Buddha teaches insight development pertaining to the paths and fruitions both at the mundane and supermundane levels.

The Fifth Set of Seven Factors of Non-Decline

The Buddha then continued with the further seven factors of non-decline thus:

1. Monastics, so long as the monastics cultivate the perception of impermanence (*anicca*), they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

2. Monastics, so long as the monastics cultivate the perception of non-self (*anatta*), they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

3. Monastics, so long as the monastics cultivate the perception of the foulness or impurity of the body (*asubha*), they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

4. Monastics, so long as the monastics cultivate the perception of the danegrs in the aggregates (*ādīnava*), they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

5. Monastics, so long as the monastics cultivate the perception of abandoning (*pahāna*), they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

6. Monastics, so long as the monastics cultivate the perception of detachment from passion (*virāga*), they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no [1000] reason for their decline.

7. Monastics, so long as the monastics cultivate the perception of cessation (*nirodha*), they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

Monastics, so long as these seven factors of non-decline remain with the monastics, and so long as the monastics live by them, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline."

Herein, the perception of impermanence means perception that arises with concentrated reflection on the impermanence of mind and body. The perception of non-self should be understood likewise. Insight into the impermanent nature of conditioned phenomena that pertains to the three spheres of existence is insight wisdom (*vipassanā-paññā*), the perception of that knowledge is worth cultivating since it is perception associated with knowledge. It should be noted that the word perception essentially means knowledge. The same method of the Buddha's teaching should be understood regarding perception of non-self, etc. Of the above seven factors, the first five are mundane; the last two are both mundane and supermundane.

The Six Factors of Non-Decline

Further, the Buddha said to the monastics: "Monastics, I shall expound to you six factors of non-decline. Listen and pay good attention. I shall explain it in detail." – "Very well Sir," responded the monastics. The Buddha said this:

1. Monastics, so long as the monastics show by their bodily action their kind regards towards fellow-practitioners of the pure life, both openly and in private, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

2. Monastics, so long as the monastics show by their speech their kind regards towards fellow-practitioners of the pure life, openly and in private, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

3. Monastics, so long as the monastics keep an attitude of kind regards towards fellow-practitioners of the pure life, openly and in private, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

4. Monastics, so long as the monastics share with virtuous fellow-practitioners of the pure life whatever they receive righteously, such as the four monastic requisites, and least of all, the alms food collected in their alms bowl, without enjoying it alone, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

5. Monastics, so long as the monastics, both openly and in private, remain in observance of the same moral precepts (*sīla*) which lead to liberation from bondage to craving (*taṇhā*), which are extolled by the wise, which are not subject to misconception, which make for concentration, and which are unbroken, intact, unblemished, unspotted, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

6. Monastics, so long as the monastics, both openly and in private, remain in noble knowledge which leads to Nibbāna and which leads one guided by it to the end of the unalloyed suffering (*dukkha*) of sentient existence, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline.

Monastics, so long as these six factors remain with the monastics, and so long as the monastics live by them, they are bound to progress spiritually; there is no reason for their decline."

Thus the Buddha taught the assembly of monastics five sets of seven factors of [1001] non-decline and one set of six factors of non-decline.

Regarding factors 1-3 above: "Showing kind regards by one's physical action," means doing any deed with loving-kindness. "Showing kind regards by one's speech," means speech uttered with loving-kindness. "Keeping a kind attitude towards others," means thinking kind thoughts towards them.

In this text, although the Buddha taught that a monastic's deeds, words and thoughts are to be expressions of loving-kindness towards fellow monastics, the same principle should govern all actions of lay persons too. The Buddha addressed the monastics here simply because in the four kinds of assembly the assembly of monastics is the noblest.

Thus, a deed of a monastic's loving-kindness may consist in doing personal service to fellow monastics. In the case of a lay person, going to worship at a shrine or at Bodhi tree, or going to the monastery to invite the Saṅgha to an offering ceremony, warmly greeting the monastics on their alms round, offering a suitable seat, seeing the monastic off on his religious mission, etc, are deeds of loving-kindness.

A verbal action of a monastic's loving-kindness may be expressed in terms of teaching the Discipline, showing the methods of meditation, teaching the doctrine, teaching the canon as the most important action. With lay persons, stimulating and organizing one's friends to do meritorious deeds, such as going to a relic shrine (*stūpa*) or to the Bodhi tree to pay respects, going to hear a discourse on the Dhamma, or to offer flowers or lights at the shrines; urging them to abide by the ten moral actions; or to offer ticket alms food or to offer robes for the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period, or to donate the four monastic requisites to the Saṅgha; and then having invited the Saṅgha for the offering, to organize and urge friends to prepare the food, to lay the seats, to provide drinking water, to greet the Saṅgha, to conduct them to the seats prepared for them, and above all, to remind them to have the right attitude in serving the Saṅgha. All these verbal activities spring from loving-kindness.

A mental action of a monastic's loving-kindness takes the form of diffusing goodwill, after having made the morning's ablutions, seated at a secluded place, and wishing all monastics in the monastery well, that they all be free from trouble and ill-will. On the part of lay persons they should diffuse a similar spirit of good will to all the Saṅgha, thinking: "May the Saṅgha be well, may they be free from trouble and ill-will." Such an attitude constitutes mental action springing from loving-kindness.

Overt Action and Action in Private

1. Deeds. Examples of overt action: Helping in the stitching of robes of fellow monastics, whether senior or junior to oneself, the younger monastics washing the feet of elders or doing other personal services, such as fanning, respecting him, etc.

Example of action in private: Looking after the personal property of fellow monastics, whether senior or junior to oneself, which have not been properly looked after by the owner, and in doing so, doing it without having any disrespectful opinion about the lack of care on the part of the owner, but doing it as if it were one's own property that needs looking after.

2. Words. Example of overt verbal action: Addressing another monastic in reverential terms. e.g., Venerable Elder Tissa. Example of verbal action in private: in inquiring after a certain elder, asking: "Where is our Ven. Elder Deva?" or "Where is our Ven. Elder Tissa? When is he expected here?"

3. Thoughts. [1002] Example of overt mental action: When one looks at a fellow monastic with endearing eyes in a clearly pleased expression this is the outcome of the loving-kindness in the mind of the one looking; it reflects his thoughts, the facial expression itself is bodily action springing from loving-kindness. Example of mental action in private; wishing Ven. Elder Deva or Tissa, to be well and happy, etc., is mental action in private, due to loving-kindness.

Regarding the fourth factor of non-decline above: "To enjoy something alone," means either not sharing something as an article that is obtained, or not sharing something with a certain person or persons. In the first case, the extent one is prepared to share something is an instance of enjoying something alone in respect of an article. In the second case, one has in mind: "I shall share it with

monastic so and so; but I shall not share it with monastic so and so," this is an instance of enjoying something alone in respect of person.

In this fourth factor, a monastic who regards any item received as an offering to the Saṅgha as common property of all virtuous monastics co-resident with him, considers thus: "This alms food is of great value morally; I shall not give it to lay persons since that would amount to pursuing gain with gain. I shall not enjoy it alone first. I shall offer it to the Saṅgha. If anything is left after all the Saṅgha have partaken of it, I shall then eat it. For this food has been obtained with the intention of becoming the common property of the Saṅgha." Accordingly he first announces the meal time for all the Saṅgha by the striking of the gong. This noble practice under the Buddha's teaching is called memorable practice.

Fraternal Living

The Noble Practice of Fraternal Living

What kind of monastic is competent or qualified to take up this fraternal practice (*sāraṇīya*)? An immoral monastic is not in a position to take up fraternal practice. Only a monastic endowed with morality can take up this practice. The reason is that virtuous monastics cannot receive offerings from a monastic of immoral conduct. They will always refuse it.

Only a monastic with impeccable morality is qualified to take up the fraternal practice. Once taken up; the practice must be fulfilled without a break, flawlessly. The details of the practice are given below.

Where a monastic gives discriminately the alms food to his mother, or father, or preceptor, or any such person, he is sharing it with someone whom he is bound to offer. But his sharing is not fraternal practice: it is merely removing an impediment (*paḷibodha*), by fulfilling an obligation, as it is termed in the teaching. That indeed is so. Fraternal practice is of a superior nobler way of sharing which is suitable only for a monastic who is free from impediments, obstructions and personal obligations.

A practitioner of fraternal practice may give, in fulfilment of his practice, the share of his alms food to a sick monastic, or to a monastic tending a sick monastic, or a guest monastic, or a way-faring monastic or to a newly admitted monastic who has not learnt the proper way to robe himself or to hold his alms bowl. After giving the alms food to these types of monastics, if any alms food is

left, he offers it to the monastics beginning from the most senior of the elders who should be allowed to partake of it as much as they like, and not in a small quantity only.

If the food runs out and if there is time to collect alms food for the day, he may go on another round of alms gathering and then continue the distribution of whatever food he has collected. If there is any food left after the distribution, he eats it. If none is left and if there is no time to go on another round of alms gathering, he stays without any food for that day and his sole sustenance then is the delightful satisfaction (*pīti*) derived from the successful undertaking of the fraternal practice.

> Note that although the text mentions sharing with virtuous fellow monastics, a practitioner of the fraternal practice may deny his alms food to an immoral [1003] monastic, or he may, out of pity, give it to him, in which latter case it is not by way of fulfilling the practice.

In actual practice, the practitioner of fraternal practice will find it not too difficult, if it is to be undertaken in the company of monastics who are skilful in this practice, but will find it rather difficult if in the company of monastics who are not so skilled.

The reason is as follows: Where the associate monastics are skilful in fraternal practice, those who have collected alms food themselves do not partake of the practitioner's food, considering the trouble that would otherwise cause to the practitioner. Other monastics who do not get alms food elsewhere would partake of the food just to satisfy their need. Thus, no unnecessary burden is placed on the practitioner. Where the associate monastics do not know how stringent the fraternal practice is, those monastics who have got alms somewhere else would, under the influence of greed, also partake of the food offered by the practitioner. Other monastics who do not get alms food elsewhere would take more than what they actually need. In such a situation the practitioner has to make repeated rounds of alms collection within the time proper to do so, and has, more often than not, to go without food as all his collection having been distributed to others.

This self-assigned task of feeding one's associates must be pursued for twelve years without break so that it can be called a success. A full twelve years self-denial regarding daily sustenance is the unique character of this practice.

If, supposing on the last day of the twelve years, there should occur the slightest vexation in the mind of the practitioner, then he fails. For instance, if the practitioner went away to bathe, leaving his alms bowl containing alms food gathered by him, and if it was seen by a senior monastic and its contents distributed according to seniority and nothing were left in it, the practitioner must be able to take it in the proper attitude. Otherwise, if he had the slightest indignant attitude towards his associates for leaving nothing for him, his twelve-year long practice goes to waste. If he is still willing, he has to start it all over again for twelve more years. In this respect, the rule is as stringent as in the case of the probationary service period of probation after belonging to an outside sect (*titthiya-parivāsa*); once broken, a fresh period must be undertaken by the incumbent.

If the practitioner, under the same circumstances, instead of being vexed, feels joy to know that his fellow monastics have partaken of all his food, his practice is then accomplished. It is a success.

The benefits of fulfilling the fraternal practice are:

1. The primary benefit in fulfilling the fraternal practice is the abandoning of envy (*issā*) and stinginess (*macchariya*) through his prolonged cultivation of overcoming these defilements.
2. His charitableness, having been established, he is adored by everyone.
3. Since a strong desire to act in generosity has the benign effect of bountiful fruit, in the present existence, the practitioner is blessed with the four requisites all the time.
4. The twelve-year long practice of offering food to virtuous fellow monastics out of his alms bowl has the effect of rendering his alms bowl an inexhaustible source of alms food. He can give as much as he wishes out of it without depleting it.
5. As the result of giving priority to the most senior elders in his act of generosity for such a long period every day, whenever the common acquisitions of offerings are divided, the best things go to him.
6. As the result of the gladdening effect, he had produced in others through his act of self-denial in offering food in them, and so, whenever famine visits, Devas are ready to help him.

Stories related to the Fraternal Practice

1. Ven. Tissa feeds 50 wayfaring monastics. Ven. Tissa was a forest dweller who lived in the forest abode known as Senavana. His place for the alms gathering was a village named Mahāgiri. A group of 50 venerables, who [1004] were on a pilgrimage to the Nāgadīpa Shrine, went on the alms round in Mahāgiri village but they collected none. As they were leaving the village, they met Ven. Tissa, the local resident monastic, who was entering the village for alms food. Tissa asked the 50 venerables whether they had got alms food. The venerables did not give a straight answer but merely replied: "Friend, we have been on the alms round there." Tissa knew that the venerables had got no alms food and so he said to them: "May the venerable ones wait here till I come back." The venerables then said to him: "None of us 50 monastics got alms food there. How could you alone get it?" – "Venerable sir," Tissa replied, "resident monastics can manage somehow; though not possessing great power, they know where alms food can be collected." The 50 venerables remained waiting there.

As Ven. Tissa entered Mahāgiri village, the very first house was ready with alms food, the lady of the house had milk rice prepared to offer to him. As soon as Tissa called in front of her house, she poured the milk rice into his alms bowl to the full. Tissa returned to the group of venerables and respectfully offered the aims-food, addressing the most senior monastic, he said: "May the venerable ones accept my offering." The elder looked surprised. "Fifty of us have been in that village and none of us have collected any alms food whatsoever. This monastic has got milk rice in no time. How could it happen like this?" These thoughts, though not spoken out loud, were reflected in their expressions. Ven. Tissa then said to them: "Venerable sirs, this alms food is righteously obtained. Do not have any misgivings about it." The 50 venerables partook of the rice meal to their satisfaction. After they had finished, Ven. Tissa ate the leftovers to his satisfaction too.

After Ven. Tissa had finished his meal, the venerables asked: "Friend, when did you gain penetrative knowledge of the supermundane?"

To this he replied: "Venerable sirs, I have not attained the supermundane."

"In that case, are you endowed with absorption (*jhāna*)?"

"No, venerable sirs."

"How, friend, could you easily get milk rice where 50 of us failed to get even a morsel. Is that not a miraculous feat?"

Ven. Tissa was obliged to admit his attainment to dispel doubts in those monastics. Since the attainment of fraternal practice is not a supermundane Dhamma (*uttari-manussa-dhamma*), he considered it proper to admit to it: "Venerable sirs, I have fulfilled the fraternal practice. Since I had done that, I could provide food for even 100,000 fellow monastics out of my alms bowl." – "Virtuous One! Excellent it is! Excellent it is! This miraculous feat is befitting a virtuous one like yourself."

This is an instance of the alms bowl that has virtually become an inexhaustible source of food; the fourth benefit of fraternal practice. This story also proves the second benefit of being adored by everyone, and the third benefit of being blessed with the four requisites all the time. The commentary picks up this story to exemplify the fourth benefit which is the most significant here.

2. Ven. Tissa at the national offerings ceremony. In ancient Śrī Laṅkā, there was the Giribhanda Mahāpūjā, an annual festival of offerings held on Mount Cetiya which was a grand national occasion. When Ven. Tissa arrived there, he inquired from fellow monastics what was the most significant item of offering that year. Being told that two finest fabrics intended for robe-making were the most significant item, Ven. Tissa said: "Those two pieces will come to my lot." This was overheard by an official who reported to the king: "Your Excellency, there is a junior monastic who says that the two fine fabrics will come to his lot." The king said: "That is what he imagines. But those fabrics are worthy of elders only." And he thought of making the offering of the fabrics to the elders. [1005]

When the procession of monastics arrived for the offering ceremony, the king himself headed the offerings. The two choicest fabrics were placed foremost, ready to hand. But they did not reach the king's hand, when he was presenting the gifts to the elders. Only other items reached his hand. When Ven. Tissa came along, the two pieces of fabrics strangely reached the king's hand. The king offered them to Tissa. He also signalled by his facial expression to the official who reported to him about the fabrics to ask Ven. Tissa to sit there a while.

After the procession had passed by, the king asked Ven. Tissa: "Venerable sir, when did you become endowed with this special apperception?" Ven. Tissa did not want to give even a faint suggestion of him of having attained the paths and

fruitions and so he simply replied: “Great King, I have not attained the supermundane.” – “But venerable sir, you had said even before the gift-making that the two fabrics would come to you.” – “That is true, O king, that was because since I had successfully completed the fraternal practice, whenever common property of gifts are distributed among the Saṅgha the choicest items always come to me.” – “Venerable sir! Excellent it is! Excellent it is! This miraculous happening becomes you well.”

After respectfully paying obeisance to Ven. Tissa, the king went back to the palace. This is an example of the fifth benefit.

3. The elder nun Nāgā. At one time, ancient Śrī Laṅkā underwent troubled times due to an insurgency headed by one Tissa, a Brahmin. At a village known as Bhārata where the elder nun Nāgā resided, the whole village fled for fear of insurgents, without letting it be known to the elder. Early in the morning the elder nun Nāgā noticed the strange silence of the village and said to her pupils: “Bhārata village is strangely silent. Go and enquire what’s the matter.” The younger female monastics went into the village and having seen that no one was left, reported it to their teacher.

The elder nun Nāgā said to her pupils: “Do not be alarmed or upset by the flight of the whole village. You go on as usual with your studying the texts, the commentaries and meditation. When the time came for the alms round, she robed herself and went to the great banyan tree near the village gate, leading her eleven disciples. The guardian spirit of the banyan tree came down and offered the twelve female monastics sufficient alms food. He then said to them: “Venerable ones, do not move away to another place. Always come to this banyan tree for your alms food.”

Now, the elder nun Nāgā had a younger brother, a monastic by the name of Nāga. He assessed the situation and decided that Śrī Laṅkā was no safe place and that he could not find sustenance here. So he left the monastery accompanied by eleven disciples meaning to cross the sea to the mainland. Before leaving Śrī Laṅkā he went to bid farewell to his elder sister Nāgā. Learning of their arrival at Bhārata village, the elder nun Nāgā went to see them and was told by monastic Nāga of his plan to cross over to the mainland. The elder nun Nāgā then said to him: “Would the venerable ones stay at the monastery for tonight, and proceed the next day.” The twelve venerables accepted the invitation.

The elder nun Nāgā collected the alms food in the morning as usual from the banyan tree. She offered the food to Ven. Nāga and his disciples. “Venerable elder, is this alms food properly gotten?” Ven. Nāga asked his elder sister and then remained silent. “Brother, this aims-food is righteously obtained. Do not have any doubts about this.” But Ven. Nāga was still doubtful: “Ven. sister is it properly obtained?”

Thereupon, the elder nun Nāgā took the alms bowl and threw it upwards where it remained for a while. Ven. Nāga said: “Even if the alms bowl stays aloft at seven palm trees high, it is still the alms food collected by a nun, is it not venerable sister?” Then he [1006] continued: “This disturbance and danger is not to last forever. After the famine has passed I, who speak in praise of the contented nature of the noble ones (*ariya*) with the four requisites, will be asking myself: ‘O virtuous one, trained in the ascetic practice regarding food, you have survived the scourge of Tissa the Brahmin by eating the alms food of a nun.’ I shall not be able to bear such criticism of myself. I must go now, you remain in mindfulness, elder sisters.”

The guardian spirit of the banyan tree was watching. If Ven. Nāga partook of the elder nun Nāgā’s alms food, he would say nothing to the monastic; but if the monastic were to refuse it, he would intervene, and ask him to drop the idea of going away. When he saw that the monastic refused the alms food, he descended from his abode in the tree and asked Ven. Nāga to hand over the alms bowl, and inviting him and his company to the foot of the banyan tree, offered them the meal on prepared seats. After the meal, he got an undertaking from Ven. Nāga not to go abroad. And from that day onwards the guardian spirit of the banyan tree offered meals daily to twelve female monastics and twelve male monastics for seven years. This is an example of the sixth benefit.

In this story the elder nun Nāgā was unaffected by famine, thanks to her fulfilment of the fraternal practice whereas Ven. Nāga was helped by the guardian spirit on account of his morality.

Regarding the fifth factor of non-decline: “Morality that is unbroken, intact, unchequered and unspotted,” is explained thus: For monastics, there are seven groups of breaches of morality in brief outline. Of the list of precepts to be observed, if the first precept or the last precept is broken, it is called “broken” like in a piece of cloth whose edges are frayed; if the precepts in the middle are

broken, it is no more intact, just as in a piece of cloth that has holes in the middle part; if two or three precepts in a series are broken, it is chequered, like a cow whose skin is of different colours either on her back or underneath; if there is a breach of precepts at alternate places, it is spotted, like a cow with spots. Morality to be unbroken, intact, unchequered, and unspotted must be such that no manner of breach of the above four ways occurs anywhere in the observance of the monastic precepts.

Morality that is flawless in those above four ways is a sufficing condition for the paths and fruitions. One who is endowed with it is free from the bonds of craving and is therefore a truly happy person. Since it is very pure, it is extolled by the Buddha and noble ones (*ariya*). Since that morality is not conceived as a means of glorious future existences, such as a Deva of any specific name or unspecified name, it is not a misconception due to craving for existence; or not wrongly conceived as something permanent or eternal, a misconception due to wrong view; it is said to be not subject to misconception. Further, since none of the four deviations (*vipatti*) can be connected to this kind of morality, it is said to be not subject to misconception. Since it provides sufficient precondition for the attainment of access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) and absorption concentration (*appanā-samādhi*), it is also called morality conducive to concentration. Since the four purities in morality (*catu-pārisudhi-sīla*) of worldlings cannot, in reality, be equal between one person and another, the fifth factor here is meant as the morality of the path, the supermundane morality which is the same for all noble ones (*ariya*). In the sixth factor also, right view as the path factor is meant. These six factors of non-decline are taught by the Buddha also as the six memorable (*sāraṇīya*) factors (*Saṅgīti-sutta*, DN 33, *Sāraṇīya-sutta*, AN 6.11-12).

During the sojourn at the Gijjhakūṭa hill in Rājagaha, as his passing away was drawing near, only one year and three months hence, whenever the Buddha discoursed to the monastics, the following theme occurred repeatedly: “Such is morality (*sīla*); such is concentration (*samādhi*); such is wisdom (*paññā*). Concentration that is developed through morality is highly efficacious and [1007] productive. Wisdom that is developed through concentration is highly efficacious and productive. The mind that is developed through wisdom is thoroughly liberated without any remnant from the moral taints or pervasive defilements or pollutants (*āsava*), namely the pollutant of sense-desire

(*kammāsava*), the pollutant of craving for continued existence (*bhavāsava*), and the pollutant of ignorance of the four noble truths (*avijjāsava*)."

Morality, Concentration and Wisdom

Then the Buddha, after staying at Rājagaha for as long as he wished, said to Ven. Ānanda: "Come, Ānanda, let us go to the Ambalaṭṭhikā Mango Grove." – "Very well, sir," Ven. Ānanda replied.

> The Buddha addressed Ven. Ānanda from among the many monastics surrounding him because Ven. Ānanda was always in close attendance.

Having expressed his assent to the Buddha, Ven. Ānanda signalled to the monastics: "Friends, make ready with your alms bowl and double robe. The Fortunate One intends to go to the Ambalaṭṭhikā garden."

Then the Buddha, accompanied by many monastics, went to the Ambalaṭṭhikā garden where he stayed at the King's rest house. While there also, considering his approaching death, the Buddha discoursed to the monastics on the same theme: "Such is morality (*sīla*); such is concentration (*samādhi*); such is wisdom (*paññā*). Concentration that is developed through morality is highly efficacious and productive. Wisdom that is developed through concentration is highly efficacious and productive. The mind that is developed through wisdom is thoroughly liberated without any remnant from the moral taints or pollutants (*āsava*), namely the pollutant of sense-desire (*kammāsava*), the pollutant of craving for continued existence (*bhavāsava*), and the pollutant of ignorance of the four noble truths (*avijjāsava*)."

Herein, in the passage: "Such is morality, such is concentration, such is wisdom," morality (*sīla*) refers to mundane morality, that is, the four kinds of monastic precepts (*catu-pārisuddhi-sīla*); concentration means mundane concentration at the threshold of perfect concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) and perfect concentration (*appanā-samādhi*) itself. Wisdom means mundane insight wisdom (*vipassanā-paññā*). All these three factors are the necessary conditions for path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*).

"Concentration developed through morality," means supermundane concentration pertaining to path and fruition, path concentration and fruition concentration. Concentration of path is highly efficacious because it leads to the fruition of the noble one's knowledge (*ariya-phala*). Fruition itself means direct

result. It is also highly productive because it has the advantage (*ānisaṁsa*) of liberation or pacification. Advantage here means the indirect result or consequence. The same interpretation should be understood for similar statements that follow. Concentration of fruition produces the direct result of abandoning the burning defilements through tranquillity (*paṭippassaddhi-pahāna*), and gives the indirect result or consequence of the peace of cessation or extinction of defilements.

"Wisdom developed through concentration," means supermundane knowledge of the paths (*magga-ñāṇa*) and fruitions (*phala-ñāṇa*). Its direct result and indirect result or consequence should be construed as in the case of concentration.

"The mind developed through wisdom," here, wisdom means mundane insight (*vipassanā-paññā*) and wisdom associated with absorption (*jhāna*); mind here means supermundane consciousness of path and fruition. Path consciousness completely eradicates defilements as abandoning by cutting off (*samuccheda-pahāna*). Fruition-consciousness thoroughly liberates one from the moral taints by abandoning through tranquillity (*paṭipassaddhi-pahāna*). [1008]

Then the Buddha, after staying at the Ambalaṭṭhikā garden for as long as he wished, said to Ven. Ānanda: "Come, Ānanda, let us go to the town of Nāḷanda." – "Very well, sir," Ven. Ānanda assented, and called upon the monastics to accompany the Buddha.

Ven. Sāriputta's Brave Utterance

Then the Buddha, accompanied by many monastics, went to the town of Nāḷanda and stayed at the Mango Grove of Pāvārika, the rich man. At that time, Ven. Sāriputta approached the Buddha, and after paying respects to him, entered into a stirring and remarkable dialogue with him.

Ven. Sāriputta: "Venerable sir, as regards Perfect Awakening, I am convinced that there has never been nor is there, nor will there be any ascetic or Brahmin who can excel the Fortunate One."

Buddha: "You say solemnly and with certitude, like the brave sound of a lion's roar, that as regards Perfect Awakening, you are convinced that there has never been nor is there, nor will there be any ascetic or Brahmin who can excel the Fortunate One. How is it Sāriputta, do you know definitely in your mind the

minds of those Arahat, Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddhas of the past so that you can assert such was their practice of morality (*sīla*), such was their practice of concentration (*samādhi*), such was their wisdom (*paññā*), such was their manner of abiding in the sustained attainment of cessation, such was their emancipation?"

"I have no such knowledge, venerable sir."

"How is it then, Sāriputta, do you know definitely in your mind, the minds of those Arahat, Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddhas of the future, so that you can assert such will be their practice of morality, such will be their practice of concentration, such will be their wisdom, such will be their manner of abiding in the sustained attainment of cessation, such will be their emancipation?"

"I have no such knowledge, venerable sir."

"How is it, Sāriputta, do you know definitely in your mind, the mind of myself, the present Buddha, the Arahat, the Perfectly Self-Awakened, so that you can assert such is the practice of morality of the Fortunate One, such is the strength of the concentration of the Fortunate One, such is the wisdom of the Fortunate One, such is the manner of the Fortunate One's abiding in the sustained attainment of cessation, such is the emancipation of the Fortunate One?"

"I have no such knowledge, venerable sir."

"Sāriputta, if you do not have the faculty of reading another person's mind (*ceto-pariyāya-ñāṇa*), by which you can know definitely the minds of the Arahat, the Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddhas of the past, the future and the present, how can you say solemnly and with certitude, and sounding like a lion's roar, that as regards Perfect Self-Awakening, you are convinced that there has never been, nor will there be any ascetics or Brahmins who can excel the Fortunate One?"

"Venerable sir, I do not have the faculty of reading another person's mind by which I can know definitely the minds of the Arahat, the Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddhas of the past, the future and the present. But I do have the knowledge by inference from personal experience (*Dhammanvaya-ñāṇa*).

Venerable sir, if I may give an example, let us say that there is a remote border town with its solid walls built on a firm foundation which has only one arched gateway, and that there is a gate-keeper who is wise, prudent and intelligent,

who would keep out strangers and would admit only persons known to him. When he makes his rounds along the roadway that encircles the town, he sees no breaks, no holes in [1009] the walls, not even one that would allow a cat to pass through it. Then he will come to the conclusion rightly that all big creatures that enter or leave the town do so only by that single gateway.

In the same way, venerable sir, I am possessed of the knowledge by inference from personal experience. Venerable sir, thus I know that all the Arahat, the Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddhas, who had arisen in the past, had abandoned the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) that defile the mind and weaken the intellect had well established their minds in the four methods of steadfast mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), had correctly cultivated the seven factors of Awakening (*bojjhaṅgaṁ*) and will attain Supreme Perfect Self-Awakening."

> Perfect Self-Awakening (*Sammā-sambodhi-ñāṇa*), is a term encompassing the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*magga-ñāṇa*) and omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*), which pertain to the Buddhas only.

"Venerable sir, thus I know that all the Arahat, the Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddhas who will arise in the future will abandon the five hindrances that defile the mind and weaken the intellect; will well establish their minds in the four methods of steadfast mindfulness, will correctly cultivate the seven factors of Awakening and will attain Supreme Perfect Self-Awakening.

Venerable sir, thus I know that the Arahat, the Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddha also, who has arisen in the world, has abandoned the five hindrances; has well established his mind in the four methods of steadfast mindfulness; has correctly cultivated the seven factors of Awakening, and has attained Supreme Perfect Self-Awakening.

Venerable sir, all these conclusions I make are due to the knowledge by inference from personal experience which I am possessed of."

> This was the stirring and remarkable dialogue that took place between Ven. Sāriputta and the Buddha.

During the sojourn at the Mango Grove of Pāvārika the rich man in the town of Nāḷanda, also considering his approaching death, the Buddha discoursed to the monastics on the same theme: "Such is morality; such is concentration; such is wisdom. Concentration that is developed through morality is highly efficacious and productive. Wisdom that is developed through concentration is highly

efficacious and productive. The mind that is developed through wisdom is thoroughly liberated without any remnant from the moral taints or pervasive pollutants (*āsava*), namely the pollutant of sense-desire (*kāmāsava*), the pollutant of craving for continued existence (*bhavāsava*), and the pollutant of ignorance of the four noble truths (*avijjāsava*)."

The Buddha's Discourse on Morality

Then after staying at the town of Nāḷanda for as long as he wished, the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Come, Ānanda, let us go to Pāṭali village." – "Very well, venerable sir," said Ven. Ānanda, and he called upon the monastics to accompany the Buddha. Then the Buddha, accompanied by many monastics, went to Pāṭali village.

When the lay devotees of Pāṭali village heard that the Buddha had arrived at their village, they were very glad, for they had the great good fortune of having to receive the Buddha even without asking for it. They had just finished building a guest-house. They thought how appropriate it would be if their first guest was the Buddha himself. "We shall request the Fortunate One to accept our offering of the guest-house and we will listen to the Fortunate One's words of appreciation of our good deed." They approached the Buddha, made obeisance to him, and sat at a suitable distance. Then they said to him: "May it please the Fortunate One to accept our new guest-house as his living quarters during his sojourn." The [1010] Buddha showed his consent by remaining silent.

Having received the Buddha's consent, the lay devotees of Pāṭali village rose from their seats, made obeisance to him and went to their guest-house. They made it ready for use by furnishing it with floor coverings throughout, arranging separate seats, filling the big water pots and lighting the lamps. They arranged with the mothers to feed their infants early that evening and to put them to bed. Then they went back to the Buddha, made obeisance to him, and stood on one side. They said to him: "Venerable sir, at the guest house, the floor has been covered throughout with floor-coverings, separate seats have been arranged, big water pots have been filled and lamps have been lit. May the Fortunate One proceed there when he wishes to."

> The new guest-house was built by the villagers at the centre of the village. The main purpose in building it was to house visiting officials of the Licchavīs and the Magadhans who often came and stayed at Pāṭali village,

which was a border village. It was essential for the village because they had to surrender their houses to the visiting officials for their temporary lodging for a month or so on each occasion. The new guest-house would now ease the situation. It was well arranged for the use of visiting officials with living quarters as well as strong rooms for the upkeep of treasures. At the time of the Buddha's visit to the village it had just been completed. At first the villagers thought that the Buddha might prefer to dwell in the forest and so they did not make it ready to receive him. Only when the Buddha consented to put up there, did the villagers prepare things to make it ready for his stay.

Then the Buddha, at evening time, arranged his robes, and taking his alms bowl and double robe, proceeded to the guest-house accompanied by the monastics. After washing his feet, he entered the guest-house where he sat against the middle post, facing east. The monastics also washed their feet and entered the guest-house, and sat against the west wall, facing east, with the Buddha in front of them. The lay devotees of Pāṭali village also washed their feet and entered the guest-house, and sat against the east wall facing west, with the Buddha in front of them. Then the Buddha discoursed on the five disadvantages (*ādīnava*) befalling an immoral person and the five advantages that bless a person of virtue.

Five Disadvantages for an Immoral Man

"Householders, five disadvantages descend on an immoral person who lacks morality. What are the five?

1. Householders, in this world, the immoral person who lacks moral virtue, suffers great loss in fortune through heedlessness. This is the first disadvantage befalling an immoral person who lacks morality.
2. Householders, furthermore, the ill-repute of an immoral person who lacks moral virtue, spreads far and wide. This is the second disadvantage befalling an immoral person who lacks morality.
3. Householders, furthermore, an immoral person who lacks moral virtue in the midst of any class of society, whether among the ruling class, or the recluses or the Brahmin class, or the wealthy, looks diffident and uneasy. This is the third disadvantage befalling an immoral person who lacks morality.

4. Householders, further more, an immoral person who lacks moral virtue, dies in a bewildered (*sammūḷha*) state. This is the fourth disadvantage befalling an immoral person who lacks morality.

5. Householders, furthermore, an immoral person who lacks moral virtue, after death and dissolution of the body is destined to fall into the miserable existences of hell (*Niraya*). This is the fifth disadvantage befalling an immoral person who lacks morality. [1011]

Householders these are the five disadvantages befalling an immoral person through lack of morality."

Five Advantages for a Virtuous Person

"Householders, five advantages bless a virtuous person for his being virtuous. What are the five?

1. Householders, in this world, a virtuous person who possesses moral virtue acquires great wealth through being heedful. This is the first advantage that waits on a virtuous person for his being virtuous.

2. Householders, furthermore, the good reputation of a virtuous person who possesses moral virtue spreads far and wide. This is the second advantage that waits on a virtuous person for his being virtuous.

3. Householders, furthermore, a virtuous person who possesses moral virtue in the midst of any class of society whether among the ruling class, or the recluses, or the Brahmin class, or the wealthy, can hold up his head and look anyone in the eye. This is the third advantage that waits on a virtuous person for his being virtuous.

4. Householders, furthermore, a virtuous person who possesses moral virtue dies without any bewilderment. This is the fourth advantage that waits on a virtuous person for his being virtuous.

5. Householders, furthermore, a virtuous person, who possesses moral virtue after death and dissolution of the body is destined to the fortunate existences of the heavenly worlds (*deva-loka*). This is fifth advantage that waits on a virtuous person for his being virtuous.

Householders, these are the five advantages that wait on a virtuous person for his being virtuous."

Although this discourse was addressed to lay persons it also applies to monastics.

1. With a lay person, lack of moral virtue may lead to committing evil deeds such as killing. As he indulges in evil, he tends to forget his usual means of livelihood, such as cultivation or trading, thereby incurring great losses of property. Worse still, his evil deed might be illegal under the law proclaimed by the king such as killing of animals, and he is liable to criminal punishment. If he steals, he also commits a crime equally liable to punishment. Thus, his lack of moral virtue can bring him great losses of property.

Similarly, a monastic lacking morality, being heedless, loses virtue, loses the good doctrine, the word of the Buddha, loses absorption (*jhāna*), and loses the seven noble properties of noble ones (*ariya*). The seven noble properties of the noble ones (*satta-ariya-dhanāni*) are:

1. Faith in the Three Treasures and productive deeds (*saddhā-dhana*).
2. Wealth of morality (*sīla-dhana*).
3. Wealth of conscience about wrong doing (*hiri-dhana*).
4. Wealth of concern about wrong doing (*ottappa-dhana*).
5. Wealth of vast knowledge (*suta-dhana*).
6. Wealth of charity (*cāga-dhana*).
7. Wealth of wisdom through path and fruition attainments (*paññā-dhana*).

2. An immoral man earns a bad repute so that he is written off as an outcaste, useless for this world and hopeless for future worlds. “This man is so stingy that he would not even take part in offering alms food by drawing lots,” this is the kind of name he builds up for himself. All the four kinds of assemblies see him in that light only.

Similarly, in the case of a monastic who lacks moral virtue, ill repute follows that monastic who is loose in monastic morality, does not take up serious learning of the good doctrine, makes a living by the practice of medicine, or similar methods of livelihood abhorred by the Buddha, and his behaviour is marked by six kinds of disrespect, which spreads among the four kinds of assemblies. [1012]

3. An immoral lay person is always pricked by a guilty conscience for the misdeeds he has done. Therefore, he does not dare to face the crowd. "Someone there might recognize me," he fears, "and I might be apprehended and sent to the authorities." That is why, in any of the four kinds of assemblies, he holds his face down and his shoulders stooping, and uneasily keeps on scratching the earth with a stick. He keeps his mouth shut as far as possible.

Likewise, an immoral monastic feels uneasy to face an assembly which might have knowledge of his misdeeds, in which case he might have to face punishment under the Vinaya process such as expulsion. Therefore, he goes into the assembly with great misgivings and speaks little. Some immoral monastic, however, might put up a bold face and might wander around in the Saṅgha, but in his heart he is feeling miserable only.

4. An immoral person, whether lay or monastic, may put up pretences while living but, on his death bed, his evil deeds appear before him in their respective sense spheres. He feebly opens his eyes to see the present world, and then closes his eyes to see his oncoming world where he finds no solace whatever. His imminent destination, the four worlds of the downfall (*apāya*), becomes vividly clear to him. He feels great pangs of conscience as if thrust by 100 spears on his head. "Help me! Help me!" he screams in desperation and then breathes his last. This is what the Buddha means by saying he dies in a state of bewilderment.

5. The fifth disadvantage befalling an immoral person needs no explanation.

> The advantages that wait on a virtuous person may be known as the opposite of the above five disadvantages befalling an immoral person.

The Buddha then went on late into the night instructing the lay devotees of Pāṭali village on other topics including the happy consequences of their donation of the guest-house, thereby pointing out the benefits of the doctrine, exhorting them to set themselves up in the practice thereof, and gladdening them in the practice. Then he sent them away, saying: "Householders, the night is far advanced, you may leave when you wish."

"Very well, venerable sir," the devotees of Pāṭali village said in assent, and paying respects to him, departed respectfully. Then not long after their departure, the Buddha retired in seclusion.

> "The Buddha retired in seclusion," should be understood as referring to a separate part of the guest house screened off for privacy. A cot had been placed there for the Buddha, and he considered that the devotees would earn much merit if he were to use the guest house in all the four bodily postures. Therefore, he lay on the cot on his right side and rested.

The Founding of Pāṭaliputta

At that time, two Brahmins, Sunidha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha kingdom, were building a fortified city at the site of Pāṭali village to keep out the Vajjī princes. During that period, many Devas in groups of 1,000 each, were occupying plots of land in Pāṭali village.

In the location where the Devas of great power were occupying the officials responsible for the building of the city were inclined to build houses for princes and the king's ministers of great power. In the location where the Devas of medium power were occupying, there, the officials responsible for the building of the city were inclined to build houses for princes and king's ministers of medium power. And in the location where the Devas of lesser power were occupying, there, the officials responsible for the building of the city were inclined to build houses for princes and king's ministers of lesser power.

> Herein, among the city builders there were officials learned in the science of building sites. They knew, by their specialised knowledge, the status of the proposed building sites down to a depth of 30 cubits as to which area is occupied by powerful serpents or Nāgas, which, by Yakkhas, or which, by Bhūtas; or where a slab of rock is lying underneath, or where an old tree stump is hidden. Accordingly, those learned ones took the necessary measures by reciting [1013] mantras or by blessing, so that they were able to proceed smoothly as if they were building the city in consultation with Devas.
>
> Another explanation: The officials responsible for the building of the city were possessed by the Devas who occupied various locations and these Devas would leave their bodies after the four corners of the building site have been marked out. Prospective human occupants, who were endowed with confidence in the Three Treasures, were possessed by the Deva occupants of the sites who were equally endowed with confidence in the Three Treasures. Prospective human occupants who lacked confidence in the Three Treasures were possessed by the Deva occupants of the sites who

> lacked confidence in the Three Treasures. The reason is this: The Devas, who were endowed with confidence in the Three Treasures, influenced the mind of the prospective human occupants who had confidence in the Three Treasures, trusting that the new occupants would invite the Saṅgha to their newly built house and hear discourses on auspicious occasions and that the Devas would get the opportunity to see the virtuous monastics and hear the Dhamma. They also expected the new occupants to share their merit from offerings made to the Saṅgha.

The Buddha saw with his divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu*) how the Devas in groups of 1,000 each were occupying plots of land at Pāṭali village. Then he woke up at dawn and asked Ven. Ānanda: "Who are those building a city at the site of Pāṭali village?"

Ven. Ānanda replied: "Venerable sir, the Brahmins Sunidha and Vassakāra, chief ministers of Magadha kingdom, are building a fortified city to keep out the Vajjī princes."

"Ānanda, the chief ministers are building the fortified city as though they were acting in consultation with the Devas of the Tāvatiṁsa Realm. Ānanda, I have seen with my divine eye how the Devas, in groups of 1,000 each, were occupying plots of land at Pāṭali village.

Ānanda, in the locations where the Devas of great power are occupying, there, the officials responsible for the building of the city are inclined to build houses for princes and king's ministers of great power. In the locations where the Devas of medium power are occupying, there the officials responsible for the building of the city are inclined to build houses for princes and king's ministers of medium power. In the locations where the Devas of lesser power are occupying, there the officials responsible for the building of the city are inclined to build houses for princes and king's ministers of lesser power. Ānanda, three catastrophes will bring about the downfall of the city of Pāṭaliputta. They are fire, floods, and internal dissension."

> Thus the Buddha was predicting that a part of Pāṭaliputta would be destroyed by fire, a part of it would be washed away by the river Ganges, and a part of it would be destroyed by internal dissension.

After saying this, the Buddha went to the river Ganges to wash his face and awaited the time to go on alms round.

Then Sunidha and Vassakāra remembered that since their King Ajātasattu was a lay supporter of the ascetic Gotama, it would only be proper if they were to invite the Buddha to an offering of a meal, because they would be seeing him in the village of Pāṭali. Further, they considered it a wise thing to request the ascetic Gotama, to bless their city-building project with auspicious words, for then the black devils would be driven away from the city site. So both went to the Buddha and stood at a suitable distance. After exchanging memorable words of felicitation, they said to him: “May it please the revered Gotama and the company of monastics to accept our offering of food for today.” The Buddha, by his silence signified his acceptance.

Then the Magadhan chief ministers, Sunidha and Vassakāra, knowing that the Buddha had accepted their invitation, went to the place where they were putting up, and having prepared the choicest food and delicacies, informed the Buddha by messengers who said: “Revered Gotama, it is time to proceed. The food offering is ready.”

Then in the morning, the Buddha rearranged his robes, and taking his alms bowl and [1014] double robe, went in the company of the monastics to the place where the two Magadhan chief ministers were being housed, and sat at the place prepared for him. Sunidha and Vassakāra attended to the Buddha and the monastics, offering the choicest food and delicacies with their own hands till they signified they had had enough, causing them to stop. When the Buddha had finished his meal and had removed his hand from his alms bowl, Sunidha and Vassakāra took low seats and sat at a suitable distance.

To Sunidha and Vassakāra, who were thus seated, the Buddha expressed his pleasure and appreciation by three verses in Pāḷi:

> *Yasmiṁ padese kappeti, vāsaṁ paṇḍita-jātiyo,*
> *sīlavantettha bhojetvā, saññate brahmacārayo.*
>
> Brahmins, when the wise man makes offerings of food to those possessed of virtue, self-control and purity of life at the place where he has made his home, he should share the merit of his offering with the Devas who are the guardians of that place.
>
> *Yā tattha devatā āsuṁ, tāsaṁ dakkhiṇam-ādise,*
> *tā pūjitā pūjayanti, mānitā mānayanti naṁ.*

> If the Devas are honoured thus, they will give protection to him, as their way of honouring him in return. If they are revered thus, they help him out of trouble, as their way of revering him in return.
>
> *Tato naṁ anukampanti, mātā puttaṁ va orasaṁ,*
> *devatānukampito poso, sadā bhadrāni passatī.*
>
> The wise man comes under the protection of the Devas who safeguard him, just as a mother safeguards her own son. That person is blessed with auspiciousness at all times.

After expressing his pleasure and appreciation in these verses to the Magadhan chief ministers, Sunidha and Vassakāra, the Buddha rose from his seat and left.

Then Sunidha and Vassakāra followed the Buddha all along the route, thinking: "We shall call the gateway, by which the revered Gotama leaves today, the Gotama Gateway, and the landing place, by which the revered Gotama crosses the Ganges, the Gotama Landing Place."

The gateway by which the Buddha left that day came to be known as the Gotama Gateway. Then the Buddha went to the river Ganges. At that time the river was full to the brim so that a crow on the bank might easily drink from it.

Then in the instant it might take a strong man to stretch out his bent arm or bend in his out stretched arm, the Buddha vanished from this side of the Ganges and reappeared on the other shore together with the company of monastics.

The Buddha saw the people who wanted to cross from one shore to the other, some of whom were looking for boats, some for log rafts, and some were making bamboo rafts. Then he, understanding the matter, uttered these joyous words in exultation:

> "The noble ones (*ariya*) have crossed the deep and wide river of craving (*taṇhā*) by building the bridge of the noble path, upon having overcome the quagmire of moral defilement. As for the multitudes, they have to build rafts just to cross this insignificant river, the Ganges. However, the noble ones (*ariya*) who have crossed the river of craving by means of the noble path of eight constituents have no need to make rafts."

40b: The Last Days 2, In Vajji

The Four Noble Truths

Then the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: “Come Ānanda, let us go to Koṭi village.” – “Very well, venerable sir,” Ven. Ānanda said, and then called the monastics. The Buddha, accompanied by a company of monastics, went to Koṭi village and dwelt there.

> The village was called Koṭi because it was the place where the pinnacle from which King Mahāpanāda fell.

During that time, the Buddha discoursed to the monastics on the four noble truths thus: “Monastics, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the four noble truths that I, as well as yourselves, have had to fare along the lengthy course of the round of existences in Saṁsāra, never stopping, but ever repeating, from one existence to the next. What are the four truths that are not understood?”

1. Monastics, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the noble truth of suffering (*dukkha-ariya-sacca*) that I, as well as yourselves, have had to fare along the lengthy course of the round of existences, never [1015] stopping, but ever changing, from one existence to the next repeatedly.

2. Monastics, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the noble truth of the origin of suffering (*samudaya-ariya-sacca*) that I, as well as yourselves, have had to fare along the lengthy course of the round of existences, never stopping, but ever changing, from one existence to the next repeatedly.

3. Monastics, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the noble truth of the cessation of suffering (*nirodha-ariya-sacca*) that I, as well as yourselves, have had to fare along the lengthy course of the round of existences, never stopping, but ever changing, from one existence to the next repeatedly.

4. Monastics, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the noble truth of the path to the cessation of suffering (*magga-ariya-sacca*) that I, as well as yourselves, have had to

> fare along the lengthy course of the round of existences, never stopping, but ever changing, from one existence to the next repeatedly.

Monastics, now I have properly understood the noble truth of suffering, I have penetrative knowledge of it; I have properly understood the noble truth of the origin of suffering, I have penetrative knowledge of it; I have properly understood the noble truth of the cessation of suffering, I have penetrative knowledge of it; I have properly understood the noble truth of the path to the cessation of suffering, I have penetrative knowledge of it. Craving for existence (*bhava-taṇhā*) has been completely uprooted, leaving no trace of it. The craving for existence in me, which is like a rope that drags one to renewed existence, has become extinct. Now, for me there will be no more rebirths."

> "Proper understanding," means insight knowledge conforming to, and preceding path and fruition. It is mundane knowledge, and is called understanding (*anubodhi*).
>
> "Penetrative knowledge," means penetrative knowledge of the paths and fruitions itself that destroys the defilements. It is called penetration (*paṭivedha*).

After the Buddha had spoken the above words, he further said this in verses:

> *Catunnaṁ ariya-saccānaṁ, yathā-bhūtaṁ adassanā,*
> *saṁsitaṁ dīgham-addhānaṁ, tāsu tāsveva jātisu.*
> *Tāni etāni diṭṭhāni, bhava-netti samūhatā,*
> *ucchinnaṁ mūlaṁ dukkhassa, natthi dāni punabbhavo.*
>
> Passing from this existence to that, faring through the long course of Saṁsāra, is necessitated by a lack of understanding of the four noble truths as they really are. I have fully understood those four noble truths. Craving for existence, that rope which drags one to rebirth, has been cut off completely. The root of suffering (*dukkha*) has been thus eradicated. For me there will be no more rebirths.

While the Buddha was staying at that Koṭi village also, considering his approaching death, he discoursed to the monastics on the same theme: "Such is morality (*sīla*); such is concentration (*samādhi*) such is wisdom (*paññā*). Concentration that is developed through morality is highly efficacious and productive. Wisdom that is developed through concentration is highly efficacious and productive. The mind that is developed through wisdom is

thoroughly liberated without any remnant from the moral taints or pollutants (*āsava*), namely the pollutant of sense-desire (*kammāsava*), the pollutant of craving for continued existence (*bhavāsava*) and the pollutant of ignorance of the four noble truths (*avijjāsava*)."

The Mirror of Wisdom

Then, after staying at Koṭi village for as long as he wished, the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Come, Ānanda, let us go to Nātika village." – "Very well, sir," said Ven. Ānanda, and he called the monastics for the journey. The Buddha went to Nātika village accompanied by many monastics and stayed in a brick building.

> Herein, Nātika was a twin village founded by two cousin brothers [1016] who sited it near a reservoir. Thus the village got its name, the village of relatives (*ñātika*). In the Pāḷi word the *ñ* became corrupted into *n*, and hence the name Nātika. In that twin village there was a brick monastery which was the place of the Buddha's sojourn.

During that time Ven. Ānanda approached the Buddha and asked these questions: "Venerable sir, in Nātika village, a monastic by the name of Sāḷha has passed away. What is his destination? What is his next existence?

Venerable sir, in this same Nātika village, a nun named Nandā has passed away. What is her destination? What is her next existence?

Venerable sir, in this same Nātika village, a devotee named Sudatta has passed away. What is his destination? What is his next existence?

Venerable sir, in this same Nātika village, a devotee named Sujātā has passed away. What is her destination? What is her next existence?

Venerable sir, in this same Nātika village, a devotee named Kukkuṭa … Kāḷimba … Nikaṭa … Kaṭissaha … Tuṭṭha … Santuṭṭha … Bhaddha … a devotee named Subhadda has passed away. What is his destination? What is his next existence?"

To these questions the Buddha answered them, one by one thus: "Ānanda, due to the extinction of the pollutants (*āsava*), Sāḷha the monastic had realized in this very life emancipation of mind (*Arahatta-phala-samādhi*) and emancipation through wisdom (*Arahatta-phala-paññā*) and he died an Arahat.

Ānanda, through the eradication of the five fetters that lead to rebirth in the sensuous sphere, the lower planes of existence, Nandā the female monastic has been reborn spontaneously in the Brahma realm. She died a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi*), with no possibility of returning from that Brahma existence and will realize Parinibbāna there.

Ānanda, through the eradication of the three fetters: wrong view of the five aggregates as a self (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), uncertainty and doubts (*vicikicchā*) and belief in religious practices outside of the noble path (*sīlabbata-parāmāsa*), and through the lessening of passion (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*), Sudatta the devotee was a Once-returner (*Sakadāgāmi*). He will make an end of suffering (*dukkha*) after being reborn in the human world only once.

Ānanda, through the eradication of the three fetters: the wrong view of the five aggregates as a self, uncertainty, and belief in religious practices outside of the noble path, Sujātā the female devotee, was a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), who is not liable to fall into the four lower worlds of the downfall (*apāya*), destined for the fortunate existences, and is firmly set on the path of spiritual progress marked by the three higher paths.

Ānanda, the devotee named Kukkuṭa … Kāḷimba … Nikaṭa … Kaṭissaha … The devotee named Tuṭṭha … Santutta … Bhaddha … the devotee named Subhadda, through the eradication of the five fetters that lead to rebirth in the sensuous sphere, the lower planes of existence, has been reborn spontaneously in the Brahma realm. He died a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi*), with no possibility of returning from that Brahma existence and will realize Parinibbāna there.

Ānanda over 50 devotees from Nātika village who have died were Non-returners (*Anāgāmi*) by virtue of having eradicated the five fetters that lead to rebirth in the sensuous sphere, the lower planes of existence, destined for [1017] spontaneous rebirth in the Brahma realm, with no possibility of returning from that Brahma existence and they will realize Parinibbāna there.

Ānanda over 90 devotees of Nātika village who have died were Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmi*), who had eradicated the three fetters: Wrong view of the five aggregates as a self (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), uncertainty and doubts (*vicikicchā*), belief in religious practices outside of the noble path (*sīlabbata-parāmāsa*), and have lessened passion (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*). They will make an end of suffering (*dukkha*) after being reborn in the human world only once.

Ānanda, over 500 devotees from Nātika village, who have died, were Stream-enterers through the eradication of the three fetters. They are not liable to fall into the lower worlds of the downfall (*apāya*), and were destined for fortunate existences, and are bound to attain the three higher paths.

Ānanda, this ability to tell about the destination of people is something which anyone endowed with knowledge of the Dhamma can have in respect of himself. It is not a mysterious art that belongs only to the Realised One. Ānanda, if the Realised One were to be approached and asked as to the destination of every person who has died, it would be quite bothersome for him.

As such, Ānanda, a noble (*ariya*) disciple, who possesses the mirror of wisdom can, if he wishes to, say of himself: "I shall never be reborn in the realm of continuous suffering in Niraya, nor in the animal world, nor in the realm of wretched spirits burning with thirst and hunger (*peta*), nor in any of the four lower worlds of the downfall (*apāya*), I am certain to be reborn only in the fortunate existences. I am bound to attain the three higher paths." I shall expound this discourse on the mirror of wisdom. Ānanda, what is this mirror of wisdom?

1. Ānanda, in this teaching, the noble (*ariya*) disciple has unshakable confidence in the Fortunate One, being convinced that the Fortunate One is worthy of homage (*Arahaṁ*); he is Perfectly Self-Awakened (*Sammā-sambuddha*); he is possessed of perfect knowledge and good conduct (*vijjā-caraṇa-sampanna*); he speaks only what is beneficial and true (*Gracious One*); he knows all the three worlds (*loka-vidū*); he is incomparable in taming those who deserve to be tamed (*anuttara-purisa-damma-sāratthi*); he is the Awakened One, knowing and teaching the four noble truths (*Buddha*); and he is the Fortunate One (*Bhagavā*).

2. The noble (*ariya*) disciple has unshakable confidence in the Dhamma, being convinced that the Dhamma expounded by the Fortunate One is well expounded (*svākkhāta*); its truths are personally apperceivable (*sandiṭṭhika*); its practice yields fruit immediately (*akālika*); it can stand investigation (*ehipassika*); it is worthy of being perpetually borne in mind (*opaneyyika*); and it can be seen, realized and enjoyed by the wise, each according to his own capacity (*paccattaṁ veditabbo viññūhi*).

3. The noble (*ariya*) disciple has unshakable confidence in the Saṅgha, being convinced that the Saṅgha are endowed with the right practice (*supaṭipanna*), having the threefold training in morality, concentration and wisdom; they are endowed with straightforward uprightness (*uju-paṭipanna*); they are endowed with righteous conduct (*ñāya-paṭipanna*), and they are endowed with conduct which inspires awe and respect (*sāmīci-paṭipanna*). Thus conducting themselves well in these four ways, serving as four grounds for their worthiness, the Saṅgha, comprising eight individual types of four pairs is worthy of offerings, even those brought from afar; worthy of offerings specially prepared for guests; worthy of offerings made for the sake of acquiring great merit, worthy of receiving obeisance; they are the incomparably fertile soil for all to sow the seed of merit, thus they are worthy in these five ways. [1018]

4. The noble (*ariya*) disciple is endowed with the moral precepts (*sīla*) which tend to liberation from bondage to craving, which are extolled by the wise, which are not subject to misconception, which make for concentration, and which are unbroken, intact, unchequered, and unspotted, and which are cherished by the noble ones (*ariya*).

Ānanda, a noble (*ariya*) disciple who is endowed with the above four factors of the mirror of wisdom can, if he so desires, say of himself: I shall never be reborn in the realm of continuous suffering called Niraya; or in the animal world, or in the realm of wretched spirits burning with thirst and hunger (*peta*) or in any of the four lower worlds of the downfall (*apāya*); I am certain to be reborn only in the fortunate existences. I am bound to attain the three higher paths. This discourse is called The Mirror of Wisdom."

While at the brick monastery at Nātika village as well, the Buddha, considering his approaching death, discoursed to the monastics on the same theme: "Such is morality (*sīla*); such is concentration (*samādhi*), such is wisdom (*paññā*). Concentration that is developed through morality is highly efficacious and productive. Wisdom that is developed through concentration is highly efficacious and productive. The mind that is developed through wisdom is thoroughly liberated without any remnant from the pollutants (*āsava*), namely the taint of sense-desire (*kammāsava*), the taint of craving for continued existence (*bhavāsava*), and the taint of ignorance of the four noble truths (*avijjāsava*)."

The Courtesan Ambapālī

Then after staying at Nātika village for as long as he wished, the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Come, Ānanda, let us go to Vesālī." – "Very well venerable sir," said Ven. Ānanda, and called upon the monastics for the journey. The Buddha, accompanied by many monastics, went to Vesālī and stayed at courtesan Ambapālī's Mango Grove.

At that time, 500 of the monastics in the Buddha's company were young men who had joined the Saṅgha recently and were weak in diligence. They would soon be seeing Ambapālī who would be coming to greet the Buddha. In order that the young monastics might not lose mindfulness on setting their eyes on the charming courtesan the Buddha prepared their minds by giving a discourse thus:

"Monastics, a monastic should dwell in mindfulness and clear comprehension. This is my exhortation to you. Monastics, how should a monastic remain mindful? Monastics, in this teaching, a monastic keeps his mind on the body with diligence, comprehension and mindfulness, steadfast by contemplating it as body, so as to keep away sense-desires and distress that would otherwise arise in him. He keeps his mind on feelings with diligence, comprehension and mindfulness, steadfastly contemplating it as feeling, so as to keep away sense-desires and distress that would otherwise arise in him. He keeps his mind on the mind steadfastly contemplating it as mind, so as to keep away sense-desires and distress that would otherwise arise in him. He keeps his mind on mind-objects (*dhamma*) steadfastly contemplating them as mind-objects so as to keep away sense-desire and distress that would otherwise arise in him. Monastics, this is how a monastic remains mindful.

Monastics, how does a monastic exercise clear comprehension? Monastics, in this teaching, a monastic exercises clear comprehension in moving forward or back; in looking straight ahead or sideways; in bending or stretching out; in wearing the double robe, or in carrying the alms bowl and robes; in eating, drinking, chewing, savouring food; in defecating and urinating; in walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking, speaking, or in remaining silent. Monastics, this is how a monastic should exercise clear comprehension. Monastics, a monastic should dwell in mindfulness and clear comprehension. This is my exhortation to you." [1019]

When Ambapālī the courtesan heard the news that the Buddha had arrived at Vesālī and was staying at her Mango Grove, she had the most excellent carriages harnessed for the great occasion to visit the Buddha, and mounting on the carriage and accompanied by other excellent vehicles, she left the city of Vesālī for her Mango Grove. After riding in the carriage for as far as it could properly go, she dismounted and approached the Buddha on foot. She made obeisance to him and sat in a suitable place.

To Ambapālī the courtesan who was seated at a suitable distance the Buddha pointed out the benefits of the doctrine, exhorted her to set herself up in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened her in the practice. After the Buddha had pointed out to her the benefits of the doctrine, exhorted her to gladden her in the practice, Ambapālī the courtesan said to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, may it please the Fortunate One to accept my offering of food for tomorrow, together with the company of monastics." The Buddha accepted the invitation by way of his silence. Then, Ambapālī, knowing that the Buddha had accepted her invitation, rose from her place, made obeisance to him, and left respectfully.

The Licchavī Princes

When the Licchavī princes of Vesālī heard that the Buddha had arrived at Vesālī and was staying at the Mango Grove of Ambapālī, they ordered the most excellent carriages harnessed, and mounting these vehicles, they left the city, accompanied by other excellent carriages, which were kept in reserve.

Some of the Licchavī princes were garbed in dark blue uniform and, wearing dark blue ornaments, they took on a dark blue appearance. Some of them were garbed in yellow uniform, and wearing yellow ornaments, they took on a yellow appearance. Some of them were garbed in red uniform, and, wearing red ornaments, they took on a red appearance. Some of them were garbed in white uniform, and wearing white ornaments, they took on a white appearance.

> Not only were the dark blue uniformed princes wearing dark blue ornaments, they painted themselves in unguents of dark blue colour. Furthermore, the chariots they rode in were also finished in dark blue, studded with dark blue gems, and harnessed by horses with embellishments of the same colour; even the whips and the flags fitted to the chariot were also of the same colour. The same applies to the remaining colour groups among the Licchavī princes.

Then Ambapālī, the courtesan let her carriage bump against the carriages of the young Licchavī princes, axle against axle, wheel against wheel and yoke against yoke. Thereupon, the Licchavī princes said to Ambapālī the courtesan: "Look, you Ambapālī, why do you let your carriage bump against the carriage of young Licchavī princes, axle against axle, wheel against wheel and yoke against yoke?"

"Princes! It is because I have invited the Fortunate One together with his company of monastics to a meal offering tomorrow."

"Now then, Ambapālī, give us the privilege to offer this meal to the Fortunate One in exchange for 100,000!"

"Princes, even if you were to give me Vesālī together with its fief territories, I would not give up the privilege to offer this meal."

At those brave words of Ambapālī, the Licchavī princes, fluttering their fingers in admiration, exclaimed: "Oh men, we have been outdone by this young woman! We have been outdone by this young woman!"

Then the Licchavī princes rode on to Ambapālī Mango Grove. The Buddha saw the splendid sight of the Licchavī princes trooped in various colours, and said to the monastics: "Monastics, let those monastics who have never seen the Tāvatiṁsa Devas [1020] look at the array of Licchavīs; let them look at them carefully; let them feast their eyes on the Licchavīs, as if the Licchavī groupings were the Tāvatiṁsa Devas."

> In this context, the Buddha said to the monastics: "Let them feast their eyes on the Licchavīs as if the Licchavī groupings were the Tāvatiṁsa Devas," not in the sense of regarding the splendid sight as something to be cherished. It is said here to impress the monastics about human glory that is comparable to the glory of celestial beings. It is a way of inspiring some of the monastics as in the usual pattern of discourses, beginning with the benefits of giving (*dāna-kathā*), the benefits of observance of morality (*sīla-kathā*), including the fortunate existences in Deva realms (*sagga-kathā*) and culminating in the faults of sensual pleasures (*kāmānaṁ ādīnavā kathā*).
>
> And yet the question remains: "Why does the Fortunate One urge the monastics to look at the Licchavīs, which might lead some monastics in the audience to think that sight is something good, something to be cherished?" In many of the Buddha's discourses, the usual instruction is not to regard

sense objects such as visual objects, as something beautiful (*subha*). "But how is it that here the same instruction is not given?"

The answer is this: the Buddha says so in the interest of the monastics. Here is the explanation. Some of the monastics, among the audience were not diligent in monastic practice. The Buddha wishes to show them that monastic practice can lead to the sort of human glory possessed by the Licchavīs. Compare this with the Buddha's method of arousing the initial interest of Nanda in monastic practice by taking him to the Deva realms and showing the glory of Devas (Ud 3.2).

Further, the Licchavīs would in due course furnish a concrete example of the impermanence of things. For these Licchavīs, so high in their present state, comparable even to Tāvatiṁsa Devas, are bound to meet their ruin in the hands of King Ajātasattu. The monastics, who remember the greatness of the Licchavīs, will soon have occasion to see their downfall. Then these monastics will gain insight readily into the impermanence of sentient beings, leading to Awakening with the four discriminative knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*). This is the second and more important reason for the Buddha's urging the monastics to have a close look at the Licchavī princes.

Then the Licchavī princes rode in their carriages as far as their vehicles could go and then they alighted and walked towards the Buddha. They made obeisance to the Buddha and sat at a suitable distance. To the Licchavī princes thus seated, the Buddha pointed out the benefits of the Dhamma, exhorted them to set themselves up in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened them in the practice. After he had pointed out to them the benefits of the Dhamma, exhorted them to get established in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened them in the practice, the Licchavī princes said to him: "Venerable sir, may it please the Fortunate One to accept our offering of food for tomorrow together with the company of monastics." Then the Buddha said to them: "Licchavī princes, I have already accepted the offering of food for tomorrow by Ambapālī the courtesan." Thereupon the Licchavī princes, fluttering their fingers in admiration, exclaimed: "Oh men, we have been outdone by the young woman! We have been outdone by the young woman!"

Then the Licchavī princes expressed their appreciation and delight at the Buddha's discourse, rose from their seats, made obeisance to him and left respectfully.

In this connection, it might be asked: "Since the Licchavī princes knew from Ambapālī that she had invited the Fortunate One and his company of monastics to the next day's meal, why did they make the invitation to the Fortunate One?" The answer is: Because the Licchavīs did not believe Ambapālī's word; and because they set a high value on the lay supporters' obligations.

More explanations on this: The Licchavī princes did not take Ambapālī's words at face value because they [1021] regarded her as a fallen woman; and secondly, it is customary for lay supporters to invite the Saṅgha to a food offering when they are going home after listening to a discourse.

Ambapālī donates her Mango Grove

Then, after the night had passed, Ambapālī, having had the choicest food and delicacies prepared in her Mango Grove, informed the Buddha by messengers who said: "Venerable sir, it is time to proceed. The food offering is ready." Then in the morning, the Buddha arranged his robes, and taking his alms bowl and double robe, went to the house of Ambapālī, accompanied by his company of monastics, and sat at the place prepared for him.

In this context, Ambapālī's house should be understood to mean the pleasure park of hers in the Mango Grove, and not her permanent residence in the city of Vesālī. This fact is clearly indicated by her words to the Buddha which say: "I give this grove in donation to the Buddha." The Chapter about Medicines (*Bhesajjakkhandhaka*, Vin Mv 6) is also specific about this; it says: "Ambapālī the courtesan offered food to the Fortunate One and his company of monastics at her pleasure park in her grove, and donated her Mango Grove to the Saṅgha headed by the Fortunate One."

Ambapālī attended on the monastics headed by the Buddha respectfully offering the choicest food and delicacies with her own hands. After the meal, she sat at a suitable distance and said to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, I give this pleasure park (*ārāma*) in donation to the Saṅgha headed by the Fortunate One." The Buddha accepted the donation and after giving a discourse on the Dhamma to Ambapālī, he rose and departed.

While the Buddha was sojourning at the Mango Grove of Ambapālī in Vesālī, there too he repeatedly expounded the importance of morality, concentration and wisdom, the threefold monastic training.

The Buddha's Last Rains Retreat

Then the Buddha, after staying at Ambapālī's Mango Grove for as long as he wished, told Ven. Ānanda his wish to go to Veḷuva village in the vicinity of Vesālī and he proceeded there accompanied by a big company of monastics. During his stay at Veḷuva village the Buddha said to the monastics: "Monastics, enter upon the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in the vicinity of Vesālī at the monasteries of your friends and acquaintances. As for me, I am going to pass the Rains Retreat in this Veḷuva village."

"Very well, venerable sir," the monastics replied, and they entered into the Rains Retreat at the monasteries of friends and acquaintances in the vicinity of Vesālī. The Buddha himself entered the Rains Retreat at Veḷuva village.

> The Buddha told the monastics to dwell during the Rains Retreat period in the various monasteries in the neighbourhood of Vesālī because Veḷuva village was too small to provide daily alms food to a great number of monastics whereas the many monasteries around Vesālī could collect alms food without difficulty.
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> The reason for the Buddha's orders to the monastics to stay not far away from Vesālī was that he knew that he would enter Parinibbāna in the next ten months, so if the monastics were allowed to go and dwell at far away places, some of them might not be able to pay their last respects to him when he passed away, and they would feel very sorry for the lack of any hint from him about his oncoming demise. By staying around Vesālī, they could get the opportunity of listening to his discourses, eight times a month. So it was out of compassion for the monastics that the Buddha limited the area of Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) dwelling for the monastics to the neighbourhood of Vesālī. [1022]

A Severe Illness

After the Buddha had entered into the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period at Veḷuva village he was afflicted with a very severe illness that caused excessive pain near unto death. He bore the pain and neutralised it by remaining mindful with clear comprehension, having insight knowledge that reflected on the impermanence, suffering, and unsubstantiality of sensation. It now occurred to him: "It would not be proper for me to pass away in the attainment of Nibbāna without letting the attendant monastics know, without taking leave of the Saṅgha. It would be

well for me to keep off this ailment by insight meditation (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*), the precursor to fruition-knowledge, and then by abiding in the life-maintaining and sustaining absorption in fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*)." Accordingly, the Buddha kept off the ailment through insight meditation and by abiding in the life-maintaining fruition-attainment. Then the Buddha's illness faded.

> The continuous process of psycho-physical phenomena kept going by the force of productive deeds (*kamma*) is called life-maintaining effort (*jīvita-saṅkhāra*). The prolonging of this process of psycho-physical phenomena through fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) is also called life-maintaining effort (*jīvita-saṅkhāra*). This life-maintaining process or effort is also the life-sustaining process (*āyu-saṅkhāra*).
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> The Arahat fruition (*phala-samāpatti*) of the Buddha is of three kinds: The fruition attainment immediately following path attainment, the fruition attainment that can be resorted to, and life-maintaining attainment (*āyu-saṅkhāra*). Of those three:
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> 1. The three impulsion thoughts that arise immediately consequent to the Buddha's Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*) thought process the path-impulsion thoughts having the character to fructify immediately (*akālika*), are called fruition-attainment immediately following path attainment (*maggānantara-phala-samāpatti*).
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> 2. The sustained absorption that the Buddha may at any time later enter at will is called fruition attainment that can be resorted to (*vaḷañjana-phala-samāpatti*). This is the enjoyment of the peace of Nibbāna. The Buddha entered into this kind of absorption at any possible odd moments, even while the audience expressing appreciation by saying: *Sādhu, sādhu*, *sādhu*, during a discourse.
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> 3. The insight meditation entered into by the Buddha at Veḷuva village as the preliminary effort to enter into the absorption of fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) is the same as the contemplation that the Bodhisatta had practised on the threshold of Awakening under the Mahā Bodhi tree. It consists in contemplating the three characteristics of physical and mental phenomena. Having first established himself in this insight-meditation, the Buddha made a solemn wish that he be free from any ailment for ten months up to the full moon of May (*Vesākha*). After that he entered upon fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*). This absorption of fruition-attainment had the desired effect of quelling the severe illness and the

freedom from all disease for ten whole months. Therefore this third type of fruition-attainment is called the life-maintaining attainment.

Details of the method of insight-meditation preceding this fruition-attainment called the material (*rūpa-sattaka*) and immaterial septad (*nāma-sattaka*) may be gathered from The Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*, Chapter XX).

Of the above three kinds of fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*), the first two, the fruition attainment immediately following path attainment, and the fruition attainment that can be resorted to are referred to as temporary (*khaṇika*) fruition-attainments (*phala-samāpatti*) in the commentaries and sub-commentaries while the third is called life process (*jīvita-saṅkhāra*) fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*).

The distinction between the temporary (*khaṇika*) fruition-attainments and life process fruition-attainment should be noted. The temporary fruition-attainments are preceded by the ordinary mode of entering into insight-meditation, whereas life process fruition-attainment is preceded by a higher mode of insight-meditation called the immaterial septad (*nāma-sattaka*), which requires greater effort. These two types of insight meditation have, therefore, different effects on the fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) that immediately follow them. The former can put off ailment only while the absorption lasts, just like a stone falling on a moss covered surface of water can clear away the moss while the impact of the stone lasts, but will let the moss gather together on the spot later. The latter can put off ailment for a desired period, here for ten months, just like when a strong man were to descend into the lake, clear away the moss from the desired area so that the moss is kept away for some considerable time.

The Buddha came out of his monastery soon after his recovery, and sat in the shade of the monastery on the seat prepared for him. Then Ven. Ānanda approached him, [1023] paid his obeisance and, having sat at a suitable distance, said: “Venerable sir, I see the Fortunate One now at ease. I find the Fortunate One now in good health. But, venerable sir, although I now see the Fortunate One like this, when the Fortunate One was ill, I felt heavy and stiff in my body. I could hardly distinguish between the directions. I became befuddled, unable to comprehend things such as the methods of steadfast mindfulness. However, I got a little comfort from the thought that the Fortunate One would not pass away so long as he had not left any instructions concerning the Saṅgha.”

Thereupon the Buddha explained his position regarding the Saṅgha thus: "Ānanda, what more could the Saṅgha expect from me? For I have taught them without discrimination with an inner circle of disciples or an outer circle of disciples. Ānanda, in the matter of the teaching, I do not keep back anything as if it were some secret held in the closed fist of a mean teacher. Ānanda, if someone should desire that he alone should have sole control over the Saṅgha, or that the Saṅgha should rely on him alone, then it would be for such a person to leave any instructions concerning the Saṅgha. But Ānanda, I have no desire that I alone should have sole control over the Saṅgha, or that the Saṅgha should rely on me alone. Since I have no such desire, why should I leave any instruction concerning the Saṅgha?

Ānanda, I am now grown old, far gone in years, and have arrived at the last stage of life. I am turning 80 years of age. And just as an old worn-out cart is kept going only by additional efforts and care so my body is kept going by the additional effort of the life-maintaining fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*). Ānanda, it is only when the Realised One remains abiding in the Arahat fruition-attainment, unconcerned with material objects through the cessation of some mundane sensations, and through ceasing to attend to any signs of conditioned phenomena, that the Realised One's body is at greater ease.

Therefore, Ānanda, let yourselves be your own refuge; let yourselves, and not anyone else, be your refuge. Let the Dhamma be your firm ground, and let the Dhamma, and not anything else, be your refuge. Ānanda, how does a monastic make himself his own refuge, make himself and not anyone else, his refuge? How does he make the Dhamma his firm ground, and make the Dhamma, and not anything else, his refuge?

Ānanda, in this teaching, a monastic keeps his mind on the body with diligence, comprehension and mindfulness, steadfastly contemplating it as body, so as to keep away sense desires and distress that would otherwise arise in him. He keeps his mind on sensation with diligence, comprehension, and mindfulness, steadfastly contemplating it as sensation, so as to keep away sense desires and distress that would otherwise arise in him. He keeps his mind on the mind, so as to keep away sense desires and distress that would otherwise arise in him. He keeps his mind steadfastly contemplating it as mind, so as to keep away sense desires and distress that would otherwise arise in him. He keeps his mind on mind objects (*dhamma*), steadfastly contemplating them as mind objects so as to

keep away sense desires and distress that would otherwise arise in him. Ānanda, thus a monastic makes himself his own mainstay, makes himself, and not anyone else, his refuge. Thus he makes the Dhamma his firm ground, and makes the Dhamma, and not anything else, his refuge.

Ānanda, those monastics who, either now or after I have passed away, make themselves their own refuge, make themselves, and not anyone else, their refuge; who make the Dhamma their firm ground, and make the Dhamma, and not anything else, their refuge, all such monastics are sure to attain to the highest state, to become Arahats, among all the monastics who cherish the threefold training."

Thus did the Buddha conclude the discourse culminating in the highest attainment of the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*). [1024]

The Demise of the Two Chief Disciples

After spending the last Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period at Veḷuva village, the Buddha left the village for Sāvatthī. Travelling by stages, he arrived at Sāvatthī and he stayed in the Jetavana monastery. It was about the eighth day of the lunar month of November (*Kattikā*).

On that day, Ven. Sāriputta, knowing that he had just seven days more to live, bade farewell to the Buddha and took a seven-day journey to his native village, Nālaka village in the province of Rājagaha. There in the brick house where he was born, Ven. Sāriputta passed away and entered Parinibbāna on the full moon day of November (*Kattikā*).

After the funeral rites were finished, Ven. Cunda, younger brother of Ven. Sāriputta, took Ven. Sāriputta's alms bowl, robes, etc., together with the remains to Sāvatthī. These relics were enshrined under the Buddha's instruction at Sāvatthī. Thereafter, the Buddha went to Rājagaha. When he was in Rājagaha, on the day of the new moon in November, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna entered Parinibbāna. The relics of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna were enshrined under the Buddha's instructions at Rājagaha.

> Details of these important events will be described in chapter 43 on the Saṅgha.

After that, the Buddha proceeded on his journey and, travelling by stages, arrived at Ukkacelā. There, at the landing place on the river Ganges, he gave a Discourse at Ukkacelā concerning the demise of the two chief disciples, (*Ukkacela-sutta*, SN 47.14).

Then, in the morning, he went into Vesālī on his alms round, and after his meal, leaving the eating place, he said to Ven. Ānanda: "Ānanda, bring the sitting mat, let us go to the Cāpāla shrine to spend the day there."

"Very well, venerable sir," said Ānanda, and taking a leather sheet seat, followed closely behind the Buddha.

The Buddha Hints about his Passing

Then the Buddha approached the Cāpāla shrine and sat on the seat spread out for him. Ven. Ānanda paid respects to him, and seated himself at a suitable distance. Then the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda by way of clear hints: "Ānanda, whosoever has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the four bases of psychic power (*iddhi-pāda*) could, if he so wished, live for the maximum lifespan or even beyond the maximum lifespan. Ānanda, the Realised One has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the four bases of psychic power. Therefore, Ānanda, the Realised One could, if he so wished, live for the maximum lifespan."

Although the Buddha thus gave clear hints, Ven. Ānanda failed to grasp them. And so it did not occur to him to entreat the Buddha in these terms: "May the Fortunate One, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, well-being and happiness of Devas and humans, out of compassion for the world, live for the maximum lifespan! May the one who speaks only what is true and beneficial live for the maximum lifespan!" Ven. Ānanda's mind was like that of one possessed by Māra.

> In this connection: The Udena shrine (*cetiya*) was a temple built on the site where the Yakkha Udena was traditionally propitiated. The other shrines at Vesālī likewise were traditional places of worship in respect of traditional deities. Regarding the term aeon (*kappa*) in this context: *Kappaṁ vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvasesaṁ vā,* is unanimously taken to mean lifespan (*āyu-kappa*) by the commentators and sub-commentators. [1025]

Only Ven. Mahāsīva took a different interpretation. According to him: "The Buddhas never make claims about their powers without some good cause. That being so, the Fortunate One could repeatedly resort to entering into the absorption of fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) and go on prolonging his life by ten-month periods up to the end of the present aeon which is marked by five Buddhas. Yet the Buddha did not choose to do so. Why not? The Buddha probably had thought thus: human beings with corporeality born of productive deeds are subject to decay. The Buddhas do not wish to present themselves with their decrepit bodies which naturally show after the four-fifths of the lifespan has passed. That is why it is customary for all Buddhas to pass away when they have attained four-fifths of the lifespan, when their physical appearance is still firm and inspiring for the devotees.

There is also another practical consideration: if a Buddha were to survive most of his great disciples and were surrounded by youthful monastics, the people would say: "Oh! What sort of disciples the Buddha has!" Thus, Ven. Mahāsīva maintained the practical considerations that Buddhas take into account in not exercising their power of living till the end of the aeon. However, Ven. Mahāsiva's views were not accepted by the commentators, who take lifespan as the meaning of *āyu-kappa* on the authority of the commentary on the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*).

The view of Ven. Mahāsīva was also rejected by the sub-commentary on the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*), where it says: "Ven. Mahāsiva's view contains a statement that human beings are subject to decay, which implies that decay cannot be postponed by psychic power. In that case, it also implies that death cannot be prevented by psychic power. Therefore, the argument is inherently unsound. Only the view taken by the commentary should be taken as the sound view, and not that of Ven. Mahāsīva."

In this matter, Ven. Mahāsīva would appear to take only one point as primary consideration, and that is, that a Bodhisatta's resultant-*kamma*, in his last existence, has the power to prolong life for an infinite period. And that view coupled with the authority of the Pāḷi text that the life-maintaining fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) of Buddhas can postpone fatal ailment, leads Ven. Mahāsīva to claim that if the Buddha so wishes, he might live on throughout the end of the present aeon.

Even though the resultant-*kamma* of a Bodhisatta in his last existence is supposed to prolong life for an infinite period, that infinite period can be

literally true only if the prevailing lifespan is also an infinite period, but if the prevailing lifespan is 100 years, that so-called infinite period can last just 100 years. That is so because the power of productive deeds (*kamma*) has its effect limited by the extent of the prevailing times, physical basis of the person, effort taken, and the plane of existence. That is why the miscellaneous teaching (*pakiṇṇaka-desanā*) of the ancient commentary takes the meaning of *āyu-kappa* as the prevailing lifespan. This view has also been maintained by the new commentators, such as Ven. Buddhaghosa, Ven. Dhammapāla, etc.

As regards the expression: "Possessed by Māra," the twelve kinds of distortions (*vipallāsa*) should be noted.

1. Impermanence (*anicca*) is held as permanence (*nicca*) through the illusion of perception; the illusion of thought; and through the illusion of views.

2. Pain (*dukkha*) is held as pleasure (*sukha*) through the illusion of perception; the illusion of thought; and the illusion of views.

3. Non-self (*anatta*) is held as self (*atta*) through the illusion of perception; the illusion of thought; and the illusion of views.

4. Loathsomeness (*asubha*) is held as lovely (*subha*) through the illusion of perception; the illusion of thought; and the illusion of views. [1026]

One who is free from all these illusions, and we can take Ven. Mahā Moggallāna as an example, cannot fall victim to Māra's influence mentally, a worldling who has not rid of any of these illusions or a noble one (*ariya*) who has overcome some of these illusions but still has some remaining in him is liable to be possessed by Māra.

Ven. Ānanda still had these four illusions: The illusion of perception and the illusion of thought that made pain appear as pleasure; the illusion of perception and the illusion of thought that made the loathsome appear as lovely. Hence, he was targeted by Māra.

The way Māra possesses his victim is by frightening him out of his wits, either by creating a dreadful vision or a dreadful sound. When the victim is thus frightened, he loses consciousness, leaving his mouth agape. Māra then would insert his hand through the open mouth and take hold of the heart exerting pressure on it. The victim lies in a senseless state totally possessed by Māra.

> In the case of Ven. Ānanda, Māra could not insert his hand through the mouth and oppress the heart. He merely presented some dreadful sense object before Ven. Ānanda, under the influence of which Ven. Ānanda could not think of the significance of the Buddha's intimation.

For a second time the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda … and for a third time the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Ānanda, pleasant is the city of Vesālī. And pleasant are the shrines of Udena, Gotamaka, Sattamba, Bahuputta, Sārandada and Cāpāla. Ānanda, whosoever has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the four bases of psychic power (*iddhi-pāda*) could, if he so wished, live for the maximum lifespan or even beyond the maximum lifespan. Ānanda, the Realised One has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the four bases of psychic power. Therefore, Ānanda, the Realised One could, if he so wished, live for the maximum lifespan." Thus the Fortunate One gave clear hints.

Although the Buddha thus gave clear hints, Ven. Ānanda failed to grasp them. And so it did not occur to him to entreat the Buddha in these terms: "May the Fortunate One, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, well-being and happiness of Devas and humans, out of compassion for the world, live for the maximum lifespan! May the Fortunate One live for the maximum lifespan!" Ven. Ānanda's mind was like that of one possessed by Māra.

> Herein, it might be asked: "Why did the Fortunate One, knowing well that Ven. Ānanda was being possessed by Māra, repeat his words of intimation three times?"
>
> The answer is this: The Buddha foresaw that later, when Māra had released Ven. Ānanda, he would then regain his senses. Ven. Ānanda would then entreat him to live the whole of the lifespan. In that event, he would have reason to blame Ven. Ānanda for his failure to make the request at the proper time and that this blaming would have the effect of attenuating Ven. Ānanda's grief.

Then the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Go now, Ānanda. Now you know the time to go." – "Very well, venerable sir," said Ven. Ānanda, then arising from his seat, he made obeisance to the Buddha and went to sit at the foot of a tree, not far away from him.

Māra's Request

Soon after Ven. Ānanda had left the Buddha's presence, Māra, the Wicked One, approached him and, standing at a certain place, addressed him thus: "Venerable sir, let the Fortunate One realize Parinibbāna now, let the Fortunate One pass away! Venerable sir, it is time now for the Fortunate One to pass away. [1027]

Venerable sir, the Fortunate One had said this to me: 'Wicked One, I shall not pass away so long as my disciples, the male monastics, are not yet well versed in the doctrine, not yet well disciplined in the threefold training, not yet sure of the righteousness of their conduct, not yet possessed of wide knowledge, not yet able to memorize the teaching, not yet able to practise according to the teaching leading to the supermundane, not yet able to take up the proper practice, not yet settled in their practice; not yet able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make evident their teacher's doctrine that they have learnt; so long as they are not yet able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds such other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful teaching.'

Venerable sir, now that the Fortunate One's disciples, the monastics, are well versed in the doctrine, are well disciplined in the threefold training, are sure of the righteousness of their conduct, are possessed of wide knowledge, are able to memorize the teaching, are able to practise according to the teaching leading to the supermundane, are able to take up the proper practice, are settled in their practice; are able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make evident their teacher's doctrine that they have learnt; now they are able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds such other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful teaching. Venerable sir, let the Fortunate One realize Parinibbāna now, let the Fortunate One pass away! Venerable sir, it is time now for the Fortunate One to pass away.

Venerable sir, the Fortunate One had said this to me: 'Wicked One, I shall not pass away so long as my female monastics … my male lay-disciples … my female lay-disciples are not yet well versed in the doctrine, not yet well disciplined in the threefold training, not yet sure of the righteousness of their conduct, not yet possessed of wide knowledge, not yet able to memorize the teaching, not yet able to practise according to the teaching leading to the supermundane, not yet able to take up the proper practice, not yet settled in their

practice; not yet able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make evident their teacher's doctrine that they have learnt; so long as they are not yet able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds such other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful teaching.'

Venerable sir, now that the Fortunate One's female lay disciples are well versed in the doctrine, are well disciplined in the threefold training, are sure of the righteousness of their conduct, are possessed of wide knowledge, are able to memorize the teaching, are able to practise according to the teaching leading to the supermundane, are able to take up the proper practice, are settled in their practice; are able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make evident their teacher's doctrine that they have learnt; now they are able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds such other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful teaching. Venerable sir, let the Fortunate One realize Parinibbāna now, let the Fortunate One pass away! Venerable sir, it is time now for the Fortunate One to pass away.

Venerable sir, the Fortunate One had said to me thus: 'Wicked One, I shall not pass away so long as this teaching of mine, which is the practice of purity, is not yet sufficiently established among the disciples, not yet prosperous, widespread, or has not reached the multitudes, and become renowned, to the extent that it can be thoroughly made known by wise Devas and humans.'

Venerable sir, now that the Fortunate One's teaching, which is the practice of purity, is sufficiently established among the disciples, is now prosperous, widespread, has reached the multitudes, and is renowned to the extent that it can be thoroughly [1028] made known by wise Devas and humans. Venerable sir, let the Fortunate One realize Parinibbāna now, let the Fortunate One pass away! Venerable sir, it is time now for the Fortunate One to pass away."

This was the third time Māra requested the Buddha to pass away. The first time was during the eight weeks of Buddha's sojourn in the vicinity of the Bodhi tree, after he had attained Perfect Self-Awakening. At that time he said to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, as the result of your fulfilling the perfections with the aim at Buddhahood, you have now become the Buddha. You have attained Perfect Self-Awakening. What benefit would be there from your wandering from town to town, village to village, teaching your doctrine for the welfare of

the world of living beings? Venerable sir, let the Fortunate One realize Parinibbāna now …"

The second time Māra, having seen that the Buddha had assented to Brahma Sahampati's request to preach the doctrine, approached him, when he was sitting beneath the Goat-herder's Banyan Tree where he stayed for the seventh week after Awakening. Māra was feeling miserable at the prospect of his domain getting lost to the Buddha whose doctrine would lead the multitudes to the deathless. So, in spite of the Buddha's promise to Brahma Sahampati, he decided to try to change the mind of the Buddha in an attempt to prevent the Buddha's propagating the Dhamma by making a second request to pass away, in words similar to the first request.

At that time the Buddha replied to Māra that so long as his monastics, female monastics, male lay disciples and female lay disciples were not well versed in the doctrine, not yet well disciplined in the threefold training, not yet sure of the righteousness of their conduct, not yet possessed of wide knowledge, not yet able to memorize the teaching, not yet able to practise according to the teaching leading to the supermundane, not yet able to take up the proper practice, not yet settled in their practice; not yet able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make evident their teacher's doctrine that they have learnt; so long as they are not yet able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds such other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful teaching, he would not pass away. Māra in his third request, therefore, referred to the reasons the Buddha gave on that second request.

On being requested thus, the Buddha said to Māra the Wicked One: "Wicked One, don't you worry; the Parinibbāna of the Realised One will not be long in coming. Three months hence the Realised One will realize Parinibbāna."

The Buddha Renounces the Life-Process

Then the Buddha, while at Cāpāla shrine, decided mindfully and with deliberation to give up the life-maintaining mental process at the end of three months, and not to resume the absorption of fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*). On the Buddha's making that resolution, the great earth quaked with a hair-raising and goose-flesh causing vehemence.

Then the Buddha, perceiving this phenomenal occurrence, uttered a joyous utterance in verse.

> *Tulam-atulañ-ca sambhavaṁ,*
> *bhava-saṅkhāram-avassaji muni,*
> *ajjhatta-rato samāhito,*
> *abhindi kavacam-ivatta-sambhavaṁ.*
>
> The great sage, having weighed the infinite Nibbāna against the ephemeral nature of sentient existence, has cast off by the noble path the resultant-producing volitions that cause fresh existence. With delight in insight-meditation, reflecting on the three characteristics of the five aggregates, and with complete calm of mind, he has destroyed the tenacious defilements that enwrap him like a tight coat of chain-mail.

The meaning of the verse is further expanded: [1029] The Buddha gained the four noble paths paths after cultivating meditation for calm and insight-meditation. As a brave warrior at the battlefield would cut loose, with his sharp sword, the tight coat of chain mail that he is wearing, so also the Buddha has completely destroyed the defilements with the four path-knowledges. Just as when the tap-roots of a tree are cut off, the fruit-producing potential of the tree is terminated the moment the defilements are destroyed, the potential for rebirth that has been cumulating from the beginningless Saṁsāra was terminated in the mental makeup of the Buddha.

> In the statement: "The Fortunate One decided mindfully and with deliberation to give up the life-maintaining mental process," mindfully means the Buddha's mind dwelled at all moments on the four foundations of steadfast mindfulness: body, sensations, mind and mind objects. Reflecting wisely on these four foundations, he recalled how he had borne the burden of the five aggregates over such a long, weary journey of Saṁsāra, and that he was now free from the burden; and that to enable him to cast aside this burden, he had for over four immeasurable periods (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and 100,000 aeons fulfilled the perfections, the prerequisites for the noble path. Now that he was established in the path which he had long aspired after, he was able to dwell on the four foundations of mindfulness, having had penetrative insight into the loathsomeness, suffering, impermanence and non-self of conditioned phenomena.

"With deliberation," means the Buddha pondered on the benefits he had brought for himself and for others. For his own benefit, he had obtained his goal of Buddhahood at the foot of the Bodhi tree. As for the benefit for others he had, by his teaching the Dhamma, caused the multitudes to gain liberation from the round of suffering (*dukkha*). He would be bringing an end to that mission in the next three months, on the full moon of May (*Vesākha*). These thoughts which the Buddha considered led to the decision, by means of his Buddha-knowledge, to give up the life-maintaining mental process.

In the expression: "To give up the life-maintaining mental process (*āyu-saṅkhāra*)," it is a term capable of two meanings, the interaction of mind and matter kept going by the process that sustains life, conditioned by productive deeds (*kamma*), is one meaning. The formless fruition-attainment (*ārupa-loka-phala-samāpatti*) that acts as a condition for prolonging life is the other meaning.

"To give up the life-maintaining mental process," means the Buddha, was resolving that he would not re-enter into the fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) after three months; he would do so only up to the full moon of May (*Vesākha*). By that resolution, the Buddha, in effect, renounced the condition for prolonging his life beyond three months.

When the Buddha thus renounced the life-maintaining mental process, the great earth quaked in six different ways: 1) Swaying from east to west; 2) swaying from west to east; 3) swaying from south to north; 4) swaying from north to south; 5) heaving upwards; and 6) lunging downwards. This phenomenon occurred throughout the 10,000 world-element, causing people terror, with gooseflesh appearing on their skin and the body-hairs standing up.

When the Buddha had relinquished the life-maintaining mental process, he felt delightful satisfaction with the thought that the burden of the body, which he had been carrying over the long course of Saṁsāra, was now to be laid aside in the next three months. Since the joy at this happy prospect was so intense that it could not be contained it found expression in the joyous utterance of the above verse.

The fact that the verse was the outcome of great joy makes it evident that in relinquishing the life-maintaining mental process, the Buddha was not yielding to Māra out of fear. If it were so, how could such a joyous utterance come about? Only the happy prospect, foreseen by the Buddha-

> knowledge, that three months [1030] hence he would be laying down the burden of the five aggregates and making an end of all suffering (*dukkha*), brought forth that joyous utterance concerning his relinquishment.

Then Ven. Ānanda bethought himself: "Wonderful it is! Unprecedented it is! This hair-raising earthquake is monstrous indeed! It is really stupendous! How rolling thunders echoed and re-echoed! What is the cause of great earthquakes? What conditions them?" He approached the Buddha, made his obeisance to him, and sitting at a suitable distance, addressed the Buddha thus: "Wonderful it is! Unprecedented it is! This hair-raising earthquake is monstrous indeed! It is really stupendous! How rolling thunders echoed and re-echoed! Venerable sir, what is the cause of such great earthquakes? What conditions them?"

Eight Causes of Earthquakes

And the Buddha said: "Ānanda, there are eight causes of, or conditions leading to, great earthquakes. They are:

1. This great earth is supported by water, the water by air, the air by space. When very strong winds blow, the water is shaken. When the water is shaken, the earth is shaken. This is the first cause of, or the first condition leading to, great earthquakes.
2. Further, Ānanda, an ascetic or Brahmin who has great mental power, and who is accomplished in the supernormal powers of the mind, or a Deva of great power, by developing intense concentration on the limited image of the earth element and on the boundless image of the water-element can cause the earth to shake strongly, to sway violently, and to convulse. This is the second cause of, or the second condition leading to, great earthquakes.
3. Further, Ānanda, on the occasion of a Bodhisatta passing away in the Tusita realm and descending into the mother's womb, mindfully and with clear comprehension, this great earth shakes, quakes strongly, sways violently, and is convulsed. This is the third cause of, or the third condition leading to, great earthquakes.
4. Further, Ānanda, on the occasion of a Bodhisatta being born, mindfully and with clear comprehension, this great earth shakes, quakes strongly,

sways violently, and is convulsed. This is the fourth cause of, or the fourth condition leading to, great earthquakes.

5. Further, Ānanda, on the occasion of a Buddha attaining supremely Perfect Awakening, this great earth shakes, quakes strongly, sways violently, and is convulsed. This is the fifth cause of, or the fifth condition leading to, great earthquakes.

6. Further, Ānanda, on the occasion of a Buddha expounding the Supreme Dhamma on the four noble truths, the first discourse known as the Discourse setting the Dhamma Wheel Turning (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*, SN 56.11), the great earth shakes, quakes strongly, sways violently, and is convulsed. This is the sixth cause of, or the sixth condition leading to, great earthquakes.

7. Further, Ānanda, on the occasion of a Buddha relinquishing mindfully and with deliberation, the life-maintaining mental process, this great earth shakes, quakes strongly, sways violently and is convulsed. This is the seventh cause of, or the seventh condition leading to, great earthquakes.

8. Further, Ānanda, on the occasion of a Buddha passing away leaving no remainder of the five aggregates and enters upon Parinibbāna, realizing the ultimate peace, this great earth shakes, quakes strongly, sways violently, and is convulsed. This is the eighth cause of, or the eighth condition leading to, great earthquakes.

Ānanda, these are the eight causes of, or the eight conditions leading to great earthquakes."

Some elaboration on the above eight factors:

1. Earthquakes occur due to the unstable conditions of the elements of the cosmos. The great earth is supported by a mass of air which is 960,000 leagues thick. Above that mass of air, there is a mass of water which is 480,000 leagues thick. Above that mass of water lies the great earth which is 240,000 leagues thick. The lower half of the thickness, 120,000 leagues, of the earth is granite while the upper half of [1031] the same thickness is earth.

When the elements become unstable and powerful winds blow across the surface of the normal mass of air, the mass of air is temporarily displaced

so that its support of the mass of water is withdrawn. The mass of water then drops abruptly, leading to a sudden drop of the mass of the great earth. When the extraordinarily strong winds become calm again, the mass of air returns to its normal level, resumes its function of supporting the mass of water, and rises up again. This leads to the rising up of the great earth. Thus, strong winds that blow due to unstable conditions of the elements are the causes of earthquakes. This phenomena is present all the time, occurring occasionally. This sudden falling and rising of the earth is not noticed because of the thickness of the great earth.

2. Earthquakes due to powerful persons: Persons possessed of psychic power can cause earthquakes by means of that power. The method they employ is by entering into absorption (*jhāna*), with water as the object of concentration and thereby causing the upheaval of the great earth. They cause the earthquake for some noble purpose, just as Ven. Mahā Moggallāna caused the Vejayanta pinnacled mansion of Sakka to shake for the purpose of arousing spiritual urgency in others; and novice Saṅgharakkhita also did the same thing to inquire after something.

Novice Saṅgharakkhita

Novice Saṅgharakkhita, the nephew of Ven. Mahānāga, was a remarkable novice who became an Arahat even while his head was being shaved at the time of entering into the Saṅgha. He reflected whether there had appeared before, any monastic who could cause the Vejayanta mansion of Sakka to shake, and seeing none, he attempted to do it. But he could not do it. Seeing his attempt fail, the Devakaññā who belonged to the group of dancers at Sakka's palace ridiculed him. "Son, you are too young to try to do such a thing; this Vejayanta mansion is too strong for you," they said to him.

Novice Saṅgharakkhita bethought himself: "I am being ridiculed by these Devakaññā because I lack proper instruction from a teacher." And so, he considered where his preceptor Ven. Sāmuddika Mahānāga could be found, and knowing that the latter was spending the day in a cave underneath the great ocean, he went there and stood in worshipful posture before the elder.

"So you failed to shake the Vejayanta mansion because you joined battle even before you had learned how to fight," said the elder.

"Venerable sir, I have not received any instructions from an able teacher," the novice said.

"Son, if such a person of psychic power as yourself cannot shake the Vejayanta mansion, who else could? Now then, you have seen some dried piece of cowdung floating along the surface of water, haven't you? And remember, son, how the pancake maker retrieves her pancake from the frying pan by tearing off its edges first. Mark this example." These were the elliptical words from the teacher. "That is instruction enough, venerable sir," the novice said.

Then he made the wish: "Let the Vejayanta mansion be surrounded by water." And the novice went to where the Vejayanta mansion stood. On seeing him return, the Devakaññā remarked: "Here he comes again, not satisfied with his disgrace. Yes, he is here again!"

When Sakka heard them, he said to them: "Do not ridicule my son. He has received instruction from an able teacher. He will shake the mansion now." Novice Saṅgharakkhita then touched the outside beam of the Vejayanta mansion with his big toe. The mansion swayed in all the four directions, sideways as well as back and forth. Thereupon the Devakaññā cried: "Son, please stop! Leave the great mansion alone!"

Novice Saṅgharakkhita then let the Vejayanta mansion stand in its place, and standing above it, uttered the following three verses in ecstatic joy (DA PTS 2.560):

> *Ajjevāhaṁ pabbajito, ajja pattāsavakkhayaṁ,*
> *ajja kampemi pāsādaṁ, aho Buddhassuḷāratā.*
> *Ajjevāhaṁ pabbajito, ajja pattāsavakkhayaṁ,*
> *ajja kampemi pāsādaṁ, aho Dhammassuḷāratā.*
> *Ajjevāhaṁ pabbajito, ajja pattāsavakkhayaṁ,*
> *ajja kampemi pāsādaṁ, aho Saṅghassuḷāratā.*

Just today I have become a monastic. I have today became an Arahat even as my [1032] head was being shaved. And today, I have been able to shake Sakka's mansion, having received instruction from my teacher. Excellent and marvellous indeed is the Buddha, the Perfectly Self-Awakened One. Excellent and marvellous indeed is the Dhamma, that truly leads to emancipation. Excellent and marvellous indeed is the Saṅgha, the noble ones (*ariya*)!

3. The third cause, the conception of a Buddha to be, and the fourth cause, the birth of a Buddha to be, are due to the superb merit of the Bodhisatta.

5. The fifth cause, the occasion of Awakening, is due to the power of the penetrative knowledge of the Buddha.

6. The sixth cause, the occasion of delivering the first discourse, is due to the power of the knowledge consisting in the power of exposition of the Buddha. On this great occasion, the guardian spirit of the great earth, showing his appreciation is figuratively said to be applauding by the great earth, according to the commentary.

7. The seventh cause is due to the power of the Buddha-knowledge in relinquishing the life-maintaining mental process, out of weariness with sentient existence which is conditioned. On this great occasion, the guardian spirit of the earth sympathized with the Buddha in the matter of decay and death which is incumbent on everyone, not excepting the Buddha, and showed his sympathy by the great earthquake.

8. The eighth cause is due to the power of the Buddha's knowledge that makes the Buddha very happy with the delightful satisfaction in having accomplished his mission that had taken him four immeasurable periods (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and 100,000 aeons (*kappa*) for attainment of perfect peace (*anupādisesa-nibbāna*). As for the guardian spirit of the earth, it was an occasion for grief and lamentation. The great earthquake then is an expression of his grief and lamentation.

Eight Categories of Assemblies

When the Buddha discoursed on the eight causes of great earthquakes, Ven. Ānanda, being of great wisdom, rightly concluded that the Buddha had relinquished the life-maintaining mental process that very day. The fact is Ven. Ānanda's appraisal of the situation was known to the Buddha but he did not allow Ven. Ānanda to disrupt the discourse, and continued with other topics, such as the eight categories of assemblies, the eight means of mind mastery, and the eight liberations.

There are certain commentators who explain this action on the part of the Buddha, as his strategy of alleviating the sorrow that would arise in Ven. Ānanda, if the fact of the relinquishing of the life-maintaining mental process were to be allowed to come to the surface. The fresh topics that the Buddha takes up without interrupting are thus meant to occupy Ven. Ānanda's mind with matters other than the Buddha's oncoming passing.

“Ānanda,” said the Buddha, “there are eight categories of assemblies. There are: the assembly of nobles, the assembly of Brahmins, the assembly of householders, the assembly of monastics, the assembly of the Devas of the realm of the Four Great Kings, the assembly of the Tāvatiṁsa Devas, the assembly of the Devas led by Māra, the assembly of Brahmas.

Ānanda, I remember having attended hundreds of assemblies of nobles. In those assemblies, I sat together with them, conversed with them, and had discussions with them. While I was among them, my appearance was like their appearance and my voice was like their voice. In my discourses to them, I pointed out to them the benefits of the doctrine, exhorted them to be established in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened them in the practice. While I was thus discoursing to them, they did not know me. They wondered: ‘Who is this one discoursing? Is he a Deva or a man?’ After I, by my discourse, had pointed out to them the benefits of the Dhamma, and gladdened them in the practice, I vanished from there. When I vanished too, they still did not know me; and wondered: ‘Who was [1032] that who has vanished now? Was he a Deva or a man?’

Ānanda, I remember having attended hundreds of assemblies of Brahmins … householders … monastics … Devas of the realm of the Four Great Kings … Tāvatiṁsa Devas … Devas led by Māra … I remember having attended hundreds of assemblies of Brahmas. In those assemblies, I sat together with them, conversed with them, and had discussions with them. While I was among them, my appearance was like their appearance and my voice was like their voice. In my discourses to them, I pointed out to them the benefits of the doctrine, exhorted them to be established in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened them in the practice. While I was thus discoursing to them, they did not know me. They wondered: ‘Who is this one discoursing? Is he a Deva or a man?’ After I had, by my discourse, pointed out to them the benefits of the Dhamma, and gladdened them in the practice, I vanished from there. When I vanished too, they still did not know me; and wondered: ‘Who was [1032] that who has vanished now? Was he a Deva or a man?’ Ānanda, these are the categories of assemblies.”

Some examples of the great many assemblies of nobles are: The first meeting with King Bimbisāra after the Buddha had attained Awakening; the Buddha’s first visit to Kapilavatthu and meeting with his kinsmen; the Buddha’s meeting

with Licchavī princes as told in Sunakkhatta's story; and Saccaka's story. Such meetings with nobles took place also in other world-elements, it should be presumed.

"My appearance was like their appearance," means not the colour of the skin, but the form, for nobles had various colours of skin, some white, some black, some dark tan. As regards the form, the Buddha did not assume any particular guise, but retained his own self. Only the onlookers, the nobles, regarded them as one of them.

> This reminds one of the traditional presentation of the Buddha image in royal attire with reference to his taming of Jambupati.

"My voice was like their voice" means the language that the Buddha used in speaking at the particular assembly. Regarding the voice itself, the Buddha had a voice like that of the lord of Brahmas, a voice replete with eight marvellous qualities. When the Buddha happened to be seated on a throne, the audience would think that their king was speaking in a sweet voice. Only after he had finished the discourse and left the assembly, then the audience could see their real king and they were left wondering: "Who was there sitting on the throne, who talked to us in Māgadhī on the Dhamma in such a sweet voice, and who is gone now? Was he a Deva or was he a man?" They did not know that it was the Buddha.

> It might be asked: "Why did the Buddha discourse on the Dhamma to those who did not recognize him? What benefit did he see there?" The answer is: The Buddha taught them to prepare the ground for their Awakening later.
>
> Here's the explanation: Although those hearers of the Dhamma did not recognize the Buddha and did not take a real interest in the Dhamma, since the Dhamma is replete with the excellent qualities such as being well-delivered (*svākkhāto*), hearing it will serve as a necessary condition for Awakening in the future to gain the paths and fruitions.

As regards the great many assemblies of Brahmins, we have examples in the Buddha's encounters with Soṇadanta, Kūṭadanta, and so on. Similar assemblies of Brahmins in the other [1034] world-elements can also be presumed to have taken place.

> It might be asked: "What benefit did the Fortunate One see in discoursing on the eight categories of assemblies?" The answer is: The Buddha

discoursed on the eight categories of assemblies to illustrate the fact that he was fearless.

Here's the explanation: After describing the eight categories of assemblies, the Buddha continued: "Ānanda, in going amongst those eight assemblies, the Realised One had no fear. That being so, how could anyone say that the Realised One was afraid of Māra who came to him alone? Ānanda, in relinquishing the life-maintaining mental process, the Realised One did so fearlessly, with mindfulness and clear comprehension."

These words are contained in the Miscellaneous Teaching on the Dhamma (*Pakiṇṇaka-dhamma-desanā*) which was not recited at the Great Council but was quoted by the commentaries.

Eight Ways of Mastery of the Mind

Then the Buddha continued his discourse without break thus: "Ānanda, there are eight ways of mind mastery (*abhibhāyatana-jhāna*), and overcoming the opposite phenomena and sense objects, that is, the hindrances that mar clear mental vision. These are:

1. Someone with an excellent mental capacity or intelligence, after having gained concentration at the preliminary or preparatory level on the colour of certain parts of his own body, concentrates his mind on small external forms of his choice (*kasiṇa*), which may be either unblemished or blemished. His mind gets fixed on these forms, gains mastery over them and he thus dwells in absorption (*appanā-jhāna*). After emerging from that absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees these forms. This is the first mind mastery (*abhibhāyatana-jhāna*).

2. Some other person with an excellent mental capacity or intelligence, after having gained the preliminary concentration on the colour of certain parts of his own body, concentrates his mind on big external forms (*kasiṇa*), which may be either unblemished or blemished. His mind gets fixed on these big objects, gains mastery over them, and he thus dwells in absorption. After emerging from that absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees these forms. This is the second mind mastery.

3. Some other person with an excellent mental capacity or intelligence, without taking the colour of any part of his body as an object of

preliminary concentration, concentrates on small external objects (*kasiṇa*), which may be either unblemished or blemished, as objects of preliminary concentration. His mind duly gets fixed on these small forms (*kasiṇa*), gains mastery over them, and he thus dwells in absorption. After emerging from that absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees these forms. This is the third mind mastery.

4. Some other person with an excellent mental capacity or intelligence, without taking the colour of his body as an object of preliminary concentration, concentrates on big external forms (*kasiṇa*), which may be either unblemished or blemished, as objects of preliminary concentration. His mind duly gets fixed on these big forms, gains mastery over them, and he thus dwells in absorption. After emerging from that absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees these forms. This is the fourth mind mastery.

5. Some other person with an excellent mental capacity or intelligence, without taking the colour of his body as an object of preliminary concentration, concentrates on external forms (*kasiṇa*) that are dark blue, with a dark blue colour, dark blue hue, like the flax-blossom which is dark blue, with a dark blue colour, dark blue hue, or like Bārāṇasī fabric with a smooth finish on both sides, which is dark blue and has a dark blue colour, dark blue hue. He concentrates on external forms that are dark blue, with a dark blue colour, dark blue hue, as objects of preliminary concentration. His mind duly gets fixed on them, gains mastery over them, and he thus dwells in absorption. After emerging from that absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees these forms. This is the fifth mind mastery.

6. Some other person with an excellent mental capacity or intelligence, without taking the colour of his body as an [1035] object of preliminary concentration, concentrates on external forms (*kasiṇa*) that are yellow, with a yellow colour, yellow hue, or like Bārāṇasī fabric with a smooth finish on both sides, which is yellow and has a yellow colour, yellow hue. He concentrates on these external forms that are yellow, with a yellow colour, yellow hue, as objects of preliminary concentration. His mind duly gets fixed on them, gains mastery over them, and he thus

dwells in absorption. After emerging from that absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees these forms. This is the sixth mind mastery.

7. Some other person with an excellent mental capacity or intelligence, without taking the colour of his body as an object of preliminary concentration, concentrates on external forms (*kasiṇa*) that are red, with a red colour, red hue, like a flower of the Noon Flower tree (*bandhu-jīvaka*) which is red, with a red colour, red hue, or like Bārāṇasī fabric with a smooth finish on both sides, which is red and has a red colour, red hue. He concentrates on these external forms that are red, with a red colour, red hue, as objects of preliminary concentration. His mind duly gets fixed on them, gains mastery over them, and he thus dwells in absorption. After emerging from that absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees these forms. This is the seventh mind mastery.

8. Some other person with an excellent mental capacity or intelligence, without taking the colour of his body as an object of preliminary concentration, concentrates on external forms (*kasiṇa*) that are white, with a white colour, white hue, like the morning star which is white, with a white colour, white hue, or like Bārāṇasī fabric with a smooth finish on both sides which is white and has a white colour, white hue. He concentrates on these external forms that are white, with a white colour, white hue, as objects of preliminary concentration. His mind duly gets fixed on them, gains mastery over them, and he thus dwells in absorption. After emerging from that absorption, he is aware that he knows and sees these forms. This is the eighth mind mastery.

Mind mastery (*abhibhāyatana-jhāna*): *Abhibhū*, means overcoming opposite external states such as hindrances; and is a state of ecstatic bliss (*jhāna*). It is the meditation that is possible for those with very sharp intellect who can achieve concentration quickly and thereby overcome all hindrances, and who are able to deal with either a small object or a big object of meditation, and gain mastery over it without difficulty.

To achieve mind mastery (*abhibhāyatana-jhāna*), a yogi may begin the preliminary or preparatory concentration by taking an internal form, such as concentrating on a certain part of his own body or an external form.

If he begins with an internal form he may choose any one of the four colours, dark blue, yellow, red or white, that consist in the various parts of his own body. For example, if he concentrates on the dark blue colour, he may concentrate on either his hair, or bile, or the pupil of the eye and impress his mind with the dark blue colour, thinking: "Dark blue, dark blue." If he concentrates on the yellow colour, he may concentrate on either the fat, the skin, the top of the hand, or the top of the foot, or the yellowish surface of the eye-ball and impress his mind with the yellow colour, thinking: "Yellow, yellow." If he concentrates on the red colour, he may concentrate on either the flesh, the blood, the tongue, or the reddish surface of the eye-ball and impress his mind with the red colour, thinking: "Red, red." If he concentrates on the white colour, he may concentrate on either the bone, the teeth, the finger nails, toe nails, or the whitish surface of the eye-ball, and impress his mind with the white colour, thinking: "White, white."

Internal forms can help set up only the preliminary concentration (*parikamma*), and not the full concentration (*appanā-bhāvanā*). The after-image or reflex image that the yogi obtains after achieving the preliminary concentration is sometimes not sufficiently clear. To get the necessary unblemished reflex image (*paṭibhāga-nimitta*), the yogi has to shift his object of meditation from an internal form to an external form. Then only can he get the desired sign or reflex image that can upgrade his concentration till he attains access concentration (*upacāra*) and full concentration (*appanā*) by stages. [1036]

The yogi, who begins the preliminary concentration by taking an external form as an object of meditation, can fulfil all the three stages of concentration: the preliminary stage (*parikamma-bhāvanā*), the threshold stage (*upacāra-bhāvanā*) and the absorption stage (*appanā-bhāvanā*).

The objects of concentration may either be small or large. For the yogi who can achieve mind mastery (*abhibhāyatana-jhāna*) is of very keen intellect so that he does not find any difficulty on account of the size of the object of concentration. It is like that of a person of good appetite who can eat a small amount or a big amount without difficulty. Whether the object of concentration is small or big, the yogi of this calibre achieves access concentration quickly and then immediately attains absorption (*appanā-jhāna*), thus overcoming all opposing mental states such as hindrances.

Regarding the first four of the eight mind masteries, a small form as object of concentration is suitable for yogis who are ruminative in nature (*vitakka-carita*). A big form, as object of concentration, is suitable for yogis who have a bewildered nature (*moha-carita*). An external form of good colour is suitable for yogis who are irritable by nature (*dosa-carita*). An external form of bad colour is suitable for yogis who have a strong inclination towards sensuous desire (*rāga-carita*).

These mind masteries were taught by the Buddha out of his own experience. As a matter of fact, he had practised them innumerable times. To some people outside the Buddha's teaching, an indefinite object can be quite daunting to be taken as a proper object of concentration, for an indefinite object may be as vast as the entire physical setting of the world of living things. As for the Buddha the extent of the object of concentration is infinite. Nothing whatever can therefore daunt the Buddha's mind. In discoursing on the eight mind masteries to Ven. Ānanda, the Buddha intended to let Ven. Ānanda understand the fearless nature of the Buddha.

"Ānanda," the Buddha continued, "the Realised One, who has dwelt in the eight mind masteries of such a nature and has emerged from them, has no fear or dread at all. That being so, how could anyone say that the Realised One was afraid of Māra who came to him alone? Ānanda, in relinquishing the life-maintaining mental process, the Realised One did so fearlessly, with mindfulness and clear comprehension."

> These words occur in the Miscellaneous Teaching on the Dhamma (*Pakiṇṇaka-dhamma-desanā*) which was not recited at the Great Council but was quoted by the commentaries.

The Eight Stages of Release

Then the Buddha without any pause continued to the next subject, on the eight stages of release (*vimokkha*), in his discourse to Ven. Ānanda thus: "Ānanda, there are eight stages of release (*vimokkha*). These are:

1. Having attained absorption (*jhāna*) by contemplating on one's own body, the yogi contemplates external forms as meditation objects (*kasiṇa*). This is the first release.

2. Not taking any internal object, without contemplating on one's own body, the yogi contemplates external forms as meditation objects (*kasiṇa*). This the second release.

3. The yogi contemplates the brightness and clarity (*subha*) of the object of contemplation. This is the third release.

4. Having completely transcended all forms of perception to corporeality (*rūpa-saññā*), all forms of consciousness arising out of contact between sense and sense object (*paṭigha-saññā*), having disappeared and completely disregarding all other forms of multifarious consciousness (*nānatta-saññā*), the yogi, contemplating infinite space, achieves concentration on that object of contemplation, and dwells in the sphere of endless space (*ākāsānañcāyatana-jhāna*). This is the fourth release.

5. Having clearly advanced beyond the absorption on endless space, the yogi, contemplating that consciousness is infinite, achieves concentration on that object of contemplation, and dwells in the sphere of endless consciousness (*viññāṇañcāyatana-jhāna*). This is the fifth release.

6. Having clearly advanced beyond the absorption on endless consciousness, the yogi, [1037] contemplating that nothing is there, achieves concentration on that object of contemplation, and dwells in the sphere of nothingness (*ākiñcaññāyatana-jhāna*). This is the sixth release.

7. Having clearly advanced beyond the absorption on nothingness, the yogi, contemplating the subtle consciousness, achieves concentration on it, and dwells in the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception (*nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana-jhāna*). This is the seventh release.

8. Having clearly advanced beyond the absorption of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, the yogi achieves and dwells in sustained attainment of cessation in which all forms of consciousness and sensation cease. This is the eighth release.

Ānanda, these are the eight stages of release."

Release (*vimokkha*) means a total freedom from hindrances and opposing mental states that shroud the mind, a cultured state of ecstatic bliss which

may be likened to the peaceful repose of a child on his father's chest. This freedom or release lasts as long as the absorption (*jhāna*) lasts. Release also means unity of mind and object of meditation unhampered by any other thought.

Of those eight releases the first three are the absorption (*jhāna*) of the fine material sphere (*rūpāvacara-jhāna*).

Of these three, the first release, the meditation on the fine material sphere, is achieved by concentrating on internal as well as external objects. The second, the absorption of the fine material sphere, is achieved by concentrating on external objects. The third is achieved by concentrating on material objects (*kasiṇa*) of very clear and pure colour, namely: dark blue, yellow, red and white. While the yogi is dwelling in this third stage of meditation, he does not have such a thought as: "This is exquisite," and yet since his mind is fixed on exquisite objects, it appears as if he is entertaining such a thought. Hence the text describes it: "He is concentrating on what is exquisite."

The four successive releases: the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh, refer to the four meditations (*jhāna*) on the formless realms (*arūpa-jhāna*). These four formless realms are called releases because they are entirely free from perceptions of corporeality, and also because the yogi's mind is in complete unity with the object of meditation, unhampered by any other thought.

The eighth release refers to the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti.*) It is called release because while one dwells in the attainment of cessation, all mental phenomena cease, beginning with perception and sensation, that is, the mental process is suspended altogether, and along with it, mind-born corporeality also ceases, so that one is totally free from being in a conditioned state. This cessation of the four mental aggregates and mind-born corporeality lasts during the attainment of cessation.

For those persons who find pleasure in the suffering round of rebirth and are satisfied with their sentient existence in the three spheres, release is a dreadful idea. As for the Buddha, it was a very pleasant thing to dwell on release. He has no fear to experience release. The Buddha discoursed on the eight stages of release to let Ven. Ānanda understand the fearless nature of the Buddha.

"Ānanda," the Buddha continued, "the Realised One who has dwelt in the eight stages of release and has emerged from them, has no fear or dread at all. That

being so, how could anyone say that the Realised One was afraid of Māra who came to him alone? Ānanda, in relinquishing the life-maintaining mental process, the Realised One did so fearlessly, with mindfulness and clear comprehension."

These also are the Buddha's words to Ven. Ānanda, as contained in the Miscellaneous Teaching on the Dhamma (*Pakiṇṇaka-dhamma-desanā*).

The Relinquishing of the Life-Process

Having discoursed on the eight stages of release, the Buddha continued his discourse without letting Ven. Ānanda say anything: [1038] "Ānanda, on one occasion, in the eighth week after the Awakening, I was staying at the foot of the Goatherd's Banyan tree, near the bank of the River Nerañjarā, in Uruveḷa forest. At that time Māra the Wicked One approached me and standing at a certain place, said this to me: 'Let the Fortunate One realize Parinibbāna now, let the Fortunate One pass away! Venerable sir, it is time now for the Fortunate One to pass away.'

Ānanda, when this was said, I replied to Māra the Wicked One thus: 'Wicked One, I shall not pass away so long as my disciples, the male monastics, are not yet well versed in the doctrine, not yet well disciplined in the threefold training, not yet sure of themselves in the righteousness of their conduct, not yet possessed of wide knowledge, not yet able to memorize the teaching, not yet able to practise according to the teaching leading to the supermundane, not yet able to take up the proper practice, not yet settled in their practice; not yet able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make evident the teacher's doctrine that they have learnt; so long as they are not yet able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful teaching.

Wicked One, so long as my female monastics … my lay male disciples … Wicked One, so long as my female lay-disciples are not yet well versed in the doctrine, not yet well disciplined in the threefold training, not yet sure of themselves in the righteousness of their conduct, not yet possessed of wide knowledge, not yet able to memorize the teaching, not yet able to practise according to the teaching leading to the supermundane, not yet able to take up the proper practice, not yet settled in their practice; not yet able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make evident the

teacher's doctrine that they have learnt; so long as they are not yet able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful teaching. Wicked One, I shall not pass away so long as this teaching of mine, which is the practice of purity, is not yet sufficiently developed among the disciples, not yet prosperous, widespread, having reached the multitudes, and become renowned, to the extent that it can be thoroughly made known by wise Devas and humans.'

Ānanda, Māra the Wicked One just now came to me at the Cāpāla Shrine, and standing at a suitable distance, again addressed me thus: 'Venerable sir, let the Fortunate One realize Parinibbāna now, let the Fortunate One pass away! Venerable sir, it is time now for the Fortunate One to pass away. Venerable sir, the Fortunate One has said this to me: "Wicked One, I shall not pass away so long as my disciples, the male monastics, are not yet well versed in the doctrine, not yet well disciplined in the threefold training, not yet sure of themselves in the righteousness of their conduct, not yet possessed of wide knowledge, not yet able to memorize the teaching, not yet able to practise according to the teaching leading to the supermundane, not yet able to take up the proper practice, not yet settled in their practice; not yet able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make evident the teacher's doctrine that they have learnt; so long as they are not yet able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful teaching.

Wicked One, so long as my disciples, the female monastics … my lay male disciples … Wicked One, so long as my disciples, the female lay-disciples are not yet well versed in the doctrine, not yet well disciplined in the threefold training, not yet sure of themselves in the righteousness of their conduct, not yet possessed of wide knowledge, not yet able to memorize the teaching, not yet able to practise according to the teaching leading to the supermundane, not yet able to take up the proper practice, not yet settled in their practice; not yet able to expound, to set forth, to show, to establish, to elucidate, to analyse, or to make evident the teacher's doctrine that they have learnt; so long as they are not yet able to thoroughly refute on righteous grounds other doctrines as may arise, and expound the wonderful teaching. Wicked One, I shall not pass away so long as this teaching of mine, which is the practice of purity, is not yet sufficiently developed among the disciples, not yet prosperous, widespread, having reached

the multitudes, and become renowned, to the extent that it can be thoroughly made known by wise Devas and humans."

Venerable sir, now that the Fortunate One's teaching, which is the practice of purity, is sufficiently established among the disciples, is now prosperous, widespread, has reached the multitudes, and is renowned, to the extent that it [1039] can be thoroughly made known by wise Devas and humans. Venerable sir, let the Fortunate One realize Parinibbāna now, let the Fortunate One pass away! Venerable sir, it is now time for the Fortunate One to pass away.'

Ānanda, on being requested thus, I said to Māra: 'Wicked One, don't you worry: the Parinibbāna of the Realised One will not be long in coming, three months hence the Realised One will realize Parinibbāna.' Ānanda, today at the Cāpāla shrine, the Realised One has decided, mindfully and with deliberation, to give up the life-maintaining mental process three months from now." Thus the Buddha related the whole story about the relinquishing of the life-maintaining mental process.

Ven. Ānanda entreats the Buddha

When the Buddha said this, Ven. Ānanda entreated him thus: "Venerable sir, may the Fortunate One, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, well-being and happiness of Devas and humans, out of compassion for the world, live for the maximum lifespan! May the Fortunate One live for the maximum lifespan!"

Thereupon the Buddha said: "Enough, Ānanda, do not implore the Realised One now. The time for such entreaty is past." For a second time Ven. Ānanda repeated his entreaty and the Buddha rejected it in the same words. When for a third time he repeated his entreaty the Buddha said to him: "Do you have faith in the Awakening knowledge (*Bodhi-ñāṇa*) of the Realised One?"

"Yes, I do, venerable sir."

"Why, then, in spite of your belief, do you persist in entreating me thrice?"

"Venerable sir, I have been told by the Fortunate One himself thus: 'Ānanda, whoever has cultivated, practised, used as a medium, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the four bases of psychic power (*iddhi-pāda*) could, if he so wished, live for the maximum lifespan or even beyond the maximum lifespan. Ānanda, the Realised One has cultivated, practised, used as a medium, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the four bases

of psychic power. Therefore, Ānanda, the Realised One could, if he so wished, live for the maximum lifespan or even beyond the maximum lifespan.' Venerable sir, it is on account of those words of the Fortunate One that I make the appeal thrice."

"Do you believe that, Ānanda?"

"Yes, venerable sir, I do."

"Ānanda, although the Realised One thus gave clear hints, you failed to grasp them. It never occurred to you to entreat the Fortunate One: 'May the Fortunate One, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, well-being and happiness of Devas and humans, out of compassion for the world, live for the maximum lifespan! May the Fortunate One live for the maximum lifespan!' Therefore, Ānanda, this failure to entreat me then is your doing, your own omission. Ānanda, if you had entreated me then, the Realised One might have refused the entreaty twice but might have acceded to it on the third time. Therefore, Ānanda, this failure to entreat me then is your own doing, your own omission.

Similar Instances of Omission

Ānanda, on one occasion, I was staying on the mountain abode on the Gijjhakūṭa hill [1040] in Rājagaha. At that time I said to you: 'Ānanda, pleasant is the city of Rājagaha. Ānanda, pleasant is the Gijjhakūṭa hill. Ānanda, whosoever has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the four bases of psychic power (*iddhi-pāda*), could, if he so wished, live for the maximum lifespan or even beyond the maximum lifespan. Ānanda, the Realised One has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the four bases of psychic power. Therefore, Ānanda, the Realised One could, if he so wished, live for the maximum lifespan or even beyond the maximum lifespan.'

Ānanda, although the Realised One thus gave clear hints, you failed to grasp them. It never occurred to you to entreat the Fortunate One: 'May the Fortunate One, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, well-being and happiness of Devas and men, out of compassion for the world, live for the maximum lifespan! May the Fortunate One live for the maximum lifespan!' Ānanda, if you had entreated me then, the Realised One might have refused the entreaty twice but

might have acceded to it on the third time. Therefore, this failure to entreat me then is your own doing, your own omission.

Ānanda, on one occasion I was dwelling at the foot of the Gotama Banyan tree in Rājagaha … I was dwelling at the Corapapāta cliff near Rājagaha … I was dwelling in the Sattapaṇṇi cave on the side of Vebhāra mountain near Rājagaha … I was at Kāḷasilā at the side of the Isigili mountain near Rājagaha … at the Ebony Grove in the Sappasoṇḍika mountain range near Rājagaha … at the Tapodārāma monastery in Rājagaha … at Veḷuvana Kalandakanivāpa … at the Mango Grove of Jīvaka … at the Migadāya Wood in Maddakucchi near Rājagaha … Ānanda, while I was dwelling at those places, too, I said to you: 'Ānanda, Rājagaha is pleasant … Gotama banyan tree is pleasant … Corapapāta cliff is pleasant … Sattapaṇṇi cave is pleasant … Kāḷasilā at the side of Isigili mountain is pleasant … the Ebony Grove in the Sappasoṇḍika mountain range is pleasant … Tapodārāma monastery is pleasant … Veḷuvana Kalandakanivāpa is pleasant … the Mango Grove of Jīvaka is pleasant … the Migadāya Wood in Maddakucchi is pleasant. Ānanda, whoever has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the four bases of psychic power could, if he so wished, live for the maximum lifespan or even beyond the maximum lifespan. Ānanda, the Realised One has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the four bases of psychic power. Therefore, Ānanda, the Realised One could, if he so wished, live for the maximum lifespan or even beyond the maximum lifespan.'

Ānanda, although the Realised One thus gave clear hints, you failed to grasp them. It never occurred to you to entreat the Fortunate One: 'May the Fortunate One, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, well-being and happiness of Devas and men, out of compassion for the world, live for the maximum lifespan! May the Fortunate One live for the maximum lifespan!' Ānanda, if you had entreated me then, the Realised One might have refused the entreaty twice but might have acceded to it on the third time. Therefore, Ānanda, this failure to entreat me then is your own doing, your own omission.

Ānanda, on one occasion, while I was living at the Udena Shrine in Vesālī, there too, I said to you: 'Ānanda, Vesālī is pleasant. The Udena shrine is pleasant. Ānanda, [1041] whoever has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the four bases of psychic power

could, if he so wished, live for the maximum lifespan or even beyond the maximum lifespan. Ānanda, the Realised One has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the four bases of psychic power. Therefore, Ānanda, the Realised One could, if he so wished, live for the maximum lifespan or even beyond the maximum lifespan.'

Ānanda, although the Realised One thus gave clear hints, you failed to grasp them. It never occurred to you to entreat the Fortunate One: 'May the Fortunate One, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, well-being and happiness of Devas and humans, out of compassion for the world, live for the maximum lifespan! May the Fortunate One live for the maximum lifespan!' Ānanda, if you had entreated me then, the Realised One might have refused the entreaty twice but might have acceded to it on the third time. Therefore, Ānanda, this failure to entreat the Fortunate One then is your own doing, your own omission.

Ānanda, on one occasion, while I was staying at the Gotama Shrine in this very city of Vesālī … at the Sattamba shrine in this very city of Vesālī … at the Bahuputta shrine in this very city of Vesālī … at the Sārandada shrine in this very city of Vesālī … Ānanda, today, at the Cāpāla shrine, the Realised One has just said to you: 'Ānanda, Vesālī is pleasant, the Cāpāla shrine is pleasant. Ānanda, whosoever has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the four bases of psychic power could, if he so wished, live for the maximum lifespan or even beyond the maximum lifespan. Ānanda the Realised One has cultivated, practised, used as a vehicle, taken as his basis, kept up, mastered, and fully developed the four bases of psychic power. Therefore, Ānanda, the Realised One could, if he so wished, live for the maximum lifespan or even beyond the maximum lifespan.'

Ānanda, although the Realised One thus gave clear hints, you failed to grasp them. It never occurred to you to entreat the Fortunate One: 'May the Fortunate One, for the welfare of mankind, for the benefit, well-being and happiness of Devas and humans, out of compassion for the world, live for the maximum lifespan! May the Fortunate One live for the maximum lifespan!' Ānanda, if you had entreated me then, the Realised One might have refused the entreaty twice but might have acceded to it on the third time. Therefore, Ānanda, this failure to entreat the Fortunate One then is your own doing, your own omission."

The Buddha related the fifteen previous instances of Ven. Ānanda's failure to entreat him to continue to live. That latest occasion, the sixteenth, took place at the Cāpāla shrine. All these cases of omission were pointed out by the Buddha to attenuate the sorrow Ven. Ānanda was feeling at that time. Of course, Ven. Ānanda's failure on all these various occasions was due to Māra's mischief.

"Ānanda, have I not previously told you that it is in the very nature of things that we must part with those most near and dear to us somehow, even while we are living, or when death divides us, or when we are of different planes of existence? Ānanda, in this matter, how could one expect anything that has the nature of arising, of appearing, of being conditioned, and of dissolution, not to disintegrate? It is not possible for anyone to wish so.

Ānanda, the Realised One has discarded, thrown up, given up, abandoned, thrown away, and relinquished the life-maintaining mental process. And the Realised One has spoken out in no uncertain terms that the Parinibbāna of the Realised One will not be long in coming, that three months hence the Realised One will realize Parinibbāna. There is no possibility of the Realised One, for the sake of living, could go back on his word.

Come, Ānanda, let us [1042] go to the Pinnacled Hall at the Great Wood." – "Very well, venerable sir," said Ven. Ānanda.

37 Factors on the Side of Awakening

Then the Buddha, accompanied by Ven. Ānanda, went to the Pinnacled Hall at the Great Wood. There, he said to him: "Ānanda, go and summon all the monastics living in Vesālī to come and assemble in the Assembly Hall." Ven. Ānanda caused all the monastics living in Vesālī to gather in the Assembly Hall. Then he went to the Buddha, made obeisance to him, and standing in a certain place, reported: "Venerable sir, the monastics are assembled. May the Fortunate One go to them as and when he wishes."

Then the Buddha went to the Assembly Hall, took his seat prepared for him, and addressed the monastics as follows: "Monastics, the doctrines which I have perceived through path-insight and which I have expounded to you should be mastered, resorted to, cultivated, put to constant practice. If you master, resort to, cultivate and constantly practise these doctrines, this teaching, which is the practice of purity, will endure long and perpetuate itself, thus making for the

welfare of mankind, the preservation of the world, the benefit, well-being and happiness of Devas and humans.

These doctrines are:

1. The four methods of steadfast mindfulness (*sati-paṭṭhāna*).
2. The four supreme efforts (*sammapadāna*).
3. The four bases of psychic power (*iddhi-pāda*).
4. The five faculties (*indriya*).
5. The five powers (*bala*).
6. The seven factors of awakening (*bojjhaṅga*).
7. The noble eightfold path (*ariya-magga*).

Monastics, these 37 doctrines constituents of Awakening, which I have perceived through path-insight and expounded to you, should be mastered, resorted to, cultivated, and put into constant practice. If you master, resort to, cultivate and constantly practise these doctrines, this teaching, which is the practice of purity, will endure long and perpetuate itself, thus making for the welfare of mankind, the preservation of the world, the benefit, well-being and happiness of Devas and humans."

Then the Buddha further said to the monastics: "Now, look monastics, I exhort you: Decay is inherent in all compounded things, physical or mental. With mindfulness and diligence strive towards the goal of liberation. The Parinibbāna of the Realised One will take place before long; three months hence the Realised One will realize Parinibbāna."

Having said this, the Buddha further spoke these words in verse:

> "My age is now quite ripe having, turned eighty. Only a little just three months of my life remains. I shall have to depart, leaving you behind. I have made a refuge of myself.

Monastics, never be forgetful, be possessed of mindfulness, be pure in morality. Keep your mind collected, think right, and guard your mind ever closely against defilements.

Monastics, in this teaching of the Doctrine and Discipline he who remains holding fast to the good doctrine will be able to get rid of the cycle of rebirths and make an end of all suffering (*dukkha*)." [1043]

Farewell to Vesālī

Then the Buddha, rearranging his robes in the morning, took his alms bowl and double robe and entered the city of Vesālī for the alms round. After the alms round, after having had his meal, he left the place of his meal. On leaving the place, he turned around and looked back towards Vesālī, like a tusker looking back. Then he said to Ven. Ānanda, "Ānanda, this will be the last time the Realised One looks on Vesālī. Come, Ānanda, let us go to Bhaṇḍa village." – "Very well, venerable sir," said Ven. Ānanda.

> In this matter, the statement about the Buddha: "Turning around to look back," needs some comment. The Buddha's anatomy is unique among human beings. Ordinary people have bones joined together by touching at the ends. Paccekabuddhas have bones joined by hooks formed at the end of each bone. The Buddha's bone structure is a set of chain-links. With the exception of the arms, which consist of twelve big joints and fingers and toes with smaller joints, all other bones are joined as chain-links. That is why the Buddha is endowed with the physical might equal to the strength of 10,000 million tuskers or that of 100,000 million men of ordinary strength.
>
> The bone structure being of chain-links, the Buddha's neck cannot turn back by itself alone. Therefore, when the Buddha wants to look back, he has to turn back the whole body, just as an elephant does.

Although it was the Buddha's intention to turn around to look back, due to the intervention of the guardian spirit of the great earth, that act was not actually carried out, for the great earth, as if unable to bear the sight of the Supreme Being turning around, rotated itself so that the Buddha stood with his person facing Vesālī. The great earth intervened as if it were saying: "Great Lord, your fulfilling of the perfections has been unique. So why should there be the need for the Fortunate One to trouble himself to turn around physically just to look back as with other ordinary people?" In any case, the expression that: "The Fortunate One turned around to look back like a tusker," was used with reference to the Buddha's intention to do so.

It might be asked: "Why was Vesālī alone mentioned as the place the Fortunate One has his last look at, and not other places, such as Sāvatthī, Rājagaha, Nāḷanda, Pāṭali village, Koṭi village and Nātika village where he had made his last visit? Did the Fortunate One not look back on those places as well?"

The answer is no. If the Buddha were to look back on these various places, the uniqueness of the occasion would be lost.

There is also another reason: Vesālī was a doomed city. It was going to be destroyed after three years from the Buddha's last visit there. The Buddha saw that if he made a turning around to look back like a noble tusker at Vesālī, that place would be commemorated by the Licchavī princes as: "The Noble Tusker's Turning-Around Shrine" which would bring great benefits to them for a long time. That was the object of the Buddha's decision to turn around to look back on Vesālī.

The Four Principles

Then the Buddha, accompanied by his large company of monastics, visited Bhaṇḍu village and took up his residence there. During his sojourn there he discoursed to the monastics as follows: "Monastics, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of four principles that I, as well as yourselves, have had to fare along the long course of the round of existences (Saṁsāra), going through from existence to existence. And the four principles are as follows:

1. Monastics, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the noble morality, the virtue of the noble one (*ariya-sīla*) that [1044] I, as well as yourselves, have had to fare along the long course of the round of existences, going through from existence to existence.
2. Monastics, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the noble concentration (*ariya-samādhi*) …
3. Monastics, it is through not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the noble wisdom (*ariya-paññā*) …
4. Monastics, it is though not having proper understanding and penetrative knowledge of the noble liberation (*ariya-vimutti*) that I, as well as

> yourselves, have had to fare along the long course of the round of existences, going through existence to existence.

Monastics, I have properly understood and gained penetrative knowledge of the noble morality; I have properly understood and gained penetrative knowledge of the noble concentration … of the noble wisdom … of the noble liberation. Craving for existence has been completely eradicated so that craving which drags one to renewed existence is extinct in me. Now there will be no more rebirth."

Then the Buddha further said to the monastics in verse:

> "Monastics, Buddha Gotama, of vast following, has correctly known these principles of supreme morality, concentration, wisdom and liberation. Having gained penetrative knowledge of them through path-insight, he has out of compassion expounded them to the monastics.
>
> The teacher of Devas and humans, endowed with the fivefold eye of wisdom, who has quelled all the fires of the defilements, has made an end of all suffering (*dukkha*) in himself as well as in his Arahat disciples."

During his sojourn at Bhaṇḍu village the Buddha, considering his approaching death, discoursed to the monastics of the repeated theme as follows: "Such is morality, such is concentration, such is wisdom. Concentration developed through morality is efficacious and productive. Wisdom developed through concentration is efficacious and productive. The mind that is developed through wisdom is thoroughly liberated from the moral taints: the taint of sense-desire, the taint of craving for continued existence, and the taint of ignorance of the four noble truths."

The Four Great Authorities

Then after staying at Bhaṇḍu village for as long as he wished, the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Come, Ānanda, let us go to Hatthi village, to Amba village, to Jamba village, and thence to the town of Bhoga."

"Very well, venerable sir," said Ven. Ānanda, and the Buddha, accompanied by a large following of monastics, arrived at the town of Bhoga, where he dwelled at the Ānanda shrine. During his sojourn there, the Buddha discoursed to the

monastics on the four great authorities, which are the principles to assess the doctrines that are being taught by persons of high esteem:

1. "Monastics, in this teaching, if a monastic should say thus: 'Friends, I have heard this exposition from the mouth of the Fortunate One, such and such is the Discourses (*Dhamma*); such and such is the Discipline (*Vinaya*); such and such is the teaching of the Buddha.'

Monastics, the words of that monastic should not be readily accepted or readily rejected. The words and phrases stated by him and attributed to the Buddha should be carefully noted. They should be collated with the Discourses and compared with the Discipline.

If, on collation with the Discourses and comparison with the Discipline, the words and phrases, as stated by the monastic, do not agree with the Discourses or are not in line with the Discipline, then it must be concluded that: "This certainly is not what the Fortunate One said. It is something wrongly learnt by the monastic.' And concluding thus, monastics, those words should be rejected and ignored. [1045]

If, on the other hand, the words and phrases, as stated by the monastic, on being collated with the Discourses and compared with the Discipline, are found to agree with the Discourses and are in line with the Discipline, then it must be concluded that: 'This certainly is what the Fortunate One said. It is something correctly learnt by the monastic.' Monastics, remember well this first principle regarding assertions attributed to a great authority.

2. And then, monastics, in the teaching, if a monastic should say thus: 'Here is such and such monastery where the community of monastics has an elder in charge. I have heard this exposition from that particular community of monastics: such and such is the Discourses (*Dhamma*); such and such is the Discipline (*Vinaya*); such and such is the teaching of the Buddha.'

Monastics, the words of that monastic should not be readily accepted or readily rejected. The words and phrases stated by him and attributed to the Saṅgha of a certain monastery should be carefully noted. They should be collated with the Discourses, and compared with the Discipline.

If, on collation with the Discourses and comparison with the Discipline, the words and phrases, as stated by the monastic, do not agree with the Discourses

or are not in line with the Discipline, then it must be concluded that: 'This certainly is not what the Fortunate One said. It is something wrongly learnt by the monastic.' And concluding thus, monastics, those words should be rejected and ignored.

If, on the other hand, the words and phrases as stated by the monastic, on being collated with the Discourses and compared with the Discipline, are found to agree with the Discourses and are in line with the Discipline, then it must be concluded that: 'This certainly is what the Fortunate One said, it is something correctly learnt by the monastic.' Monastics, remember this second principle regarding assertions attributed to a great authority.

3. And then, monastics, in the teaching, if a monastic should say thus: 'There is such and such monastery where many elders of wide learning who have memorized the Pāḷi text, who abide by the Doctrine and the Discipline, and who are thoroughly versed in the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*), I have heard this exposition from these elders themselves: such and such is the Discourses (*Dhamma*); such and such is the Discipline (*Vinaya*); such and such is the teaching of the Buddha.'

Monastics, the words of that monastic should not be readily accepted or readily rejected. The words and phrases stated by him and attributed to the elders should be carefully noted. They should be collated with the Discourses and compared with the Discipline.

If, on collation with the Discourses and comparison with the Discipline, the words and phrases, as stated by the monastics, do not agree with the Discourses or are not in line with the Discipline, then it must be concluded that: 'This certainly is not what the Fortunate One said. It is something wrongly learnt by the monastic.' And concluding thus, monastics, these words should be rejected and ignored.

If, on the other hand, the words and phrases as stated by the monastic, on being collated with the Discourses and compared with the Discipline, are found to agree with the Discourses and are in line with the Discipline, then it must be concluded that: 'This certainly is what the Fortunate One said. It is something correctly learnt by the monastic.' Monastics, remember well this third principle regarding assertions attributed to a great authority.

4. And then, monastics, in this teaching, if a monastic should say thus: 'There is a certain elder of wide learning who has memorized the Pāḷi texts, who abides by the Doctrine and the Discipline, and who is thoroughly versed in the Monastic Rules. I have heard this exposition from that monastic himself: such and such is the Discourses (*Dhamma*); such and such is the Discipline (*Vinaya*); such and such is the teaching of the Buddha.'

Monastics, the words of that monastic should not be readily accepted or readily rejected. [1046] The words and phrases stated by him and attributed to the learned elder should be carefully noted. They should be collated with the Discourses and compared with the Discipline.

If, on collation with the Discourses and comparison with the Discipline, the words and phrases, as stated by the monastics, do not agree with the Discourses or are not in line with the Discipline, then it must be concluded that: 'This certainly is not what the Fortunate One said. It is something wrongly learnt by the monastic.' And concluding thus, monastics, these words should be rejected and ignored.

If, on the other hand, the words and phrases, as stated by the monastic, are in line with the Discourses and with the Discipline, then it must be concluded that: 'This certainly is what the Fortunate One said. It is something correctly learned by the monastic.' Monastics, remember well this fourth principle regarding assertions attributed to a great authority. Monastics, remember well these four principles regarding assertions attributed to the great authorities."

Miscellaneous Points on the Four Great Authorities

On this subject of the four great authorities, the commentary draws the attention of the reader to miscellaneous points touching on it. A brief note follows. Herein:

1. There are the four directive principles concerning the four great authorities in the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*).
2. Four directive principles on the subject as taught in the Great Division (Vin *Mahā-vagga*).
3. Four types of answers corresponding to four types of questions called the four answers (*vyākaraṇa*).
4. The four Disciplines (*Vinaya*).

5. The three Great Councils.
6. The four great authorities as taught in the discourses. These are what has been described above.
7. The four great authorities as taught in the Discipline (Vin *Mahā-vagga*, 6).

Four directive principles are laid down by the Buddha regarding what sort of medicinal preparation is proper for monastics:

1. Monastics, a certain drug is not specifically mentioned by me as improper for use by monastics, yet if it tends towards impropriety and rules out any possibility of propriety, in the light of the Vinaya rules, then consider it as being improper for use.
2. Monastics, a certain drug is not specifically mentioned by me as improper for use by monastics, and if, in the light of the Vinaya rules, it tends towards propriety and rules out any possibility of its impropriety, then consider it as being proper for use.
3. Monastics, a certain drug is not specifically mentioned by me as proper for use by monastics, and if it tends towards impropriety and rules out any possibility of propriety in the light of the Vinaya rules, then consider it as being improper of use.
4. Monastics, a certain drug is not specifically mentioned by me as proper for use by monastics, and if it tends towards impropriety and rules out any possibility of propriety in the light of the Vinaya rules, then consider it as being improper of use by monastics, and if it tends towards propriety and rules out any possibility of its impropriety in the light of the Vinaya rules, then consider it as being proper for use.

There are four types of answers to match the four types of questions: [1047]

1. A straight question is answered by a categorical statement, e.g. if the question is: “Is the eye impermanent?” the appropriate answer is: “Yes, the eye is impermanent.”
2. A question requiring an analysis to answer, e.g. “Is the eye the only thing that is impermanent?” The answer needs an analysis: “The eye is

not the only thing that is impermanent: the ear also is impermanent; the tongue also is impermanent; etc."

3. A question to be replaced by question, e.g. "Is the ear to be regarded as being the same as the eye? Is the eye to be regarded as being the same as the ear?" The appropriate reply is: "In what sense is this question put?" Then if the inquirer says: "In the sense of seeing: is the ear capable of seeing as the eye is?" The answer then is: "No, it is not." If again, the inquirer says: "In respect of its impermanence: is the ear the same as the eye is?" The answer then is: "Yes, it is."

4. The type of question that is ignored, e.g. to believers in self (*atta*), there is life (*jīva*), body (*sarīra*), which are mere names but which do not exist in the ultimate sense. Therefore if the question is: "Is life the same as the body?" the proper answer is silence because one understands that the Buddha himself ignores such a question. The question is of the nature of talking about the son of a barren woman, which is absurd.

The four guides (*vinaya*).

1. Doctrine (*sutta*) here means the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*).

2. What is in line with Doctrine (*suttānuloma*) means the four great authorities (*mahāpadesa*) described in the Vinaya and the four great authorities described in the Discourses.

3. The words of the teachers (*ācariya-vāda*) means the miscellaneous expositions in elucidation of the doctrines of the Buddha that were made even during his lifetime at different places. Since they explain the Pāḷi texts, they were also called commentaries (*aṭṭhakathā*). At the great Councils, the elders recited the Pāḷi first and at the end of it, they prescribed the respective commentaries to each division of the texts as the regular syllabus for elucidation. These learned sayings which were miscellaneous discourses as well as commentaries, being written by learned teachers, come to be known also as The words of the teachers (*ācariya-vāda*).

   These learned observations or treatises, which are referred to by three different names, which are The words of the teachers (*ācariya-vāda*), commentaries (*aṭṭhakathā*), miscellaneous teachings (*pakiṇṇaka-*

desanā), were carried by Ven. Mahinda to Śrī Laṅkā. The Śrī Laṅkā elders translated them into Sinhalese to ensure for the Sinhalese monastics the tradition against doctrines that might be introduced by other sects later. Ven. Mahā Buddhaghosa studied the Sinhalese commentaries (*aṭṭhakathā*), the root miscellanany (*mūḷa-pakiṇṇaka*), cleared up repetitive statements and condensed them wherever suitable, classified them under suitable headings which were appropriate to the Baskets, elucidating them wherever necessary, and thereby produced a new commentary in Māgadhī, adding the traditional views held by the elders (*ācariya-vāda*) which came to be called "own views' (*attano mati*), wherever necessary. Thus, the words of the teachers (*ācariya-vāda*), the third of the four guides, for practical purposes as used today, refers to this new commentary.

4. Own views (*attano mati*) means considered opinions held by elders after following the principles contained in the Doctrine, what is in line with Doctrine and the words of the teachers. Own views (*attano mati*) is also known as the traditional views held by the elders (*ācariya-vāda*). Thus these four guides which are the Doctrine, what is in line with Doctrine, the words of the teachers and own views should be noted.

The three great Buddhist councils.

1. The first great council of 500 Arahats headed by Ven. Mahā Kassapa.
2. The second great council of 7,000 Arahats headed by Ven. Mahā Yasa.
3. The third great council of 1,000 Arahats headed by Ven. Mahā Moggaliputta.

These are the three great official Buddhist Councils. [1048] First, remember the four great authorities as taught in the Discourses, the four great authorities as taught in the Vinaya, the four types of questions and answers, the four guides and the three great official councils.

Then apply them to practical problems thus:

1. If a monastic says: "This is the doctrine, this is the Vinaya, this is the Buddha's teaching," citing the authority of the Buddha, or of the Saṅgha, or of a number of elders, or a certain elder. To decide the veracity of his statement, apply the test of the four great authorities as taught in the

Discourses: only if the statement accords with these four great authorities, the statement should be taken as true. Otherwise it must be regarded as mere hearsay, a case of irresponsible talk.

2. Where a certain problem arises as to whether a certain thing is proper for a monastic or not, the test is the four great authorities as taught in the Great Division (Vin *Mahā-vagga*). The commentary on the Great Division should be consulted for detailed information on the subject. If, on examining the subject of controversy or doubt in the light of the four great authorities taught in the Basket of Discipline (*Vinaya-piṭaka*), it tends to agree with the rules, it should be accepted as being proper; otherwise it should be considered as being improper.

3. If a question on the doctrine arises, as illustrated above, the answer should be appropriate to the type of question taught as the four types of questions.

4. Of the four guides, if the assertion by someone is part of the Discourses (*Sutta-piṭaka*), as contained in the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*) approved at the councils, the statement should not be rejected, for rejection of the Discourses amounts to the rejection of the Buddha himself. If the assertion is what is in line with Doctrine (*suttānuloma*) statement, it should be collated with the Discourses, or with the Three Baskets. If it agrees with the Discourses, it should be accepted otherwise it should be rejected. As regards the traditional views held by the elders (*ācariya-vāda*) or the miscellaneous exposition, there is the possibility of the commentary not conforming to the Three Baskets due to slackness. Therefore, the traditional views held by the elders should be collated with the Three Baskets. Only if it agrees with the Baskets should it then be accepted; otherwise it should be rejected as something carelessly said. Own views (*attano mati*), or own opinion, is the weakest of authorities. It is to be accepted only if it accords with the Three Baskets.

5. If someone quotes a passage as being part of the Pāḷi which had been approved by the Councils, it must conform to the texts approved at the three great councils. If it is not part of the Pāḷi text approved at the three great councils, it is to be regarded as spurious.

40b: The Last Days 2, In Vajji – 1590

While the Buddha was staying at the Ānanda shrine, in the town of Bhoga also, being mindful of his approaching passing, he exhorted the monastics, where there was occasion to do so, in the following words:

“Such is morality; such is concentration; such is wisdom. Concentration developed through morality is efficacious and productive. Wisdom developed through concentration is efficacious and productive. The mind that is developed through wisdom is thoroughly liberated from the moral pollutants: the pollutant of sense desire, the pollutant of craving for continued existence, and the pollutant of ignorance of the four noble truths.”

40c: The Last Days 3, In Malla

Cunda, the Goldsmith's Son

Then after staying at the town of Bhoga for as long as he wished, the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Come, Ānanda, let us go to Pāvā." – "Very well, venerable sir," said Ven. Ānanda. And the Buddha, accompanied by his large following of monastics, went to Pāvā where he dwelled in the Mango Grove monastery donated by Cunda, the goldsmith's son.

> Cunda, the goldsmith's son, was a very rich man. From his earlier meeting with [1049] the Buddha, he had benefited from his discourse and become a Stream-enterer. He built a big monastery in his Mango Grove and donated it to the Buddha. This was the last time the Buddha resided at the monastery.

When Cunda, the goldsmith's son, heard the news that the Buddha had arrived and was staying at his Mango Grove monastery, he approached him, made obeisance to him, and sat in a suitable place. The Buddha pointed out to Cunda, the benefits of the doctrine, exhorted him to set himself up in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened him in the practice. After listening to his discourse, Cunda said to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, may it please the Fortunate One to accept my offering of food for tomorrow together with the company of monastics." The Buddha signified his acceptance by remaining silent.

Cunda, knowing that the Buddha had accepted his request, rose from his seat, paid respects to him and left respectfully. The next day, he had choice foods of hard and soft kinds prepared at his home, including tender pork (*sūkara maddava*), meat of a wild pig that was neither too old nor too young. "Venerable sir, it is time to proceed. The food-offering is ready," he announced to the Buddha.

> Herein, the Pāḷi word for tender pork (*sūkara maddava*), is interpreted by some teachers as soft rice boiled with fine-tasting cow's milk, while others also say that it means a special food prepared with some delicious and highly nutritive concoction called an elixer (*rasāyana*). They say that Cunda had this special meal prepared for the Buddha in the belief that it would not cause the passing away of the Buddha.

Then in the morning, the Buddha, taking his alms bowl and robes, went to the house of Cunda, accompanied by the monastics, and sat on the seat prepared for him. Being thus seated, the Buddha said to Cunda, the goldsmith's son: "Cunda, you may serve me the tender pork prepared by you; and you may serve the other food prepared by you to the company of monastics."

"Very well, venerable sir," answered Cunda, and accordingly served the personally prepared tender pork to the Buddha, and the other personally prepared food to the Saṅgha.

After finishing the meal, the Buddha said to Cunda: "Cunda, bury the remaining tender pork in a pit. I see no one else, besides me, in all the celestial world of Devas, Māras and Brahmas, or in this human world of ascetics and Brahmins, rulers and men who, should he perchance to eat it, could digest it properly." This the Buddha declared categorically.

"Very well, venerable sir," said Cunda and accordingly buried the remaining tender pork in a pit. Then he approached the Buddha, made obeisance to him, and sat in a suitable place. And the Buddha taught Cunda a discourse on the doctrine. Then the Buddha rose from his seat and departed.

Thereafter, subsequent to the meal offered by Cunda, the Buddha became afflicted with a severe illness, an acute form of dysentery with discharge of blood, causing great pain near unto death but he bore the pain with mindfulness and clear comprehension, without perturbation. Then he said to Ānanda: "Come, Ānanda, let us go to Kusinārā." "Very well, venerable sir," said Ven. Ānanda.

> It should be noted here that the dysentery came upon the Buddha not on account of Cunda's food offering. It is meant here that the affliction came merely subsequent to the meal but not because of it. As a matter of fact, Cunda's specially prepared meal strengthened the Buddha. If not for Cunda's highly nourishing food, the Buddha would not be able to withstand the onslaught of the severe illness. Thanks to Cunda's tender pork meal, the Buddha found the strength to journey to Kusinārā on foot. [1050]

Drinking Water

Then the Buddha left the road and went to the foot of a tree. There, he said to Ven. Ānanda: "Ānanda, fold my double robe fourfold and place it on the ground. Ānanda, I am weary. I shall sit down for a while."

"Very well, venerable sir," Ven. Ānanda assented, and he placed on the ground the double robe folded fourfold. The Buddha sat on the seat thus prepared and said: "Ānanda, go and get some drinking water. Ānanda, I am thirsty. I want to have a drink of water." Ven. Ānanda said: "Venerable sir, 500 carts have just now crossed the stream. The shallow water is disturbed and is turbid. Venerable sir, the river Kakudhā is not far off. There the water is clear, sweet, cool and free from muddiness. The river bank is also pleasant and inviting. The Fortunate One may take his drink of water at the river Kakudhā and also may cool his limbs there."

"Ānanda, go and get some drinking water. Ānanda, I am thirsty. I want to have a drink of water." Ven. Ānanda again said: "Venerable sir, 500 carts have just crossed the stream. The shallow water is disturbed and is turbid. Venerable sir, the river Kakudhā is not far off. There the water is clear, sweet, cool and free from muddiness. The river bank is also pleasant and inviting. The Fortunate One may take his drink of water at the river Kakudhā, and also may cool his limbs there."

"Ānanda, go and get some drinking water. Ānanda, I am thirsty. I want to have a drink of water." After being commanded thrice by the Buddha, Ven. Ānanda assented: "Very well, venerable sir," and taking the alms bowl, went to the little stream. Then the shallow water which was turbid after having been disturbed by the caravan, became mysteriously clear, pure and free from muddiness. Thereupon, Ven. Ānanda thought to himself: "Wonderful indeed, and marvellous indeed, is the great power of the Realised One! This shallow stream which was turbid due to the crossing of the caravan is, on my arrival, flowing clear, pure and free from muddiness."

With these thoughts of wonderment, Ven. Ānanda took the drinking water in the alms bowl, went back to the Buddha, and said: "Wonderful indeed, venerable sir, marvellous indeed, venerable sir, is the great power of the Realised One! That shallow stream which was turbid due to the crossing of the caravan just

now, on my arrival there, was flowing clear, pure and free from muddiness. Now let the Fortunate One drink the water. Let the Fortunate One drink the water." And the Buddha drank the water.

The Twelve Debts of the Buddha[237]

In this connection it would seem appropriate to mention briefly the twelve counts of recompense which might be considered as twelve debts the Buddha had to meet in Saṁsāra:

1. The first recompense: In his former existence, the Bodhisatta was a drunkard named Munāḷi. He accosted a Paccekabuddha named Surabhi with a wild accusation: "This man is an immoral person who indulges in sense pleasures in private." For that evil verbal action, he was reborn in the realm of continuous suffering in Niraya. And in the last existence as the Buddha, he was publicly accused by Sundarī, the wandering female ascetic, as being luscious and having had an affair with her.

2. The second recompense: In a former existence, the Bodhisatta was a disciple, named Nanda, to a Paccekabuddha named Sabbābhibhū. He accused his teacher of being a person of loose character. [1051] On account of that evil verbal action, he had to suffer for 100,000 years in the Niraya realm. When he was reborn as a human being, many times he was unjustly accused of wrongdoing. In the last existence as the Buddha, he was publicly accused by Ciñcā Māṇavikā[238] as a wanton person who had caused her pregnancy.

3. The third recompense: The Bodhisatta was once a learned Brahmin teacher, who was well versed in the three Vedas, and a person of great esteem. While he was teaching the Vedas in the Great Wood to 500 pupils, they saw, in the sky, a holy recluse named Bhīma coming to the forest by means of psychic powers. Instead of being inspired, the Bodhisatta told his 500 pupils that the recluse was a sensuous hypocrite. The pupils, believed in what the teacher had said, spread the teacher's

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[237] [See Apadāna 39.10, and its commentary, the Charming and Pure People (*Visuddha-jana-vilāsiṇī*).]

[238] [Also known as Ciñcāmāṇavikā, or simply, Ciñcā.]

view of the holy recluse while the recluse was going alms collecting. These 500 pupils were reborn as monastic disciples of the Buddha. Due to their slander against Bhīma, as the 500 pupils of the Brahmin teacher in their former life, they were falsely accused of murdering Sundarī, the wandering female ascetic, who was actually the victim of the ascetics. It should be noted that an accusation against the disciples of the Buddha amounted to an accusation against the Buddha himself.

4. The fourth recompense: In a previous existence, the Bodhisatta murdered his half brother on account of covetousness. He threw the younger brother into a ravine and then crushed him with a boulder. For that evil deed, the Buddha, in his last existence, became the victim of Devadatta's plot against his life. But, since a Buddha is not liable to get killed, he suffered from being cut by a rock splinter, which was as a result of a huge boulder being dropped from the hillside by Devadatta. His big toe was internally bruised by the rock splinter.

5. The fifth recompense: In one of his former existences, the Bodhisatta was a scamp and when he met a Paccekabuddha on the way, he gave vent to frolicsome tendencies and threw stones at the Paccekabuddha. For that evil deed, the Buddha once came under attack by a band of archers sent by Devadatta who meant to kill him.

6. The sixth recompense: When the Bodhisatta was a mahout, he threatened a Paccekabuddha, who was on his alms collection, with his elephant, as if to trample on him. On account of that misdeed, the Buddha was once threatened with a drunken elephant named Nāḷāgiri in Rājagaha which was sent by Devadatta to trample on him.

7. The seventh recompense: In one of his former existences, the Bodhisatta was a monarch. Out of kingly conceit, he executed a prisoner personally, without considering the consequences, by piercing him with a spear. That evil deed brought him down to the realm of continuous suffering for a great many years. In his last existence, the Buddha had to undergo treatment on his big toe being cut open by Jīvaka, the celebrated physician, to heal it when it was hit by a splinter caused by Devadatta's wicked scheme.

8. The eighth recompense: In a former existence, the Bodhisatta was born into a fisherman's family. He used to take delight in witnessing his relatives hurting and killing the fish, although he did not do the killing himself. As the result of that evil thought, in his last existence as the Buddha, he often suffered from headaches. As for his relatives of that existence, they were reborn as Sakyans who were massacred by Viṭaṭūbha. [1052]

9. The ninth recompense: When the Bodhisatta was born as a human being during the time of Buddha Phussa's teaching, he railed the male monastic disciples of the Buddha saying: "You may eat only barley, but not rice." That vituperation had the consequence that in his last existence, the Buddha had to live on barley meal for the whole of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period at the Verañjā Brahmin village where he stayed at the invitation of Brahmin Verañja.

10. The tenth recompense: Once the Bodhisatta was born as a professional boxer, and one time he broke the back of his combatant. As a consequence of that evil deed, the Buddha, in his last existence, often suffered from back-ache.

11. The eleventh recompense: When the Bodhisatta was a physician in one of his former existences he purposely administered a drug causing loose bowels to a rich man's son who grudged him his fee. On account of that evil deed, the Buddha, in his last existence, was afflicted with severe dysentery with discharge of blood, prior to his passing away.

12. The twelfth recompense: The Bodhisatta was once born as a Brahmin named Jotipāla. He made blasphemous remarks about Buddha Kassapa saying: "How is it possible that this shaveling is Perfectly Awakened? Perfect Awakening is a most rare thing." That blasphemy had the consequence of delaying Awakening for him. Other Bodhisattas attained Awakening in a matter of days or months, whereas Gotama, the Bodhisatta, had to go through six painful years in his quest for the truth.

These twelve consequences of the past blunders of the Bodhisatta were related by the Buddha himself in the Connection with Previous Deeds in the Traditions about the Buddha (*Pubba-kamma-pilotika-buddha-apādāna*, Ap: 39.10).

Pukkusa, the Malla Prince

While the Buddha was sitting at the foot of the tree after having a drink of water, Pukkusa, a Malla Prince, who was a disciple of Āḷāra Kālāma, was on his journey from Kusinārā to Pāvā. Seeing the Buddha sitting at the foot of a tree, Pukkusa of the Mallas approached him, made obeisance to him, and sat in a suitable place.

Then he addressed the Buddha: "Wonderful it is, venerable sir, marvellous it is, venerable sir, how the recluses remain in their tranquil state! Venerable sir, as it happened in the past, Āḷāra Kālāma, while on a journey, left the road and sat down at the foot of a tree by the roadside to spend the day. At that time, 500 carts passed by, very close to him.

Venerable sir, a man who was following behind the 500 carts went towards Āḷāra Kālāma and asked: 'Sir, did you see 500 carts pass by?'

Āḷāra said: 'Friend, I did not see them.'

'Sir, how is it then? Did you hear the noise of those carts?'

'Friend, I did not hear the noise either.'

'Sir, how is it then? Were you asleep then?'

'Friend, I was not asleep either.'

'Sir, how is it then? Were you quite conscious then?'

'Yes, friend, I was quite conscious.'

'Sir, you say you did not see nor hear the 500 carts that passed very close by you even though you were conscious and awake. Yet your double robe [1053] is covered all over with dust, isn't it?'

'It is so, friend.'

Venerable sir, after having that dialogue with Āḷāra Kālāma that man thought thus: 'Wonderful it is, marvellous it is, that the recluses remain in their tranquil state! This recluse Āḷāra, although conscious and awake, did not see nor hear the 500 carts that passed close by him!' And saying how deeply he revered Āḷāra Kālāma, he went away."

Thereupon the Buddha said to Pukkusa of the Mallas: “Pukkusa, what do you think of this? Someone, though conscious and awake, does not see nor hear the 500 carts that pass close by him. Another person, though conscious and awake, does not see nor hear a downpour of rain with rumbling thunder, lightning and crashing thunderbolts close by him. Now, of these two cases, which is the more difficult to achieve? Which is the more unlikely to happen?”

“Venerable sir,” replied Pukkusa, “to remain unseeing and unhearing of the passing of carts close by oneself, be it 500, 600, 700, 800, 900, 1,000, or even 100,000 carts, cannot be called difficult compared to the other case. Indeed, it is much more difficult to remain unseeing and unhearing the downpour of rain with rumbling thunder, lightning and crashing thunderbolts close by. It is more unlikely to happen.”

Then the Buddha said: “Pukkusa, at one time, I was living in a straw hut at the town of Āluma. During that time, there was a downpour of rain with rumbling thunder, lightning and crushing of thunderbolts. A thunderbolt struck near my hut killing four oxen and two cultivators who were brothers.

Then, Pukkusa, a large number of people came out from the town to see the place where the four oxen and two cultivators were killed. By that time, I had come out of the straw hut and was walking up and down in the open near the hut. A man from that crowd drew near me, and after paying respects to me, stood at a suitable distance. I asked that man: ‘Friend, why are there many people gathered?’

‘Venerable sir, four oxen and two cultivators were struck by a thunderbolt and killed while it rained heavily with rumbling thunder and lightning. These people have come to see the damage. But, venerable sir, where were you at that time?’

‘Friend, I have been here all the while.’

‘Venerable sir, how is it, then? Did you see what happened?’

‘Friend, I did not see it.’

‘Venerable sir, how is it then? Did you here that sound?’

‘Friend, I did not hear the sound either.’

‘Venerable sir, how is it then? Were you asleep?’

‘Friend, I was not asleep either.’

‘Venerable sir, how is it then? Were you conscious?’

‘Yes, friend, I was conscious.’

‘Venerable sir, is it that, though conscious and awake, you neither saw nor heard the heavy rain, rumbling thunder, lightning and crashing thunderbolts?’

‘That is so, friend.’

Pukkusa, at the end of the dialogue, the man thought: ‘Wonderful it is, marvellous it is that recluses or monastics remain in their tranquil state! The Fortunate One here, though conscious and awake, did not see nor hear the heavy rain, rumbling thunder, lightning and crashing thunderbolts!’ And saying how deeply he [1054] revered me, he made obeisance to me and went away.”

A Special Gift to the Buddha

After the Buddha had said these words, Pukkusa of the Mallas said to him: “Venerable sir, whatever high esteem I had for Āḷāra Kālāma, I now throw it away as if I would throw away rubbish in a strong wind, or let go as if I would cast some worthless thing down the rushing stream.

Venerable sir, excellent is the Dhamma! Venerable sir, excellent is the Dhamma! It is as if, venerable sir, that which has been turned over has been turned up, or as if that which has been hidden is revealed, or as if a lost traveller was told the way, or as if a lamp was lit in a dark place so that those with eyes may see visible objects, even so the Fortunate One has shown the Dhamma to me in various ways. Venerable sir, I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dhamma, I take refuge in the Saṅgha! May the Fortunate One regard me as a lay disciple, one who has taken refuge in the Three Treasures, from this day to the end of life.”

Then Pukkusa called a man and said to him: “Man, go and bring me the pair of fine golden-hued pieces of cloth that are reserved for ceremonial occasions.” And when the pair of lengths of fine golden-hued cloth were brought, Pukkasa, the Malla Prince, offered them to the Buddha, saying: “Venerable sir, may the Fortunate One, out of compassion for me, accept this pair of fine ceremonial lengths of cloth.” The Buddha said: “In that case, Pukkasa, present one to me and one to Ānanda.” And so Pukkusa presented one piece to the Buddha and the other piece to Ven. Ānanda.

> In this connection, one might ask: "Did Ven. Ānanda accept Pukkasa's gift?" And the answer is, yes he did. Then the inquirer might point out the previous agreement by Ven. Ānanda not to receive offerings originally made to the Buddha, which was the agreement to receive only four kinds of gifts and to refuse four kinds of gifts, made by him when he became the personal attendant to the Buddha.
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> The gift was accepted in this case as an exception was for these three reasons: Ven. Ānanda had, by this time, fulfilled his task as the Buddha's personal attendant supremely well. This fact of his receiving the gift would stop others who might otherwise say that Ven. Ānanda had not served the Buddha well. So the Buddha did not favour him with any gift after 25 years of personal service. Ven. Ānanda understood that the Buddha let Pukkusa enjoy the benefit of making the gift to the Saṅgha, for giving to Ven. Ānanda amounted to giving to the Saṅgha. The Buddha also knew that Ven. Ānanda would not use the cloth himself but, instead, would present it to him.

Then the Buddha pointed out to Pukkusa the benefits of the doctrine, exhorted him to set himself up in the practice of the Dhamma, and gladdened him in the practice. After thus pointing out the benefits of the Dhamma, being exhorted to set himself up in the practice of the Dhamma, and being gladdened in the practice, Pukkusa rose from his seat and after paying respects to the Buddha, departed respectfully.

Not long after Pukkusa was gone, Ven. Ānanda placed the pair of fine golden-hued robes on the body of the Buddha. Once they were placed on the person of the Buddha, the pair of robes appeared to lose their splendour against the natural splendour of the Buddha's person. Ven. Ānanda was awestruck. He exclaimed what he saw. Thereupon the Buddha explained to him thus: "Ānanda, what you say is true. Ānanda, what you say is true. There are two occasions when the natural colour of the Realised One becomes exceedingly clear and his complexion exceedingly bright.

These two occasions are: The night, Ānanda, when the Realised One attains Supreme Perfect Self-Awakening, and the night in which he passes away leaving no trace of the five aggregates, and realizes Complete Nibbāna. [1055] Ānanda, these are the two occasions on which the natural colour of the Realised One's person becomes exceedingly clear and his complexion exceedingly bright.

Ānanda, today, in the last watch of the night, in the Sāla grove of the Malla princes where the road to Kusinārā turns, between the twin Sāla trees, the Realised One's realization of Parinibbāna will take place."

Then the Buddha said: "Come, Ānanda, let us go to the river Kakudhā."

"Very well, venerable sir," said Ven. Ānanda in assent.

Then the Buddha proceeded to the river Kakudhā accompanied by a large number of monastics. He entered the river, bathed in it, and drank its water. Back again on the river bank, he went to the mango grove by the river. Ven. Ānanda was then at the river bank drying the loin cloth in which the Buddha bathed. There, he said to Ven. Cunda: "Cunda, fold my double robe fourfold and place it on the ground. I am weary. I need to lie down."

Ven. Cunda assented respectfully, and placed the folded double robe on the ground and the Buddha lay down on his right side in a noble posture, with his left foot above the right foot, placed slightly beyond it, with mindfulness and clear comprehension, and keeping in mind the time of arising. Ven. Cunda kept watch there, seated nearby.

The Merits of the Two Meals

When Ven. Ānanda returned to the Buddha, he made the following special remarks about the last meal: "Ānanda, it may happen that someone may cause unhappiness to Cunda, the goldsmith's son, by saying: 'Friend Cunda, the Fortunate One passed away after he had eaten his last meal provided by you. How unfortunate, what a loss to you.'

Should such a thing happen, Cunda should be solaced thus: 'Honourable Cunda, the Fortunate One passed away after he had eaten his last meal provided by you. How fortunate, what a good gain for you. Honourable Cunda these are the words I heard from the mouth of the Fortunate One himself: "There are two offerings of food that surpass all other food offerings in their benefit, and whose merits compare well as between the two of them. The two offerings are: The food offered to the Realised One, after eating which the Realised One attains Supreme Perfect Self-Awakening, and the food offered to the Realised One, after eating which the Realised One passes away leaving no trace of the five aggregates, and realizes Complete Nibbāna. These two offerings of food surpass all other food offerings in their benefit, and whose merits compare well as

between the two of them." These are the words I heard from the mouth of the Fortunate One himself.'

That being so, the honourable Cunda, the goldsmith's son has in store for him: The merit that will ensure him long life, the merit that will ensure him good looks, the merit that will ensure him well-being and happiness, the merit that will ensure him large following, the merit that leads to the Deva realm, and the merit that ensures him pre-eminence. Thus should Cunda the goldsmith's son be solaced."

Then the Buddha, comprehending the matter, uttered this exalted verse on the spur of the moment (*udāna*):

> "In one who gives, merit grows. In one who is self-controlled, enmity cannot gather. One who has insight wisdom abandons evil. One who is endowed with generosity, morality, concentration and wisdom, having destroyed attachment, hatred and delusion, attains peace."

Herein the equal merit in Sujātā's milk rice at the Bodhi tree and Cunda's tender pork might be a matter of controversy. One might ask: "At the time the Fortunate One ate Sujātā's milk rice, he had not destroyed [1056] attachment, hatred and delusion whereas at the time he ate Cunda's food-offering, he was free from attachment, hatred and delusion. Thus the state of purity was not equal, how could the merit in the offering be equal?"

The answer is this: the equal factors in both are:

1. Both the meals lead to Parinibbāna.
2. Both enable the Buddha to dwell in the attainment of absorption (*jhāna*).
3. Both led to the same mode of contemplation, by the two supporters.

Now to expand this:

1. After eating Sujāta's milk rice, the Buddha extinguished the defilements and become a Buddha which is the Parinibbāna of the defilements (*kilesa*), the realization of Nibbāna with the five aggregates remaining.

After eating Cunda's tender pork, the Buddha extinguished the re-arising of the five aggregates, which is the Parinibbāna of the aggregates (*khandha*), the realization of Nibbāna with no aggregates remaining.

Thanks to Sujāta's milk rice, there arose in the Buddha's physical system superior corporeality (*paṇīta-rūpa*). This gave strength to the mental system so that the Dhamma body, comprising the arising of insight, the arising of path, and the arising of fruition, was able to destroy the defilements without difficulty, thus leading to the Parinibbāna of the defilements.

Cunda's food-offering, likewise provided proper sustenance to the Buddha and enabled him to renounce the five aggregates without difficulty, thus leading to the Parinibbāna of the aggregates.

2. On the day of the Awakening, the Buddha, after eating the milk rice offered by Sujātā, had the strength to dwell in the attainment of concentration comprising 24,000 billion absorptions which was to become his daily routine (*devasika-vaḷañjana-samāpatti*). After eating Cunda's food offering, the Buddha was, in spite of his severe dysentery, also able to keep up the daily routine of dwelling in the attainment of concentration comprising 24,000 billion absorptions.

3. Sujātā offered her milk rice to the Bodhisatta thinking him to be the guardian spirit of the great tree, later to be called the Mahā Bodhi tree. But when she knew that it was the Buddha to whom she made her offering and that he become a Buddha after having her meal of milk rice and that the Buddha got sustenance for 49 days from her food-offering, she was intensely happy. "What a great fortune for me, what a great gain to me!" She contemplated repeatedly, thus increasing her meritorious thoughts of delightful satisfaction and joy. Similarly, when Cunda learnt that his food-offering was the Buddha's last meal, after which, he realized Nibbāna with no aggregates remaining, he was overjoyed. "What a great fortune for me, what a great gain to me!" he contemplated repeatedly, in this way increasing his meritorious thoughts of delightful satisfaction and joy.

The 2.4 Million Billion Sustained Absorptions

As discussed in the sub-commentary to the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*) on the Discourse about the Emancipation (*Parinibbāna-sutta*, SN 6.15), according to some teachers (*keci*): The Buddha in his daily routine dwelled in the absorptions of great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā*) numbering 12,000 billion times, and the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) absorptions numbering the same; thus dwelling in a total of 24,000 billion

absorptions known as the attainments resorted to daily (*devasika-vaḷañjana-samāpatti*).

Another explanation: With the Buddhas, the return to the life-continuum thought-moment (*bhavaṅga-citta*) is very swift. Entering into and dwelling in a certain type of absorption as from one to another is an accomplished feat. To enter into absorption and to emerge from absorption, the Buddha needs just two or three thought-moments. That being so, it is routine for the Buddha to dwell in the five types of fine-material absorptions and the four types of non-material absorptions, the measureless attainments (*appamaññā-samāpatti*), the cessation attainment (*nirodha-samāpatti*) and [1057] the Arahat fruition attainment (*Arahatta-phala-samāpatti*), thus making a daily total of twelve types of attainment (*samāpatti*). One 1,000 billion times for each of these twelve attainments were entered into every morning, and the same number of absorptions repeated every afternoon, thus a daily routine of 24,000 billion absorptions took place every day. This is according to some teachers.

According to other (*apare*) teachers it was customary for the Buddha to dwell in the cessation attainment (*nirodha-samāpatti*) every day. Entering into the cessation attainment is to be preceded by insight meditation. With the Buddhas, the subject of contemplation to develop insight-meditation leading to the cessation attainment is dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*).[239] This meditation procedure involves contemplating the twelve factors of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) in the forward order beginning from ignorance (*avijjā*), each for 1,000 billion times. Thus 12,000 billion times are devoted to the twelve factors of dependent origination or dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*). Then contemplating the same twelve factors in the reverse order involves another 12,000 billion times. The entering into the cessation attainment, with dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) as the subject of contemplation, is therefore 12,000 billion times each for the forward and the reverse order of dependent origination, thereby taking up 24,000 billion times. This is what other teachers say.

Since the 24,000 billion times are devoted daily to the absorptions by the Buddha, what significance is there about these absorptions on the day of Awakening and

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[239] Refer to chapter 16 on the great diamond insight (*mahā-vajira-vipassanā*).

on the day of passing away? The significance, as pointed out in the sub-commentary on the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*), is that on these particular days the absorptions are built up on a more rigorous mental discipline that requires contemplating the seven aspects of physical phenomena (*rūpa-sattaka*) and seven aspects of mental phenomena (*nāma-sattaka*) in the preliminary insight-meditation.

Kusinārā as the Buddha's Last Repose

Then the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Come, Ānanda, let us go to the Sāla grove of the Malla princes where the road bends to Kusinārā town, on yonder bank of the river Hiraññavatī."

"Very well, venerable sir," Ven. Ānanda assented. Then the Buddha, accompanied by a large body of monastics, reached at last the Sāla grove of the Malla princes where the road bends to Kusinārā town on the further bank of the river Hiraññavatī. There, he said to Ven. Ānanda: "Ānanda, lay the couch with its head to the north between the twin Sāla trees. Ānanda, I am weary, and wish to lie down."

"Very well, venerable sir," said Ven. Ānanda, and laid the couch with its head to the north between the twin Sāla trees, And the Buddha lay down on his right side in a noble posture, with his left foot above the right foot, placed slightly beyond it, with mindfulness and clear comprehension.

On this journey from Pāvā to Kusinārā, a very large body of monastic disciples, almost beyond count, had gathered around the Buddha because from the time of the news of his imminent passing away had gone out of the small village of Veḷuva, all monastics living at various places, who had come to the Buddha, did not disperse.

In the Sāla grove of the Malla princes where the couch for the Buddha was laid, there were two fine rows of Sāla trees at the north, where the head of the couch was placed, and at the south. Amidst these two rows, there was a pair of Sāla trees at the opposite ends of the couch whose roots, branches and foliage were intertwined so that they were referred to as the twin Sāla trees. There was a couch used by the Malla princes in the Sāla grove and it was the couch that the Buddha commanded Ānanda to be laid for him, and which was duly complied with. [1058]

"Ānanda, I am weary, and wish to lie down." The significance of these words may be considered in the light of the Buddha's natural physical might, which was equal to the strength of 10 billion of ordinary elephants, equivalent to that of ten Chaddanta white elephants, or that of 100 billion average men. All that marvellous might drained down with the dysentery, like the water poured down into a funnel filter, after the Buddha had eaten Cunda's food. The distance from Pāvā to Kusinārā was a mere three miles, or half of a league,[240] yet the Buddha had to make 25 pauses on his journey. At the end of the last leg of his journey, on entering the Sāla grove at sunset, he was overwhelmed by the ailments. Hence, his admission of uneasiness and need to lie down was an ominous signal to the world that he was as good as dead.

Here one might be tempted to ask: "Why did the Buddha take as much trouble to get to Kusinārā? Were not other places fit to be his last repose?" The answer is there was no place which was actually unfit for that great occasion. But there were three reasons for the Buddha in choosing this insignificant town of Kusinārā as the place of his last repose. He saw the following three eventualities and considered:

1. "If I were to pass away at any place other than Kusinārā, there would be no occasion for the Discourse about Mahā Sudassana (*Mahā-sudassana-sutta*, DN 17). This long discourse took two recitals (*bhāṇavāra*) at the council and revealed that even as a human being, when the Buddha was a Bodhisatta, one could enjoy divine glory on earth, it would find a fitting setting only at Kusinārā. The discourse would kindle the interest of the hearers to do good deeds.

2. If I were to pass away at some place other than Kusinārā, Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, would get no opportunity of meeting me. In which case it would be an utter loss for him. For he was fit to be awakened only by a Buddha and not by a Buddha's disciple. That ascetic Subhadda would be there at Kusinārā, and would put intelligent questions, and at the end of the answers to his questions, he would embrace the doctrine, learn the method of practice for developing insight, and would become the last Arahat during my lifetime.

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[240] A league is variously taken as seven and half to twelve and half miles.

3. If I were to pass away elsewhere, there would be bloodshed over the scramble for the relics of the Realised One. In Kusinārā, Brahmin Doṇa would be able to prevent such a catastrophe and the distribution of the relics would be effected peacefully.

These were the three reasons why the Buddha took so much trouble to get to Kusinārā.

As the Buddha lay there on the couch, the twin Sāla trees burst forth into full bloom, though it was not the flowering season, and in adoration of the Buddha, rained down blossoms, continuously scattering them over his body.

Also, celestial Mandārava flowers fell from the sky, continuously scattering themselves over the body of the Buddha, signifying the adoration of the Buddha by the celestial beings; also celestial sandalwood powder fell from the sky, continuously scattering itself over the body of the Buddha, signifying the adoration of the Buddha by the celestial beings; and celestial music wafted in the sky, celestial melodies resounded in the air above, in adoration of the Buddha.

Then the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Ānanda, the twin Sāla trees burst forth into full bloom though it is not the flowering season, and in adoration of the Realised One, rain fell, continuously scattering them over the body of the Realised One.

Also, celestial Mandārava flowers fall from the sky, continuously scattering themselves over the body of the Realised One, signifying the adoration of the [1059] Realised One by the celestial beings; also celestial sandalwood powder falls from the sky, continuously scattering itself over the body of the Realised One, signifying the adoration of the Realised One by the celestial beings; and, celestial music wafts in the sky, celestial melodies resound in the air above, in adoration of the Realised One.

Ānanda, all these forms of adoration cannot be called sufficient acts of honour, esteem, reverence, adoration or worship of the Realised One. Ānanda, the male monastic or female monastic, or the male lay disciple, or the female lay disciple, who practices according to the doctrine leading to the supermundane, who conducts himself correctly in the practice, and who leads a righteous life, by such a follower of the Realised One only is the Realised One best honoured, esteemed, revered, adored, and worshipped.

Accordingly, Ānanda, train yourselves diligently with a firm resolve to practice according to the doctrine leading to the supermundane; conduct yourselves correctly in the practice, and lead a righteous life."

> Herein, the Sāla trees raining down their blossoms should be understood as acts of adoration by the guardian spirits of those trees by shaking the branches.

"Mandārava flowers bloom in the Nandā Lake in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm." The leaf of the plant is about the size of an umbrella, and the pollen collects in each flower is as much as a basketful. Not only Mandārava flowers, but also other celestial flowers, such as the coral flower and other celestial flowers, were strewn down by the Devas who dwell around the regions at the walls of the Cakkavāḷa, Tāvatiṁsa and Brahma realms so that there was a continuous sprinkling of celestial flowers.

Likewise, "celestial sandalwood" here should be understood to represent various other kinds of scented wood not only from the Deva realm but from the realms of Nāgas, Garuḷas, and other foreign lands of the human world, as well as all kinds of exotic natural scents in various forms, such as gold dust, silver powders, minerals, rocks, etc. In short, all the sentient worlds, celestial as well as terrestrial, joined in sprinkling scented dust of all descriptions continuously onto the reclining Buddha at Kusinārā.

"Celestial music," also represents a universal symphony played by musicians of all the sentient worlds extending throughout the 10,000 world-element, including Devas, Nāgas, Garuḷas and human beings that sounded in the sky of the world-element.

"Celestial melodies resounded in the air above." Behind the statement lies a touching story. It concerns Varuṇa and Vāruṇā Devas who have exceedingly long lifespans. These Devas, on learning that the Deva who was the Bodhisatta was going to be reborn in the human world, started making a garland for presentation to the Bodhisatta on the day of his conception. Before they had finished making the garland they heard the news that the Bodhisatta was conceived in the human mother's womb. So when other Devas asked them for whom the garland was being made, they said: "Our garland is not finished yet, so it has to be presented to the Bodhisatta on the day he is born."

Again, when they learnt that the Bodhisatta was already born, the garland-making Devas said: “Well, we will present it to the Bodhisatta on the day of his renunciation.” When, after 29 years of life in the human world, the Bodhisatta renounced the world, the garland-makers heard the news and said: “We will present it to the Buddha on his day of Awakening.” Then after six years of the Bodhisatta’s great struggle and the news of his Awakening reached the garland-making Devas, they said: “We will present it to the Fortunate One on the day of the first discourse.” After 49 days dwelling in absorption at seven different places, when the first discourse was delivered at the Deer Park, the garland-making Devas [1060] said: “Well, we will present it to the Fortunate One on the day the Fortunate One displays the twin miracle.” When the news that the twin miracle had taken place reached the garland-makers, they thought of offering the garland when, after three months, the Buddha had descended from the Tāvatiṁsa Realm. And when the news of the Buddha’s descent from the Tāvatiṁsa Realm was received also, they thought of offering the garland on the day the Buddha relinquished his life-maintaining thought-process. But by that day the garland was still not finished, and so they said: “The garland is still not finished; we will honour the Fortunate One with it on the day of his passing away.”

Now that the latest news of the Buddha lying on his deathbed reached the garland-makers and that at the third watch of that very night the Buddha would be passing away, the Varuṇa Devas and Vāruṇā Devas exclaimed, quite bewildered: “How is that? Just today the Bodhisatta is known to be conceived in his mother’s womb; just today he is born; just today he has renounced earth and home; just today the Fortunate One has attained Awakening; just today he has delivered his first discourse; just today he has displayed the twin miracle; just today he has descended from the Tāvatiṁsa Realm; just today he has relinquished the life-maintaining thought-process, and just today he is about to pass away! Should he not have tarried till breakfast time the next day? It is just too soon, too early, for such a great personage who has fulfilled the ten perfections supremely and has become a Buddha to pass away now.”

Thus murmuring mournfully, the Varuṇa Devas and the Vāruṇā Devas came before the Buddha bringing with them the great garland, still unfinished, together with more flowers to go into its making. But they could not find any place in this world-element amidst the celestial crowds who had already

gathered so that they were obliged to recede to the edge of the world-element, and had to keep the great garland hanging in the air above. Then those Devas ran about the rim of the world-element holding onto another's hands or embracing one another, all the while contemplating the noble attributes of the Three Treasures, and singing devotional songs on the 32 marks of the great man, the six-hued aura of the Buddha, the ten perfections, the 550 existences of the Bodhisatta, and the fourteen knowledges of the Buddha; and singing the refrain at the end of each song: "The Fortunate One with such great following and fame! The Fortunate One with such great following and fame!" All these beautiful melodies were coming from these great Devas so that celestial music resounded in the air above.

Even while the Buddha was lying there, on the couch, he saw the great gathering of Devas and Brahmas which filled the entire world-element, from the earth's surface to the brim of this world-element and from its brim to the Brahma world. On seeing the zeal with which they were honouring the Buddha, the Buddha said the above words to Ven. Ānanda. After mentioning the marvellous modes of worshipping the Buddha by the celestial beings of the 10,000 world-element, the Buddha pointed out that the material offerings (*āmisa-pūjā*) were not sufficient in themselves as the best way of doing honour to the Buddha, but that only by learning and practising the doctrine is the best honour done to the Buddha. In saying these words the Buddha also implied that since the very beginning when, having been endowed with the eight factors required of a full-fledged Bodhisatta as the ascetic Sumedha, he had aspired to Buddhahood at the feet of Buddha Dīpaṅkara, lying face downward in the mud, offering himself to be used by the Buddha and his company of 400,000 Arahats, all his fulfilling of the perfections over four immeasurable periods (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and 100,000 aeons, were not for the purpose of being honoured by the celestial world with these flowers, perfumes and music, but was solely for the purpose of being honoured by his disciples following his teaching, which is the best way of doing honour to him.

> Herein, it might be asked: "It is usual for the Fortunate One to extol the offerings of as insignificant object such as a sesame flower, unless the offering is made with a consciousness of the Buddha's attributes, then the benefit accruing from the offering would be infinite. Yet in this case of the Varuṇa Devas and Vāruṇā Devas why did the Fortunate One not welcome their offering of the great garland?"

> The answer is that the Buddha had in mind the true interest of the vast multitudes, and also [1061] the perpetuation of the teaching. Here is the explanation: The doctrine lays down the threefold training of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*). If offering of material things were allowed too freely, then, in future, the disciples of the Buddha might neglect the practice of concentration and wisdom, they would neglect the practice of insight meditation; the male monastic disciples would preach the merits of offerings of flowers and fragrant things and offering other material things only. Offering of material things cannot maintain the teaching consisting essentially of the threefold training even for one breakfast period. Indeed, thousands of splendid monasteries or thousands of splendid relic shrines (*stūpa*) cannot maintain the teaching. These material donations merely lead only to mundane welfare.
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> It is the right practice of the Dhamma that truly counts as honouring the Buddha. The Buddha desires for honouring him by practising the Dhamma (*Dhamma-pūjā*). For, by right practice alone can the teaching be perpetuated. That was the reason why the Buddha extolled the practice of the Dhamma.[241]

The practice leading to the four paths, four fruitions and Nibbāna, the ninefold supermundane Dhamma, is the highest mode of honouring the Buddha. This practice, in accordance with Dhamma (*Dhammānudhamma-paṭipatta*), begins with refuge in the Three Treasures and culminates in the highest development that marks the change of the worldling into the lineage of the noble ones (*gotrabhū*), the state of mental maturity, which is, so to speak, on the threshold of path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*).

A monastic who indulges in the six kinds of disrespect (*agārava*), disobeys the rules of monastic conduct, and lives an improper life using the four requisites, which are acquired unlawfully and not according to the rules of Vinaya, is one who does not practice in accordance with the Dhamma. The monastic, who meticulously obeys every rule prescribed of monastic conduct, is one who practises in accordance with the Dhamma. These observations apply equally to female monastics.

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[241] But this should not be seen as the negation of the merit of material offerings.

As for lay disciples, he who is in the habit of breaking the five precepts, such as killing, which is also known as 'the five animosities' because non-observance of these precepts are inimical to one's own true interest; and who indulges in the ten courses of evil action, is called one who does not practise according to the Dhamma. The lay disciple, who is well established in the Three Treasures, who observes the five precepts, the ten precepts, who keeps fasting-day precepts on four fasting days and the four days prior to them, who is in the habit of generously giving offerings of fragrant flowers to the Three Treasures, looking after his parents, and ministering to the needs of men of virtue, is called a lay disciple who practises in accordance with the Dhamma. These observations apply equally to female lay disciples.

Honouring the Buddha by honouring the Dhamma (*Dhammānudhamma-paṭipatta*) is also called spiritual worship (*pūjā*). This kind of doing honour to the Buddha alone contributes to the perpetuation of the teaching. So long as the four categories of the Buddha's disciples, i.e. male monastics, female monastics, lay male-disciples and lay female-disciples, are doing honour in this way the teaching will shine forth like the full moon in the clear sky.

Ven. Upavāṇa

At that time, Ven. Upavāṇa was standing in front of the Buddha, fanning him. Then the Buddha said to Upavāṇa: "Move away, monastic, do not stand in front of me." Ven. Upavāṇa obeyed without delay, dropped the palm-leaf fan there, and stood at a suitable distance.

Thereupon it occurred to Ven. Ānanda thus: "This Ven. Upavāṇa had for a long time during the first 20 years after the Fortunate One's Awakening been a close attendant to the Fortunate One, and yet at this period of his passing away the Fortunate One caused him to move aside, saying: 'Move away monastic, do not stand in front of me.' What might be the reason for the Fortunate One in doing so?"

Therefore he asked the Buddha: [1062] "Venerable sir, Ven. Upavāṇa had for a long time been a close attendant on the Fortunate One, and yet at this period of the Fortunate One's passing away, the Fortunate One caused him to move aside with the words: 'Move away monastic, do not stand in front of me.' What is the reason for the Fortunate One in doing so?"

Then the Buddha, wishing to clear away from Ānanda's mind any idea of Ven. Upavāṇa being at fault and to make it clear that Ven. Upavāṇa was not at fault, explained to him thus: "Ānanda, with the exception of the Asaññasatta Brahmas and Brahmas of the formless realm, most of the Devas and Brahmas of the ten world-elements are gathered here at Kusinārā to see the Realised One. There is not, within twelve leagues in and around this Sāla grove, a single space about the breath of a tail hair of a mountain goat that remains unoccupied by powerful Devas.

Ānanda, the Devas are murmuring against Upavāṇa thus: 'We have come from afar to see the Realised One. It is only rarely that the Arahat, Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddhas arise in the world. And tonight, in the third watch of the night, the Realised One is due to pass away. This powerful monastic standing in front of the Fortunate One is obstructing our view. Alas! We are going to miss the chance of seeing the Realised One at his last hour.' This is the reason why I had asked monastic Upavāṇa to step aside."

> A note of explanation: Within the space close to the Buddha, Devas and Brahmas in their subtle corporeality in groups of ten each, occupied units of space which were a tail hair in breath. Beyond those groups of Devas are Brahmas, there were groups of Devas and Brahmas in groups of 20, each occupying a space of the same breath. And beyond those groups were similar arrangements of space occupancy with groups of 30, 40, 50 and 60 Devas and Brahmas. Even though tightly spaced, there was no Deva or Brahma who got in the way of another either bodily or in their costumes; no one needed to ask another to clear the way for him or for her.
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> Upavāṇa was a person of extra large size, about the size of an elephant calf. Moreover, he was wearing dust-rag robes (*paṁsukūlika*), which added to his bulk. So he was making an obstruction by standing in front of the Buddha, a genuine cause of complaint on the part of the Devas and Brahmas. It might be asked: "Did the Devas and Brahmas not have power to see through the monastic?" The answer is: "No, they did not have." For although Devas and Brahmas can see through a worldling, they cannot see through an Arahat. Ven. Upavāṇa was not only an Arahat but a person of unique powers so that people could not come too close to him.
>
> The cause and condition for the extraordinary powers of Ven. Upavāṇa even amongst the Arahats was that he had been a guardian spirit at the shrine set up in honour of Buddha Kassapa.

Ninety-one aeons before the advent of Buddha Gotama, Buddha Vipassī passed away leaving behind a single relic, a mass of golden hue. It is customary for the Buddhas, who appear during the human lifespan of thousands of years, to leave behind a single relic at their passing away, which is enshrined by the people. The people of those times built a shrine to house the relic. The shrine was of a league high, with golden coloured bricks measuring one cubit by half a cubit, two fingers' breath thick. For cement they used crystal stone powder used for eye lotion mixed in sesame oil.

In the construction of the shrine, the Devas belonging to the terrestrial abodes raised a further league above the shrine built by human beings, which was further raised another league by the Devas of the celestial abodes. Above that height, the Uṇhavalāhakā Devas, the Abbhavalāhakā Devas, the Devas of the Catumahārājika realm and the Devas of the Tāvatiṁsa Realm added a league respectively to the structure so that altogether the shrine, in commemoration of Buddha Vipassī, that encased a single Buddha-relic, was seven leagues in height. [1063]

When people came to that shrine to make offerings of flowers and other things, the guardian spirit of the shrine took over the offerings and placed them suitably before the shrine even in the presence of the supporters.

At that time, in his previous existence, the elder Upavāṇa was born as a wealthy Brahmin. He went to the shrine to make an offering of a golden-hued piece of cloth, for a robe for the Buddha. The guardian spirit placed the cloth beautifully at the shrine which pleased the Brahmin supporter greatly and who uttered his wish that in future he be reborn as a guardian spirit to a Buddha-shrine of this kind. At his death, he was reborn in the Deva realm.

During the time the future Upavāṇa was being reborn, in turns, in the Deva realms and the human world, Buddha Kassapa had appeared in the world. When Buddha Kassapa passed away, the prevailing human lifespan being 20,000 years, only a single Buddha-relic remained. This relic was treasured in a shrine of one league in diameter and in height. The future Upavāṇa, at that time, became the guardian spirit of the shrine. After passing away from that life, he was born in the Deva realm again. At the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn into a noble family. He renounced the householder's life, leaving behind his wife and children, and became an Arahat.

> Thus, the cause and condition for Ven. Upavāṇa's extraordinary powers even among Arahats, was that he had been a guardian spirit at the shrine erected in commemoration of Buddha Kassapa.

After the Buddha had thus explained to Ven. Ānanda that Ven. Upavāṇa was told to move aside in the crowd not because he was at fault but only to satisfy the Devas, Ven. Ānanda said to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, what is the Fortunate One's assessment of the state of mind that is present in the Devas and Brahmas?" By this, Ven. Ānanda was enquiring how far the Devas and Brahmas were able to bear the grief at the impending Buddha's decease.

The Buddha told Ven. Ānanda that the Devas and Brahmas were in a state of despondency thus: "Ānanda, the Devas, who choose to remain in the air and are standing there as if there was firm ground to stand on, having transformed the sky into firm ground by their divine power, are wailing with dishevelled hair, their arms upraised; they fling themselves down, rolling on the ground in all directions, all the while lamenting: 'All too soon is the Fortunate One going to realize Parinibbāna! All too soon is the Gracious One going to realize Parinibbāna! All too soon is the Visionary going to vanish from the world!'

Ānanda, the Devas, who choose to remain on the earth and are standing on the ground transforming the natural earth into supportable ground for their bodies of subtle corporeality, are wailing with dishevelled hair, their arms upraised, they fling themselves down, rolling in all directions, all the while lamenting: 'All too soon is the Fortunate One going to realize Parinibbāna! All too soon is the Gracious One going to realize Parinibbāna! All too soon is the Visionary going to vanish from the world!'

But those Devas, who are free from sensual attachment, can bear it with fortitude in the keen contemplation that all conditioned things are impermanent by nature. And hence, how would it be possible to find any permanence in this conditioned nature?"

> The Devas' bodies are composed of subtle corporeality. The texture of the natural earth cannot support them; if they were to stand on it, their bodies would seep into the earth like a lump of butter. On a certain occasion, a Brahma named Hatthaka went to the Buddha and as he tried to stand there, his body seeped into the earth. The Buddha had to remind him to transform his body into a gross kind of corporeality so as to be able to remain on solid ground. The same situation holds true with Devas. That

was why the Devas, in this context, needed to transform the natural earth to suit their subtle corporeality so that it became possible for them to stand on it. [1064]

Four Places that inspire Emotion

Then Ven. Ānanda said to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, it was customary for monastics who had ended the Rains Retreat period in various parts of the land to pay homage to the Fortunate One. We used to have the privilege of meeting and honouring these monastics whose presence inspired us. But, venerable sir, now that the Fortunate One will be no more, we shall not get the privilege of meeting these inspiring monastics."

In the days of the Buddha, monastics went to see the Buddha twice a year, before the Rains Retreat period began and at the end of the Rains Retreat period. They went to the Buddha before going into Rains Retreat to learn the meditation method, and at the end of the Rains Retreat period to report to the Buddha their attainments such as the paths and fruitions.

In Sri Laṅkā also, as in the days of the Buddha, monastics used to assemble twice each year, before and after the Rains Retreat period. Monastics, on the shore on the Mahāgāma side, assembled at the Tissa monastery, which was donated by King Kākavaṇṇatissa while those on yonder shore assembled at Lohapāsāda Pinnacled Hall. Of those two groups, monastics on the yonder shore, at the beginning of the Rains Retreat period assembled at the Great Monastery (Mahā Vihāra), bringing with them brooms and garbage-collecting baskets, where they carried out maintenance works to the Great Shrine (*Mahā-cetiya*) such as, mending the masonry work, white-washing, etc. Before they dispersed to the various places of their choice to pass the Rains Retreat period, after having finished their cleaning up operations, they agreed to meet at the end of the Rains Retreat period at the Lohapāsāda Pinnacled Hall.

At the end of the Rains Retreat period, they assembled again at the Lohapāsāda Pinnacled Hall where the Five Collections (*Nikāya*) of the Buddha's teachings were taught by the elders and recited by the students. Some monastics attended the Pāḷi text sessions while others attended the commentarial (*aṭṭhakathā*) sessions. Whenever the texts or the commentary were wrongly recited, the teachers would ask the student where and under which teacher he had learned it, and correct it. The same

functions also took place, by monastics on the shore on the Mahāgāna side, at the Tissa monastery.

Here, Ven. Ānanda was referring to these biannual functions that were customary during the Buddha's times. Ven. Ānanda was careful in the observance of religious and social duties towards fellow monastics. Whenever he saw an elder arrive, he would rise from his seat to welcome him. He would relieve the guest of the umbrella, alms bowl and double robe and offer a seat to the senior monastic. He would then sit down, make obeisance to the elder, and, finding a suitable lodging place for the visitor, he would clean it for occupation. Whenever he saw a monastic of senior standing arrive also, he would welcome him, ask about his needs and render every possible help to him. This was because Ven. Ānanda was always desirous of being a useful, helpful and respectful monastic to every other monastic. This was his usual way, and hence he expressed his concern about the matter in the above words.

The Buddha knew how Ven. Ānanda was feeling: "Ānanda is concerned about losing the usual privilege of seeing and knowing monastics who are inspiring. Now I shall point out to him those places where he can see such monastics easily by just staying there himself."

He therefore said to him: "Ānanda, there are four places which are worthy of pilgrimage for persons with devotion to the Three Treasures which will inspire in them a spiritual urgency.

1. Ānanda, the Lumbinī Sāla grove is one such place. A person of devotion, visiting there, reflects: 'This is the place where the Realised One was born,' and this reflection will inspire in him a spiritual urgency; hence it is a place worthy of pilgrimage.

2. Ānanda, the Mahā Bodhi, the Great Awakening tree, is another such place. A person of devotion, visiting there reflects: 'This is the place where the Realised One attained Supremely Perfect Awakening,' and this reflection will inspire in him, a spiritual urgency; hence it is a place worthy of pilgrimage. [1065]

3. Ānanda, the Isipatana Deer Park is another such place. A person of devotion, visiting there, reflects: 'This is the place where the Realised One set the Supreme Dhamma Wheel turning,' and this reflection will

inspire in him a spiritual urgency; hence it is a place worthy of pilgrimage.

4. Ānanda, Kusinārā is another such place. A person of devotion, visiting there, reflects: 'This is the place where the Realised One realized Parinibbāna, having passed away without any attachment to the five aggregates,' and this reflection will inspire in him a spiritual urgency; hence it is a place worthy of pilgrimage.

Ānanda, these are four places which are worthy of pilgrimage for persons with devotion to the Three Treasures which will inspire in them a spiritual urgency.

Ānanda, there will come to these four places male monastics, female monastics, male lay disciples and female lay disciples who are devoted to the Three Treasures, reflecting: 1) This sacred place of Lumbinī is the place where the Realised One was born; 2) this sacred place of Mahā Bodhi is the place where the Realised One attained Supremely Perfect Awakening; 3) this sacred place of the Isipatana Deer Park is the place where the Realised One set the Supreme Dhamma Wheel turning; and 4) this sacred place of Kusinārā is the place where the Realised One realized Parinibbāna, having passed away without any attchment to the five aggregates. Ānanda, all those pilgrims, if they should die with devotion in their hearts while on pilgrimage to these four sacred places or shrines, after the death and dissolution of the body, they will be bound for fortunate destinations. They will be reborn in the Deva realm."

Ven. Ānanda's Questions

Then Ven. Ānanda put a series of questions to which the Buddha answered in detail.

Ven. Ānanda: "Venerable sir, how should we conduct ourselves with regard to women?"

Buddha: "Not seeing them, Ānanda."

> Hence the best way, the Buddha says, is not to see any woman. For if a monastic stays with closed doors and windows inside the monastery, and if a woman were to appear at the door, there is no idea in him of attachment to the woman so long as he does not see her. But when he sees her, some thought of desire may come into his mind, and the mind is agitated. That is why the Buddha says it is best for a monastic not to see a woman.

Ven. Ānanda: "Venerable sir, if we should unavoidably see them, what should we do?"

Buddha: "Do not speak to them, Ānanda."

> On going for alms collection in the mornings, women devotees usually come to offer alms food. They will have to be seen by monastics. In such a case, the Buddha says: "Consider the woman as if she were a fierce man with a sharp knife in his hand, who says to you: 'If you dare speak to me, I will cut off your head,' or as a Yakkha who says to you: 'If you speak to me, I will devour you.' Consider that if you were to speak to the fierce man or to the Yakkha your life is at stake for the present life only, whereas, if you were to speak to the woman whom you are obliged to see, you are liable to fall to the four lower worlds. If a monastic were to enter into conversation with a woman, there occurs familiarity. When there is familiarity, attachment arises. When the monastic's mind becomes attached to a woman, his morality is spoilt and it leads him to the four lower worlds. That is why the Buddha says to not speak to them.

Ven. Ānanda: "Venerable sir, if we have occasion to speak to them what should we do?" [1066]

Buddha: "Ānanda, consider the woman to be your mother, or sister, etc., as the case may be, and be mindful."

> A monastic will, on occasion, be obliged to talk to a woman. She might want to know the fasting days, or she might ask to have the precepts administered, or she might request a discourse, or she might like a doctrinal point cleared. On such occasions, it is quite inadvisable for a monastic to remain silent, lest he should be taken as a dumb monastic or a dullard. If perforce, a monastic is obliged to talk to a woman, he should regard her as his own mother, if the woman is of the age of his mother, or as his own sister, if she is of the age of his sister, or as his own daughter, if she is of the age of a daughter to him.[242]

Ven. Ānanda: "Venerable sir, after the Fortunate One has passed away, what should we do with regards to the remains of the Realised One?"

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[242] See the Discourse to Bhāradvāja (*Bhāradvāja-sutta*, SN 35.127).

Buddha: "Ānanda, do not trouble yourself about doing honour to the remains of the Realised One. I exhort you, Ānanda, devote yourselves to the noble practice. Strive in all earnest, without negligence, directing your mind towards Nibbāna. Ānanda, wise nobles, wise Brahmins and wise householders are there, in deepest devotion to the Realised One, who will see to the task of doing honour to the remains of the Realised One."

Ven. Ānanda: "Venerable sir, in what manner should those wise nobles, wise Brahmins and wise householders perform regarding the remains of the Realised One?"

> By this Ven. Ānanda means to say that those wise nobles, and so on, would certainly be seeking advice from him as regards the funeral rites, and so he wants to have a broad suggestion from the Buddha in the matter.

Buddha: "Ānanda, it should be performed as in the case of treating the remains of a Universal Monarch."

Ven. Ānanda: "Venerable sir, what is the procedure in the case of treating the remains of a Universal Monarch?"

Buddha: "Ānanda, the procedure is as follows: The body of a Universal Monarch, after his decease, is wrapped up in new cloth which is made in the province of Kāsi. Over that wrapping there should be a wrapping of carded cotton-wool.[243] Over the cotton-wool wrapping, there should be another layer of wrapping with new cloth made in Kāsi. Then another layer of wrapping with cotton wool should be made. In this way, the body of the Universal Monarch is wrapped up in 500 pairs of cloth in successive layers and cotton wool. Then it is placed in an oil vat wrought with gold, and covered with a lid wrought with gold. Then it is placed upon a funeral pyre built of various kinds of scented wood and the body of the Universal Monarch is cremated. Then they build a shrine in memory of the Universal Monarch at the junction of the four highways. Ānanda, this is the procedure in the case of the remains of a Universal Monarch.

Ānanda, as is the procedure followed with regard to the relics of a Universal Monarch, so also should the procedure be followed with regard to the relics of

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[243] This is because cloth made in Kāsi is too fine to absorb oil and only cotton wool can absorb oil.

the Realised One. A relic shrine (*stūpa*) to the honour of the Realised One should be erected at the junction of the four highways. People will make offerings of flowers or incense or scented powder, or pay homage, or will reflect on the Buddha's greatness in front of the shrine, and for such deeds of devotion, those people will enjoy benefit and happiness for a long time.

Four Types of Person worthy of a Relic Shrine

Ānanda, there are four types or classes of persons who are worthy of honouring by a [1067] shrine in their memory. They are:

1. A Realised One, a Worthy One, a Perfectly Self-Awakened One.
2. A Paccekabuddha.
3. A noble disciple of a Realised One.
4. A Universal Monarch.

Ānanda, on account of what special benefit is a Realised One, the Arahat, Perfectly Self-Awakened, worthy of a shrine? Ānanda, a shrine, in honour of a Realised One, arouses in the pilgrims who visit it a keen sense of devotion, with the reverential thought: 'This shrine is in memory of the Arahat, Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddha.' Having reverentially recalled the memory of the Realised One, after the death and dissolution of their bodies, these pilgrims will be bound for fortunate destinations. They will be reborn in the Deva realm. Ānanda, it is on account of this special benefit that a Realised One, Arahat, Perfectly Self-Awakened, is worthy of a shrine.

Ānanda, on account of what special benefit is a Paccekabuddha worthy of a shrine? Ānanda, a shrine in honour of a Paccekabuddha arouses in the pilgrims who visit it a keen sense of devotion, with the reverential thought: 'This shrine is in memory of a Paccekabuddha who discovered the Four Noble Truths by himself without the guidance of any teacher.' Having reverentially recalled the memory of the Paccekabuddha, after the death and dissolution of their bodies, these pilgrims will be bound for fortunate destinations, they will be reborn in the Deva realm. Ānanda, it is on account of this special benefit that a Paccekabuddha is worthy of a shrine.

Ānanda, on account of what special benefit is a noble disciple (*ariya*) worthy of a shrine? Ānanda, a shrine in honour of a noble disciple (*ariya*) arouses in the

pilgrims who visit it a keen sense of devotion, with the reverential thought: 'This shrine is in memory of a noble disciple (*ariya*) of the Arahat, Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddha.' Having reverentially recalled the memory of the noble disciple (*ariya*), after the death and dissolution of their bodies, these pilgrims will be bound for fortunate destinations; they will be reborn in the Deva realm. Ānanda it is on account of this special benefit that a noble disciple (*ariya*) is worthy of a shrine.

Ānanda on account of what special benefit is a Universal Monarch worthy of a shrine? Ānanda, a shrine in honour of a Universal Monarch arouses in the pilgrims who visit it a keen sense of devotion, with the reverential thought: 'This shrine is in memory of a Universal Monarch who lived and ruled righteously.' Having reverentially recalled the memory of the Universal Monarch, after the death and dissolution of their bodies, these pilgrims will be bound for fortunate destinations; they will be reborn in the Deva realm. Ānanda, it is on account of this special benefit that a Universal Monarch is worthy of a shrine.

Ānanda, these are the four types or classes of persons who are worthy of a shrine." These were the questions by Ven. Ānanda and the detailed answers by the Buddha.

> In this connection, it might be asked: "Why is a Universal Monarch who lives and dies a lay person honoured by a shrine whereas a monastic, though yet a worldling, who is possessed of virtue, is not?"
>
> The answer is that the Buddha did not allow a shrine be built in honour of a virtuous monastic who is still a worldling because that would be too common a practice. For, if virtuous monastics were declared by the Buddha to be honoured by a shrine, even in Sri Lankā alone, a great many shrines could be built so that these shrines would be very common.
>
> A Universal Monarch is a very rare personage and a shrine built in his honour will be awe-inspiring. However, although a virtuous monastic, who is a worldling, is not honoured by a shrine, he is entitled to funeral rites on the same scales as the honour that is accorded to an Arahat at his Parinibbāna. [1068]

The Noble Qualities of Ven. Ānanda

After the Buddha had given detailed answers to Ven. Ānanda's queries, Ven. Ānanda thought to himself: "The Fortunate One has discoursed to me on the

four places which inspire spiritual urgency, and the benefits arising from pilgrimage to these places; he has answered me about monastic conduct regarding women; he has detailed to me the procedure about performing the last rites in honour of the Realised One; and he has explained to me about the four classes of persons worthy of a shrine. And just today the Realised One is going to realize Parinibbāna."

These thoughts made him miserable. He felt like crying but, remembering that it would not be proper to cry near the Buddha, he retired into the assembly chamber and leaning against the door-post, he wailed: "I am still training myself for the three higher paths, and my teacher who has been so compassionate to me, is about to pass away."

Then the Buddha asked the monastics: "Monastics, where is Ānanda?" – "Venerable sir," the monastics replied, "Ven. Ānanda has gone into the pavilion and is leaning against the door-post, wailing: 'I am still training myself for the three higher paths, and my teacher who has been so compassionate to me, is about to pass away!' "

Then the Buddha said to a monastic: "Go, monastic, say to Ānanda in my words: 'Friend Ānanda, the Teacher calls you.' " – Responding to that monastic's message, Ven. Ānanda went to the Buddha and after paying respects to him, sat in a suitable place. To Ven. Ānanda sitting there, the Buddha said: "Enough Ānanda, do not grieve, nor weep. Have I not previously told you that it is the very nature of things most near and dear to us that one must part with them somehow even while we are living, or when death divides us, or when we are on different planes of existence? Ānanda in this matter, how could one expect anything that has the nature of arising, of appearing, of being conditioned, and of dissolution, not to disintegrate? It is not possible for anyone to wish so.

For a long time, Ānanda, you have attended upon the Realised One faithfully, whether in his presence or not, with infinite kindness in deed, with the welfare and happiness of the Realised One at heart; faithfully, whether in his presence or not, with infinite kindness in words, with the welfare and happiness of the Realised One at heart; faithfully, whether in his presence or not, with infinite kindness in thought, with the welfare and benefit of the Realised One at heart. Ānanda, you have earned much merit. Apply yourself to the task of insight

meditation, and you will soon become an Arahat." The Buddha said this to console Ven. Ānanda.

> Ven. Ānanda's personal service to the Buddha with infinite kindness in deed included all bodily activities, such as preparing the water and toothbrushes for the Buddha's morning ablutions. His infinite kindness in words included all courteous, respectful communication with the Buddha such as saying: "Venerable sir, it is time for the Fortunate One to wash his face, and so on." Taken in another sense, it also included words of appreciation and gladness on hearing the Buddha's admonition. Infinite kindness in thought means after rising early and his personal cleanliness being attended to, Ānanda would sit in a secluded corner and wish the Buddha well: "May the Fortunate One be free from ailments, may he be free from harm, may he be at ease physically and mentally."

Then as if a strong man were to spread out the great earth that was folded, or as if a strong man were to smoothen the sky that was wrinkled, or as if a strong man were to push downwards Mount Cakkavaḷa, which is 164,000 leagues high, or as if a strong man were to lift up Mount Meru which is 168,000 leagues high, or as if a strong man were to shake the stem of the Jambu Rose Apple Tree [1069] which is 100 leagues high and 100 leagues wide, in order to incite wonder in the hearts of his audience.

Regarding the meritorious qualities of Ven. Ānanda, the Buddha spoke thus to the monastics: "Monastics, the attendant monastics of the Arahat, Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddhas of the past were as accomplished and devoted as my attendant Ānanda.

Monastics, the attendant monastics of the Arahat, Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddhas of the future will be as accomplished and devoted as my attendant Ānanda.

Monastics, Ānanda is wise and intelligent. He knows: 'This is the proper time for the male monastics to approach and see the Realised One, or this is the proper time for the female monastics to approach and see the Realised One, or this is the proper time for the male lay disciples to approach and see the Realised One, or this is the proper time for female lay disciples to approach and see the Realised One, or this is the proper time for the king, the king's ministers, or the teachers of other faiths or their adherents to approach and see the Realised One.' "

Note that the Buddha does not say anything about other Buddhas of the present time because in no other world-element was another Buddha of infinite attributes in existence.

Four Marvellous Qualities of Ānanda

"Monastics, Ānanda has four marvellous and astounding qualities, they are:

1. If, monastics, a company of male monastics should visit Ānanda, they are gladdened on seeing him. If Ānanda should give them a discourse on the doctrine, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of his discourse, Ānanda remains silent, the company of monastics is still unsatiated. This is one marvellous quality.

2. If, monastics, a company of female monastics should visit Ānanda, they are gladdened on seeing him. If Ānanda, should give them a discourse on the doctrine, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of his discourse, Ānanda remains silent, the company of female monastics is still unsatiated. This is another marvellous quality.

3. If, monastics, a company of male lay disciples should visit Ānanda, they are gladdened on seeing him. If Ānanda should give them a discourse on the doctrine, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of the discourse, Ānanda remains silent, the company of male lay disciples is still unsatiated. This is another marvellous quality.

4. If, monastics, a company of female lay disciples should visit Ānanda, they are gladdened on seeing him. If Ānanda should give them a discourse on the doctrine, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of his discourse, Ānanda remains silent, the company of female lay disciples is still unsatiated. This is another marvellous quality.

Monastics, these are the four marvellous and astounding qualities in Ānanda."

All the four categories of disciples who visited the Buddha also visited Ven. Ānanda. Many visited him because he had a reputation of being absolutely dignified in bearing, pleasing in appearance, of wide learning, and was the pride of the Saṅgha. When they saw him in person they were gladdened because all the good things they had heard about Ven. Ānanda were found to be true. Ven. Ānanda would give a discourse fitting to each category of disciples. His talk was mostly courteous exchange of personal interest.

To a company of male monastics, he would ask: "Friends, are you doing well in health? Are you able to apply yourselves to the monastic practice with proper attention? Are you able to do your duties towards your preceptors?"

To a company of female monastics, he would ask: "Sister, do you observe well the eight weighty rules (*garu-dhamma*)?"

To male lay disciples who came to see him, he would not ask such trite questions as: "Supporters, how is your headache? How [1070] is your stomach functioning now? How are your children or relatives doing in health? etc." Rather, he would ask: "Supporters, do you remain firmly committed to the Three Treasures? Do you observe the five precepts well? Do you keep the Observance Day precepts on the eighth days of each month? Do you look after your parents? Do you minister to the needs of virtuous ascetics and Brahmins?" These words, that monastics are obliged to say to those who visited them, are the usual words that Ven. Ānanda used when male lay disciples visited him. With female lay disciples also, Ānanda's courteous words are of a similar nature.

Four Marvellous Qualities of a Universal Monarch

"Monastics, a Universal Monarch has four marvellous and astounding qualities. They are:

1. If, monastics, a company of the ruling class should visit the Universal Monarch, they are gladdened by the sight of him. If the Universal Monarch should give them a discourse, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of his discourse, the Universal Monarch remains silent, the company of the ruling class is still unsatiated. This is one marvellous quality.

2. If, monastics, a company of Brahmins should visit the Universal Monarch, they are gladdened by the sight of him. If the Universal Monarch should give them a discourse, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of the discourse, the Universal Monarch remains silent, the company of Brahmins is still unsatiated. This is another marvellous quality.

3. If, monastics, a company of rich householders should visit the Universal Monarch, they are gladdened by the sight of him. If the Universal Monarch should give them a discourse, they are gladdened by the

discourse. Even when, at the end of the discourse, the Universal Monarch remains silent, the company of rich householders is still unsatiated. This is another marvellous quality.

4. If, monastics, a company of recluses should visit the Universal Monarch, they are gladdened by the sight of him. If the Universal Monarch should give them a discourse, they are gladdened by the discourse. Even when, at the end of the discourse, the Universal Monarch remains silent, the company of recluses is still unsatiated. This is another marvellous quality.

These are the four marvellous qualities of a Universal Monarch."

The ruling class, who visit the Universal Monarch includes both crowned kings as well as uncrowned kings. They visit him because they have heard the good reputation of the Universal Monarch, such as: "The Universal Monarch is attractive and dignified in appearance, he roams his realms by air to administer peace and justice, and he rules by justice alone." And when they see him in person they are gladdened because all the good things they have heard about the Universal Monarch are found to be true. When the ruling class visits him, the Universal Monarch would ask them: "How is it, friends, do you abide by the ten points of kingly conduct? Do you protect and preserve the time honoured traditions of ancient rulers?"

To the Brahmin visitors, he would ask: "How is it, masters, do you teach the Vedas? Do the close pupils of yours learn the Vedas? Are you being honoured with sacrifices, are you being offered new cloth, with milk-cows of variegated colours?"

To the rich house-holders who visits him, he would ask: "How is it, [1071] men, are you free from oppression by the rulers with unjust sentences or unjust taxes? Do you get regular rainfall? Are your harvests bountiful?"

To the recluses who visit him, he would ask: "How is it, recluses, are you being offered your requisites without trouble? Are you arduous in your religious undertakings?"

King Mahā Sudassana

[The following is based on the Discourse about King Mahā Suddasana (*Mahā-sudassana-sutta*, DN 17) and its commentary.]

After the Buddha had extolled the virtues of Ven. Ānanda, he said to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, pray do not realize Parinibbāna in this insignificant little town of Kusinārā. Venerable sir, there are many great cities, such as Campā, Rājagaha, Sāvatthī, Sāketa, Kosambī and Bārāṇasī. Let the Fortunate One realize Parinibbāna in one of them. In these great cities, there are many rich nobles, many rich Brahmins and many rich householders who are devoted to the Realised One. They will carry out the task of honouring the relics of the Realised One."

"Do not say so, Ānanda. Do not say: 'This insignificant little town,' Ānanda. Ānanda, as it happened in the long, long past, there was a king named Mahā Sudassana, a Universal Monarch, a Righteous Ruler over the four quarters of the four island continents bounded by the four oceans, a conqueror of all enemies, holding unchallenged sway over his territory, and endowed with the seven treasures, the customary boon of the Universal Monarch. And Ānanda, this Kusinārā town was then King Sudassana's capital city named Kusāvatī. From east to west, it was twelve leagues long, and from north to south, it was seven leagues broad.

Ānanda, the capital city of Kusāvatī was prosperous and flourishing, populous and thronging with people, and well provisioned. Just as, Ānanda, the celestial city of Āḷakamandā, the seat of King Vessavaṇa of the Four Great Kings was prosperous and flourishing, populous with Devas and thronging with all sorts of Yakkhas, and was well provisioned. So, Ānanda, the capital city of Kusāvatī was prosperous and flourishing, populous and thronging with all sorts of people and was well-provisioned.

The capital city of Kusāvatī, Ānanda, was never silent by day nor by night, resounding with ten sounds: the noise of elephants, horses, carriages, big drums, tabors, lutes, singing, conches, music-beats with little gongs and cymbals, and of cries of: "Eat, drink, and chew."

> The ten sounds signify the peace and prosperity of Kusāvatī. In some other towns, instead of the ten sounds, there were unpleasant sounds such as: "Dispose of the garbage, bring pick axes, bring baskets; or let us move to some other place, bring provisions, bring cooked meals; or make ready your shields and weapons, prepare yourselves for war!" But in Kusāvatī such unpleasant sounds were never heard. Only pleasant welcome sounds of invitation to feasts and festivals were heard there.

The Buddha discoursed on Kusāvatī, the royal city, by beginning with: "Ānanda, the royal city of Kusāvatī was surrounded by seven rings of fortifications, etc.," which, lasted for two recitals[244] at the Council.[245]

Having concluded this long discourse on the grandeur of Kusāvatī, the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Go you, Ānanda, enter Kusinārā and announce to the Malla princes of Kusinārā: 'O Vāseṭṭhas,[246] tonight, in the third watch of the night, the Parinibbāna of the Realised One will take place. Come, Vāseṭṭhas, come! Do not let yourselves regret it later with the thought: "The Realised One passed away in our territory, and yet we failed to take the opportunity of paying our respects at his last hour." ' "

"Very well, venerable sir," said Ven. Ānanda, and went into Kusinārā with a monastic companion.

In this connection, it might be asked: "Did the Malla princes not know about the arrival of the Fortunate One at Kusinārā?" The answer is, they knew it, of course. For, wherever the Buddha went, there were always some Devas who were devoted to [1072] him and the lay disciples, heralding the glad tidings that resounded in the neighbourhood. On that particular evening, the Malla princes were engaged in a meeting so that they could not go and welcome the Buddha. The Buddha sent Ven. Ānanda at that late hour because there was no monastery built for him in the Sāla grove, and the Malla princes would have to provide shelter for the big company of monastics there. There was also the consideration that the Malla princes might, if not informed at that late hour, feel sad later that they had no news of the Buddha at his last moments.

The Mallas pay their Last Respects

When Ven. Ānanda entered the city of Kusinārā, the Malla princes were holding a meeting at the Council Hall. Ven. Ānanda went up to them and announced, as enjoined by the Buddha: "Vāseṭṭhas, tonight, in the third watch of the night, the Parinibbāna of the Realised One will take place. Come, Vāseṭṭhas, come! Do not

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[244] [A recital (*bhāṇavāra*) is said to be equal to 250 siloka verses of 32 syllables, or 8,000 syllables in all.]

[245] See the Discourse about King Mahā Suddasana (*Mahā-sudassana-sutta*, DN 17).

[246] This is the clan name of the Mallas.

let yourselves regret it later with the thought: 'The Realised One passed away in our territory, and yet we failed to take the opportunity of paying our respects at his last hour.' "

On hearing the message brought by Ven. Ānanda, the Malla princes, their sons and daughters, their daughters-in-law, and their wives were grief-stricken and sick at heart, and wailed, their hair dishevelled, their arms upraised; they flung themselves down, rolling on the floor in all directions, all the while lamenting: "All too soon is the Fortunate One going to realize Parinibbāna! All too soon is the Gracious One going to realize Parinibbāna! All too soon is the Visionary going to vanish from the world!"

Then the Malla princes, their sons and daughters, their daughters-in-law and their wives were grief-stricken and sick at heart, and they went to the Sāla grove where they approached Ven. Ānanda. Then it occurred to Ven. Ānanda thus: "If I were to let the Mallas of Kusinārā pay homage to the Fortunate One one by one, the night will have passed into dawn before all of them had finished. It would be well if I should group them together in families and cause them, family-wise, to pay homage to the Fortunate One, by announcing: 'Venerable sir, the Malla prince named such and such with children, wife, ministers and retinue, pays homage at the feet of the Fortunate One.' "

Accordingly, he grouped the Mallas of Kusinārā in families and caused them family-wise, to pay homage to the Buddha, announcing: "Venerable sir, the Malla prince named such and such, with children, wife, ministers, and retinue, pays homage at the feet of the Fortunate One," thus finishing the whole event even before the end of the first watch of the night.

Subhadda, the Wandering Ascetic

At that time Subhadda, a wandering ascetic, was staying at Kusinārā. He had heard the news: "Tonight, in the last watch of the night, the Parinibbāna of the ascetic Gotama will take place." Then it occurred to Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, thus: "I have already heard wandering ascetics, teachers, and teachers of teachers, declare that the Arahat, Perfectly Self-Awakened Realised Ones arise in the world only once in a very long time. Tonight, in the last watch of the night, the Parinibbāna of the Realised One, the ascetic Gotama, will take place. A certain problem, an uncertainty, has arisen in my mind, and I am fully

confident that the ascetic Gotama will be able to teach the doctrine to me so that this uncertainty is cleared."

> Before we discuss the previous existence of Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, it is useful to know that there are three Subhaddas connected with the life story of Buddha Gotama. There is Subhadda, son of Upaka and Cāpā. And there is Subhadda the monastic, who entered the Saṅgha after being a householder, who after the decease of the Buddha, was one of the company of monastics that accompanied Ven. Mahā Kassapa from Pāvā to Kusinārā, [1073] and who had the affront to declare that since the Buddha was no more, monastics were free to conduct themselves as they pleased. The Subhadda in our story here, is a wandering ascetic, not a naked ascetic, who came of a well-known and rich Brahmin family, who was the last person that was Awakened though the direct teaching of Buddha Gotama.

The reason for Subhadda's idea to meet the Buddha at the eleventh hour may be due to his past merit which had the potential and entitled him to gain Awakening only at such a late moment.

Subhadda's Previous Existence

The peculiar nature of Subhadda's past merit will be discussed now. In one of their previous existences, there were two farmers who were brothers and both were charitable. But the elder brother had a desire to give in generosity at every stage of the cultivation of paddy which had nine different stages. Thus, when the paddy plants were being sown, he set aside some of the seeds for giving away in generosity, which he cooked and made a seed-rice offering of them; when the paddy crop began to turn into rice, he consulted with his younger brother to extract the milky juice of the formative rice and give away in generosity. The idea was not acceptable by the younger brother who said: "Brother, why do you wish to spoil the young rice?"

Thereupon, the elder brother, to be able to carry out his desire, divided the field equally with the younger brother and extracted the milky juice of the forming rice from his portion of the field, boiled it with ghee and clear oil from sesame, and gave away in generosity as the earliest-stage rice offering. When the rice took solid grain shape, he pounded it and prepared soft rice-flakes offering. When it was time for harvesting, he made harvesting-time rice offering. When bundles of rice plants were made, he selected the earliest bound plants into bundle-time rice offering. When the bundles of rice plants were piled up on the

threshing ground, he made the rice from the earliest-piled bundles into bundled-heaped rice offering. When the threshing of the bundles began, he selected the first bundles to be threshed, took the rice and made an offering of threshing-time rice offering. After the rice grains were collected from the threshing floor and heaped up, he selected the earliest samples of the heap and made a paddy-heaped rice offering. When the rice grains were put into the granary, he took the earliest samples and made a granary-time rice offering. In that manner, he made rice offerings of rice for every cultivating season.

As for the younger brother, he made his rice offering only after the harvested rice was garnered.

In their last existences, the elder brother was reborn as Koṇḍañña in the time of Buddha Gotama. When the Buddha viewed the world, thinking: "Who would deserve the privilege of hearing the first discourse?" he saw Koṇḍañña who in his previous existence had made nine various offerings of rice for every cultivating season. Therefore, Koṇḍañña, one of the five ascetics, deserved to have the privilege of hearing the first discourse entitled the Discourse setting the Dhamma Wheel Turning (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*, SN 56.11). Thus Koṇḍañña, who was the first human disciple to realize the Dhamma, was called Aññāsi Koṇḍañña, 'Koṇḍañña who has understood,' who became a Stream-enterer along with 800 million Brahmas at the end of the first discourse.

As for the younger brother, as the result of making late offerings, the thought of seeing the Buddha came to his mind only at the last hour.[247] When the time to reap the fruit of his previous merit arrived at last, Subhadda remembered the Buddha. He lost no time to go to the Sāla grove. He approached Ven. Ānanda and said: "Ven. Ānanda, I have heard from elderly wandering ascetics, who are teachers, teachers of teachers, that the Arahat, Perfectly Self-Awakened Realised Ones arise in the world only once in a very long time. Tonight, in the last watch of the night, the Parinibbāna of the ascetic Gotama will take place. A certain problem, an uncertainty has arisen in my mind, and I am fully confident that the ascetic Gotama will be able to teach the doctrine to me so that this [1074] uncertainty is cleared. Ven. Ānanda, pray let me have the chance of seeing the ascetic Gotama!"

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[247] See the commentary to DN 16.

Thereupon, Ven. Ānanda reflected thus: "These ascetics, who believe in doctrines other than the Fortunate One's teaching, cling to their own views. If the Fortunate One were to explain to this Subhadda at much length to make him forsake his own view, it would only strain the bodily and vocal energies of the Fortunate One, and Subhadda is not likely to renounce his own view. As it is, the Fortunate One is already weary." So he said: "Friend Subhadda, this is out of the question. The Fortunate One is weary. Do not pester or trouble him."

On that reply, Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, bethought himself: "Ven. Ānanda is withholding his assent. But one must be patient to get what one wants." And so he said for the second time: "Ven. Ānanda …" Ven. Ānanda refused again. For the third time Subhadda made his appeal as before. And for the third time Ven. Ānanda refused again.

The Buddha overheard the conversation between the wanderer Subhadda and Ven. Ānanda. Since he had made this exhausting journey to Kusinārā for the sake of Subhadda, he called to Ven. Ānanda: "Ānanda, it is not fitting to stop him. Do not prevent Subhadda from seeing me. Ānanda, let Subhadda have the opportunity to see the Realised One. Whatever Subhadda shall ask of me, he will ask for his information, and not for harassing me. When I answer what he asks, he will readily understand my answer." Then Ven. Ānanda said: "Go, friend Subhadda, the Fortunate One has given you permission."

Then Subhadda approached the Buddha and offered courteous greetings to him. After exchanging memorable words of felicitation with him, Subhadda sat in a suitable place. Then he addressed the Buddha thus: "Reverend Gotama, there are ascetics and Brahmins who have a large following, who have adherent sects, who are leaders of their sects, who are renowned, who are proponents of their own doctrines, and who are held in esteem by many people, such as, Pūraṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambala, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta and Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta. Do all of them understand what they maintain as the truth? Or do all of them have no understanding of what they maintain as the truth? Or do some of them understand the truth and some of them do not?"

Subhadda's question is essentially about Buddhahood. He asked: "Reverend sir, are Pūraṇa Kassapa and the five other religious leaders, who claim to be all-knowing Buddhas, and who are held in high esteem by many people, really All-

knowing Buddhas? Or are none of them Buddhas? Or are some of them Buddhas while others are not? For if they are really Buddhas the doctrines they preach must lead to liberation from the round of existences. Are all of their doctrines conducive to liberation? Or are none of their doctrines conducive to liberation? Or are some of their doctrines conducive to liberation while others are not?"

Now, the Buddha's intention in going to Kusinārā was to discourse on the doctrine to the Malla princes in the first watch of the night, to discourse on the doctrine to Subhadda in the middle watch of the night, to give admonition to the Saṅgha in the third watch of the night, and then to realize Parinibbāna at the approach of dawn. In that tight schedule, it would be of no benefit to Subhadda to explain to him about whether the doctrines of the six religious leaders were conducive to liberation or not, and there would be no time for such a discussion. Therefore the Buddha chose to teach Subhadda the Middle Way as contained in the noble Eightfold Path which could lead him to liberation. Accordingly he said: "Subhadda, do not ask that. Leave aside the question whether all of those religious leaders know the truth, whether none of them know the truth, or whether some of them know the truth, while others do not. Subhadda, I shall expound to you the good doctrine leading to Nibbāna. Listen and pay careful attention. I shall speak in full." [1075] "Very well, Revered Sir," said Subhadda, the wandering ascetic.

And the Buddha gave this discourse: "Subhadda, in whatever righteous teaching, the noble Eightfold Path is not found, therein there is not found an ascetic (*samaṇa*) of the first stage, a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) monastic, nor an ascetic of the second stage, a Once-Returner (*Sakadāgāmī*) monastic, nor an ascetic of the third stage, a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*) monastic, nor an ascetic of the fourth stage, an Arahat.

Subhadda, in whatever righteous teaching the noble Eightfold Path is found, therein is found an ascetic of the first stage, a Stream-enterer, an ascetic of the second stage, a Once-Returner, an ascetic of the third stage, a Non-returner, and an ascetic of the fourth stage, an Arahat.

Subhadda, in this righteous teaching of mine, there is the noble Eightfold Path. In this teaching alone is found an ascetic of the first stage, an ascetic of the second stage, an ascetic of the third stage, and an ascetic of the fourth stage, an Arahat.

All other creeds are devoid of the twelve categories of monastics who comprehend the truth: The four noble ones (*ariya*) who have attained the paths; the four noble ones (*ariya*) who have attained the fruitions; and the four trainees who are cultivating insight to attain the four stages of path-knowledge. Subhadda, if these twelve monastics practise and pass on the teaching rightly, the world will not be void of Arahats.

Subhadda, at the age of 29, I renounced the world and became an ascetic to seek the all-knowing truth, the Awakening as a Buddha. It is over 50 years now, since I became an ascetic. Outside of this teaching of mine, there is no one who cultivates insight which is the prelude to the noble path, there is also no ascetic of the first stage; there is also no ascetic of the second stage; there is also no ascetic of the third stage; there is also no ascetic of the fourth stage, an Arahat.

All other creeds are devoid of the twelve categories of monastics mentioned above who comprehend the truth. Subhadda, if these twelve monastics practise and pass on the teaching rightly, the world will not be void of Arahats."

Subhadda ordains and becomes an Arahat

When this was said by the Buddha, Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, said: "Venerable sir! Excellent is the Dhamma! Venerable sir! Excellent is the Dhamma! It is, venerable sir, as if that which had been turned over has been turned up, or as if that which has been hidden is revealed, or as if a lost traveller is told the way, or as if a lamp is lit and held up in a dark place so that those with eyes may see visible objects, even so has the Fortunate One shown the Dhamma to me in various ways. Venerable sir I, Subhadda, take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dhamma, I take refuge in the Saṅgha. Venerable sir, may I be ordained into the Saṅgha in the presence of the Fortunate One; may I receive full admission into the Saṅgha."

When Subhadda made this appeal, the Buddha said: "Subhadda, if a person, who has been a believer in another faith, wishes to receive ordination and admission into this Saṅgha as a monastic, he has to live under probation for four months, and if at the end of the four months, the monastics are satisfied with him, he will be ordained and admitted into the Saṅgha. But in this matter, I recognize there is a difference in individuals, and whether a person needs to go on probation or not."

Subhadda replied: “Venerable sir, if a person, having been a believer in another faith and wishing to receive ordination and admission into the Saṅgha as a monastic, has to live under [1076] probation for four months, and if at the end of the four months the monastics are satisfied and grant him ordination and grant him admission, I’m prepared to live under probation even for four years. And at the end of four years, if the monastics are satisfied with me, let them grant me ordination into the Saṅgha and raise me to the status of a monastic.”

Then the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: “Well, then, Ānanda, let Subhadda be ordained into the Saṅgha.” – “Very well, venerable sir,” Ānanda replied. Then Subhadda said to Ven. Ānanda: “Friend Ānanda, how fortunate you all are, what a boon you all have, that you all have been personally conferred by the Fortunate One the status of close discipleship.”

> Here the actual words used by Subhadda were: “That you all have been sprinkled by, or anointed by, the sprinkling of close discipleship.” This idea of being dubbed a close disciple by the head of the religious Saṅgha was, in the religious system of the wandering ascetics, a great honour and privilege.

Then Ven. Ānanda took Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, to an appropriate place where his head was wetted with water out of a water container, and he was taught the method of reflecting on the loathsomeness of the body, particularly the group of five parts, or aspects, of the body with skin as the fifth. With the shaving of the head and the face, robing with monastic robes, and administering of the refuges, performed in succession, he was ordained. After that Subhadda was brought before the Buddha.

Then the Buddha caused the novice Subhadda to be admitted into the Saṅgha as a full-fledged monastic (*bhikkhu*) and then taught him the appropriate method of meditation. Ven. Subhadda sought seclusion in the Sāla grove, went into meditation in the walking posture alone, by walking up and down. With intent mindfulness, and striving arduously, he became an Arahat during that very night, and he was endowed with the four discriminative knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*). Then he went to the Buddha and sat there in a worshipping posture. Ven. Subhadda became one of the Arahats, and he was the last one to become an Arahat in the presence of the Buddha.

> Herein, "the last to become an Arahat in the presence of the Buddha," may mean any one of the following: 1) One who was ordained into the Saṅgha during the time of the Buddha, who was admitted into the Saṅgha as a monastic after the Buddha's decease and who learnt insight meditation, and became an Arahat; 2) one who was ordained and admitted into the Saṅgha as a monastic during the time of the Buddha who learnt insight-meditation after the Buddha's decease and became an Arahat; 3) one who was ordained and admitted into the Saṅgha as a monastic who learnt insight-meditation, and became an Arahat after the Buddha's decease.
>
> Ven. Subhadda was one who was ordained and admitted into the Saṅgha, who learnt insight-meditation and became an Arahat during the time of the Buddha. Thus he was the last of those who became an Arahat in the presence of the Buddha.

Subhadda, according to the Dhamma Verses Commentary

What is related above about Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, is according to the Long Discourse about the Emancipation (*Mahā-parinibbāna-sutta*, DN 16) and the commentary thereon. The story of Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, as described in the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (Dhp 254-255), is briefly related below: While the Buddha was lying on the couch, his death-bed, in the Sāla grove, Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, thought to himself: "I have referred my three questions to wandering ascetics but have not done so to the ascetic Gotama because he is young. Now, the ascetic Gotama is about to pass away. If I do not ask my questions to him, I shall have cause to regret later for failure to do so."

Musing thus, he went to the Sāla grove where the Buddha was staying and requested Ven. Ānanda to gain an audience with the [1077] Buddha. Ven. Ānanda refused as related above. However, the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Ānanda, do not prevent him. Let him put his question to me." Subhadda was accordingly admitted into the Buddha's private quarters which was screened off from outside. He sat at the foot of the Buddha's couch and addressed him thus: "How is it, Revered Gotama?

1. Is it possible for a track to be present in the sky?
2. Is it possible for ascetics who can quell the defilements to be present outside of the teaching of Buddha Gotama?

3. Is it possible for any conditioned thing to remain permanent?

The Buddha answered the above three questions in the negative in the following verses (Dhp 254-255):

> *Ākāse va padaṁ natthi, samaṇo natthi bāhire,*
> *papañcābhiratā pajā, nippapañcā Tathāgatā.*
>
> Subhadda, in the sky, there is no track. Even so, outside the Buddha's teaching, there is no monastic of the twelve categories who can quell the defilements. All sentient beings, be they Brahmas, Devas, or humans take delight in the three factors that tend to prolong Saṁsāra: craving, conceit and wrong view. All the Buddhas are free from these factors, having overcome them at the time of Awakening at the foot of the Bodhi tree.
>
> *Ākāse va padaṁ natthi, samaṇo natthi bāhire,*
> *saṅkhārā sassatā natthi, natthi Buddhānam-iñjitaṁ.*
>
> Subhadda, in the sky there is no track. Even so, outside the Buddha's teaching, there is no monastic of the twelve categories who can quell the defilements. There is no conditioned thing, such as the five aggregates, that remains permanent. All the Buddhas are unperturbed either by craving, conceit, or wrong view.

At the end of the discourse Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, became a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-magga*). And the audience that were present also benefited from the discourse.

> In this matter the two stories may be recompiled in this way: Subhadda, the wandering ascetic, posed his question as contained in the Long Discourse about the Emancipation (*Mahā-parinibbāna-sutta*, DN 16), and after listenening to the Buddha's answer to it, he further asked the three questions as mentioned in the Dhamma Verses commentary. After hearing the answers thereto, he became a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*). Then he became a Buddha's disciple, was admitted into the Saṅgha, devoted himself to the threefold training, and became an Arahat before the Buddha realized Parinibbāna.

The Buddha's Last Words

After Subhadda had become the last one to become an Arahat, the Buddha gave admonition, his last one, which he addressed to Ven. Ānanda, but it was also

directed towards the large gathering of monastics: "Ānanda, it may be that some of you will think: 'The doctrine propounded by the teacher is bereft of its propounder; we have now no teacher.' But, Ānanda, despondency of such a nature is uncalled for. The doctrine and discipline which I have taught and prescribed for you over these 45 years, is to be your teacher when I am gone.

Whereas Ānanda, monastics now address each other by the term friend (*āvuso*), irrespective of seniority, they should not address each other like that after I am gone. A senior monastic should address a junior monastic either by his given monastic name [1078] or by his family name, or by the title of friend (*āvuso*). And a junior monastic should address a senior monastic by the title of venerable sir (*bhante* or *āyasmā*)."

Ānanda, after I am gone, the Saṅgha may abolish the lesser and minor rules of the discipline, if it wishes to.

Ānanda, after I am gone, let the supreme penalty be imposed upon the monastic Channa."

"But, venerable sir, what is the supreme penalty?"

"Ānanda, let Channa say what he likes. No monastic should make any remarks on what he says, nor should they admonish him, nor check him."

> With regard to this first point: The Buddha means to say: "Ānanda, while I am living, I have taught you the Discipline,[248] covering the seven classes of offences with their respective background cases, such as: 'This is an offence of a light nature; this is an offence of a grievous nature; this is a retrievable offence, this is an irretrievable offence; this is a definitely demeritorious offence, this is merely a nominal offence; this is an offence redeemable with the pardoning by the aggrieved party; this is an offence redeemable with the pardoning by the sect of monastics concerned; this is an offence redeemable by the Saṅgha as a body, etc.' All these in the Discipline will, after I am gone, remain as your teacher, discharge the function of the teacher himself.

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[248] In present day context these are the five books: the two Analyses (*Vibhaṅga*), the Long Division (*Mahā-vagga*), the Short Division (*Cūḷa-vagga*), the Chapters (*Khandhaka*), the Summary (*Parivāra*), together with their commentaries.

Ānanda, while I am living, I have taught you the Discourses encompassing the thirty-seven constituents of Awakening, comprising the four methods of steadfast mindfulness, the four right endeavours, the four bases of psychic power, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven factors of Awakening, the eight constituents of the path, together with their details. All these, under the Discourses will, after I am gone, remain as your teacher, discharging the function of the teacher himself.

Ānanda, while I am living, I have taught you the Abhidhamma specifying in minute detail: 'These are the five aggregates, the twelve sense spheres, the eighteen elements, the four truths, the twenty-two faculties, the nine root causes, the four nutriments, the seven kinds of contact, the seven kinds of sensation, the seven kinds of perception, the seven kinds of volition, the seven classes of consciousness. And, of these phenomena, which I have taught you, classifications enumerating them under phenomena pertaining to the sense sphere, to the form realm, to the formless realm; phenomena that are included in the round of resultants; phenomena that are mundane, phenomena that are supermundane.' Thus, beginning from an enumeration of the phenomena, such as the aggregates (*khandha*), the edifice of the Abhidhamma has been built up for you with an infinite variety of methods of analyses and syntheses comprising the Conditional Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*). All these, under the Abhidhamma will, after I am gone, remain as your teacher, discharging the function of the teacher himself.

These doctrines that I have taught you over 45 Rains Retreat (*vassa*), constituting the Dhamma,[249] number 84,000 units. These 84,000 units of Dhamma factors are still with you. The Realised One is the teacher that will not be there any longer. While I am living, you are under the guidance and supervision of only one teacher; when I am gone, these 84,000 units of the Dhamma factors, which can be called the 84,000 teachers, will guide you, supervise you on my behalf." Thus the Buddha admonished and consoled the monastics.

Under the next point, the Buddha instructed the rule of social conduct among monastics.

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[249] In the present context these are the Three Baskets (*Piṭaka*), the Five Collections (*Nikāya*), or the traditonal nine divisions.

> Under the following point, the Buddha did not give an unequivocal [1079] directive to the effect that lesser and minor rules of the Discipline be abolished. Instead, he left the option to do so to the Saṅgha. Why did he leave the matter in an equivocal state? The answer is: He saw the strength of conviction and the strength of wisdom in Ven. Mahā Kassapa. The Buddha saw that even if he were to give an unequivocal directive on the matter, the Saṅgha, in the council headed by Ven. Mahā Kassapa, would not agree to abolish any rules, even the lesser and minor ones.

After the Buddha had said these words to Ven. Ānanda, he addressed the monastics thus: "Monastics, in case there should be any uncertainty or misgiving in any one of you regarding the Buddha, or the Dhamma, or the Saṅgha, or the path leading to Nibbāna, or the noble practice, ask me questions, and do not leave an occasion for regret later, with the thought: 'We were there together with the Fortunate One, and yet we failed to clear our doubts by asking him our questions.' "

When the Buddha said this, the monastics remained silent. He asked a second time, but the monastics remained silent. When asked for a third time, the monastics also remained silent. Thereupon, he said to them: "It may be, monastics, that you do not ask questions because you have deference for the Fortunate One, thinking: 'We all are monastic disciples under the Fortunate One, we owe the four requisites to the Fortunate One, we have had no uncertainty about him, and yet it is not proper for us to have uncertainty about him at this last moment.' Monastics, if that is so, then let each one tell his companion about his uncertainty or misgiving." And still the monastics were silent.

Ven. Ānanda said to the Buddha: "Wonderful it is, venerable sir! Astounding it is, venerable sir! I believe that in this assembly of monastics there is not a single monastic who has uncertainty or misgiving regarding the Buddha, or the Dhamma, or the Saṅgha, or the path, or the practice."

And the Buddha said: "Ānanda, you say this out of faith. But, as for the Realised One, it is a matter of knowledge that, in this assembly of monastics, there is not a single monastic who has uncertainty or misgiving regarding the Buddha, or the Dhamma, or the Saṅgha, or the path, or the practice.

Ānanda, amongst these 500 monastics, even the least accomplished one is a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), not liable to be reborn in the four miserable realms,

but is destined to gain the three higher paths.[250] Then the Buddha said to the monastics as his last admonition:

> *Handa dāni, bhikkhave, āmantayāmi vo,*
> *vaya-dhammā saṅkharā, appamādena sampādetha.*
>
> Now, monastics, I say this as my last exhortation: Decay is inherent in all compounded things, strive with heedfulness to complete the task.

This was the Buddha's last exhortation. This was given even as he was on his death-bed. It is a most significant compression of all that he had taught over 45 years into just one word, heedfulness (*appamāda*). [1080]

The Buddha's Parinibbāna

After the Buddha had uttered these words about striving with heedfulness (*appamādena sampādetha*), no more words were uttered. The whole Sāla grove fell silent. The Buddha was then engaged in mental activity only, preparing himself to realize utter cessation through passing away. His mind was now purely absorbed in meditation.

First, the Buddha entered into the first fine material absorption (*rūpāvacara-kriyā-paṭhama-jhāna*). Rising from the first absorption, he entered into the second absorption. Rising from the second absorption, he entered into the third absorption. Rising from the third absorption, he entered into the fourth fine material absorption.

Rising from the fourth absorption, he entered and became absorbed in the non-material absorption of the sphere of infinity of space (*arūpāvacara-kriyā-ākāsānañcāyatana-samāpatti*). Rising from the absorption of the sphere of infinity of space, he entered and became absorbed in the sphere of the infinity of consciousness (*viññāṇañcāyatana-samāpatti*). Rising from the absorption of the sphere of infinity of consciousness, he entered and became absorbed in the sphere of nothingness (*ākiñcañāyatana-samāpatti*). Rising from the absorption of the sphere of nothingness, he entered and became absorbed in the sphere of neither-consciousness-nor-non-consciousness (*nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana-samāpatti*). Rising from the absorption of the sphere of neither-consciousness-

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[250] This was said with Ven. Ānanda in mind.

nor-non-consciousness, he entered and became absorbed in cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*), so-called because consciousness and sensation cease during the absorption.

While the Buddha was absorbed in cessation, there was no breathing. When Ānanda noticed the stoppage of breathing, he was alarmed and asked Ven. Anuruddha: "Venerable sir, has the Fortunate One passed away?" Ven. Anuruddha explained to Ānanda: "No, friend, the Fortunate One is only in the absorption of cessation which is marked by a complete cessation of consciousness and sensation."

> "How did Ven. Anuruddha know that the Fortunate One was absorbed in cessation?" Ven. Anuruddha was entering and remaining absorbed in the first absorption (*jhāna*) throughout the absorptions of formless realm absorption along with every step that the Buddha went through, entering and rising from each absorption, up to the absorption of the sphere of neither-consciousness-nor-non-consciousness. Only when the Buddha became absorbed in cessation, Anuruddha did not join him at this stage. Therefore, he knew that the Buddha was in the absorption of cessation and he knew that during this kind of absorption death never takes place.

Then the Buddha, rising from the absorption of cessation, entered and became absorbed in the sphere of neither-consciousness-nor-non-consciousness. Rising from the absorption of the sphere of neither-consciousness-nor-non-consciousness, he entered and became absorbed in the sphere of nothingness. Rising from the absorption of the sphere of nothingness, he entered and became absorbed in the sphere of infinite consciousness. Rising from the absorption of the sphere of infinite consciousness, he entered and became absorbed in the sphere of infinite space. Rising from the absorption of the sphere of infinite space, he entered into the fourth fine material absorption. Rising from the fourth absorption, he entered into the third absorption. Rising from the third absorption, he entered into the second absorption. Rising from the second absorption, he entered into the first absorption.

> A few technical details:
>
> The Buddha entered upon the first fine-material absorption with the following 24 objects of meditation:
>
> 1. 10 concepts of loathsomeness.

2. 8 concepts of the preliminary mental objects (*kasiṇa*).

3. The concept of the corporeality group which is the mental object of mindfulness of the body.

4. The concept of out-breathing and in-breathing which [1081] is the mental object of breathing meditation (*ānāpanasati*).

5. Three concepts of boundless living beings which in the mental object of the three Divine Abidings (*Brahma-vihāra*) of loving-kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*) and sympathetic joy (*muditā*).

6. The concept of the limit of space.

Total: 24

He entered upon the second and third fine-material absorptions (*jhāna*) with the thirteen objects of meditation comprising the five out of six groups of the above table, i.e. minus groups 1 and 3. He entered upon the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) with fifteen objects of meditation mentioned below:

1. 8 concepts of the preliminary mental objects (*kasiṇa*).

2. The concept of out-breathing and in-breathing.

3. The concept of boundless living beings, which is the mental object of the divine abiding of equanimity (*upekkhā*).

4. The concept of the limit of space.

5. Four meditation objects of non-materiality.

Total: 15

This is only a broad outline. In fact, at the last moment, just before entering the utter cessation, the Buddha remained in the myriads of absorptions numbering 24,000 billion which was his daily routine. Like a traveller leaving home would bid all the family farewell with embraces and kisses, the Buddha dwelt in the bliss of the absorptions to the full before realizing Parinibbāna.

Then again, rising from the first absorption (*jhāna*), the Buddha entered into the second absorption. Rising from the second absorption, he entered into the third absorption. Rising from the third absorption, he entered into the fourth absorption. Rising from the fourth absorption, he contemplated equanimity and one-pointedness of mind, the two absorption factors of the fourth absorption,

alternatively or both of them together. Then at the end of the reviewing impulsion (*paccavekkhaṇa-mahā-kriyā-javana*), with the life-continuum thought-moment or consciousness, which is associated with happiness, associated with knowledge, the unprompted resultant of the first-order, which is the truth of suffering (*dukkha-sacca*) of neither meritorious nor demeritorious thought, the Buddha realized Parinibbāna and made an end of suffering (*dukkha*).

> There are two kinds of Parinibbāna, namely:
>
> 1. Passing away after the end of dwelling in absorption where the incumbent Arahat, after entering into absorption and rising from it, reverts to the life-continuum thought moment, during which he passes away.
>
> 2. Passing away after the reviewing impulsion where the incumbent Arahat, after entering in absorption and rising from it, contemplates the absorption and the factors combined or separate, and at the end of such contemplation, which is the reviewing impulsion, he reverts to the life continuum thought-moment, during which he passes away.
>
> Of the above two kinds, the Buddha passed away after the second kind. [1082]

41a: After the Passing of the Buddha

Utterings that Arouse Religious Urgency

[Although in a separate chapter, this is a continuation of the retelling of DN 16.]

When the Buddha passed away, there occurred simultaneously a great earthquake, so terrible as to cause the body hair to rise and gooseflesh to appear on the skin. Rumblings of celestial big drums reverberated in the sky. When the Buddha passed away, at the moment of his passing away, Brahma Sahampati uttered this verse:

Sabbe va nikkhipissanti, bhūtā loke samussayaṁ,
yattha etādiso Satthā, loke appaṭipuggalo,
Tathāgato balapatto Sambuddho parinibbuto.

In this transient world even such an incomparable person as the Self-Awakened Realised One, the teacher of humans, Devas and Brahmas, endowed with Ten Powers, has to pass away. All beings in this world, when the time of death is due, must lay down this body, which is a composite of mental and physical phenomena.

When the Buddha passed away, at the moment of his passing away, Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, uttered this verse:

Anicca vata saṅkhārā, uppādavaya dhammino,
upajjhitvā nirujjhanti, tesaṁ vūpasamo sukho

Impermanent indeed are all conditioned things, they are in the nature of arising and dissolution; having arisen, they cease to be, the realization of Nibbāna on their utter cessation is blissful peace.

When the Buddha passed away, at the moment of his passing away, Ven. Anuruddhā uttered this verse:

Nāhu assāsa-passāso, ṭhita cittassa tādino,
anejo santim-ārabbha, yaṁ kālam-akarī Muni.

Friend monastics! The Great Sage, Lord of the Three Worlds, free of craving for existence, has ended his span of life, intent on the peace of Nibbāna. No more breathing in or out is there.

Asallīnena cittena, [1083] vedānaṁ ajjhavāsayi,
pajjo tasseva Nibbānaṁ, vimokkho cetaso ahu.

Of him who was steadfast. Against the storm of worldly conditions, friends, our teacher endured the physical pain with fortitude. Like the extinction of a flame when the fuel is exhausted, his mind has attained total liberation from all bonds.

When the Buddha passed away, at the moment of his passing away, Ven. Ānanda uttered this verse which aroused spiritual urgency:

Tadāsi ya bhiṁsanakaṁ, tad-āsi lomahaṁ sanaṁ,
sabhā kāra va rūpete, Sambuddhe parinibbate.

At the moment of the passing away of our teacher, endowed with glorious qualities, there was a terrifying earthquake. Then at that moment, there occurred the hair-raising, goose flesh causing earthquake of sixfold intensity.

When the Buddha passed away, those monastics who had not been able to abandon attachment and anger, i.e. the Stream-enterers and the Once-returners wailed with their arms upraised; they flung themselves down, rolled in all directions, all the while lamenting: “All too soon has the Fortunate One realized Parinibbāna! All too soon has the Gracious One realized Parinibbāna! All too soon has the possessor of the Eye of Wisdom vanished from the world!”

But those monastics who had abandoned attachment and anger, i.e. the Non-returners, bore the event with fortitude in the keen contemplation that “all conditioned things are impermanent by nature, and hence, how would it be possible to find any permanence in this conditioned nature?”

Then Ven. Anuruddha said to the monastics: “Enough, friends, do not grieve, nor weep. Has not the Fortunate One previously expounded to you that it is the very nature of things most near and dear to us that we must part with them somehow, even while we are living, or when death divides us, or when we are on different planes of existence? Friends, in this matter, how could one expect anything that has the nature of arising, of appearing, of being conditioned, and of dissolution, not to disintegrate? It is not possible for anyone to wish so. Friends, the Devas are reproachful, saying, if even venerable ones cannot bear with it, how could they give comfort to others?”

At these words of Ven. Anuruddha, Ven. Ānanda asked: “But Ven. Anuruddha, according to your observation, what is the state of mind that is present in the Devas and Brahmas?”

“Friend Ānanda, the Devas who remain in the sky are standing there as if there was firm ground to stand on, having transformed the sky into firm ground by their divine power, and are wailing with dishevelled hair, their arms upraised, they fling themselves down, rolling on the fancied ground in all directions, all the while lamenting: ‘All too soon has the Fortunate One realized Parinibbāna! All too soon has the Gracious One realized Parinibbāna! All too soon has the Visionary vanished from the world!’

“Friend Ānanda, the Devas who remain on the earth are standing on the ground [1084] transforming the natural earth into supportable ground for their bodies of subtle corporeality, and are wailing with dishevelled hair, their arms upraised, they fling themselves down, rolling on the ground in all directions, all the while lamenting: “All too soon has the Fortunate One realized Parinibbāna! All too soon has the Gracious One realized Parinibbāna! All too soon has the Visionary vanished from the world!

But those Devas who are free from sensual attachment bear the event with fortitude, contemplating that ‘all conditioned things are impermanent by nature, and hence how would it be possible to find any permanence in this conditioned nature?’ ”

Then Ven. Anuruddha and Ven. Ānanda spent the rest of the small hours of the night in Dhamma discourse. They discussed the omnipresence of death: “Friend, death has no shame even to snatch away such a great unrivalled teacher of the three worlds. How should any common beings expect any shame from death? He would take away anyone without shame.” Thus they were talking Dhamma and soon it was dawn.

Then Ven. Anuruddha said to Ven. Ānanda: “Go, friend Ānanda, enter Kusinārā and tell the Malla princes: “Vāseṭṭhas, the Fortunate One has passed away. Do now what you deem fitting.” – “Very well, venerable sir,” Ānanda assented and he went into Kusinārā accompanied by a monastic.

At that time the Malla princes were engaged in a meeting at the Council Hall, discussing the details needed in connection with honouring the Buddha who had passed away, such as flowers and incense to be arranged, seating places for the

Saṅgha, offerings of food, etc. Then Ven. Ānanda went to the Council Hall and said to them: "Vāseṭṭhas, the Fortunate One has passed away. Do now as you deem fitting."

On hearing the news from Ven. Ānanda, the Malla princes, their sons and daughters, their daughter-in-laws, and their wives were grief-stricken, and sick at heart, and wailed, their hair dishevelled, their arms upraised; they flung themselves down rolling on the floor in all directions, all the while lamenting: "All too soon has the Fortunate One realized Parinibbāna! All too soon has the Gracious One realized Parinibbāna! All too soon has the Visionary vanished from the world!"

Last Rites for the Remains of the Buddha

Then the Malla princes of Kusinārā ordered their men to gather flowers, perfumes and all kinds of musical instruments in Kusinārā. Then they went to the Sāla grove where the body of the Buddha was, bringing flowers, perfumes and all kinds of musical instruments, as well as 500 sets of long cloth. And there they passed the day in song and dance by way of venerating, honouring, revering and paying homage to the remains of the Buddha. Flowers and perfumes were placed at suitable locations, canopies of cloth were made, and pavilions set up with long cloth. Then the Malla princes of Kusinārā decided that it was rather late for that day to cremate the remains of the Buddha. "We shall perform the cremation tomorrow," they all agreed.

Then the second day was also passed in song and dance, by way of venerating, honouring, revering and paying homage to the remains of the Buddha, where flowers and perfumes were placed in suitable locations, canopies of cloth were made, and new pavilions set up with long cloth. In the same manner the third day, the fourth day, the fifth day and the sixth day were also spent.

Then on the seventh day, the Malla princes of Kusinārā conferred among themselves and decided thus: "We shall cremate the remains of the Fortunate One at the south of the town, to which place we shall carry the body by the southern road and perform the ceremony with song and dance, flowers and perfumes, thereby venerating, honouring, revering and paying homage to the remains of the Fortunate One."

Thereupon, eight most senior Malla princes of robust build, after washing their heads and [1085] donning new clothes, thinking: "We shall now lift up the body of the Fortunate One," exerted in unison to lift up the body of the Buddha, but the body did not budge.

Then the Malla princes of Kusinārā, being confident that Ven. Anuruddha as the foremost monastic in the power of divine eye should be able to explain it, asked him: "Ven. Anuruddha, these eight most senior Malla princes, after washing their heads and donning new clothes, thinking: 'We shall lift up the body of the Fortunate One,' exerted in unison to lift up the body of the Fortunate One, but the body did not budge. What is the reason, what is the cause of this?"

"Vāseṭṭhas, it is because you are working with a different intention from the Devas."

"What, Ven. Anuruddha, is the will of the Devas?"

"Vāseṭṭhas, your intention is this: 'We shall cremate the remains of the Fortunate One at the south of the town, where we shall carry the body by the southern road and perform the ceremony with song and dance, flowers and perfumes, thereby venerating, honouring, revering, and paying homage to the remains of the Fortunate One.'

The intention of the Devas however is this: 'We shall cremate the remains of the Fortunate One at the east of the town near the Makuṭabandhana Shrine of the Malla princes, where we shall carry it first northwards by the northern road, hence via the North Gate into the town, then to the East Gate by the middle road, to the Makuṭabandhana Shrine, and perform the ceremony with song and dance, flowers and perfumes, thereby venerating, honouring, revering and paying homage to the remains of the Fortunate One.' "

"Venerable sir, let it be according to the wish of the Devas."

At that time, Kusinārā, the home town of Malla princes, was thickly strewn with celestial Mandārava flowers everywhere, even including fence borders and rubbish heaps.

Then the Devas and the Malla princes of Kusinārā carried the remains of the Buddha northwards by the northern road; thence via the North Gate into the town, thence to the centre of the town by the middle road, venerating,

honouring, revering and paying homage to the remains of the Buddha all along the route by both celestial and human dance and song, flowers and perfumes.

Mallikā, Widow of General Bandhula

While the remains of the Buddha was thus being paid homage to in the town, along the middle road, Mallikā, the widow of General Bandhula, on hearing the news, awaited in front of her house with her famous Great Creeper (*Mahā-latā*) gown which she had not garbed herself with since the death of her husband. She had it cleaned and washed in perfumed water to decorate the body of the Buddha with it as her unique way of honouring the memory of the Buddha.

The Great Creeper gown was a rare kind of dress which only three outstanding persons owned, viz., Visākhā, Mallikā and a robber called Devadāniyā. This dress is referred to as the Mallikā dress these days.

As the procession carrying the remains of the Buddha reached her door, Mallikā requested the people in the procession: "Princes, put down the body of the Fortunate One for a while here!" And when they complied with her request, she placed the Great Creeper gown around the body of the Buddha. It fitted well with the body from head to foot. The golden-hued body was then resplendent with the bejewelled dress wrought with the seven kinds of gems.

Mallikā was throbbing with joy at the glorious sight of the Buddha's body being garbed in her bejewelled dress. "Fortunate One, may I, in all future existences in Saṁsāra, be blessed with a completely garbed person without the need to garb myself," thus did she make her wish on that occasions. After she died, she was reborn in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm and her wish was fulfilled, see the commentary on the Story about Mallikā's Heavenly Mansion (*Mallikā-vimāna-vatthu*, Vv 36). [1086]

Thereafter, the Malla princes carried the body of the Buddha with the Great Creeper gown and proceeded to the East Gate. They put it down at the Makuṭabandhana Shrine of the Malla princes to the east of the town.

The Funeral Rites

Then the Malla princes asked Ven. Ānanda: "Venerable sir, in what manner should the body of the Realised One be properly handled?" – "Vāseṭṭhas, it should be treated in the same way as is done to the remains of a Universal

Monarch." – "Venerable sir, what is the procedure in the case of treating the remains of a Universal Monarch?"

"Vāseṭṭhas, the body of a Universal Monarch is wrapped up in new cloth. Over that wrapping, there should be a wrapping of carded cotton wool. Over the cotton wool wrapping, there should be another layer of wrapping with new cloth. In this way the body of a Universal Monarch is wrapped up in 500 pairs of pieces of cloth. Then it is placed in an oil vat wrought with gold, and covered with a lid wrought with gold. Then it is placed upon a funeral pyre, which is built of various kinds of scented wood and then cremated. The relics, after the cremation, are then enshrined at the junction of the four highways. Vāseṭṭhas, this is the procedure in treating the remains of a Universal Monarch.

Vāseṭṭhas, in the same way as the procedure is followed with regard to the relics of a Universal Monarch, so also should the procedure be followed with regard to the relics of the Fortunate One. A relic shrine (*stūpa*) to the honour of the Fortunate One should be erected at the junction of the four highways. People will visit the shrine and make offerings of flowers or incense or fragrant powder, or pay homage, or will reflect on the Buddha's attributes. And, for such deeds of devotion, these people will enjoy benefit and happiness for a long time."

> These instructions were the Fortunate One's instructions, as has been described above.

Then the Malla princes of Kusinārā ordered their men to collect cotton wool from the storehouses of the Malla princes. Then they treated the body of the Buddha as instructed by Ven. Ānanda. They wrapped it up in new cloth. Over that wrapping they made a cotton wool wrapping, and over that they again wrapped it up with new cloth. In this way the body of the Buddha was wrapped up in 500 pairs of pieces of cloth. Then they placed it in an oil vat wrought with gold, and covered it with a lid wrought with gold. A funeral pyre with various kinds of scented wood was built, on which they placed the embalmed body.

Ven. Mahā Kassapa

When the funeral ceremony of the Buddha was thus taking place in Kusinārā, Ven. Mahā Kassapa had finished the alms round in the city of Pāvā. And, with his mind set on going to Kusinārā, he was on his way from Pāvā to Kusinārā,

accompanied by 500 monastics. On his way, he left the road and sat underneath a tree together with his company of monastics.

> He sat there, not to pass the day, as of routine, but to take a rest. Here is the explanation: All the companion monastics had been brought up in an easy way. So when they travelled on foot under the scorching heat of noon, they were tired out. Ven. Mahā Kassapa saw how tired his followers were. The journey was not long ahead. There was time for rest and they would proceed in the cool of the evening and see the Buddha. That was what was in the mind of Ven. Mahā Kassapa. He sat at the foot of a tree, had his double robe spread on the ground, and cooled his limbs with the water from his water-container. Some of the companion monastics were meditating while others were discussing the glories of the Three Treasures.

At that time a wandering ascetic was approaching them on the road from Kusinārā heading for Pāvā. He was holding a celestial Mandārava flower above his head with a stick as the prop of the umbrella. [1087]

Ven. Mahā Kassapa noticed the celestial Mandārava flower held in the ascetic's hand. He knew that this flower is not seen on earth at all times and that it appears on earth only on such rare occasions as when some person of great power carries out an exercise in his psychic power, or when a Bodhisatta takes conception in his mother's womb. "But," he reflected, "this is not the day when some powerful person is carrying out an exercise in his psychic power, nor is it the day the Bodhisatta takes conception, nor the day he is being born, nor the day he attains Awakening, nor the day he delivers the Dhamma Wheel discourse, nor the day he displays the twin miracle, nor the day he descends from the Tāvatiṁsa Realm, nor the day he relinquishes the life-maintaining mental process, hence, this must be the day he has passed away."

Ven. Mahā Kassapa wanted to verify his deduction and asked the wandering ascetic. But if he were to mention about the Buddha in his sitting posture it might be lacking in respect, so he thought, and therefore he rose up and moving a few steps away from where he was sitting, he covered his head with the dark-brown robe made from dust heap rags which the Buddha had offered him in exchange, just as the Chaddanta white elephant would cover his head with a ruby-studded ornamental headdress, and putting his ten fingers, with their lustre aglow, together in the raised hands atop his forehead, he stood facing the wandering ascetic and asked him: "Friend, do you know our teacher?"

> Herein, it might be asked: "Did Ven. Mahā Kassapa know the demise of the Buddha or did he not?" The commentaries reject the idea that he did not know. The reasons for assuming that he knew are given by the commentators thus: There was no reason to believe that Ven. Mahā Kassapa did not know the demise of the Buddha since the great earthquake that took place in all the 10,000 world-element could not go unnoticed by him.
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> The reason why he asked the wandering ascetic was this: "Some monastics who were with him had seen the Buddha in person while others had not. Those who had seen the Buddha wanted to see him again just because they had seen him before; those who had never seen the Buddha also wanted to see him because they had not seen him before.
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> If someone did not break the news of the demise of the Buddha before they arrived at Kusinārā, on their arrival there, only to find the Fortunate One had already gone, they would not be able to contain their grief and they would weep and wail and made a wretched spectacle of themselves, throwing away their upper garments, or donning the robes improperly, or beating their breasts. People seeing them would say: "The company of monastics that came with Ven. Mahā Kassapa, all rag-wearers, are crying like women. If they cannot restrain themselves, how could they be able to give comfort to us?" And so I shall have to bear the blame for them. This is a remote place here. If, on hearing the bad news, these monastics should cry, and cry as much as they like, the blame will not fall on me, for no other follower of the Buddha is here to see them. If these monastics are to receive the sad news early they would not get the shock on arrival at Kusinārā and suffer grief."

On being asked by Ven. Mahā Kassapa, the wandering ascetic replied: "Yes, friend, I know of him. It is seven days now since the ascetic Gotama passed away. As a matter of fact, I have brought this celestial Mandārava flower from the place of his demise."

Thereupon, some of the monastics who were with Ven. Mahā Kassapa, and had not abandoned attachment, wailed with their arms upraised; they flung themselves down rolling in all directions, all the while lamenting: "All too soon has the Fortunate One realized Parinibbāna! All too soon has the Gracious One realized Parinibbāna! All too soon has the Visionary vanished from the world!"

But, those among them who were free from sensual attachment bore the news with fortitude, contemplating that: "All conditioned things are impermanent by nature, and hence [1088] how could it be possible to find any permanence in this conditioned nature?"

Subhadda, the Elderly Monastic

Now, at that time there was an elderly monastic named Subhadda among Ven. Mahā Kassapa's 500 monastics. He had became a monastic only late in his life. When the other monastics were crying and wailing helplessly, he said these ugly words to them: "Enough, friends. Do not grieve. Do not lament. Only now we are all well-liberated from that great ascetic (*samaṇa*). He had been hard upon us, always saying: 'This is proper for you; that is not proper for you.' Now we are free to do what we like, and equally free not to do what we do not like."

> "Why did Monastic Subhadda say those horrendous words?" it might be asked. The answer: "Because he bore a grudge against the Buddha."

Now to relate the story: Subhadda was a barber by profession before he became a monastic. He had two sons, both trainee barbers, living together with him in the town of Ātuma, who were gifted with pleasant speech and well-known as skilful barbers. Once, when the Buddha went to Ātuma from Kusinārā with a company of 1,250 monastics, he received the news of the happy event and, intending to offer a great offering of rice gruel, he said to his two trainee sons: "Sons, the Fortunate One is coming to Ātuma with 1,250 monastics. Go now, sons, carry your barber's tools with you, and collect in vessels or in bags from every house in the town whatever provisions, such as rice, oil, salt, and other edibles, being offered. Let us prepare rice gruel with those things and offer gruel to the Fortunate One."

Ven. Subhadda's two trainee sons obeyed the instruction of their father. Thanks to their melodious speech and the skill in their profession, the townspeople sponsored them in their trade. Even those who did not actually need a hair cut or a hair-do submitted themselves to them. After the job was done they asked the trainee barbers: "Sons, what would you like as fees?" They would reply: "We are planning to offer rice gruel when the Fortunate One comes to our town. So we want only the necessary ingredients to make rice gruel."

And the people were generous in their gifts to the novices. They did not even consider those gifts of rice, oil, salt and other edibles as fees. The provisions

collected were of such an abundance that they could not carry them home. Instead, the supporters had to help to carry them.

Then with the arrival of the Buddha in Ātuma and his entering the straw-thatched monastery, the monk Subhadda went to the village gate in the evening and announced to the townspeople: "Disciples, I do not want any other thing but utensils to cook rice gruel from the provisions which my young sons have collected. I also would like you to lend a hand in the preparation of the rice gruel." Then, after making ready the cooking place, he personally supervised the operations, with the dark-brown loin cloth and the dark-brown upper robe on. He prepared a special kind of gruel worth 100,000 which was to be in solid form and had to be first eaten and then drunk. The gruel contained ghee, honey, molasses, fish, meat, nectar, fruit juices, etc. It smelt like hair pomade and was also suitable to be used as such. Besides this rich rice gruel, he also prepared honey-cakes.

The Buddha, rising early, and having finished cleaning himself, went to the town of Ātuma, accompanied by a big following of monastics, for alms round. The people informed Ven. Subhadda: "The Fortunate One is now on the alms round. For whom is the rice-gruel being prepared?"

Ven. Subhadda, in his usual garb of dark-brown robes, sat in the Brahma sitting posture, with his right knee-top placed on the ground and holding a ladle and a big spoon in one hand, paid homage to the Buddha and said: "May the Fortunate One accept my thick gruel as a food offering."

The Buddha inquired after how the food had been made, what ingredients were used, etc. as described in the Chapter about Medicines (*Bhesajjakkhandhaka*, Vin Mv 6) and being told of the facts, he reprimanded Ven. Subhadda on a number of counts. The Buddha then laid down fresh [1089] Vinaya rules: 1) Taking upon oneself improper activity which is liable to a wrong-doing (*dukkaṭa*) offence (*akappiya-samādāna*); and 2) keeping up the outfit of a barber by one who had been a barber, which is also liable to a wrong-doing offence (*khura-baṇḍa-pariharaṇa*).

He also enjoined the monastics from accepting Ven. Subhadda's rice gruel in these words: "Monastics, you have spent millions and millions of aeons in search of food. The food now offered by Subhadda is improper for monastics. If you take this food, you will suffer in the four lower worlds for thousands of

existences. Monastics, move away. Do not accept the food." After saying so, the Buddha proceeded to the alms collecting area of the town. None of the monastics accepted any of the thick gruel that Ven. Subhadda offered.

Ven. Subhadda was greatly disappointed: "This ascetic (*samaṇa*) goes about declaring: 'I am omniscient.' If he could not accept my offering, he ought to have sent someone to say so. My food is totally spoilt and wasted. Cooked food cannot last seven days. If it were not yet cooked the provisions could have lasted for my whole life. This ascetic has ruined me. He is inimical and antagonistic towards me." Thus thought Ven. Subhadda, and he bore a grudge against the Buddha. But he knew that: "This ascetic Gotama comes from the Sakyans, a superior social class. If I were to say anything, I could only face oppression," and so he did not murmur while the Buddha was alive. Now he heard the news that the Buddha was no more, and he felt at ease and was greatly pleased, hence his vulgar remarks.

Ven. Mahā Kassapa's Plan

On hearing the wild remarks uttered by Ven. Subhadda, Ven. Mahā Kassapa was very concerned. It was as though his heart had been dealt a blow, or as though he was struck by thunder on the head. "Alas, barely seven days have passed since the teacher passed away. His golden-hued body is still in existence. How soon has such a bad monastic, the scum of the religion, a thorn to the Saṅgha, arisen to threaten the existence of the teaching that the Fortunate One has so painfully set up. If such a monastic were to be left unchecked the number of his kind would grow to the detriment of the teaching." Thus a spiritual urgency occurred to Ven. Mahā Kassapa.

Then the idea of convening a Council to recite and approve the doctrine was conceived by him, through the thoughts described as follows: "If I were to expel, on the spot, this old monastic, who is a late entrant to the Saṅgha, deriding him and sprinkling his body with ash, the people would say: 'Even when the remains of the ascetic Gotama are still in existence, his disciples are already in disharmony.' I must, therefore, hold my patience.

For the teachings of the Fortunate One are at present like a big heap of flowers not strung into garlands. Just as a lose heap of flowers could very well be blown away in all directions by the winds as time passes on, monastics of Subhadda's sort would work havoc to the Discipline Collection (*Vinaya-piṭaka*) by one or

two rescissions at first, the Discourse Collection (*Sutta-piṭaka*) would be diminished by revocation, at first by one or two dialogues; the Abstract Collection (*Abhidhamma-piṭaka*) would suffer by the omission of one or two of the ultimate things out of the existing doctrines, such as things pertaining to the sensuous sphere, things pertaining to the form realm, things pertaining to the formless realm, and things supermundane. In this manner, the disappearance of the teaching would come about, Collection by Collection, in turn. If the teaching rooted in the Discourses, the Discipline and the Abstract Collections were to disappear, the world would have nothing to stand on; where the branches of a tree are cut off, the guardian spirit of that tree can dwell in the stem of the tree; if the stem is destroyed the spirit can dwell in the roots; but if the roots are destroyed then the spirit will be rendered homeless. If the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*) were to disappear, there would be nothing that the followers of the Buddha could point out as their religion. [1090]

Or, to take another simile: The father Yakkha has entrusted his Yakkha son with a charm that can make its holder invisible. If the Yakkha son loses this charm through forgetfulness or by being robbed of it, then he would be totally helpless. Similarly, if the Collections were to be lost then we all are lost. Therefore, we shall convene a Council and recite the Discourses and the Discipline. By doing so, we would be putting the teaching in proper order that would withstand assault just as flowers are carefully strung into garlands.

The Fortunate One had come to Kusinārā after travelling three miles to enable me to pay my last respects to him. He admitted me into the Saṅgha after three chapters of admonition. He gave me the robes he was wearing, in exchange for the robes I was wearing. When he discoursed on the practice with the similes of the moon, he referred to me by way of example. In these three events, he showed his intention of leaving the custodianship of his teaching to me (see SN 16.6-8).

So long as a true son of the Fortunate One such as myself is living, let this wicked man not grow in influence in this teaching. Before depravity gets a footing, before depravity mars the true Dhamma, before new fangled rules gain ground, before spurious regulations obstruct the Vinaya, before miscreants hold sway, before upholders of righteousness are on the wane, before those people who misrepresent the Fortunate One become a strong force, before the faithful exponents of the Fortunate One's teaching are on the wane, I shall see to it that a

Council is convened to recite and unanimously approve the Discipline, the Discourse and the Abstract Collections. When such a Council is convened, monastics will learn the teaching as much as they are capable of, and discuss the Discipline with the matters that are proper and improper. When such a session is held, this wicked old monastic will know where he stands and will be duly chastised and he will never be able to show his face. And, above all, the Buddha's teaching will become well-defined and it will prosper."

These thoughts occurred to Ven. Mahā Kassapa. However, he did not confide his plan to any other monastics or to any other person. He simply consoled the lamenting monastics by his discourse on the doctrine thus: "Enough, friends, do not grieve. Do not weep. Has not the Fortunate One previously expounded to you that it is in the very nature of things that regarding those most near and dear to us that we must part with them some day, even while we are living, or when death divides us, or when we are on different planes of existence? Friends, in this matter, how could one expect anything that has the nature of arising, of appearing, of being conditioned, and of dissolution, not to disintegrate? It is not possible for anyone to wish so."

The Mallas cremate the Body of the Buddha

Then four of the most senior Malla princes of robust physique washed their heads, donned themselves in new clothes, and intending to set fire to the funeral pyre of the Buddha, ignited it; but, try as they would, the pyre did not catch fire at all. Herein, the pyre of fragrant woods was 120 cubits high, when four strong men failed to ignite it, eight were engaged in it and when eight failed too, sixteen, and again 32 men were put to the task. All means to help ignite it were also employed, such as fanning and even blowing with the smith's bellows, but all in vain. This may be explained like this: The 80 great disciples of the Buddha had great followings devoted to them, when these people, numbering 80,000 passed away they were reborn in the Deva realms. Among these Devas, the Devas who had particular devotion to Ven. Mahā Kassapa when they were lay supporters of the monastic, saw the critical situation that their esteemed monastic was still on the way from Pāvā to Kusinārā. So they made their wish that this funeral pyre be not lighted until he arrived on the scene. It was due to their will that no amount of human effort could ignite the funeral pyre.

Then the Malla princes asked Ven. Anuruddha for the reason the funeral pyre remained unburnt. He replied to them: “The Devas wish it otherwise.”

“Venerable sir, what is the wish of the Devas?” [1091]

“Vāseṭṭhas, Ven. Mahā Kassapa is now on his way from Pāvā to Kusinārā in the company of 500 monastics. The Devas have willed that, until he has paid homage at the Fortunate One’s feet, the funeral pyre of scented woods will remain unburnt.”

“Venerable sir, let the wish of the Devas prevail,” replied the Malla princes.

When the people heard that Ven. Mahā Kassapa was coming to pay homage at the feet of the Buddha, and that the funeral pyre of scented woods would not catch fire until he had done so, they were agog with excitement. “Friends, is that Ven. Mahā Kassapa dark complexioned or fair complexioned? Is he tall or short? How does he look? Friends, how could that be, that there lives such a great monastic, when the Fortunate One’s passing away has taken place?” Some of them took perfumes and flowers and went out to meet Ven. Mahā Kassapa while others prepared the roadway he was coming along and stood there waiting.

Then Ven. Mahā Kassapa arrived and went to the funeral pyre of scented woods at the Makuṭabandhana Shrine of the Malla princes in Kusinārā. He wore a folded robe on one shoulder, with joined palms raised to his forehead, and he walked around the funeral pyre keeping it on his right for three rounds. By his special powers he reflected on the embalmed body of the Buddha and knew for certain which end of the body was the Buddha’s feet. And standing at the end where the Buddha’s feet lay, he entered upon the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) which is the prelude or basis of special apperception and, rising from that absorption, he made the solemn wish: “May the Fortunate One’s feet, marked with 1,000 spokes at the wheels, push through the golden casket together with the multilayered wrappings of cotton-wool and 500 pairs of pieces of cloth, and come out to lie on my head.”

As soon as his solemn wish was made, the Buddha’s feet pushed through the 500 layers of cloth and cotton-wool wrappings like the full moon appearing from the clouds. Ven. Mahā Kassapa spread out his palms of pinkish red, like the new bloom lotus, and holding the golden hued feet of the Buddha firmly in his hands up to the ankles, placed the pair of feet on his head, thus paying homage in a most touching manner.

Witnessing the miraculous scene, the people raised a thunderous applause and made their offerings of perfumes, flowers and other things and paid their homage at the feet of the Buddha to their hearts' content. The 500 monastics who accompanied Ven. Mahā Kassapa also wore folded robes on one shoulder and with their joined palms raised to their forehead, walked around the funeral pyre of scented wood keeping it on their right for three rounds, and paid homage at the feet of the Buddha.

After Ven. Mahā Kassapa, the people and the 500 monastics had paid homage at the Buddha's feet as much as they liked, at the instant Ven. Mahā Kassapa let go the Buddha's feet, the lac-coloured feet of the Buddha returned to their former place inside the casket, without any further wishing by Ven. Mahā Kassapa. As the feet disappeared into the golden casket, not a piece of scented wood was bestirred. As a matter of fact, as when the Buddha's feet came out of the golden casket and as they re-entered it, nothing was disturbed, not a strand of cotton-wool, not a fibre of the cloth, not a droplet of oil, not a piece of scented firewood was caused to stir itself. When once the feet were inside the golden casket again, everything was perfectly intact.

But when the Buddha's feet disappeared from view like the setting of the sun or the moon beyond the western mountain, the people wailed. They presented an even more pitiable sight than they did at the passing away of the Buddha.

After Ven. Mahā Kassapa and his 500 monastics had paid their last respects, the funeral pyre of scented wood burnt by itself, all at the same time without human effort but by the power of celestial beings; this is called the combustion by the element of heat (*tejo*).

Of the body of the Buddha that had burnt itself, the outer, thinner layer of the skin, the inner, thicker layer of the skin, flesh, sinews and sticky substances did not remain in the form of ash or soot; what remained was only the relics that were formed out of the body. It is just like the case of burning clear butter which leaves no ash or soot. Of the five [1092] hundred pieces of cloth that were wrapped round the body of the Buddha only the innermost and the outermost remained intact.

Notes on the Relics of the Buddha

Relics of the Buddhas that appear in the aeons when human lifespans are very long, by tens of thousands of years are of one solid mass of golden colour. Our Gotama Buddha appeared in the period when human lifespan was short, 100 years. The Buddha reflected thus before passing away: "My teaching has not spread to all directions at the time of my passing away. Let people from various places procure the relics from my body which may be as tiny as a mustard seed, enshrine them and make them a place of pilgrimage, and thus acquire merit leading to the good destination." With that compassionate thought, he willed that the relics of his body be split up into many pieces.

In this matter, relics of the Buddha are of two broad classes: the relics that do not break up into many, and those that break up into many. Of the two classes, seven items belong to the first category: the four canines, the two collar bones, the frontal bone of the head. The remaining relics belong to the second category. About a basketful of the latter remained, of these: 1) The smallest are of the size of mustard seed, having the shape of the red jasmine buds, and a total collection of about six measures (*aḷhaka*);[251] 2) the medium size relics are of the size of broken rice, look like pearls, and have a total collection of about five measures; 3) the big-size relics are of the size of a grain of green gram, having a golden colour and a total collection of about five measures; see the commentaries on the Long Discourse about the Emancipation (*Mahā-parinibbāna-sutta*, DN 16) and the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*).

After the spontaneous combustion of the Buddha's body by the element of heat had occurred, there came down from the sky, through the agency of Devas, huge columns of water, ranging in diameter from the thickness of a man's arms, to that of a man's calf, and to that of a palm tree, that quelled the fire arisen in the funeral pyre of scented wood. Fountains of water also sprang from the boughs of the Sāla trees. To cope with the size of the pyre which was 120 cubits high, thick columns of water with a diameter of a plough shaft sprang up from the ground on all sides of the pyre. The Malla princes of Kusinārā brought scented water in gold and silver pots and sprinkled it on the pyre. Then they combed the ashes with ploughs fitted with eight golden and silver ploughshares each, to scatter

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[251] *Aḷhaka*: An uncertain measure applied to grain.

and cool the ashes. A particularly wonderful phenomenon here is that although the flames were rising fiercely through the boughs, branches and foliage of the Sāla trees around the funeral pyre, not a leaf or a blossom was burnt. Insects living in the Sāla trees were going about their own way, quite unharmed.

Last Rites for the Remains of the Buddha

After the funeral pyre had been quelled of the fire, the Mallas assembled at the Council Hall to prepare for a grand ceremony. They pounded into a cosmetic paint, four ingredients: The rhododendrons, the saffron, cloves and leaves of gum trees which they applied to various parts of the hall. Then they strew flowers, such as the primrose, the red jasmine, white durra grass, the saffron and parched grain. They made a canopy and decorated it with gold and silver spangles and hung fragrant things, flowers and precious jewels all about the Council Hall.

Then they made a ceremonial roadway from the Council Hall to the Makuṭabandhara Shrine with half a wall of matting and long cloth on either side of the route, along it they put up canopies which were studded with gold and silver spangles. Fragrant things, flowers and precious jewels were also hung about. Fresh bamboo poles, looking like solid pieces of emerald, were set up along the route with five coloured flags fluttering in the breeze, vying with the fluttering paper streamers. The route was made smooth and clean. Banana plants, water pots filled with water, and oil lamps in their stands were set up at regular intervals. Then they put the gold casket, which contained the relics of the Buddha, on the royal elephant fitted with bejewelled ornaments.

> The reader can visualize the ceremonial route which stretched between the Council Hall, which was in the town of Kusinārā, and [1093] the funeral site at the Makuṭabandhana Shrine, which lay to the east of the town.

The Malla princes, in a ceremonial procession with song and dance, led the royal elephant bearing the golden casket containing the relics of the Buddha into Kusinārā town, making offerings of flowers and incense in front of the relics. In the town, in the council hall, they had erected a high platform, called the Sarabha, which was supported by sculpted figure of a lion and was a platform decorated with the seven kinds of jewels. There they placed the Buddha's relics, above which, the white ceremonial parasol was set up.

Around the Council Hall, where the relics were placed in state, the security of the place was arranged in great elaboration. Around the Council Hall, there was stationed an army of elephants standing close to one another. Outside this ring of elephants, there was a cavalry with horses standing close to one another. And outside the ring of cavalry, there was an army of chariots standing close to one another. Outside the ring of chariots, infantry men stood guard in a ring, in close formation. Outside the ring of infantry, there was an army of archers in close formation. And outside the ring of archers, there was an army of lancers in close formation. Thus the security guard extended to a league on all sides which took on the appearance of one huge network of chain mail. For seven days the funeral celebrations were held in all gaiety.

The Malla princes staged these celebrations only a fortnight after the demise of the Buddha because, during the previous fortnight, they were busily engaged in attending to the Saṅgha's needs regarding their lodging and meals. Now they thought: "Now we shall celebrate the great occasion in gay festivities that are connected with spiritual urgency for seven whole days. During these days of jollity we must make sure that the Buddha's relics are safe against any thief, and so we shall mount guard over the relics to the best of our ability," hence the elaborate security arrangements.

Distribution of the Relics

King Ajātasattu of Magadha heard that the Buddha had passed away in Kusinārā. The news reached him in the following manner: First the ministers of King Ajātasattu heard the news of the passing away of the Buddha and they said among themselves: "Even such a great person as the Buddha has passed away. Nothing in the world can make him alive again. Among worldlings, our king is unrivalled in the matter of devotion to the Buddha. If he were to learn this news in the normal course, he is sure to die of a broken heart. So it behoves us to see that he does not die of this news." After conferring among themselves, they made ready three golden troughs filled with a concoction of the four nutriments of sesame oil, honey, butter and molasses.

Then they said to King Ajātasattu: "Your majesty, we had had a bad dream. To avert the evil consequences of the bad dream, we would advise your majesty to wear two layers of white cloth and lie in the trough immersed in the four nutriments, with only the nose above the concoction."

The king believed the loyalty of his ministers and said: “Nobles, let it be as you say,” and putting on two layers of white cloth, he lay immersed in the concoction in the trough, with only his nose exposed.

Then an official, discarding the official garb and in plain clothes, with dishevelled hair, with his face directed towards Kusinārā where the demise of the Buddha had taken place, with joined palms raised, addressed King Ajātasattu: “Your majesty, no one can escape death. The preserver of our lives, our shrine, the fertile field to sow our merit, the person worthy of sprinkling with ceremonial water on the occasion of the king’s consecration and enthronement, the teacher of Devas and humans, has now passed away at Kusinārā!”

As soon as he heard this news, King Ajātasattu fainted. His body was so heated with sorrow that the concoction in which he lay immersed simmered. Thereupon, the officials removed the king from the trough and put him into a second trough filled with the concoction of four nutriments. Then King Ajātasattu regained his consciousness and asked: [1094] “What did you say, my nobles?”

“Your majesty, the Fortunate One has passed away.” And King Ajātasattu fainted again. The concoction in the trough simmered with the body heat of the king. Then the officials removed the king from the trough and placed him into a third trough filled with the concoction of the four nutriments. When King Ajātasattu regained consciousness, he again asked what was said to him. The news was repeated to him, and he fainted again. Then the officials took him out of the trough, bathed him in scented water, and poured pots of cool clear water over his head.

When King Ajātasattu regained consciousness, again he stood up and throwing down his dishevelled dark hair on his broad back, beat his chest in desperation and holding firmly his golden-hued chest with his lac-coloured fingers as if to check its breaking asunder, wailed helplessly and ran out along the high road like a lunatic.

Then King Ajātasattu, accompanied by a big company of embellished court dancers, left the town and went to the monastery in Jīvaka’s Mango Grove. There, gazing at the place where the Buddha used to deliver discourses, he lamented: “The Fortunate One, the omniscient Buddha! Have you not discoursed to me on the doctrine? Have you not removed the darts of sorrow from our hearts with your discourses? We are one of your disciples who go to you for

refuge, who are established in the three refuges. But now you do not speak a word to me!

Venerable sir! In previous times, about this hour, I had had the good news of the Fortunate One and his big company of monastics having gone to the various places in this southern island continent. But now, I have only the bad news of your demise!"

Thus, he went on lamenting the passing away of the Buddha, recalling the glory of the Buddha in 60 verses. He then bethought to himself: "Lamenting alone will get me nowhere. There is the more serious business of procuring the relics of the Buddha."

This is a more complete account of King Ajātasattu's reaction on hearing the news of the passing away of the Fortunate One.

Then King Ajātasattu of Magadha sent an envoy to the Malla princes of Kusinārā, saying: "Malla princes of Kusinārā! The Fortunate One was of the ruling class; I too am of the ruling class. Therefore I am entitled to a share of the relics of the Fortunate One. I too shall build a relic shrine (*stūpa*) where the Fortunate One's relics will be held and honoured."

After sending an envoy, King Ajātasattu thought: "It would be well and good if the Malla princes comply with our demand. But in case they should refuse, we will get relics by force." Accordingly, he marched to Kusinārā at the head of an array of the four wings of the armed forces: elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers.

Similar actions of sending envoys were taken by: the Licchavī princes of Vesālī; the Sakyans of Kapilavatthu; King Buli of Allakappa; and the Koḷiyan princes, natives of Rāmagāma.

Further, they also thought: "It would be well and good if the Malla princes comply with our demand. But in case they should refuse, we will get the relics by force." Accordingly, they marched towards Kusinārā at the head of an array of the four wings of the armed forces: elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers.

The Brahmin of Veṭṭhadīpa heard that the Buddha had passed away at Kusinārā. He also sent an envoy to the Malla prices of Kusinārā saying: "Malla princes of Kusinārā, the Fortunate One was of the ruling class. I am of the Brahmin class,

therefore, I am entitled to a share of the relics of the Fortunate One. I too shall build a shrine (*stūpa*) where the Fortunate One's relics will be held and honoured." Besides sending an envoy, the Brahmin also went to Kusinārā with his followers.

The Malla princes of Pāvā, like King Ajātasattu, sent an envoy to Kusinārā demanding their share of the relics. They also marched towards Kusinārā in full battle array of the [1095] four wings of the armed forces.

> Of the seven rival claimants mentioned above, Pāvā was the closest to Kusinārā, a mere three quarters of a league distance. Yet they arrived last because they were engaged in more elaborate ceremonial arrangements.

The seven rival claimants sent their respective envoys and at the same time surrounded the town of Kusinārā, declaring that if their demands were not met they would wage war.

The reply by the Malla princes of Kusinārā was this: "We did not ask, by messenger, for the Fortunate One to come to our place, nor personally did we go to the Fortunate One. As a matter of fact, the Fortunate One came here on his own accord and informed his arrival to us. Naturally, you will not part with whatever treasure that arises within your domain. In the world of Devas and all sentient beings there is no treasure as noble as the Buddha. We have the greatest of treasures that has come to us. So we cannot, by any means, share it with you. You had been nourished by your royal mothers, and so have we. You are brave men, and so are we. If you would choose war, then so be it." Thus there was a vainglorious attitude on both sides. Tension was great.

> Should there be a war, the Mallas of Kusinārā were bound to win because the Devas that came to pay homage to the relics of the Buddha took the correct view that the relics were the legitimate property of the Kusinārā Malla princes.

Doṇa the Brahmin distributes the Relics

When Doṇa, the Brahmin, learnt the tense situation between the seven disputants, he thought: "These princes are doing dishonour to the place where the Fortunate One passed away. This is most improper as no one is going to benefit from war. I will pacify them all." So he went to the scene, stood on a small mound and uttered a series of verses extolling the glory of the Buddha. His verses are known as A Panegyric to the Buddha by Doṇa (*Doṇa-gajjita*). It

describes the Buddha's endowment of root causes, of results or fruits of merit, and of being a benefactor to all beings, known as the three endearments.

The story of how Brahmin Doṇa got the ability to versify such a weighty panegyric should be noted here. On a certain occasion, when the Buddha was travelling from Ukkaṭṭha to Setabya, he left his footprint with the solemn wish: "May this footprint of mine remain intact until Brahmin Doṇa has viewed it," and then he rested underneath a tree.

When Brahmin Doṇa came along on the way and saw the footprint he knew for certain: "This is the footprint of the greatest person among all beings, including Devas." Then he traced the track of the Buddha and met him resting under the tree. The Buddha gave a discourse to him and Brahmin Doṇa became devoted to the Buddha, hence his ability to sing in praise of the Buddha at such length.

Although the Brahmin's verses were as lengthy as two recitals, since the disputing princes were squabbling, they did not hear the first half at all. It was only when the second half was nearly over that they recognized the voice. "Well, this is our teacher's voice! Friends, this is the voice of our teacher, isn't it?" Then all the tumult died down out of respect for Brahmin Doṇa, for in all Jambudīpa in those days almost all youths of good families had been pupils of Brahmin Doṇa. Very few of them would not know him as a teacher.

When Brahmin Doṇa knew that the princes were now paying attention to him he said to them:

> Sirs, listen to one word of mine, our Fortunate One was an upholder of forbearance. It would not be proper to make war over the matter of sharing the relics of him who was of such noble nature. Sirs, let us all be united and in harmonious agreement to divide the relics into eight parts. There are the multitudes devoted to the Buddha. Let there be shrines to [1096] his honour, everywhere across the land.

The squabbling princes assented. "Brahmin master," they said, "in that case, divide fairly the relics of the Fortunate One into eight parts." – "Very well, sirs," and Brahmin Doṇa caused the golden casket of relics to be opened. On seeing the golden-hued relics lying motionless inside the casket, all the princes lamented: "The all-knowing Fortunate One! In previous times we used to see the resplendent sight of the Fortunate One with the golden complexion, marked with the 32 marks of the Great Man, emitting the six-hued radiance, and

embellished by the 80 lesser marks of the Buddha. But now we are seeing only the golden relics that remind one of the Fortunate One. What a misfortune for us!"

When Brahmin Doṇa saw the princes in their grief and knew they would not notice him, he snatched the right canine tooth and hid it in his head gear. When the princes were in their stable senses, he took eight equal measures of the relics in a basket and distributed them, each sharing two measures (*aḷhaka*), for the whole amount of the relics was sixteen measures.

Even while Brahmin Doṇa was distributing the relics, Sakka was watching. "Where is the right canine tooth of the Buddha now, that of the Fortunate One, the expounder of the four truths that expelled all doubts in the minds of Devas and humans? Who has got it?" He scanned the scene and he saw the right canine tooth hidden in the head-gear of Brahmin Doṇa. He thought: "This canine tooth of the Buddha is such a cherished relic, I shall acquire it. And so he took it, it was a case of the robber being robbed. He took it from Brahmin Doṇa and placed it reverentially in a golden chalice and took it to the Tāvatiṁsa Realm where he enshrined it in the Cūḷāmaṇi Shrine.

After distributing the relics to the eight claimants, Brahmin Doṇa felt with his hand to reassure himself about the hidden relic in his head-gear but it was no longer there. But since he had stolen it himself, he dared not ask anybody about it. If he were to claim his share now, the princes would say: "Master, you distributed the relics yourself. Why did you not think of yourself to get a share for yourself?" So he consoled himself with the thought: "The basket-measure used in dividing up the relics has become sacrosanct. I shall be content with obtaining it. I shall put up a shrine enshrining it."

So he said to the princes: "Sirs, let me keep the measure basket used in dividing the relics. I shall erect a shrine in its honour." The princes agreed and so Brahmin Doṇa got the measure basket used in the division of the relics.

The Moriyan princes of Pippalivana also heard that the Buddha had passed away, and they also, like King Ajātasattu, sent an envoy to Kusinārā to demand their share of the relics and also marched to Kusinārā in full array of battle, with the four wings of their armed forces, but they reached there late.

The Malla princes of Kusinārā said to them: "There is no share of the Buddha's relics remaining. All the claimants have divided the relics among themselves.

Take the charred pieces of firewood from the site of the cremation." And the Moriyan princes had to take away the charred pieces of firewood from the site of the cremation.

Building Relic Shrines in Reverence

1. King Ajātasattu of Magadha built a relic shrine (*stūpa*) at Rājagaha where he enshrined the relics of the Buddha in reverence.
2. The Licchavī princes of Vesālī built a relic shrine at Vesālī where they enshrined the relics of the Buddha in reverence.
3. The Sakyan princes of Kapilavatthu built a relic shrine at Kapilavatthu where they enshrined the relics of the Buddha in reverence. [1097]
4. The Buli princes of Allakappa built a relic shrine at Allakappa where they enshrined the relics of the Buddha in reverence.
5. The Koliyan princes of Rāma village built a relic shrine at Rāma village where they enshrined the relics of the Buddha in reverence.
6. The Brahmin of Veṭṭhadīpa built a relic shrine in his Veṭṭhadīpa country and enshrined the relics of the Buddha in reverence.
7. The Malla princes of Pāvā built a relic shrine at Pāvā and enshrined the relics of the Buddha in reverence.
8. The Malla princes of Kusinārā built a relic shrine at Kusinārā and enshrined the relics of the Fortunate One in reverence.
9. Brahmin Doṇa built a shrine and enshrined the measure basket in reverence.
10. The Moriyan princes of Pippalivana built a shrine and enshrined the charred pieces of firewood from the site of cremation in reverence.

Thus there were eight shrines of the Buddha-relics, with the ninth one, a shrine of the measuring-basket, and the tenth a shrine of charcoal, altogether making ten shrines.

King Ajātasattu's Shrine

Of the above ten shrines, we shall relate the events connected with the building of King Ajātasattu's shrine as told in the commentary and sub-commentary on the Long Discourse about the Emancipation (*Mahā-parinibbāna-sutta*, DN 16).

King Ajātasattu carried home his share of the relics in great ceremony. He prepared the 25 league stretch of the journey between Kusinārā and Rājagaha, a grand route of 5,000 metres wide, which was levelled. He made elaborate arrangements similar to what the Malla princes did with their passage route for the relics between the Makuṭabandhana Shrine and the Council Hall. Besides doing honour to the relics in various ways, he arranged for the opening of stalls at various places all along the route for the crowds. The golden casket of relics was placed in a golden coffin which was carried in all pomp and honour, escorted by a big army of lancers.

Before the relics arrived in Rājagaha, King Ajātasattu ordered the people to assemble in a gathering 500 kilometres wide. The festivities, which started in Kusinārā, continued all along the route under the escort of his big army. Wherever golden-coloured flower trees were in bloom, he placed the relics in the ring, surrounded by the army of lancers and made ceremonial offerings, which lasted for as long as the golden flowers were in bloom. Then the procession moved on from there. At every length of the ceremonial carriage, as it proceeded along, the procession halted to hold festivities and to make offerings, which lasted for seven days. The procession thus moved on at leisurely pace so that it lasted seven years, seven months and seven days to get to Rājagaha.

Believers in wrong views raised an outcry that King Ajātasattu held funeral ceremonies on the passing away of ascetic Gotama against the wishes of the people and that these festivities caused neglect of work by the people who had to suffer hardships. In denouncing thus the 86,000 holders of wrong views were motivated by malevolent thoughts about the Three Treasures, as a result of which, they were reborn in the four lower worlds.

The Arahats then reviewed the situation. The prolonged festivities over the carriage of the relics was causing transgressions against the Three Treasures amongst the people, which was indeed undesirable. So they thought of seeking the co-operation of the Devas to speed up the King's procession to Rājagaha.

They requested Sakka, the Lord of the Devas: "Sakka, think of some way to speed up the carriage of the relics to Rājagaha."

Sakka replied: "Venerable sir, there is no worldling who is as devoted to the Three Treasures as King Ajātasattu. He will not take my advice. But I can use other means. One possible way is to assume myself a terrifying appearance as Māra is wont to do, to cause terrible sounds to possess people, to cause people to sneeze, to cause people to lose appetite, which are also [1098] Māra's pet devices. When I use these means, the venerable ones should say to King Ajātasattu: "King, the prolonged festivities over the carriage of the relics has angered the Devas. Speed up the procession to Rājagaha." On your advice only would King Ajātasattu speed up his procession." Sakka did his part as suggested, causing terror among the people.

The Arahats then went to King Ajātasattu and said: "Great King, the prolonged festivities over the carriage of the relics has angered the Devas. Speed up the procession to Rājagaha." King Ajātasattu replied: "Venerable sirs, I cannot fully satisfy myself in honouring the relics yet. However, I will follow your advice." And so he ordered his men to speed up the carriage of the relics to Rājagaha. This order was given on the day when seven years and seven months had elapsed on the way to Rājagaha. Now in the next seven days the procession reached its destination.

King Ajātasattu erected a shrine in Rājagaha in honour of the relics which had arrived. Other kings and Brahmins who received their share of the relics or the measuring basket or charred firewood also put up shrines in honour of the relics, according to their means, in their own cities. These facts are recorded under the title: "The Honouring of the Relics by Raising Shrines," which states: "King Ajātasattu of Magadha raised a shrine in Rājagaha in honour of the relics of the Buddha," which was recited at the Second and Third Councils.

A Secret Relic Depository

[The following account is based on Thūpavaṁsa, chapter 5.]

After the various kings and Brahmins had erected their respective shrines at their own places where the Buddha-relics were enshrined, Ven. Mahā Kassapa by his special power of seeing into the future, saw:

1. That these shrines were liable to be pilfered by holders of wrong views.

2. That if a secret depository were to be built these relics would be discovered by King Asoka who should cause the spread of the relics over the whole of Jambudīpa to the benefit of Devas and humans.

So he went to King Ajātasattu and said solemnly: "Great King, it would be highly advisable that a secret depository be built to safeguard the relics."

"Very well, venerable sir," said King Ajātasattu, "leave the matter of building a secret depository to me, but how should the relics in other places be collected?"

"Great King, the collection of the relics that are with the other kings and Brahmins will be our responsibility, not yours."

"Very well, venerable sir, let the venerable ones collect the relics. I shall build the depository."

Having reached this understanding, Ven. Mahā Kassapa went around to the recipients of the relics, and explained to them his vision; and was able to collect the relics, leaving only an appropriate quantity of them for private homage at the various homes of the recipients. All the relics collected were brought to Rājagaha.

The relics at Rāma village were an exception. There, the Nāgas were guarding the relics and they were therefore secure against pilferers. Ven. Mahā Kassapa foresaw that, at a later time the relics of Rāma village would be enshrined when the Mahā Cetiya was erected at the Mahā Vihāra monastery in the island of Śrī Laṅkā, so relics from that place were not among the relics collected and brought to Rājagaha. There, at a site to the north east of the city, Ven. Mahā Kassapa made a solemn wish: "May the ground at this site be flawless and clean. If there be any rocks let them disappear now. Let no water arise here."

King Ajātasattu then ordered earth digging work at that site. The earth dug up there was made into bricks. Then he built 80 shrines in honour of the 80 senior disciples. When asked what the project was. The king replied that it was the building project of shrines in honour of the 80 senior disciples. Nobody was allowed to know that the Buddha-relics were underneath. [1099]

The Enshrining of the Relics in Caskets

At the depth of 80 cubits, a copper platform was laid out, over which a copper chamber the size of a standard shrine was built. Then a series of eight sets of

containers of various sizes beginning from golden sandalwood caskets and eight sets of shrines of golden sandalwood were made ready, each to be encased in another by turn in the following order: The relics of the Buddha were first put into a casket made of golden sandalwood. Then this was encased in a second casket of the same material. Then this was encased in a third casket of the same material. In this manner, eight caskets of golden sandalwood encased in one another in turn formed one casket of eight layers of golden sandalwood.

This eight-layered casket of golden sandalwood was enshrined in the series of eight shrines made of golden sandalwood, each shrine being encased in another in turn so that a shrine of eight layers of golden sandalwood was formed.

Likewise, this shrine of golden sandalwood was encased in a series of eight ivory caskets which formed one casket of eight layers of ivory caskets. This eight-layered ivory casket was enshrined in a series of eight ivory shrines, each being encased in another in turn, so that a shrine of eight layers of ivory shrines was formed.

Likewise, this ivory shrine was encased in a series of eight caskets wrought with the seven gems, which formed one casket of eight layers of the caskets of seven gems. This eight-layered casket of the seven gems was enshrined in a series of eight shrines wrought with the seven gems, each being encased in another in turn so that a shrine of eight layers of shrines of the seven gems was formed.

Likewise, this shrine of the seven gems was encased in a series of eight silver caskets which formed one casket of eight layers of silver caskets. This eight-layered silver casket was enshrined in a series of eight silver shrines, each being encased in another in turn so that a shrine of eight layers of silver shrines was formed.

Likewise, this silver shrine was encased in a series of eight emerald caskets which formed one casket of eight layers of emerald caskets. This eight-layered emerald casket was enshrined in a series of eight emerald shrines, each being encased in another in turn so that a shrine of eight layers of emerald shrines was formed.

Likewise, this emerald shrine was encased in a series of ruby caskets which formed one casket of eight layers of ruby caskets. This eight layered ruby casket was enshrined in a series of eight ruby shrines, each being encased in another in turn so that a shrine of eight layers of ruby shrines was formed.

Likewise, this ruby shrine was encased in a series of cat's-eye caskets which formed one casket of eight layers of cat's-eye caskets. This eight layered cat's-eye casket was enshrined in a series of eight cat's-eye shrines, each being encased in another in turn so that a shrine of eight layers of cat's-eye shrines was formed.

Likewise, this cat's-eye shrine was encased in a series of glass caskets which formed one casket of eight layers of glass caskets. This eight layered glass casket was enshrined in a series of eight glass shrines, each being encased in another in turn so that a shrine of eight layers of glass shrines was formed.

Thus systematically encased in turn, the outermost glass shrine had the size of the Thūpārāma in Sri Laṅkā. The glass shrine was placed in a shrine set with the seven gems. This again was sheltered inside in a golden shrine, which was again sheltered inside a silver shrine, and finally sheltered inside a copper shrine. Inside the copper shrine, seven jewels were strewn about as sand flooring above which thousand of flowers grown on land were scattered. Golden statuettes depicting the 550 Birth Stories (*Jātaka*), the 80 senior disciples, King Suddhodana, father of Buddha Gotama, Queen Māyā Devī, mother of Buddha Gotama, the seven remarkable conatals that were born or appeared at the birth of Bodhisatta, etc. were placed there. Five hundred golden pots and 500 silvers pots filled with water, 500 golden streamers, 500 golden lamps, 500 silver lamps fitted with wicks of white cloth filled with scented [1100] oil, were also set up inside.

Then Ven. Mahā Kassapa made a solemn wish: "May the flowers remain fresh, may the scents retain their fragrance, may the lighted lamps remain aglow." On a golden sheet, he had the following inscription etched out and scaled: "At some future date a prince named Piyadassi will be enthroned as a righteous king by the name of Asoka. That King Asoka will spread these relics through the southern island continent of Jambudīpa."

After having carried out all forms of doing honour to the relics, King Ajātasattu closed all entrances to the inner shrine wrought with the seven jewels; the same was done to the golden shrine and the silver shrine that successively housed the inner shrine. He locked up the outermost shrine made of copper.

Against the steel padlock he placed a big piece of ruby accompanied by an inscription that read: “Let some needy king of some future date utilise this ruby to meet the expenses of doing honour to the relics.”

Then Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, said to Vissakamma: “My good Vissakamma, King Ajātasattu had done his best for the security and preservation of the relics. You now see to the security of the depository.”

Vissakamma went to the relic depository and set up a complex mechanism which emitted searing heat and which presented an awful sight with interconnected moving parts. The moving parts were made of steel blades shining like glass, which turned at the speed of whirlwinds, and which were held by wooden statues of demons which guarded it on all sides. All these complex rotating blades had only a single key-switch. Having thus made the relic depository secure, Vissakamma returned to his celestial abode.

King Ajātasattu further put up stone walls around the depository as was usually erected in the construction of a masonry monastery. Atop the walls, he covered the whole area with a rock platform which was covered up with earth. The earth was made into an even surface upon which a stone shrine was erected.

The First Council

[This section has been moved here from the story about Ven. Ānanda. It is based on the Council of the Five Hundred (*Pañca-satikakkhandhaka*, Vin Kandh 21), and its commentary.]

Ven. Mahā Kassapa remembered the special recognition shown by the Buddha to him. “The Fortunate One exchanged his double robe with me. He declared to the monastics: ‘Monastics, in abiding in the first absorption (*jhāna*), Kassapa is my equal; and so on,’ thus extolling my power of absorption (*jhāna*) attainments with reference to the successively higher absorptions, which embraced the nine absorption attainments that require abiding at each of the progressive levels, as well as the five supernormal powers.

Again, the Fortunate One remained in mid-air, and waving his hand, declared, that: ‘In the matter of detachment to the four types of followers, Kassapa is unequalled,’ and that: ‘In the attitude of equanimity, Kassapa conducts himself like the moon.’ These words of praise are truly unparalleled. I must live up to

these attributes in no other way but by undertaking to convene a Saṅgha Council for reciting the Dhamma and the Discipline for their preservation.

Inasmuch as a king appoints his eldest son heir-apparent, conferring all his own regal paraphernalia and authority on the son with a view to perpetuating his sovereignty, so also the Fortunate One had indeed praised me so lavishly, in such extraordinary ways, seeing that I, Kassapa, would be able to perpetuate his teaching."

After pondering deeply thus, Ven. Mahā Kassapa related to the monastic congregation the sacrilegious words of Subhadda, the old monastic and made this proposal: "Now, friends, before immorality has gained ground and becomes an obstruction to the Dhamma, before infamy has gained ground and becomes an obstruction to the Discipline, before upholders of immorality have gained strength, before upholders of the good doctrine have become weak, before upholders of infamy have gained strength, and before upholders of the Discipline have become weak, let us recite in unison the Doctrine and the Discipline and preserve them."

On hearing his animated appeal, the congregation said to him: "Ven. Kassapa, may the venerable one select the monastics to carry out the reciting of the Doctrine and the Discipline." Ven. Mahā Kassapa then selected 499 Arahats [1318] who had memorized the Dhamma-Vinaya, and most of whom were also endowed with the fourfold analytical knowledge, the three knowledges (*vijjā*), and the six supernormal powers, and were designated as the foremost monastic disciples by the Buddha.

> In this connection, the selection of 499 monastics indicates that one seat was reserved by Ven. Mahā Kassapa for Ven. Ānanda. The reason is that, at that moment, Ven. Ānanda had not become an Arahat, and was still training himself to become an Arahat. Without Ven. Ānanda, it would not be possible to hold the Council because he had heard all the discourses of the Buddha which comprise the five sections (*nikāya*), the nine parts (*aṅga*) or, the doctrines numbering a total of 84,000.
>
> Why, then, should Ven. Ānanda be put on the list of the reciters by Ven. Mahā Kassapa? The reason was that Ven. Mahā Kassapa wanted to avoid criticism that he was partial to Ven. Ānanda because there were other Arahats endowed with the fourfold analytical knowledge like Ven.

> Ānanda while Ven. Ānanda was still in training (*sekkha*) to become an Arahat.
>
> This criticism was probable, considering the fact that Ven. Mahā Kassapa and Ven. Ānanda were very intimate. The former would address the latter in such intimate terms as: "This young lad," even when the latter was about 80 years old with gray hair.[252] Further, Ven. Ānanda was a Sakyan Prince and a first cousin of the Buddha. For that reason, Ven. Mahā Kassapa, although knowing full well that Ven. Ānanda was indispensable to the project of the recitations, awaited the general consent of the congregation in selecting him.

When Ven. Mahā Kassapa informed the congregation about his having chosen 499 Arahats for the purpose, the congregation unanimously proposed Ven. Ānanda to be selected for the Council in spite of his still being a trainee (*sekkha*).

They said: "Ven. Mahā Kassapa, although Ven. Ānanda is still a trainee, he is not one who is likely to be misled into wrong judgment on any of the four unjust ways. Moreover, he is the monastic with the greatest learning imparted by the Buddha both on the Doctrine and the Discipline." Then Ven. Mahā Kassapa put Ven. Ānanda on the list of the reciters. Thus there were 500 reciters selected with the approval of the congregation.

Then the venue for the holding of the recitals was considered by the congregation. They chose Rājagaha because it was a big city, big enough to provide daily alms food to the big gathering of monastics, and because it had many big monasteries where the monastics could stay. They also thought about the need to disallow other monastics outside of the Council to spend the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in Rājagaha, where the Council members would reside during that period.

> The reason for disallowing non-participating monastics was because as the proceedings of the Council was to be conducted every day for a number of days, unless non-participating monastics were officially disallowed from residence during the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), dissenters might interfere in the proceedings.

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[252] See the Discourse about Robes (*Cīvara-sutta*, SN16.11).

Then Ven. Mahā Kassapa by making his formal proposal as an act-in-congregation, and getting the formal approval of the congregation, passed the Saṅgha resolution in the following terms:

> *Suṇātu me, āvuso Saṅgho, yadi Saṅghassa patta-kallaṁ,*
> *Saṅgho imāni pañca bhikkhu-satāni*
> *sammanneyya Rājagahe vassaṁ vasantāni,*
> *Dhammañ-ca Vinayañ-ca saṅgāyituṁ,*
> *na aññehi bhikkhūhi Rājagahe vassaṁ vasitabban-ti.*
> *Esā ñatti.*

The gist of this is: 1) Only 500 monastics, who were to recite the Doctrine and the Discipline, were to stay in Rājagaha during the Rains Retreat; and 2) that no other monastics were to stay in Rājagaha during the same period.

The above legal act of the Saṅgha-in-council took place 21 days after [1319] the passing away of the Buddha. After the act was performed, Ven. Mahā Kassapa made a proclamation to all the members of the congregation: “Friends, I allow you 40 days to enable you to attend to any of your personal obligations. After these 40 days, on no account will any excuses be accepted for failure to attend to the task of the recitation, whether for sickness, business concerning the preceptor, or parents or monastic requisites, such as alms bowls or robes. Every one of you is expected to be ready to begin the proceedings at the end of 40 days.”

After giving these strict instructions to the Saṅgha, Ven. Mahā Kassapa, accompanied by 500 monastic pupils, went to Rājagaha. The other members of the Council also went to various places, accompanied by their monastic disciples, to assuage the sorrow of the people by means of discourses on the good doctrine. Ven. Puṇṇa and his 700 monastic pupils remained at Kusinagara giving solace with their discourses to the devotees who mourned the demise of the Buddha.

Ven. Ānanda carried, as usual, the alms bowl and robes of the Buddha, and went to Sāvatthī accompanied by 500 monastic disciples. His following of monastics increased day by day. Wherever he went, devotees lamented and wailed.

When, going by stages, Ven. Ānanda reached Sāvatthī, and news of his arrival spread through the city and people came out with flowers and perfumes to welcome him. They wailed, saying: “Ven. Ānanda, you used to come in the

Buddha's company, but where have you left the Buddha now and come alone?" The people's lamentation in seeing Ven. Ānanda alone was as pitiable as the day of the Buddha's passing away.

Ven. Ānanda solaced them with discourses on the impermanence, suffering and non-self of conditioned existence. Then he entered the Jetavana monastery, paid homage before the Buddha's Perfumed Chamber, opened the door, took out the cot and the seat, cleaned them, swept the precincts of the Chamber, and removed the withered flowers. Then he replaced the cot and the seat and performed the routine acts at the Buddha's residence, as in the days when the Buddha was living.

Whenever he carried out these routine tasks, he would say, weeping: "Fortunate One, is this not the time for your taking a bath?" "Is this not the time for your delivering a discourse?" "Is this not the time to give admonition to monastics?" "Is this not the time to lie on the right side in all the Buddha's grace like a lion?" "Is this not the time to wash your face?" He could not help weeping in the hourly routine activities in the usual service of the Buddha because, knowing well the benefits of the pacifying quality of the Fortunate One, he had a deep love for the Buddha, out of devotion as well as out of affection. He had not purged all the pollutants; he had a soft heart towards the Buddha owing to the mutual deeds of kindness that had taken place between him and the Buddha over millions of former existences.

Advice given by a Forest-Deity

While he himself was suffering intense grief and lamentation over the loss of the Buddha, Ven. Ānanda was also giving much time to offering solace to the devotees who went to see him in sorrow on account of the Buddha's passing away. As he was then staying at a forest in the kingdom of Kosala, the guardian spirit of the forest felt sorry for him; and to remind him of the need to check his sorrow, the spirit sang the following verse to him (SN 9.5):

Rukkha-mūla-gahanaṁ pasakkiya,
Nibbānaṁ hadayasmiṁ opiya.
Jhāya Gotama mā pamādo,
kiṁ te biḷi-biḷikā karissati. *[1320]*

> Venerable one of the Gotama clan, resort to seclusion at the foot of a tree, immerse your mind in Nibbāna[253] and abide in the absorption (*jhāna*) characterized by concentration on the object of meditation, and on its characteristics of impermanence, suffering, non-self. What good is there in your tittle-tattling with your visitors in your effort to solace them?

That admonition caused urgency (*saṁvega*) in Ven. Ānanda. Since the passing away of the Buddha, he had been standing and sitting too much so that he was feeling out of sorts, and to get relief, he took a laxative prepared from milk on the next day, and did not go out of the monastery.

On that day, Subha, son of the deceased Todeyya the Brahmin, went to invite Ven. Ānanda to an offering of a meal. Ven. Ānanda said to the youth that he could not accept the invitation that day because he had taken a laxative made from milk, but that he might be able to do so the next day. On the next day, Ven. Ānanda went to Subha's residence where he was asked a question about the doctrine. Ven. Ānanda's discourse, in reply to that question, can be found in the Discourse to Subha (*Subha-sutta*, DN 10).

Then Ven. Ānanda supervised the repairs to the Jetavana monastery. When the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) was approaching, he left his monastic pupils at the monastery and went to Rājagaha. Other members who were selected for the Council to recite the Doctrine and Discipline also went to Rājagaha, at about the same time. All these members performed the Observance Day (*Uposatha*) on the full moon of July (*Āsāḷha*) and on the first waning day of the month they vowed to remain in Rājagaha for the three-month Rains Retreat (*Vassa*).

Rājagaha had eighteen monasteries around the city at that time. As they had been unoccupied for some period, the buildings and the precincts were in a state of despair and neglect. On the occasion of the Buddha's passing away, all the monastics had left Rājagaha for Kusinārā and the monasteries remained unused and untended so that the buildings became mouldy and dusty, while there were broken panes and gaping walls.

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[253] Immerse your mind in Nibbāna means direct your mind to Nibbāna; see the commentary.

The monastics held a meeting and decided that, as according to the Vinaya laid down by the Buddha on living places, the monastic buildings and compound should be repaired and maintained to proper condition. So they assigned the first month of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period to the repairing and maintenance of the monasteries, and the middle month to the recitals. They attended to the repair work to honour the Buddha's instructions found in the Discipline and also to avoid criticism by the religious sects outside the Buddha's teaching, who would say: "The disciples of ascetic Gotama took care of the monasteries only when their teacher was living, but when he is dead and gone, they neglect them and let the valuable assets donated by their followers go to waste."

After coming to the decision, the monastics went to King Ajātasattu's palace. They were paid homage to by the king who asked them the purpose of their visit. They told him that they needed men to carry out repair work to the eighteen monasteries. The king provided men to repair the monasteries under the supervision of the monastics. In the first month the job was completed. The monastics then went to King Ajātasattu and said: "Great King, the repair work at the monasteries is completed. Now we shall convene the Council by reciting the Doctrine and the Discipline in unison." The king said: "Venerable sirs, carry out your task freely. Let there be the joint operation of our regal authority with your doctrinal authority. Mention your needs and I will see to them." The monastics said: "We need an Assembly Hall for the Saṅgha to carry out the task." The king asked them the place of their choice, and they mentioned the mountain-side on Mount Vebhāra where the great Sattapaṇṇi tree stood.

A Grand Pavilion donated by King Ajātasattu

"Very well, venerable sirs," said King Ajātasattu and he built a grand pavilion for the Council, as splendid as one that might have been created by Vissakamma, the Deva architect. It had compartments for the efficient working of the Council, each with stairways and [1321] approaches, all the walls, pillars and balustrades beautifully painted with artistic designs. The whole pavilion would seem to outshine the royal palace and its gorgeousness, would seem to put a Deva mansion to ridicule. It presented itself as a magnificent mansion which attracted the eyes of its beholders, Devas and humans alike, as a pleasant river bank attracts all sorts of birds. In fact, it gave the impression of an object of delight which was the sum total of all delightful things put up together.

The Council Hall had a canopy laid with gems. Clusters of flowers of various sizes, shapes and hues hung from it. The flooring was inlaid with jewels which looked like a huge platform of solid ruby. On it were floral festoons of variegated hues forming a wondrous carpet as would decorate a Brahma's mansion. The 500 seats for the 500 monastic-reciters were made of priceless material, yet suitable for monastic use. The throne, or the raised dais, for the elder in charge of posing questions, had its back leaning on the southern wall, facing north. In the middle, stood the throne or raised dais of the elder in charge of answering the question, facing east, which was suitable for use by the Buddha. On it was placed a ceremonial circular fan, made of ivory. Having made all these detailed arrangements, the king informed the Saṅgha that all was ready.

It was the fourth waning day in the month of August (*Sāvaṇa*). On that day, some of the monastics went about saying amongst themselves: "In this gathering of monastics, one can still stand with defilements," which was plainly an allusion to Ven. Ānanda. When these words of ridicule reached Ven. Ānanda's ear, he knew that no one else but himself was going about spreading the stink of defilements. He felt spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) from those words. There were other monastics who said to him: "Friend Ānanda, the Council will begin tomorrow. You still have to gain the higher stages of the path. It would not be proper for you to participate in the proceedings as a noble one who is still training (*sekkha*) himself for becoming an Arahat. We would like you to be mindful in striving for becoming an Arahat in this time."

Becoming an Arahat outside of the Four Postures

Then Ven. Ānanda thought to himself: "Tomorrow, the Council begins. It would not be proper for me to participate in the proceedings as a mere Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*)." He meditated on the body the whole night. Early in the morning, he thought of getting some sleep. Going into the monastery, he mindfully reclined on the cot. As his two feet lifted off the ground and his head was not yet touching the pillow, he became an Arahat in a split second, outside of any of the four bodily postures.

> To explain this further: Ven. Ānanda had been meditating while walking up and down along the walk outside the monastery. Despite this, the paths and fruitions at the three higher levels was still not attained. Then he remembered the Buddha's words when the latter was about to pass away: "Ānanda, you have done many meritorious actions. Meditate diligently.

> You will soon become an Arahat." He knew that the Buddha's word never went amiss.
>
> He reviewed his meditation effort: "I have been overzealous; this makes my mind distracted. I must strike a balance between energy and concentration." Reflecting thus, he washed his feet and entering his meditation cell, he thought of taking a short rest. With mindfulness, he reclined on the cot. As his two feet lifted off the ground and his head had not touched the pillow, during that fleeting moment he became an Arahat, purified of all the pollutants.
>
> Therefore, if someone were to pose a question: "Which monastic in this teaching gained Awakening while outside of the four bodily postures?" the answer is "Ven. Ānanda."

It was on the fifth waning day, in the month of August (*Sāvaṇa*), the day after Ven. Ānanda had become an Arahat, after finishing their meal, the reciters selected for the Council kept their alms bowls and other requisites and congregated at the great pavilion to begin the recitation.

> By the custom of the Indian subcontinent, the period from the full moon day of the month in July (*Āsāḷha*) to the full moon day of the month in August (*Sāvaṇa*) is reckoned as one month. During that period of one month, the Saṅgha had [1322] attended to the repairing and maintenance of the monasteries. On the first day of the waning moon in August, they requested King Ajātasattu to build a pavilion. The construction took three days. On the fourth day, Ven. Ānanda became an Arahat. On the fifth day, the proceedings of the Council commenced.

Ven. Ānanda becomes an Arahat

He entered the pavilion when everybody was present. Donning his upper robe in the manner prescribed for monastics when appearing before a meeting or for going into the village, he stepped into the hall with a beaming face which looked as fresh as a toddy palm fruit just plucked, or a ruby placed on a white piece of velvet, or a full moon in a clear sky, or a lotus blooming forth on being radiated with dawn's sunshine. It seemed to radiate with the inner purity of the Arahat. Its splendour proclaimed the Arahat fruition of the possessor.

> In this connection, it might be asked: "Why did Ānanda enter the hall as if proclaiming his being an Arahat?" Ven. Ānanda reflected: "An Arahat does not declare his attainment of the Arahat fruition in words but he may

let the fact known to others, and this is extolled by the Buddha." He knew that the Council was prepared to let him participate in the proceedings because of his vast knowledge, even though he was still a trainee (*sekkha*). And now that he had become an Arahat, those other monastics would be very happy to know about it. Further, he wanted to demonstrate to everyone that the Buddha's last words: "Work with diligence, towards the attainment of your set task," had proved most beneficial.

On seeing Ven. Ānanda, Ven. Mahā Kassapa thought: "Ven. Ānanda looks glorious as an Arahat. If the Fortunate One were living, he would surely laud Ven. Ānanda today. Now I must say words of praise on behalf of the Fortunate One." And he said: "Friend Ānanda, glorious it is indeed that you have become an Arahat." He said these congratulatory words thrice aloud.

Proceedings of the Council

With the arrival of Ven. Ānanda, the Council was complete with the 500 selected reciters. Ven. Mahā Kassapa asked the Council where to begin their recitals, whether the doctrine including the Discourses and the Abhidhamma should be recited first, or whether the Discipline (*Vinaya*), should be recited first. The Saṅgha unanimously proposed: "Ven. Mahā Kassapa, the Vinaya is the lifeblood of the Buddha's teaching. For, if the Vinaya lasts long, the Buddha's teaching will lasts long. Therefore let us begin our recitals with the recital of the Vinaya." Ven. Mahā Kassapa then asked: "Whom shall we make the leading monastic in reciting the Vinaya?" – "We will make Ven. Upāli the leading monastic." – "Would Ven. Ānanda be incapable of it?" – "Ven. Ānanda would be quite capable of it. However, when the Fortunate One was living he had declared Ven. Upāli as the foremost among the male monastic disciples who have mastered the Vinaya. Therefore, we should make Ven. Upāli, after getting his consent, the leading monastic in reciting the Vinaya."

Ven. Mahā Kassapa was the presiding monastic at the First Council. He also took the responsibility for the questioning. Ven. Upāli took the responsibility of answering the questions on the Vinaya. Both took the special seats made for them and conducted the proceedings. Each section of the Discipline was put as a question consisting of the subject, the background story, the person that was the cause of the Buddha's prescribing the rule, the original rule, the amendment thereto if any, whether a breach of that rule amounts to an offence or not; and each question was answered fully under those headings. The Council then put

them on record by reciting in unison, clothing the subject-matter with such formal expressions as: "At that time," "It was then that," "Then," "When it was said," etc. to give cohesion to the matter. The recitals were made in unison: "At that time the Fortunate One was staying at Verañjā, etc."

> This reciting of the words of the Buddha by the Saṅgha in a special assembly is called the holding of a Council, or literally, Chanting Together (*Saṅgāyaṇa*).

When the reciting of the First Expulsion (*Pārājika*) rule was completed, the great earth trembled [1323] vehemently down to the sheet of water that supports it as if applauding the noble historic event.

The three remaining Expulsion rules were recited in the same manner, as also were the rest of the 227 rules, each framed as a question and followed by its answer. The whole of the text, which contains the Rules on Expulsion (*Pārājika*), Requiring a Meeting of the Saṅgha (*Saṅghādisesa*), the Undecided Rules (*Aniyata*), and the Confession Rules involving Forfeiture (*Nissagiya-pācittiya*), all of these together was entitled the Section on Expulsion (*Pārājika-kaṇḍa*); and together with the Simple Confession Rules (*Suddha-pācittiyā*), the Acknowledgment Rules (*Pāṭidesanīyā*), the Training Rules (*Sekhiya*) and the Settling of Legal Issues (*Adhikaraṇa-samathā*) became known as the Analysis of the Monks' Rules (*Bhikkhu-vibhaṅga*), and is popularly referred to as the Great Analysis (*Mahā-vibhaṅga*). It was prescribed as the official text and has since been taught at the monasteries from generation to generation. At the conclusion of reciting the Great Analysis, the great earth also shook violently as before.

Then followed the 304 rules of the Analysis of the Nuns' Rules (*Bhikkhunī-vibhaṅga*), containing the same sections, but more Rules, recited in the form of questions and answers as before. This Analysis of the Monks' Rules and the Analysis of the Nuns' Rules together are known as "the Twofold Analysis (*Ubhato Vibhaṅga*) of 64 recitals (*bhāṇavāra*), or over half a million syllables in length." This was prescribed as the official text that has since been taught from generation to generation. At the conclusion of reciting the Twofold Analysis the great earth also shook violently as before.

The Council of 500 reciters entrusted the approved version of the Collection of Discipline (*Vinaya-piṭaka*) to Ven. Upāli with the mandate: "Friend, teach this Collection of Discipline to the disciples who come to you for instruction." When

the reciting of the Collection of Discipline was completed, Ven. Upāli, having done his task, laid down the ceremonial circular ivory fan on the throne of the monastic in charge of answering the questions, descended from it, paid his respect to the elders, and sat in the place marked out for him.

After the reciting of the Vinaya, the Dhamma, which includes the discourses and the Abhidhamma, was to be recited. So Ven. Mahā Kassapa asked the Council of reciters: "Which monastic shall we make the leader in reciting the Dhamma?" The Council unanimously named Ven. Ānanda for the post.

Then Ven. Mahā Kassapa named himself as the Questioner (*Pucchaka*) and Ven. Ānanda as the Answerer (*Vissajjaka*). Rising from his seat, rearranging his upper robe, and making his obeisance to the elders, Ven. Ānanda held the ceremonial circular ivory fan and sat on the throne prepared for the purpose. Then the plan of reciting the Dhamma was discussed by Ven. Mahā Kassapa and the participating elders:

Ven. Kassapa: Friends, as there are two divisions of the Dhamma, the Collection of Discourses (*Sutta-piṭaka*) and the Collection of the Abstract Teaching (*Abhidhamma-piṭaka*), which shall we take up first?

Elders: Venerable sir, let us start with the Collection of Discourses.

> The Vinaya is mainly concerned with higher morality (*adhi-sīla*); the Dhamma is mainly concerned with higher consciousness, i.e. concentration (*adhi-citta*); and the Abhidhamma is mainly concerned with higher wisdom (*adhi-paññā*). Therefore, the Council recited the threefold training of morality, concentration and wisdom in that order, it should be noted.

Ven. Kassapa: Friends, there are four Collections (*Nikāya*) of the discourses in the Collection of Discourses; which of them shall we take up first?

Elders: Venerable sir, let us start with the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*).

Ven. Kassapa: Friends, the Collection of Discourses contains 34 discourses (*sutta*) in three Divisions (*Vagga*), which Division shall we take up first?

Elders: Venerable sir, we shall start with the Division on the Category of Virtue (*Sīlakkhandha-vagga*).

Ven. Kassapa: Friends, the Division on the Category of Virtue contains 13 discourses, which discourse shall we take up first?

Elders: Venerable sir, the Discourse on the Supreme Net (*Brahma-jāla-sutta*, DN 1) portrays the three grades of morality. It is useful for the abandoning of deceitful talk or hypocrisy on the part of monastics which is detrimental to the teaching. It also explains the 62 kinds of wrong views. It had caused 62 times the shaking of the great earth when it was delivered by the Fortunate One. Therefore, let us start with the [1324] Discourse on the Supreme Net.

Having thus agreed upon the plan of verification, Ven. Mahā Kassapa posed appropriate questions on the Discourse on the Supreme Net to Ven. Ānanda regarding the background story, the persons connected with the discourse, the subject matter, etc. Ven. Ānanda answered every question completely, at the end of which the 500 reciters recited in unison the Discourse on the Supreme Net (*Brahma-jāla-sutta*). When the reciting of the discourse was completed, the great earth quaked violently as before.

Then followed the questioning and answering about the recital of the twelve other discourses in the Division on the Category of Virtue, which was recognized as the title of the Division and prescribed as part of the course of studies of the collections in respect of the discourses.

Then the Great Division (*Mahā-vagga*), which consisted of ten discoursses, was next and followed by the Division beginning with the discourse about Pāthika, a naked ascetic (*Pāthika-vagga*), which consisted of eleven discourses, each with the questioning and answering. Hence the 34 discourses in three Divisions (*Vagga*), whose recitals (*bhāṇavāra*) numbered 24, were recorded as the Buddha's words under the title of the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*). This approved version of the text was then entrusted to Ven. Ānanda with the following instruction from the elders: "Friend Ānanda, teach this Collection of the Long Discourses to the pupils who come to you for instruction."

After that the Council approved the Collection of Middle Length Discourses (*Majjhima-nikāya*), after the usual questioning and answering, which took 80 recitals (*bhāṇavāra*, or 640,000 syllables) in all. Then they entrusted the approved version of the text to the pupils of Ven. Sāriputta, saying: "Friends, preserve this Collection of Middle Length Discourses well."

Then the Council approved the Collection of Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*), after the usual questioning and answering, which took 100 recitals (800,000 syllables). They then entrusted the approved version of the text to Ven. Mahā Kassapa, saying: "Venerable sir, teach this Collection of Thematic Discourses, the sayings of the Fortunate One, to the pupils who come to you for instruction."

Then the Council approved the Collection of Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*), after the usual questioning and answering, which took 120 recitals (960,000 syllables). Then they entrusted the approved version of the text to Ven. Anuruddha, saying: "Venerable sir, teach this Collection of Numerical Discourses to the pupils who come to you for instruction."

Then the Council approved the seven books of the Abhidhamma: the Enumeration of Phenonema (*Dhamma-saṅgaṇī*), the Analyses (*Vibhaṅga*), the Discussion about Elements (*Dhātu-kathā*), the Designation of Persons (*Puggala-paññatti*), the Debates (*Kathā-vatthu*), the Pairs (*Yamaka*) and the Causal Relations (*Paṭṭhāna*), with the usual questionings, answerings and recitals. At the end of the recital of these Abhidhamma texts the great earth quaked violently as before.

Then the Council recited: the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*), the Expositions (*Niddesa*), The Path of the Analytic Knowledges (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*), the Traditions (*Apadāna*), the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*), the Supplementary Readings (*Khuddaka-pāṭha*), the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*), the Exalted Utterances (*Udāna*), the This-Saids (*Iti-vuttaka*), the Stories about Heavenly Mansions (*Vimāna-vatthu*), the Stories about Petas (*Peta-vatthu*), the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*), and the Verses of the Elder Nuns (*Therī-gāthā*), after the usual questioning and answering. These thirteen books collectively were called the Collection of the Supplementary Texts (*Khuddaka-nikāya*).

According to the elders who had memorized the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*), it was said: "The Collection of the Supplementary Texts (*Khuddaka-nikāya*) was recited and approved along with the Abhidhamma." But according to the elders who had memorized the Collection of Middle Length Discourses (*Majjhima-nikāya*), these 13 books, together with the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*), making 15 books altogether, were named as the Collection of

the Supplementary Texts (*Khuddaka-nikāya*) and are classified in the Collection of Discourses.

> These statements are based on the introduction to the commentary on the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*). A *bhāṇavāra* or a "recital" is the length of time it took to recite a piece of the text, which by our modern clock time, would be about half an hour. [A *bhāṇavāra* is calculated as being the same as 250 *Siloka* verses in length. As a *Siloka* is normally considered to have 4 lines of 8 syllables each that would give 32 syllables to the verse. A *bhāṇavāra* therefore is 250 x 32 syllables long, which is equal to 8,000 syllables in length.] The naming of the principal elders: Ven. Mahā Kassapa, Ven. Upāli and Ven. Ānanda, in their respective offices, are on record in the Discipline (Vin Cv 11).

Thus Ven. Ānanda was a principal monastic in the First Council, in answering most competently all the questions concerning the Dhamma which comprised the Basket of Discourses (*Dhamma-piṭaka*) and the Basket of the Abstract Teaching (*Abhidhamma-piṭaka*). [1325]

King Asoka's Shrines

After making the elaborate arrangements for the relic depository and the Council, Ven. Mahā Kassapa, living to the end of the span of life destined for him, passed away. King Ajātasattu also was dead and gone to his next existence according to his deeds, good and bad. People of those times also are dead and gone. Alas! All conditioned phenomena of mind and matter are of such an impermanent nature, such an unstable nature, such a suffering nature.

> [The following account is based on Thūpavaṁsa, chapter 6.]

After more than 200 years from the year of the passing away of the Buddha, a prince named Piyadassi was enthroned as King Asoka. He excavated the relics of the Buddha which was kept in the depository by Ven. Mahā Kassapa and erected many relic shrines (*stūpa*) all over Jambudīpa.

This story is related here: King Asoka became a great devotee of the Buddha through the help and assistance of the novice Nigrodha. His remarkable devotion to the Buddha and his teaching found expression in 84,000 monasteries. After building them he said to the Saṅgha: "Venerable sir, I have built 84,000 monasteries, but where can I find the relics?" The venerable ones said: "Great

King, we have heard about a relic depository built by Ven. Mahā Kassapa and King Ajātasattu. But we do not know its exact location."

King Asoka first searched for the relics in Rājagaha. In the hope of finding the relics, he pulled down the original shrine built by King Ajātasattu but failed to find anything there. He restored the shrine to its original condition. Then be organized a company of four types of assembly, namely male and female monastics, male and female lay disciples, and went to Vesālī.

In Vesālī, he searched for the relics inside the original shrine built by the Licchavī princes after pulling it down but found none. He restored the shrine to its original condition and searched for the relics inside the shrine built in Kapilavatthu. He failed again there and proceeded to Rāma village. [1101]

The Nāgas who had taken custody of the relics in Rāma village did not allow the shrine to be pulled down. All the implements that were used in the operation were broken up into pieces.

After the unsuccessful attempt at Rāma village, King Asoka went to other places where the relics were known to have been enshrined. He went to the Allakappa province, Veṭṭhadīpa province, Pāvā, Kusinārā, one by one, he pulled down the shrines at each place but finding no relics in any of them, he restored all those shrines into their original condition and so went back to Rājagaha again. Back in Rājagaha, King Asoka held a meeting with the four assemblies and asked: "Is there anyone who has heard where King Ajātasattu had deposited the relics?"

An elderly monastic said: "Great King, the exact location of the depository is not known. But I remember how my father, an elderly monastic, said to me: 'Come novice, in such and such an overgrowth of thickets there lies a stone shrine. Let us go and pay our homage there! We made offerings of flowers there.' My father then told me: 'Novice, remember this place well,' this all I know about it."

> According to the sub-commentary, some teachers said that as there were no monastics present at the assembly who are possessed of psychic powers through absorption (*jhāna*) they had to take note of what the elderly monastic said. According to other teachers, however, there were monastics possessed of psychic powers at that meeting but these monastics were unwilling to win fame and acclaim by revealing what they knew by their special apperception, and they thought that just by taking the slim clue

from what the elderly monastic said, the king would be able to trace the treasure.

King Asoka Discovered the Sacred Relic Chamber

King Asoka was able to locate the spot. “This must be the place where King Ajātasattu deposited the relics,” he decided and ordered the excavations. Clearing the overgrowth of vegetation, they found the stone shrine, and when the shrine and the earth underneath were removed the rock platform was revealed. Then tearing away the bricks and mortar, the depository came to view. They saw in wonderment the seven jewels spread on the flooring, and the wheeling blades held in the hands of a formidable ring of demon statues.

King Asoka engaged necromancers to try to halt the protective mechanism but they could not solve the mystery of the whirling blades. Then King Asoka invoked the Devas: “I intend to enshrine and honour these relics in the various monasteries numbering 84,000. May the Devas not cause any hindrance to my sincere efforts!”

At that moment Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, was on his round of travels and saw the event. He said to Vissakamma: “My good Vissakamma, King Asoka is now inside the precinct of the relic depository, wishing to get the relics. You now go and remove the protective mechanism.” Then Vissakamma took on the appearance of a young boy with five knots of hair. He went up to King Asoka with a bow in hand and said: “Great King, I shall remove those mechanical demons.” The king gladly said: “Go on, please, son!” Then Vissakamma in the guise of a young boy sent a shaft aimed at the key spot in the mechanical device and all the demon statues fell into pieces.

Then King Asoka inspected the padlock at the entrance and saw the inscription on the gold plate which reads: “Let some needy king of some future date utilise the ruby to meet the expenses of doing honour to the relics.”

King Asoka was displeased with the inscription. “How dare anyone say of me that I am a ‘needy’ king!” he remarked. Then after repeated efforts, he removed the many obstacles placed at the entrance and got inside the relic depository.

He found the lamps lit some 218 years ago still alight. The brown lotuses were as fresh as ever, and so were the bed of flowers strewn about the floor. The perfumes were as fragrant as though freshly prepared.

King Asoka took hold of the gold plate on which Ven. Mahā Kassapa had inscribed the words: [1102] "At some future date, a prince named Piyadassi will be enthroned as a righteous king by the name of Asoka. That King Asoka will spread these relics throughout Jambudīpa."

He was exhilarated and cried out: "Friends! Ven. Mahā Kassapa had rightly foreseen me!" And bending his left arm, he slapped it with his right hand thereby producing loud clapping sounds.

King Asoka then removed much of the relics, leaving only an appropriate amount in the depository for local worshippers. He closed all entrances to the depository carefully as previously done, and restored the whole edifice to its original condition. He rebuilt a new stone relic shrine (*stūpa*) about it. Then he enshrined the relics inside the 84,000 monasteries that he built and donated.

Conclusion of the Chapters on the Buddha

We have come to the end of the chapter on the Buddha. You may have noticed, in going through this chapter, the seven auspicious days connected with the Buddha, namely:

1. The day of his conception.
2. The day of his birth.
3. The day he renounced the world.
4. The day he attained Perfect Awakening.
5. The day he delivered the first discourse.
6. The day he passed away.
7. The day his body was consumed by the element of heat.

These seven dates may be noted thus:

1. The Bodhisatta was conceived on Thursday, the full moon of July (*Āsāḷha*) in 564 BCE.

2. He was born on Friday, the full moon of May (*Vesākha*) in 563 BCE.

3. He renounced the world on Monday, on the full moon of July (*Āsāḷha*) in 534 BCE.

4. He attained Perfect Awakening on Wednesday, the full moon of May (*Vesākha*) in 528 BCE.

5. He delivered his first discourse on Saturday, the full moon of July (*Āsāḷha*) in 528 BCE.

6. He passed away on Tuesday, the full moon of May (*Vesākha*) in 483 BCE.

7. His body was consumed by the element of heat on Sunday, the twelfth waning day of May (*Vesākha*) in 483 BCE.

Ledi Sayādaw's verses on the Seven Memorable Days

The late Ledi Sayādaw composed the following rhymes on the above seven days for remembering and honouring the Buddha by the devotees:

> 1. Being implored in union by the Devas and Brahmas of the 10,000 world-element, the Lord of the Three Worlds, the object of my adoration, descended from the Tusita Realm into his royal mother's womb on Thursday, the full moon of July (*Āsāḷha*) in 564 BCE, an occasion promising peace for Devas and humans.
>
> 2. Ten months after conception, on Friday, the full moon of May (*Vesākha*), in 563 BCE, the lord was born in the cool shade of the Lumbinī Park when the great earth quaked to honour the ominous event [1103] that laid out the road to the city of Nibbāna for Devas and humans.
>
> 3. At the young age of sixteen, being provided with the three princely palaces as seasonable residences he lived in regal splendour for thirteen years. Then at the youthful age of 29, being overcome by spiritual urgency on seeing the four omens conjured up by the Devas, he went forth into the homeless life in the quiet seclusion of the forest. That was on Monday, the full moon of July (*Āsāḷha*) in 534 BCE.
>
> 4. After six years of seclusion in the forest, came the time for the Perfect Awakening. On Wednesday, the full moon of May (*Vesākha*) in 528 BCE, sitting on the throne of victory, with the Tree of Awakening as a majestic canopy, he vanquished the vexatious hordes of Māra. The 10,000 world-element cheered the arising of the Fortunate One, the great event heralded spiritual security for the denizens of the three worlds.

5. Making his way to the Deer Park at Isipatana, the Buddha expounded the doctrine, the Discourse setting the Dhamma Wheel Turning (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*, SN 56.11), to the Group-of-Five ascetics and to an assemblage of Devas and Brahmas coming from the 10,000 world-element. That was Saturday, the full moon of July (*Āsāḷha*) in 528 BCE, when the great drum of the Dhamma was first sounded.

6. Then for 45 years the Buddha, with the help of the Dhamma, ferried across to the yonder shore of safety the multitudes of the three worlds belonging to 10,000 world-element. At the ripe old age of 80, in 483 BCE, on Tuesday, the full moon of May (*Vesākha*), under the twin Sāla trees at Kusinārā in the province of the Mallas, the Buddha realized the ultimate cessation that cast gloom on the 10,000 world-element.

7. The remains of the Buddha, a wondrous golden corpse, burned by itself, thanks to the prior resolution of the Fortunate One, leaving for posterity eight portions of relics. That was a Sunday, on the waxing moon of May (*Vesākha*) in 483 BCE.

8. Reflecting on the seven memorable days [1104] connected with the Buddha, the Most Fortunate One amongst the exalted, Lord of the Three Worlds, I pay my deepest devotion by deed, word and thought to the great master. For this good deed, may every blessing come showering on me! [1105]

41b. Buddha Metteyya

[Mingun Sayādaw did not include a chapter about the coming Buddha Metteyya. To rectify that omission I include this story compiled by Saya U Chit Tin in his book on the Coming Buddha Ariya Metteyya. Saya's retelling has been modified here to fit in with the vocabulary adopted in this work, and most of his notes have been omitted.]

Many [18] details concerning the coming Buddha can be assembled by combining Buddha Gotama's prediction in the Discourse about the Universal Monarch (*Cakkavatti-sutta*, DN 26), the Lineage in the Future (*Anāgata-vaṁsa*), the Garland of the Times of the Victor (*Jina-kāla-mālī*), the Appearance of the Ten Bodhisattas (*Dasa-bodhisattuppatti-kathā*), the Teaching about the Ten Bodhisattas (*Dasa-bodhi-satta-uddesa*) and the Book of the Ten Stories (*Dasa-vatthuppakaraṇa*). Further details can be added from the description by Buddha Gotama of the past Buddha Vipassī (*Mahāpadāna-sutta*, DN 14), Ven. Ananda's praise of the Buddha (*Acchariya-abbhuta-sutta*, MN 123), and the commentary on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*). These are our sources for what follows.

The Bodhisatta Metteyya

Buddha Gotama [8] predicted as follows in the Prelude to the Lineage in the Future (*Anāgata-vaṁsa*):

> *Uttamo Metteyyo Rāmo, Pasenadi Kosalo ca*
> *Abhibhū Dīghasoni ca, Caṇḍani ca Subho Todeyya-brahmaṇo*
> *Nālāgiri Palaleyyo, Bodhisattā anukkamena*
> *Sambodhiṁ labhanti anāgate.*
>
> In the future ten Bodhisattas will attain full awakening in the following order: the most honourable Ariya Metteyya, King Rāma, King Pasenadi of Kosala, the Deva Abhibhu, the Asura Deva Dīghasoni, the Brahman Caṇḍani, the young man Subha, the Brahman Todeyya, the elephant Nālāgiri, and the elephant Palaleyya.

The [11] Great Bodhisattas are confirmed in their aspiration by many Buddhas. A sixteenth-century Pāḷi text from Thailand, the Garland of the Times of the Victor (*Jina-kāla-mālī*) says that Bodhisatta Metteyya received his prediction of future Buddhahood from Buddha Mahutta. This would then be the first

prediction for him. This text also gives details of the period during which the Bodhisatta who became Buddha Gotama made a mental resolve to become a Sammā Sambuddha. This is shown to be his preparation for the life in which he received his first sure prediction. Bodhisatta Metteyya is mentioned as being associated with him in two of these lives: as his leading disciple when he was a religious teacher and as his chaplain named Sirigutta when he was King Atideva.

The story of one occasion when Bodhisatta Metteyya made an aspiration and when the perfection which is strongest for him is illustrated is told in the Pāḷi texts which were written down after the compilation of the canon. The story of Bodhisatta Metteyya's aspiration was told to the leading disciple Ven. Sariputta when he was residing near Sāvatthi in the Eastern Monastery (*Pubbārāma*), which was offered by the laywoman Visākhā.

Long ago, Bodhisatta Metteyya was the Universal Monarch Saṅkha in the city of Indapatta in the Kuru country. This large city resembled a city of the Devas. Universal Monarchs reign over the whole earth and have seven great treasures: The wheel, elephant, horse, gem, wife, householder, and adviser. Saṅkha lived in a seven-storey palace made of the seven kinds of gems. This palace rose up out of the earth through the power of his merit. Saṅkha led others to follow the path leading to rebirth in the higher planes of existence, and he administered justice with impartiality.

After Saṅkha became a Universal Monarch, there arose the Buddha Sirimata. Whenever a Bodhisatta is to be born in his last life, there is a Buddha proclamation a thousand years before. Brahmas of the Pure Abodes (*Suddhāvāsa*) travel throughout the world of men and proclaim: "A thousand years from now, a Buddha will arise in the world." King Saṅkha must have heard of this proclamation, for one day, as he sat on his golden throne under the royal white umbrella, he said: "A long time ago there was a proclamation that a Buddha would be born. I will turn over the place of Universal Monarch to whoever knows of the Three Treasures, to whoever points out to me the gems of the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha, as well as the Dispensation. I will go to see the Supreme Buddha." Buddha Sirimata was residing at that time only sixteen leagues from Saṅkha's capital city.

Among the novices in the Saṅgha, there was a boy who came from a poor family. His mother was a slave, so the novice went [12] to the city to seek wealth in

order to set his mother free. When the people saw him, they thought he was a Yakkha so they threw sticks at him. Afraid, he went to the palace and stood before the king. “Who are you, young man?” the king asked.

“I am a novice (*sāmaṇera*), Great King,” the novice answered.

“Why do you call yourself a novice?”

“Because, Great King, I do no evil, I have established myself in moral conduct, and thus I lead the holy life. Therefore I am called a novice (*sāmaṇera*).”

“Who gave you that name?”

“My teacher gave it, Great King.”

“What is your teacher called, young man?”

“My teacher is called a monk (*bhikkhu*), Great King.”

“Who gave your teacher the name monk, young man?”

“Great King, my teacher’s name was given by the priceless gem of the Saṅgha.”

Full of joy, King Saṅkha rose from his throne and prostrated himself at the feet of the novice. And he asked: “Who gave the name to the Saṅgha?” – “Great King, the Supreme Buddha Sirimata gave the name to the Saṅgha.” Hearing the word “Buddha,” which is so difficult to hear in many hundreds of thousands of aeons, King Saṅkha fainted from joy. When he regained consciousness, he asked, “Venerable sir, where does the Supreme Buddha Sirimata reside at present?”

And the novice told him the Buddha was in a monastery called the Eastern Monastery (*Pubbārāma*), sixteen leagues away. King Saṅkha turned over the power of a Universal Monarch to the novice. He gave up his kingdom and a great number of relatives. Filled with joy at the thought of seeing the Buddha, he started walking to the north towards the Eastern Monastery. The first day, the soles of his feet split open, for they were very tender due to his luxurious upbringing. On the second day, his feet began to bleed. He was unable to walk on the third day, so he went on his hands and knees. On the fourth day, his hands and feet bled, so he determined to continue on his chest. The joy of the possibility of seeing the Buddha enabled him to overcome his great suffering and pain.

41b. Buddha Metteyya – 1699

Buddha Sirimata surveyed the world with his omniscience and seeing the power of the effort (*viriya-bala*) of the king, the Buddha thought: "This Universal Monarch Saṅkha is surely a seed, a Buddha-sprout (*Buddhaṅkura-bīja*). He undertakes great pain because of me. Indeed, I should go to him." By his psychic powers, the Buddha hid his great splendour and went disguised as a young man in a chariot. He went to where Saṅkha was and blocked his path in order to test the power of his effort.

"You there!" Buddha Sirimata said to King Saṅkha: "Go back on your chest! I am going down this road in my chariot." But King Saṅkha refused, saying he was on his way to see the Buddha. The Buddha in disguise invited the king to get into his chariot, saying that is where he was going also. On the way, the Deva maiden Sujātā came down from the Tāvatiṁsa heaven, and taking the form of a young girl, offered food. The Buddha had it given to Saṅkha. Then Sakka, in the form of a young man, came down from the Tāvatiṁsa heaven and gave water. As a result of the divine food and water, all of King Saṅkha's ailments disappeared.

When they arrived at the Eastern Monastery, the Buddha sat on his seat in the monastery, assuming his true appearance with the rays of six colours shining forth. When the king went in and saw the Buddha, he again lost consciousness. After a while, he came to himself, approached the Buddha, and paid his respects.

"Venerable sir," he requested, "protector of the world, refuge of the world, teach me one point of the doctrine which may calm me when I have heard it." – "Very well, listen" the Buddha said. The Buddha reviewed the teaching about Nibbāna and taught the king a discourse concerning Nibbāna. This aroused reverence for the Doctrine in the king, but after hearing only a little of the teaching, he requested the Buddha: "Please stop, Fortunate One. Do not teach me any more." He said this because he thought to himself that he would not have a gift worthy of what the Buddha taught him if he heard any more. [13]

"Indeed, venerable sir," the king said, "of all the doctrines taught, the Fortunate One has pointed out Nibbāna, which is the highest. So, of all the parts of my body, I will pay homage to your teaching with my head." He began to sever his neck with his fingernails and said: "Venerable Buddha Sirimata, you go to the deathless first; through the gift of my head, I will afterwards go to Nibbāna. Having said just these few words, I pay homage to the teaching about Nibbāna.

Now, may this be the means for my attaining omniscience." And saying this, he finished severing his head with his fingernails.

King Saṅkha's predominant characteristic was his great energy (*viriya*). This is shown through his overcoming the difficulties in going to see Buddha Sirimata. His effort was so strong, the Buddha realised that he was a Great Bodhisatta. Other perfections are also illustrated in this story. He gives away his position of Universal Monarch in renunciation. Even before hearing of the Buddha, he set the example of leading a moral life leading to higher rebirths. As a just king, he would show his wisdom, patience, truthfulness, loving kindness, and equanimity. Once he heard of the Buddha, he renounced his kingdom and family, giving up the highest position that can be attained by a human being. And great resolution worked together with his energy.

The final action of King Saṅkha is the gift of his head to the Buddha. This may seem strange, but it is explained in the text by the fact that the Buddha had taught him one aspect of the teaching concerning Nibbāna, the highest goal. King Saṅkha cannot find any other gift worthy of Nibbāna, so he resolves to offer his own head. In the Pāḷi commentaries, it is said that only giving their own limbs or their life makes Great Bodhisattas exalt when they give. Joy arises when they give such gifts and they experience no contrariety of mind. So we can see that such gifts are beyond ordinary people, and we need not feel that we should make such sacrifices ourselves.

Ven. Ajita

During the time of Buddha Gotama, the Great Bodhisatta who is to be the next Buddha was a monk named Ajita. According to the commentary on the Lineage in the Future (*Anāgata-vaṁsa*), Ajita was the son of King Ajātasattu and Queen Kañcanadevī. Prince Ajita had five hundred attendants, and when he reached the age of sixteen, the king asked his son to inherit the Buddha's heritage. The prince agreed, so the king took him to the Bamboo Grove Monastery in great pomp and splendour along with his five hundred attendants. Prince Ajita was ordained as a novice, and because of his serenity, calmness, and wisdom he was much respected. Later he was ordained as a monk. The Buddha took him when he went from Rājagaha to Kapilavatthu to reside in Nigrodha's Monastery.

While they were residing at that monastery, Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī came one day with two special cloths to be presented to the Buddha for use as robes. She had planted the cotton seeds herself and did all the necessary work up to the time the robes were finished. The account of the gift of the cloths is found in the Discourse giving the Analysis of Offerings (*Dakkhiṇā-vibhaṅga-sutta*, MN 142). There, the Buddha refused three times to accept the robes offered by Mahā Pajāpatī Gotamī and suggested that she offer them to the Saṅgha with the Buddha at its head. Ven. Ānanda approached the Buddha, suggesting he should accept the cloths. The Buddha then gave the discourse on the Analysis of Offerings. [14]

No other details are given in the Pāḷi or Ven. Buddhaghosa's commentary on this discourse. In the commentary on the Lineage in the Future (*Anāgata-vaṁsa*), it is said that the Buddha accepted one robe for himself and instructed his step-mother to offer the second one to the Saṅgha. But not one of the eighty leading disciples came forward to accept that robe. Eventually, Ven. Ajita thought to himself that the Buddha had told his step-mother to give the robe to the Saṅgha for her benefit, so he bravely got up like a king of the lions in the midst of the Saṅgha and accepted the robe. There was some confusion and much talk about how an unknown monk could accept the robe when none of the leading disciples had taken it.

Realising the situation, and in order to dispel any doubts, the Buddha said: "Do not say this monk is an ordinary monk. He is a Bodhisatta who will be the coming Buddha Metteyya." Then the Buddha took the bowl that had been given to him shortly after his Awakening by the world's Four Great Kings and threw it into the air. None of the eighty leading disciples could retrieve it, but Ven. Ajita understood that the Buddha intended for him to show his psychic powers, so he brought back the bowl. Then Ven. Ajita took the cloth he had accepted and put it in the Buddha's Perfumed Chamber as a canopy under the ceiling, making the aspiration that this act of generosity might result in his having a canopy made of seven gems and with hangings made of gold, silver, coral, and pearls measuring twelve leagues when he becomes a Buddha.

The Buddha smiled after this and Ven. Ānanda asked why he had smiled. The Buddha replied: "Ānanda, the monk Ajita will become the Buddha Ariya Metteyya in this Auspicious Aeon." Then he remained silent, enjoying the Arahat fruition. The first chief disciple, Ven. Sāriputta, who knew the assembled

monks wished to hear more information, requested the Buddha give a discourse about the coming Buddha. And the Buddha gave the account in the Lineage in the Future (*Anāgata-vaṁsa*).

The Book of the Ten Stories (*Dasa-vatthuppakaraṇa*) goes on to say that from the time of the sure prediction, the Bodhisatta taught a large number of monks, explaining the whole canon and causing them to increase in insight and to attain the knowledge of adaptable patience. At the end of that life, he was reborn in a Deva world. But there is a reference to at least one other human life as he should have a life in which he is generous in the way the Bodhisatta Vessantara was. After that life, he should be reborn in the Tusita Realm, where all Great Bodhisattas reside before their final birth. According to the Lesser Chronicle (*Cūḷa-vaṁsa*), the Bodhisatta would have other human births.

When Ven. Buddhaghosa went from India to Ceylon to consult the commentaries on the Pāḷi canon, he was given two verses to comment on as a test. The result was the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*). The Devas, in order to convince the people of his greatness, hid the text twice so that Ven. Buddhaghosa had to write it out three times. When the copies were compared with the original, no deviations were found. The Saṅgha then exclaimed: "Without a doubt this is Metteyya!"

In another Pāḷi text that is not part of the canon, there is a description of Metteyya in the Tusita Realm. He is said to go to the Cūḷāmaṇi shrine in the Tāvatiṁsa Deva world to pay respects to the hair cut off by the Bodhisatta Siddhattha when he made the great renunciation and to relics brought there by the Sakka, the Lord of the Gods, after the death of Buddha Gotama. The Bodhisatta Metteyya is described as being surrounded by a host of male and female Devas. Four female Devas in particular are described as having beautiful complexions, halos, ornaments, and clothes, one of a shining colour, one red, one dark gold, and the fourth, golden.

The Buddha describes how morality among human beings grows stronger and stronger. As a result, their life span grows longer until it reaches 80,000 years, and at that time, Buddha Metteyya will come. Ven. Buddhaghosa explains that the life span increases to an incalculable number of years (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and then begins to decrease again until it reaches 80,000 years, for Buddhas arise only when the life span is decreasing. A tradition in Burma says that Buddha

Metteyya will live for 80,000 years and that the human life span at that time will be 100,000 years, just as Buddha Gotama lived for eighty years when the human life span was one hundred years. No definite number of years is given for the period between Buddha Gotama and Buddha Metteyya. The Lineage in the Future (*Anāgata-vaṁsa*) verse 5, says Buddha Metteyya will arise 10 million years later (*vassa-koṭiye*), but the commentary says this means after many hundreds of thousands times 10 million years.

> Dvp 125/132 says that after the human life span decreases to ten years, there will be seven intervening aeons (*sattantara-kappa*), then the life span will increase to an incalculable, and when it has decreased again to 80,000 years, the next Buddha will arise.

This aeon (*kappa*) is an Auspicious Aeon (*bhaddha-kappa*), which means that the maximum number of five Buddhas will arise in the same aeon. Some aeons are empty ones, meaning no Buddhas arise (*suñña-kappa*). In other types of aeons, one to four Buddhas arise.[254] Buddha Gotama was the fourth Buddha in this Auspicious Aeon, and Metteyya will be the fifth and last Buddha in it.

The commentary to the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) says that an Auspicious Aeon is very difficult to encounter. Those who are born in such aeons are usually rich in goodness and happiness. They usually have the three root conditions of non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion, and destroy the defilements. Those with the two root conditions of non-greed and non-hatred are usually reborn in good planes of existence, and those with no root conditions acquire one. In another commentary, it is said that during the time of Buddha Metteyya, the group of sensual pleasures will have little initial power to distract.

The Birth of the Next Buddha

Before his last rebirth, which is in the human world, each Bodhisatta resides in the Tusita Realm. He is mindful and aware when he is reborn there and while he lives there. He lives there as long as his life span lasts. One thousand years before he is to be reborn as a human and become a Buddha, Devas or Brahmas go to the world of men and announce that a Buddha will arise. This is a Buddha uproar (*Buddha-kolāhala*). [19]

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[254] [See the Further Explanations.]

When the time is right, he descends into his mother's womb, mindful and aware. He is aware it is his last existence. At that time, there is an illimitable, splendid radiance throughout the universe. His mother is protected by the Four Great Kings during the gestation period. His mother does not break the five precepts during her pregnancy, and she is not attracted to any man. The mother is surrounded by all the pleasures of the five senses. She suffers from no illness, and she can see the Bodhisatta in her womb. He is seated cross-legged in the womb facing outward.

His mother gives birth in a standing position and in a forest. The Bodhisatta Metteyya will be born in the Deer Park at Isipatana. The feet of the baby are placed in a golden cloth. He is received first by Devas and afterwards by men. Before his feet touch the ground, the Four Great Kings present him to his mother, saying: "Rejoice, lady, for mighty is the son that is born to you." He comes forth without any stain. Two showers of cool and warm water fall from the sky to bathe mother and the Bodhisatta. He takes seven steps to the north, surveys the four quarters, and pronounces the lion's roar that he is supreme in the world. When he is born, an illimitable, splendid radiance is seen throughout the universe. Seven days after the birth of the Bodhisatta, his mother dies and is reborn in the Tusita Realm.

When Bodhisatta Metteyya is reborn in the human world, life on earth will be like life in a Deva world. Women will marry at the age of five hundred. There will only be three diseases: desire (*iccha*), hunger (*anasana*), and old age (*jarā*). Jambudīpa will have Ketumatī, which is present-day Bārāṇasī, as its capital city. In addition, there will be 84,000 cities with 900 million princes. Jambudīpa will extend for 100,000 leagues. It will be without thorns, clear, with green grass. There will be grass which is four inches high and soft as cotton. The climate will always be good. The rains will be even, and the winds will be neither too hot nor too cold. The rivers and ponds will not lack water. There will be white sand that is not rough, the size of peas and beans. The country will be like an adorned garden. The villages will be close together, full of people, without interval.

The people will be tranquil, safe, and free from danger. They will be happy and joyful, enjoying festivals. They will have plenty to eat and drink. Jambudīpa will be delightful, like Āḷakamandā, the capital city of the Kurus. The capital city of Jambudīpa, Ketumatī, will be twelve leagues long and seven leagues wide. The city will have beautiful lotus ponds, full of water that is fragrant, clear, clean,

cool, and sweet. The ponds will be accessible to people at all times. There will be seven rows of palm trees and walls of seven colours, made of jewels, will surround the city.

In squares at the gates of the city, there will be shining wishing trees: one blue, one yellow, one red, and one white. Divine adornments and ornaments as well as all sorts of wealth and possessions will be hanging on the trees.

The Universal Monarch Saṅkha

At this time, there will be a Universal Monarch named Saṅkha. In a past life, he and his father made a hut for a Paccekabuddha. They had him stay there for the three months of the Rains Retreat and [20] then gave him three robes. In the same way, they had seven Paccekabuddhas stay in the hut. The father and son were reborn in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm, and Sakka requested that the father be reborn in the human world as Prince Mahāpanāda. The architect for the Devas, Vissakamma, built a palace for Mahāpanāda. During the time of Buddha Gotama, Mahāpanāda was Ven. Bhaddaji, who, on one occasion, raised up the Mahāpanāda palace from the bottom of the Ganges. The palace still waits there for the future Saṅkha, who was the son that gave to the Paccekabuddhas in the past.

When Saṅkha becomes the Universal Monarch, he will raise up the Mahāpanāda palace which will serve as his palace in the centre of Ketumatī. The palace is described as resplendent with many jewels, so bright it is hard to look at. And he will possess the seven treasures of a Universal Monarch: the wheel, elephant, horse, gem, wife, householder, and adviser.

Through the merit of Saṅkha, there will be a square in the middle of the city with four halls facing the four directions with wishing trees. Hanging from the trees there will be all sorts of fine garments, drums, and jewellery.

Through the merit of the people at that time, there will be rice that grows without being cultivated. It will be pure, sweet-smelling, and the grains will be ready-husked. The residents of Ketumatī will have whatever they want. They will be very rich. They will wake up to the sound of drums and lutes. They will be exceedingly happy in both body and mind.

King Saṅkha's palace will have 84,000 dancing girls. He will have one thousand sons, valiant, of heroic forms, crushing enemy armies. The eldest son will be the

king's adviser. The king will conquer the sea-girt land of Jambudīpa without violence, without a sword, but rather by righteousness.

The Career of Bodhisatta Metteyya

The Bodhisatta will be the son of the Universal Monarch's head priest, Subrahma, and his wife, Brahmavatī. He will be named Ajita, and he will bear the 32 marks and 80 minor marks that are common to Buddhas and Universal Monarchs. He will lead the household life for 8,000 years. He will have four palaces named: Sirivaḍḍha, Vaḍḍhamana, Siddhattha, and Candaka.[255] He will have 100,000 dancing girls. His wife will be Candamukhī and his son will be named Brahmavaḍḍhana.

Bodhisattas decide to give up household life after they have seen the four signs of an old man, a sick man, a dead man, and a recluse. They go forth from lay life and after a son is born to them. They put on the yellow robe and engage in striving. The Bodhisatta Metteyya will go forth [21] in one of his palaces. Accompanied by his followers, he will fly through the air in the palace and go to the Ironwood (*Nāga*) tree, which will be his Bodhi tree. He will engage in striving for seven days, which is the minimum period.

At the age of 8,000 years, the Bodhisatta will mount a chariot that resembles a glorious celestial palace and when going to the royal park, he will see the four signs. They will produce a sense of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*). And he will long for the state of going forth. Then he will return and go up to his palace. His mind will be bent on the state of going forth. At that moment, that jewelled palace will fly up by a path in the sky, and he will leap up into the sky, like the king of the golden water fowl, together with his followers.

Then the Devas of the 10,000 world-element will take flowers and honour him. The 84,000 kings of Jambudīpa, the people from the cities and from the countryside will honour him with perfume and flowers. The king of the Asuras will guard the palace, the king of the Nāgas will take him a precious gem, the king of the Supaṇṇas will take him a jewel necklace, the king of the Gandhabbas

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[255] This is the only case in which a Bodhisatta is said to have four rather than three palaces. As each of the three palaces were used for one of the three seasons, we can surmise that there will be four seasons during the time of the next Buddha.

will honour him with musical instruments and dancers. The Universal Monarch, together with his consorts and followers, will go to the Bodhisatta.

By the power of the king and the power of the Bodhisatta, that crowd will be established in the state of going forth, and the people will rise into the sky with him and go to the Bodhi tree. Then, a Mahā Brahma will take a sixty-league parasol and hold it over them. The Deva king Sakka will blow the Vijayuttara conch shell. The king of the Yāma Devas, Suyāma, will take a yak's tail fan and honour him. The king of the Tusita Devas, Santusita, will hold a jewel fan. The Gandhabba Deva, Pañcasikha, will take his celestial lute Beluva, and play it. The Four Great Kings, swords in hand, will surround them on all four sides. All those people, Devas, Gandhabbas, Yakkhas, Nāgas, and Supaṇṇas, surrounding him in front, in back, and on both sides, will go with him. Surrounded by a crowd of Devas and women, etc., of great splendour and beauty, the Bodhisatta will rise into the sky, and then descend near the place of Awakening. At that moment, the Mahā Brahma will take the eight requisites of an ascetic created by his psychic powers and offer them to him. Then the Bodhisatta will cut off the topknot of hair on his head and throw it up into the sky. He will take the eight requisites from the hands of the Mahā Brahma and go forth. For seven days he will make the austere striving. And all that great crowd of people will follow the example of the Bodhisatta in going forth.

The Ironwood (*Nāga*) tree where the Bodhisatta will be Awakened is described as being 120 cubits high with four main branches 120 or 130 cubits long. There will be 2,000 minor branches. The tips of the branches will be bent, constantly moving, and will be continually in bloom with blossoms as big as wheels. They will have a heavenly smell, full of pollen. The perfume will spread around for ten leagues, both with and against the wind. The leaves will be a deep green in all seasons and the flowers will scatter on the people all around.

The Lineage in the Future (*Anāgata-vaṁsa*) describes the people who go forth with the Buddha, including the names of the most important people among them: He will be accompanied by a large group of people, including friends, ministers, and members of his family. There will be a fourfold army and an assembly of the four castes to go forth with him. There will be 84,000 princesses and 84,000 Brahmins who are skilled in the Vedas. Among the 84,000 there will be the brothers Isidatta and Purāṇa; the twins of unlimited wisdom, Jatimitta and Vijaya; the householder Suddhika and the female disciple Suddhanā; the male

disciple Saṅgha and the female disciple Saṅghā, the householder Saddara and the famous man Sudatta; and the [22] husband and wife Visākha and Yasavatī. Many other citizens and people from the countryside of various social ranks will go forth.

The spot on which the Bodhisattas attain Awakening is one of the four fixed places, so Metteyya will make his final bid for liberation on the same spot as all the past Buddhas – the present-day Bodhagaya. On the day they attain Self-Awakening, Bodhisattas have a meal of milk-rice. They are seated on a spreading of grass. They use mindfulness of breathing as their preparation for developing insight and shatter the forces of Māra. They attain the three knowledges and the six special qualities not shared by others, etc., while still seated in the cross-legged position. And they spend seven weeks near the Bodhi Tree after becoming Self-Awakened. The Lineage in the Future commentary says that from the time he becomes Awakened, Ariya Metteyya will be known as the Buddha-King (*Buddha-rāja*). Then the Mahā Brahma will request that Buddha Metteyya teach others the path to Nibbāna.

Buddha Metteyya will preach his first discourse, the Discourse setting the Dhamma Wheel Turning (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*, SN 56.11), in the Elephant Grove (*Nāga-vana*). The park is said to be in Isipatana near the city of Ketumatī. He will be surrounded by an assembly extending one hundred leagues. A great many Devas will approach him at that time, and he will set free one billion from their bondage. This will be the first occasion when a great number of beings attain penetration (*abhisamaya*) into the four noble truths.

Then King Saṅkha will give his jewel palace to the Saṅgha with the Buddha at its head, and he will make a great donation to the poor, the needy, and beggars. Accompanied by his wife and 900 billion people, the king will approach the Buddha. And all that 900 billion people will be ordained with the words: “Come, bhikkhu” (*etha bhikkhu*). This will be the second penetration.

After that, the third penetration of 800 billion will take place when Devas and men approach the Buddha with a question concerning Arahatship.

There will be three assemblies (*sannipāta*) of Arahats. The first will include 1,000 billion. This may be, as for many past Buddhas, at the time the Buddha recites the Pātimokkha on the full moon day of February (*Magha*) to an assembly possessing four factors: 1) All the monks present are ordained with the

"Come, bhikkhu" ordination; 2) all have the six types of higher knowledge; 3) all of them come without any previous announcement; and 4) the Observance Day (*Uposatha*) is on the fifteenth day in the bright fortnight.

The second assembly will be at the time the Buddha proclaims the Invitation (*Pavāraṇa*) at the end of the rainy season and will include 900 billion.

For the third assembly, 800 billion Arahats will accompany the Buddha when he goes in seclusion on the Gandhamādana slope of the Himavant mountain range. Otherwise, the Buddha Metteyya will continually be surrounded by 1,000 billions of those who have attained the six types of higher knowledge (*abhiñña*) and great psychic power.

Buddha Gotama said that just as he was accompanied by a Saṅgha of hundreds of bhikkhus when he wandered around, Buddha Metteyya will be accompanied by thousands. Buddha Metteyya will go through the countryside teaching the Dhamma, awakening many people. Some will take the three refuges, some will be established in the five precepts, some will undertake the [23] ten skilful actions. There will be some who become ordained, some who attain the four excellent fruition states, some who will attain analytic insight into the Dhamma, some who will attain the eight excellent perfections, some the three knowledges, and some the six types of super knowledge. The teachings of Buddha Metteyya will be widespread. Seeing people who are ready to be Awakened he will go 100,000 leagues in a moment to cause them to be Awakened.

It is said that Buddha Metteyya will quench the heat for beings reborn in the lower realms. The first chief disciple will be the Universal Monarch Saṅkha who will have the bhikkhu name of Asoka. The second chief disciple will be Brahmadeva. The Buddha's attendant will be named Sīha. The chief women disciples among the female monastics (*bhikkhuni*) will be Padumā and Sumanā. The chief lay attendants among the men will be Sumana and Saṅgha; among the women, Yasavatī and Saṅghā.

Wherever he goes, Buddha Metteyya will be accompanied by a great company of Devas honouring him. The Devas will make necklaces which will be adorned by the kings of the Nāgas and the Supaṇṇas. There will be eight garlands each of gold, silver, jewels, and coral. There will be many hundreds of banners hanging down. Awnings adorned with jewels will resemble the moon. They will be surrounded by nets of bells and jewelled garlands. They will scatter sweet-

smelling flowers and different sorts of perfumed powder, both divine and human. And there will be various types of cloth of many colours. Having faith in the Buddha, they will sport all around, and many marvels will take place through the power of Buddha Metteyya's merit. Seeing those marvels, many people will decide they would rather die than abandon him as their refuge. Many of them will attain Awakening, and those who do not, will do good deeds which lead to heavenly worlds.

Several other details can be predicted for Buddha Metteyya as they are part of the list of thirty things that are true of all Buddhas: He will live regularly at a monastery at Jetavana. His bed there will be on the same spot as those of past Buddhas. He will perform the Double Miracle at the gateway to the city of Sāvatthī. He will teach the Abhidhamma to his mother in the Tavatiṁsa Deva world. He will descend from that Deva world at the gateway to the city of Saṅkassa. He will lay down a rule of training whenever necessary. He will tell the story of one of his past lives (*Jātaka*) whenever necessary. He will teach the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) to a gathering of his relatives.

Several details have to do with his day-to-day habits: He will give a friendly welcome to monastics when they arrive. He will spend the Rains Retreat where he is invited to and will not leave without asking permission. Each day, he will carry out the duties to be performed before and after meals and for the three watches in the night. [24]

The Lineage in the Future (*Anāgata-vaṁsa*) says his eyelashes will be thick, that the eyes will be broad and pure, not winking day or night; and that with his physical eye he will be able to see large and small things all around for ten leagues without obstruction.

Rays of six colours will radiate from his body and illumine the 10,000 world-element. The major and minor marks will always be visible as countless hundreds of thousands of rays which will shine in all directions for 25 leagues. Through the merit acquired when the blood flowed from his head when he offered it to Buddha Sirimata, his radiance as a Buddha (*Buddha-pabhā*) will shine from the summit of the world (*Bhavagga*) to the lowest of the hells (*Avīci*), and the offering of his head and the drops of blood will mean that the radiance from the hair between his eyebrows will be unlimited.

People will not be able to distinguish night from day. The only way they will know when it is night is through the sound of bird cries and the closing of the blossoms and leaves of lotuses and water lilies. They will know it is day by the cries of birds going to seek food and the opening of the flowers and leaves of lotuses and water lilies.

Wherever Buddha Metteyya walks, lotuses will spring up for him to step on. This is said to be the result of his great effort in the past life when he was the Bodhisatta King Saṅkha and went to Buddha Sirimata. The main petals of the lotuses will be thirty cubits, and the minor petals, twenty-five. The stamens will be twenty cubits, the pistils will be sixteen cubits, and they will be full of red pollen.

But even Buddhas are subject to the law of impermanence. Eventually, Buddha Metteyya will attain Parinibbāna. All Buddhas have a meal with meat on the day of their Parinibbāna. Before their Parinibbāna, they will have accomplished 24,000 billion attainments. According to the Lineage in the Future (*Anāgata-vaṁsa*) commentary, when Ariya Metteyya attains Parinibbāna, he will not leave behind his human body (*vipāka-kammaja-rūpa*), the body produced by the fruition of volitional actions; he will enter the element of Nibbāna (*Nibbāna-dhātu*) and no relics will remain. Although the text says his Dispensation will last for 180,000 years, the commentary says it will continue for 380,000 years.

How to Meet Buddha Metteyya

The Teaching about the Ten Bodhisattas (*Dasa-bodhi-satta-uddesa*) and the Lineage in the Future (*Anāgata-vaṁsa*) both give instructions on what people must do if they are to meet Buddha Metteyya. This is very important for all those who do not attain at least the first stage of Awakening during this Buddha Dispensation, for, as we have seen, Buddha Metteyya will be the last [25] Buddha to arise in this world-cycle. If a person does not attain Awakening in this world-cycle, it will be extremely difficult to get another opportunity.

In the Teaching about the Ten Bodhisattas (*Dasa-bodhi-satta-uddesa*), Buddha Gotama says to Ven. Sāriputta: “Not all men will see my physical body. If they encounter my Dispensation (*Sāsana*), give gifts (*dāna*), observe morality (*sīla*), and cultivate development of the mind (*bhāvanā*), through the fruit of that, they will be reborn in the time of Buddha Ariya Metteyya.”

These three actions are the basis of meritorious action (*puñña*). Through these actions a person can be assured of rebirth in the higher planes of existence. Developing the mind leads to the temporary purity attained through the absorption (*jhāna*) states. But it can also lead to insight (*vipassanā*) and true liberation.

The Lineage in the Future (*Anāgata-vaṁsa*) gives more details. In order to meet Buddha Metteyya, people should put forth effort (*viriya*) and be firm (*daḷha*), with agitated mind (*ubbigga-mānasa*). We can surmise that "agitated mind" means the profound stirring of the mind or sense of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) that comes from realising the urgent need to work for liberation.

All those who do good deeds and who are vigilant – whether they are male monastics, female monastics, laymen, or laywomen – will be able to encounter the next Buddha. All those who pay great honour to the Buddha will see the auspicious assembly of Buddha Metteyya. The spiritual life (*brahma-cariya*) should be practised. Gifts (*dāna*) should be given. The Observance Days (*Uposatha*) should be kept. Loving kindness (*mettā*) should be carefully developed. By delighting in vigilance and meritorious actions, it will be possible to eventually make an end to misery (*dukkha*).

Ven. Ledi Sayadaw points out that it is necessary to make balanced effort in terms of good conduct (*caraṇa*) and right knowledge (*vijjā*) if one is to meet the next Buddha. Right conduct means developing morality (*sīla*) and concentration (*samādhi*). Knowledge means developing wisdom (*paññā*). Right conduct can be compared to having sound limbs. Right knowledge can be compared to being able to see. If one or the other is missing, a person will be unsuccessful. A person may be generous and keep the moral rules of the five precepts and the eight precepts on Observance Days, but if the seeds of knowledge are not planted, that person may meet Buddha Metteyya but still not Awaken. If only knowledge is developed, wrong conduct will mean that the chances of encountering the next Buddha will be slight, due to the intervening period (a*ntara-kappa*) between this Buddha's Dispensation and the next one.

Examples of wrong conduct mentioned by Ven. Ledi Sayadaw are: Not being generous, being poorly guarded in physical actions, being unrestrained in speech, and unclean in thought. Such conduct will mean rebirth in the lower realms, either in the next life or in a future life. If people who act in this way do manage

to be reborn in a higher world, their lack of generosity will mean they will encounter hardships, trials, and tribulations in making a living. Through not keeping the precepts, they are likely to meet with disputes, quarrels, anger, and hatred; and they will be susceptible to diseases and ailments. This will make it even harder to avoid actions leading to the lower worlds.

It may be possible, however, that a person today has already prepared in the past for attaining Awakening. If the right effort is made in this life, that person can reach at least the first stage of Awakening and become a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*). Then, it will be impossible to do any action that results in rebirth in the lower realms. This will not necessarily mean that such a person will miss the opportunity to see the next Buddha. Eventually, as a Non-returner, he or she can be reborn in the Suddhāvāsa Brahmā worlds, and life in these worlds can span the careers of several Buddhas.

If a person who has enough perfections (*pāramī*) to reach Awakening in this lifetime does not make the necessary effort, it may be possible to become a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) in the next life in the Deva worlds. If such a person does not practise the factors leading to Awakening, he or she will miss out entirely during this Buddha's Dispensation and will only be able to attain release during the next Buddha's Dispensation.

The Dhamma Treasure

42: The Attributes of the Three Treasures

The Dhamma Treasure is made up of the nine supermundane phenomena, which are the four paths, the four fruitions and Nibbāna; and the doctrine (*pariyatti*) of the Buddha forming the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*) or the Buddhist Scriptures, together with the practice of the doctrine (*paṭipatti*) as delineated in the texts. It also implies the attributes of the Three Treasures. This chapter features a discussion of the attributes of the Three Treasures in a treatment that is neither too concise nor too elaborate but that will cover all salient features.

The Nine Supreme Attributes of the Buddha

The Buddha is endowed with infinite noble qualities. However, for ready remembrance for the devotees among humans, Devas and Brahmas, only nine special attributes beginning with Worthiness (*Arahaṁ*), were specially taught by the Buddha in the various discourses, and the same applies to the teaching about the six supreme attributes of the Dhamma and the nine supreme attributes of the Saṅgha later.

> *Iti pi so Bhagavā Arahaṁ Sammā-sambuddho,*
> *vijjā-caraṇa sampanno sugato loka-vidū,*
> *anuttaro purisa-damma-sārathi,*
> *satthā Deva-manussānaṁ Buddho Bhagavā.*

The Buddha[256] who has attained Perfect Awakening after fulfilling the 10 perfections (*pāramī*) in three ways, and has destroyed all defilements is endowed with the following attributes:

1. He is Worthy (*Arahaṁ*), being perfectly pure of defilements, so that no trace of them, not even a vague impression, is left to suggest their presence; being incapable of doing evil, even where nobody could know of it; having broken up

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[256] The Myanmar translation by Ashin Vepullābhidhaja Aggamahāpaṇḍita, Abbot of Vejayantā Brick Monastery, Kozaung Taik Myingyan, is rather elaborate and ornate. Only its salient features are rendered into English here.

the spokes of the wheel of existence; being worthy of homage by all the three worlds of humans, Devas and Brahmas.

2. He is perfectly Self-Awakened (*Sammā-sambuddho*), in that he truly comprehends the Dhamma by his intellect and insight and is able to expound it to others.

3. He is endowed with the three knowledges (*vijjā-caraṇa-sampanno*): knowledge about the past existences of all beings, the divine eye and the extinction of all moral pollutants, which knowledges are expandable into eight knowledges together with the good conduct definable in fifteen ways.

4. The Buddha is Well-gone (*Sugato*) to Nibbāna through the four paths and fruitions (*magga-ñāṇa*); because the Buddha speaks only what is beneficial and true.

5. He knows the conditioned arising of all beings (*loka-vidū*), the bases of their arising in the various planes of existence, and the conditionality of physical and mental phenomena.

6. He is incomparable in taming those who deserve to be tamed (*anuttaro purisa-damma-sārathi*).

7. He is the teacher of Devas and humans (*Satthā Deva-manussānaṁ*), showing them the path leading to Nibbāna. [1106]

8. He is the Awakened One (*Buddho*), who knows and teaches the four noble truths.

9. He is endowed with the six exalted qualities (*Bhagavā*): supremacy (*issariya*), knowledge of the nine supermundane factors (*magga-phala-nibbāna*), fame and following (*yasa*), physical perfection (*sirī*), power of accomplishment (*kamma*) and diligence (*payatta*).

An Explanation of the Above Attributes

Although the Buddha is endowed with infinite attributes only the above nine are declared in his discourses, as the attributes of the Buddha to the various hearers in the Deva and human worlds simply to meet the spiritual or intellectual capacity of the hearer. Each of the nine attributes should be taken as representative of a category of qualities which may be attributed to the Buddha.

How the meaning of the nine attributes may be properly understood is given below, not too briefly and yet not too comprehensively either.

1. He is Worthy (*Arahaṁ*).

Here the attribute, in the abstract sense, and the possessor of the attribute, should be distinguished. The former refers to the natural states that arise in the mental process of the Buddha, while the latter refers to the particular continuum of the five aggregates wherein those attributes arise. There are five beneficial qualities included in the attribute of being Worthy. They are:

1. It means the Buddha, who has destroyed by the supermundane path (*lokuttara-magga*) all the defilements (*kilesa*), numbering 1,500, without leaving a trace. Defilements may be compared to one's enemies that always work against one's interest and welfare. The defilements were present in the mind-body continuum of the Bodhisatta; they are called enemies (*ari*). The Buddha, after meditating on dependent origination called the great diamond insight (*mahā-vajira-vipassanā*) as mentioned earlier on, attained Supreme Awakening on the undefeated throne. The four supermundane paths enabled him to destroy all those defilements group by group. So, the supermundane Dhamma, the four noble paths, are the attribute called *Arahaṁ* whereas the Buddha's mind-body continuum of five aggregates is the possessor of that attribute.

2. Then there is the derivation of the word *Arahaṁ* from its root *araha*, meaning: "The one who has distanced himself from the defilements." As explained above, the Buddha has destroyed all the defilements together with the subtle proclivity to some form of habit without leaving a trace; not even a vague impression to suggest their presence. The defilements and the proclivities have no possibility of ever arising in the Buddha. It is in this sense that the Buddha has distanced himself from the defilements and the proclivities. He has banished them thoroughly. This absolute casting off of all defilements together with proclivities is the attribute of *Arahaṁ* and the Buddha's mind-body continuum of five aggregates is the possessor of that attribute. This attribute is derived from the four noble paths.

> The above attributes explained above are not possessed by other Arahats; they are not entitled to be called *Arahaṁ*. The reason is this: All Arahats have destroyed all the 1,500 defilements (*kilesa*), but unlike the Buddha,

> certain vague impressions or traces of their proclivity to some habits still remain with them.

The vague impression is some subtle proclivity remaining in the ordinary Arahat's mentality that can involuntarily cause some action to arise in him, as in the case of a worldling. This is because of lingering tendencies for certain actions that had repeatedly occurred in the previous existences of the Arahat concerned, in whom they remain as a residual force even after the destruction of all defilements.

An example of this phenomenon is found in Ven. Pilinda Vaccha, an Arahat who lived during the Buddha's times. He had been, for 500 successive existences, a Brahmin of a haughty clan. Members of that clan considered every person outside of their [1107] clan as a scoundrel and the future Pilinda Vaccha used to address all outsiders as "scoundrels." This habit became ingrained in him for so long a chain of existences that even after becoming an Arahat, Ven. Pilinda Vaccha could not help himself while addressing others, though inadvertently, as "you scoundrel." This was not through any defilement of conceit of birth but was merely a habituated action of the past.

3. *Arahaṁ* can be interpreted as: "One who has no secret place for doing evil" (negative particle *a* + *raha*). There are some people who pose themselves as wise men or good men who put on appearances, but who are prone to evil in private. As for the Buddha, since he has destroyed all defilements absolutely, together with any proclivity to habitual actions, there can be no secret place for him to do evil nor does he do any evil in any secret place. This noble quality of having no secret place for evil is the attribute of *Arahaṁ*, and the Buddha's mind-body continuum of five aggregates is the possessor of that attribute.

4. *Arahaṁ* can also mean: "One who has broken up into pieces the spokes that make up the wheel of existences" (*ara* + *hata*). Existence in the three spheres, which are the sensuous sphere, the form realm and the formless realm, are figuratively called "the carriage of the round of existences." The continuous arising of the aggregates (*khandha*), and the sense spheres (*āyatana*) and elements (*dhātu*) is figuratively called "the wheel of existences," which is the essential part of the carriage of the round of existences. In that wheel, there are ignorance and craving for existence as its hub, while volitions (*puññābhisaṅkhārā*) that find their expression in meritorious volitions or

meritorious actions pertaining to the sensuous sphere and the form realm make up the spokes of the wheel that arise in the sensuous sphere and the form realm. Likewise, demeritorious volitions (*apuññābhisaṅkhārā*) that cause demeritorious actions pertaining to the four lower worlds (*apāya*) make up the spokes of the wheel that arise in the four lower worlds. And likewise, meritorious volitions pertaining to the formless realm (*aneñjābhisaṅkhāra*), and cause meritorious actions, make up the spokes of the wheel that arise in the formless realm.

Of the arising of those three types of volitions, ignorance and craving for existence are called "the hub," since the hub is where the turning of the wheel originates, forming thereby the cause of the cycle of Saṁsāra. Its force is passed on to the rim or tyre, figuratively, the result that ends in aging and death, by the spokes, the volitions.

> In this first mode of presentation, the gist about the twelve factors of dependent origination is that ignorance and craving are shown as the hub of the wheel; aging and death are shown as the tyre; and the three types of volitions are shown as the spokes of the wheel of Saṁsāra. The remaining factors of dependent origination are shown as the body of the carriage in the round of existences.

It is due to the presence of the pollutants (*āsava*) that ignorance (*avijjā*) arises. Ignorance has its source or cause in the pollutants. As such, the pollutants can be seen as the axle that is fixed to the hub of ignorance and craving for ignorance.

Thus, in the wheel of Saṁsāra, with the axle of the pollutants fitted to the hub of ignorance and craving for existence, with the spokes of three volitions and the tyre of aging and death, which has been turning since the beginningless Saṁsāra, that has borne the carriage of existence in the three spheres, the Buddha has, on his attaining Perfect Awakening, broken into pieces, the spokes of the wheel by standing on the two feet of mental and physical endeavour, taking a firm stand on morality (*sīla*), and holding, in his hand of conviction, the pick-axe of path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*), which is the merit that exhausts productive deeds (*kamma*).

Therefore, the breaking up of the spokes of the wheel of Saṁsāra by the pick-axe of the four paths and fruitions (*magga-ñāṇa*) is the attribute of *Arahaṁ*; the

mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

Another explanation: [1108] The beginningless round of existences is called the cycle of Saṁsāra. This cycle, if reviewed in its ultimate sense, is a set of the twelve factors of dependent origination.

Ignorance being the source or cause of rebirth is the hub of the wheel. Aging and death being the end of a given existence is the tyre of the wheel. The remaining ten factors, having the hub, ignorance, and the tyre, aging and death, as their two extremities, are the spokes of the wheel.

The Buddha has totally destroyed these spokes of the wheel of Saṁsāra. Therefore the breaking up of the ten factors of dependent origination by the four strokes of the sword of the paths and fruitions (*magga-ñāṇa*) is the attribute of *Arahaṁ* in this fourth interpretation. The mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

5. *Arahaṁ* can also be interpreted as: "He who is worthy of homage by humans, Devas and Brahmas." That is because the Buddha is the noblest person, worthy of receiving the special offerings of the four monastic requisites by all three worlds. That is why when the Buddha arises in the world, powerful Devas and humans do not make their offerings and pay homage to any other deity but the Buddha.

Let us take some important instances of this fact: Brahma Sahampati made a special offering of a garland of flowers the size of Mount Sineru to the Buddha. Other Devas and kings, such as Bimbisāra, Kosala, etc., made the greatest offerings they could afford to the Buddha; further, after the passing away of the Buddha, King Asoka spent 960 million to build 84,000 monasteries throughout Jambudīpa in honour of the Buddha.

Therefore, the incomparable morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), wisdom (*paññā*), emancipation (*vimutti*) and knowledge leading to emancipation (*vimutti-ñāṇa-dassana*), are the noble qualities that make the Buddha worthy of homage by humans, Devas and Brahmas, that is, the attribute of *Arahaṁ*. The mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

2. He is perfectly Self-Awakened (*Sammā-sambuddha*).

This is analysed like this: *Sammā*, truly, correctly; *saṁ*, on one's own; *buddho* knower of all knowable things.

The Buddha discovered the Dhamma by his own intellect and insight, unaided by anyone. Paccekabuddhas also discover the Dhamma by their own intellect and insight. But they are not able to teach the Dhamma, which they discover, to other persons, so they do not deserve the epithet *Sammā-sambuddha*. They are only called *Sambuddha*, as in Paccekasambuddha.

Noble disciples (*ariya*) know the Dhamma only with the assistance of some teachers and they are able to teach it to others, but, since they do not discover the Dhamma by themselves, they are also not called *Sammā-sambuddha*. They are only called *Sammā-buddha*, rightly Awakened. The Buddhas are *Sambuddha*, knowers of the Dhamma and all knowable things through Self-Awakening. They are also *Sammā-buddha* because they can teach the four truths to their disciples each according to their capacity, and in the language they can understand. So, a combination of these two qualities makes the Buddha deserving of the title Perfectly Self-Awakened, or *Sammā-sambuddha*.

Therefore, the four path-knowledges (*magga-ñāṇa*) that enable the Buddha to know, unaided, all knowable things with omniscience at the highest level, is this attribute called *Sammā-sambuddha*. The mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

3. He is endowed with the three knowledges (*vijjā-caraṇa-sampanno*).

The one endowed with the three knowledges or the eight knowledges and the fifteen forms of good conduct. The three knowledges are taught by the Buddha in the Discourse about Fear and Fright (*Bhaya-bherava-sutta*, MN 4), the eight knowledges are taught by the Buddha in the Discourse to Ambaṭṭha (*Ambaṭṭha-sutta*, DN 3). The two ways of teaching knowledge in three categories and eight categories is adopted by the Buddhas through compassionate consideration of the mental framework of [1109] the hearers on each occasion.

The three knowledges:

1. The knowledge of past existences (*pubbe-nivāsa-ñāṇa*). By this knowledge, the Buddha can see the past existences of himself and other beings.

2. The knowledge of the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu-ñāṇa*). By this knowledge, the Buddha can see things at far away places, things concealed, and things too subtle for the ordinary human eyes to see.

3. The knowledge of the extinction of the pollutants (*āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*). This is knowledge of the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala-ñāṇa*) which extinguishes all four of the pollutants.

The eight knowledges:

1-3 as above, and:

4. Insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*). This is understanding the impermanence, suffering and unsubstantiality of all conditioned mental and physical phenomena.

5. Psychic power of the mind (*manomayiddhi-ñāṇa*). The power to assume various forms through mastery of mind, accomplished by absorption (*jhāna*) practice.

6. Multifarious kinds of psychic power (*iddhividha-ñāṇa*). The power to conjure up great numbers of various forms, human or otherwise.

7. The knowledge of the divine ear (*dibba-sota-ñāṇa*). The power to hear sounds from far away places, sounds muffled and sounds too subtle to hear by the ordinary human ear.

8. The knowledge of reading the mind of others (*ceto-pariyāyaya-ñāṇa*). The Buddha can know the minds of others in sixteen different ways.

Of the above eight knowledges, the fourth knowledge, insight knowledge, is knowledge pertaining to the sensuous sphere. The third knowledge, knowledge of extinction of the pollutants (*āsava*) is supermundane knowledge. The remaining six knowledges pertain to the form realm absorption (*jhāna*) powers called (*rūpāvacara-kriyā-abhiññā-ñāṇa*).

The Fifteen Forms of Perfect Practice of Morality

1. Morality of restraint (*sīla-saṁvara*). The observance of the monastic precepts of restraint under the Monastic Rule (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara-sīla*).

2. Control of the faculties (*indriyesu gutta-dvāratā*). Keeping watch over the doors of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind with constant mindfulness, so as not to allow any demeritoriousness enter.

3. Knowing the proper extent regarding food (*bojane mataññutā*). He knows the proper extent in receiving alms food, and in enjoying it. In receiving alms food, the Buddha considers the degree of devotion of the supporter. If the devotion is strong but the gift is small, the Buddha does not scorn the gift for its smallness but accepts it. On the hand, if the gift is big but the supporter's devotion is weak, the Buddha accepts only a small amount of the gift, considering the weak devotion of the supporter. If the gift is big and the supporter's devotion is strong, the Buddha accepts just an appropriate amount to satisfy his need. This is called knowing the proper extent regarding the acceptance of alms food. In enjoying the food thus collected, the Buddha never eats to the full but stops four or five morsels short of filling his stomach. More important, he never takes food without cultivating the monastic's contemplation while eating.

4. Wakefulness (*jāgariyānuyoga*). Wakefulness does not mean just remaining without sleep. The Buddha spends the whole day: during the first watch of the night and the last watch of the night in meditation, while walking or sitting, thus keeping away the hindrances. This purposeful waking is called wakefulness. Out of 24 hours in a day, the Buddha sleeps just four hours, i.e. between 10p.m. and [1110] 2a.m., to recuperate his energy; the remaining 20 hours are spent in meditation and monastic practice.

The seven properties of virtuous persons:

5. Confidence in the Three Treasures (*saddhā*).

6. Mindfulness (*sati*).

7. Conscience about doing evil (*hiri*).

8. Concern about doing evil (*ottapa*).

9. Wide learning of the doctrine (*bāhu-sacca*).

10. Diligence (*viriya*).

11. Wisdom (*paññā*).

12-15. The four form realm absorptions (*jhāna*). These refer to the four absorptions (*jhāna*) of the form realm under the fourfold reckoning of absorptions (*jhāna*).

The above fifteen forms of good conduct lead straight to Nibbāna, the deathless element, which as worldlings, the disciples never have realized before. Hence they are called good conduct (*caraṇa*).

Knowledge (*vijjā*) and good conduct (*caraṇa*) are complementary to each other. The former is like the eyes, whereas the latter is like the legs. To get to a desired place the eyes without the legs cannot accomplish it any more than the legs without the eyes. Therefore, knowledge and good conduct should be cultivated together.

> It might be asked: "Are not knowledge and good conduct attainable by the noble disciples?" The answer is yes and no. The noble ones (*ariya*) can attain them, but they cannot be said to have the attribute of knowledge and good conduct (*vijjā-caraṇa-sampaññā*) which belongs to the Buddha alone for the reasons given below: There are two factors in this attribute, they are, being accomplished in knowledge, and being accomplished in good conduct. The Buddha's accomplishment of knowledge is the source of omniscience. His accomplishment of good conduct is the source of his being a compassionate one. Being thus accomplished in two ways, the Buddha, by his knowledge, knows what is beneficial to each individual being and what is not. Further, the Buddha, by his good conduct, extends his compassion on all beings to cause them to abstain from what is not beneficial to them and to adopt what is beneficial to them. His accomplishment of knowledge and accomplishment of good conduct, therefore, together make his teaching the doctrine of liberation. It also ensures that his disciples that their practice is the righteous, correct practice.
>
> Therefore, the accomplishment of knowledge and the accomplishment of good conduct combined together are called the attribute of *Vijjā-caraṇa-sampanno*. The mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

4. Being Well-gone (*Sugato*). The commentary explains this attribute in four ways:

1. *Su*, well; *gata*, gone. Thus the going to, the attaining of, the noble path, hence the one who has attained the noble paths is the first meaning. The noble path is faultless or flawless and therefore is magnificent. Therefore, the Buddha is called Well-gone (*Sugato*) because he proceeds to the haven from all dangers, by the magnificent path, in an unattached attitude. Under this interpretation, the noble path is the attribute and the mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.

2. *Su* = Nibbāna, the excellent goal; *gata*, means he proceeds there by means of knowledge. Nibbāna is the excellent goal because it is the end of all strife and is the ultimate [1111] peace. Attaining that excellent goal with path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*) at one sitting is the Buddha's attribute. Here the noble path is the attribute and the mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.

In both of these interpretations, proceeding to Nibbāna means having Nibbāna as an object of thought. The going or proceeding here is by means of knowledge only and does not, indeed cannot, connote the physical act of going which only applies where a certain geographical place is the destination.

3. *Su* = *Sammā*, well; *gata*, means gone to Nibbāna by means of path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*). Here the adverb "well" denotes freedom from the defilements. The going is well since the defilements destroyed by the four path-knowledges do not arise in the Buddha any more.

In all the above three interpretations the ultimate sense is the same, having Nibbāna as object of thought through the four paths. This is the first explanation of Well-gone (*Sugato*) in the brief meaning given earlier on.

4. *Su* = *Sammā*, well; *gata*, speaks appropriately on all occasions. Here the root *gada* is changed into *gata*. The appropriate speech, or speaking well, is further explained thus: There are six kinds of speech among people; of these six, four should be rejected, i.e. not resorted to, and only two should be adopted.

1. There is the kind of speech which is not true, which is not beneficial, and not liked by the other party; for instance, saying that a virtuous person is wicked. The Buddha avoids this kind of speech.

2. There is the kind of speech which is true but which is of no benefit to, and not acceptable to, the other party; for instance, calling a bad man a bad man, not intending to correct him but merely out of malice. The Buddha avoids this kind of speech also.

3. There is the kind of speech which is true, which is beneficial but is not liked by the other party hearing it; for instance, referring to Devadatta as the one heading for Niraya, which was spoken by the Buddha out of compassion for him. The Buddha speaks this kind of speech when occasion demands it.

4. There is the kind of speech which is not true, which is not beneficial to the other party, but is liked by him; for instance, quoting the Vedas and claiming that an evil deed such as killing will lead to the good destinations. The Buddha avoids this kind of speech also.

5. There is the kind of speech which is true but is not beneficial to the other party, and he likes to hear it; for instance, a true statement which is going to drive a wedge between the other parties. The Buddha avoids this kind of speech also.

6. There is the kind of speech which is true, which is beneficial to the other party, and he likes to hear it; for instance, discourse on generosity, morality, etc. given on appropriate occasions. The Buddha speaks this kind of speech when the occasion is appropriate.

Out of the above six kinds of speech, the Buddha speaks only the third and the sixth kinds.

Regarding the third kind above, if a statement is true and is beneficial to the other party, although he does not like to hear it, the Buddha would say it because it would benefit other people who might hear it, and it will therefore be for the good of the world at large.

Thus, if a statement is true and is beneficial to the hearer, the Buddha says it whether the hearer likes it or not. Therefore the Buddha is called Well-gone (*Sugato*), the one who speaks what is beneficial and true. The speaking of what is beneficial and true is the attribute, and the mind-body continuum of the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

The Discourse about Prince Abhaya

[The following is based on the Discourse to Prince Abhaya (*Abhaya-rāja-kumāra-sutta*, MN 58) and its commentary.]

These six kinds of speech are featured in [1112] the Discourse to Prince Abhaya. A brief account follows: At one time, the Buddha was staying in Veḷuvana monastery at Rājagaha. During that time, Prince Abhaya, son of King Bimbisāra approached his teacher, Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta, and, after paying respects to him, sat in a suitable place.

Then Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta said to Prince Abhaya: "Go to the ascetic Gotama, prince, and accuse him with falsity in doctrine. If you can accuse him you will gain wide fame as one who can accuse even the ascetic Gotama with falsity in doctrine."

"But, venerable sir," said Prince Abhaya, "how am I to accuse ascetic Gotama, who is so powerful, of falsity in doctrine?"

1. "Prince, go to ascetic Gotama and say this: 'Venerable sir, would you say something that is unacceptable or unwelcome to someone?' And if ascetic Gotama were to reply: 'Prince, the Realised One would say something that is unacceptable or unwelcome to someone.' In that case, you should say to ascetic Gotama: 'Venerable sir, if that is so, what is the difference between the venerable one and any other worldling? For any worldling would say something unacceptable or unwelcome to someone.'

2 If, on the other hand, ascetic Gotama replies: 'Prince, the Realised One would not say something that is unacceptable or unwelcome to someone.' In that case, you should say to ascetic Gotama: 'Venerable sir, if that is so, why did the venerable one say to Devadatta: "You, Devadatta are heading to the lower realms of Niraya, you are going to suffer in the Niraya realms throughout an aeon, you are irredeemable?" If I may add, Ven. Devadatta is very angry and miserable at those remarks.' Prince, if you only confront ascetic Gotama with the above questions, which allows no escape for him, that ascetic Gotama will be just helpless, like a man who has swallowed a fish-hook."

It took Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta four months to think out the above questions with which to harass the Buddha. Then he taught it to his disciple, Prince Abhaya. Before the advent of the Buddha there were six religious teachers

who led their own sects, claiming themselves as Buddhas. People could not discriminate truth from untruth and went, each after his or her liking, to these teachers. Only when the Buddha appeared in the world, did these adherents, who possessed previous merit, leave them in large numbers and become disciples of the Buddha.

Niganṭha Nāṭaputta was sore with the thought that ascetic Gotama had won over his followers. He thought hard how to discredit the Buddha: "I must find a question to confront ascetic Gotama; a question so neat that ascetic Gotama would be caught helplessly." He fed himself well on the offerings of daily food sent to him from his royal disciple, Prince Abhaya, and spent days thinking of a problem that would confound ascetic Gotama.

When a question came to his thought, he turned it over in his mind and found a flaw which the Buddha would easily point out. And, when he thought of another question, he would later detect a flaw there, and had to drop it. And thus he spent four hard months in thinking out really hard questions. At last, he got the question: "Would the Buddha speak something that would be unacceptable or unwelcome to someone?"

Niganṭha Nāṭaputta was sure that he had found a question which ascetic Gotama would be quite at a loss to find fault in, either in its presentation or in its answer. He then thought about some suitable agent who would confront the Buddha. He remembered Prince Abhaya, whom he believed was wise. So, he taught the question to the prince and persuaded him to go and present it to the Buddha.

Prince Abhaya was a censorious person and so gladly undertook to do what his master asked. "Very well, master," he said, and after paying respects to Niganṭha Nāṭaputta, he left him. He went to the Veḷuvana monastery where the Buddha was staying, and after paying respects to the Buddha, he sat in a suitable place. Then he looked at the sun which was [1113] about to set. He thought: "It took four months for my teacher to formulate this question. If such a profound question were to be taken up point by point, there would not be sufficient time today. I will confront the Buddha tomorrow at my palace," he thought to himself. So he said to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, may the venerable one, for the sake of my merit, kindly accept an offering of food to the venerable one and three other monastics at my palace tomorrow."

> The number of three monastics only being invited by Prince Abhaya is based on two considerations: 1) If a big company of monastics were present on the occasion of his putting the question, even though the question itself is in a few words only, there might be wide discussions by the company and other matters and other discourses might arise, in which case controversy and heated debates might occur; 2) if no monastics were invited to accompany the Buddha, people might think: "This Prince Abhaya is a stingy man. He knows the Fortunate One goes on the daily alms round accompanied by hundreds of monastics, and yet he invites only the Fortunate One."

The Buddha accepted the invitation of Prince Abhaya by remaining silent. Prince Abhaya, having noted that his invitation was accepted, rose from his seat and, paying respects to the Buddha, returned to his palace.

The next morning the Buddha went to the palace of Prince Abhaya and took his meal there. After the meal was finished Prince Abhaya took his seat at a lower place and addressed the Buddha as taught by Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta thus: "Venerable sir, would the venerable one say something that is unacceptable or unwelcome to someone?" the Buddha said to Prince Abhaya: "Prince Abhaya, regarding your question, no single answer can be given in a straight yes or no."

> The Buddha, in effect, said: "A speech of this nature as described by you, may or may not be spoken by the Realised One. If by saying it, there is benefit to the other party, the Realised One would say it. If there is no benefit the Realised One would not say it."

By this single statement the Buddha crushed the question like a mountain shattered by a thunder bolt, thus disposing of the weighty question which took four months for Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta to formulate.

Thereupon Prince Abhaya could no longer challenge the Buddha and said to him: "Venerable sir, by this question all the Nigaṇṭhas have gone to wreck and ruin!" – "Prince, why do you say: 'Venerable sir, by this question all the Nigaṇṭhas have gone to wreck and ruin?' " Prince Abhaya then recounted the whole episode about his visit to Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta and the mission he was assigned by his master.

At that time, Prince Abhaya had on his lap his infant child who could only lie flat on its back.

> The prince placed the baby there on purpose. Wherever dogmatic persons enter into a debate on a matter of doctrine they used to keep something handy with them, such as a fruit or a flower or a book. As the debate proceeds, and if one of the disputants is gaining his points, he would trounce the opponent relentlessly. But if the going is tougher than is expected and defeat is likely, he would pretend to be smelling the flower, or tasting the fruit, or reading the book that is in his hand, as if he was not following the trend of the arguments. Here, Prince Abhaya placed the infant on his lap for the same purpose. He thought to himself: "Ascetic Gotama is a great man who has won many a debate on doctrine. He is the one who quashes others' doctrines. If I were to win, it is well and good. But if I should be cornered, I would pinch the baby and announce: 'O friends, how the baby cries! Let us break the debate now and continue later.' "

The Buddha, being infinitely wiser than Prince Abhaya, chose to make the infant itself trounce the prince. And even before Prince Abhaya could find time to pinch the baby, the Buddha asked Prince Abhaya thus: "Prince Abhaya, what do you think of this? You may answer whatever you think fit. Suppose this infant on your lap, either due to your negligence or to the negligence of its nurse, were to put a piece of wood or a potsherd or a broken piece of a glass bottle in its mouth, what would you do to the infant?"

And Prince Abhaya answered: "Venerable sir, I would take out the piece of wood or [1114] potsherd or broken glass from the baby quickly. If there should be difficulty in taking it out at the first attempt, then I would hold the baby's head fast with my left hand, and, with the bent forefinger of my right hand, I would dislodge the piece of wood or potsherd or broken glass from its mouth even if that operation might draw blood. I would do it because I have great love and compassion for my baby." – "Prince Abhaya, on the same analogy, there are these six kinds of speech:

1. The Realised One does not speak that kind of speech which is not true, which is not beneficial and which is unacceptable to the other party.
2. The Realised One does not speak that kind of speech which is true but is not beneficial and which is unacceptable to the other party.

3. The Realised One would, if occasion demands, speak that kind of speech which is true, which is beneficial but which is unwelcome by the other party.
4. The Realised One does not speak that kind of speech which is not true, which is not beneficial, but which is welcome by the other party.
5. The Realised One does not speak that kind of speech which is true, which is not beneficial but which is welcome by the other party.
6. The Realised One would, if he sees benefit to the hearers, speak that kind of speech which is true, which is beneficial, and which is welcome by the other party.

Prince Abhaya, out of these six kinds of speech, the Realised One avoids four of them and speaks two of them. This is because I have great good will and compassion on all beings."

> The gist is that the Buddha speaks what is beneficial and true regardless of the person. The commentary terms the fourth kind of speech above as *aṭṭhānīya-kathā*, an absurdity, i.e. a speech that neither party likes, nor is it true, and it is not beneficial, but it is liked by the other party, and illustrates it with the story of a rustic old man. The story is related below for general knowledge.

The Story of a Rustic Old Man

A rustic old man was drinking in a liquor shop in town. A group of swindlers joined him and conspired between themselves to divest the old man of his possessions by trickery. They agreed among themselves: "We shall relate our experiences each in turn. Anyone who says he does not believe it will lose all his possessions to the story-teller and also become his slave." And they said to the old man: "Grand uncle, do you agree to this proposition?" The old man replied: "So be it boys, so be it."

Then the first town dweller at the drinking party related his story thus: "Friends, when my mother conceived me, she had a particular longing to eat wood apple. And as she had no one to pick the fruit for her she sent me to pick a wood apple. Then I who was in my mother's womb, went to a wood apple tree. As I could not climb up the tree, I took hold of my two legs and threw them upwards into the

tree as I would a wooden club. Then I went from one bough to the other and picked the wood apples. After that I found myself unable to climb down the tree and so I went back home, took a ladder and used it to get down. I gave the fruit, to my mother. They were of a size as big as a water pot.

All the wood apples were carried down the tree in my pouch fashioned from the loin cloth I was wearing. Out of my gathering of wood apples my mother ate 60 of them at one sitting till she satisfied herself with the special longing during conception. The remainder of the fruit, after my mother had eaten, were for distribution to all the villagers, both young and old. The front room of our house is sixteen cubits wide, we stored the wood apples in it after removing all furniture from there. The fruit filled the room to the roof. The surplus fruit had to be piled up outside the house and it was as high as a hillock of 80 cubits high. Now, friends, what do you say? Do you believe the story or not?" [1115]

The rustic old man remained silent. The town folks at the drinking party answered in the positive. Then they asked the old man: "Do you believe the story?" The old man replied: "Well, this is a vast country. It is believable in this vast country."

The remaining men at the drinking party told their tall stories in turn. And then it was the old man's turn. "Now listen to my story," he said. "Not only are the houses in your town big and grand, houses in our village are also big and grand. I want you to note that our family specializes in cotton planting. We have hundreds of acres under cotton cultivation.

Amidst the vast cotton plantation, we had a particularly big cotton plant that grew to a height of 80 cubits. There were five branches in it. Of those five, four were fruitless, but the fifth one, turning to the east, bore a huge cotton pod as big as a water jar. From that pod with six compartments there bloomed forth six blossoms of cotton flower.

I shaved myself, bathed, and after applying unguent to my body, I went to the cotton field and when I saw the six big cotton blossoms from the same pod I was very pleased. I reached out to them and plucked them. Then lo and behold! In place of these six cotton blossoms there were in my hands six strong slave men. These six slave men of mine left me and ran away to other places. I have not seen them for a long time. Now only, I have found them. They are none other

than the six of you. You, my boy, are Nanda my slave. And you are Poṇṇa, my slave. And you are Vaḍḍhamāna, my slave. And you are Citta, my slave. And you are Maṅgala, my slave. And you are Poṭṭhiya, my slave." Then the old men rose up suddenly and stood holding the six knots of the six men firmly in his hand.

The six town dwellers who were at the drinking party could not deny that the story was not true, for if they did, they would, under the terms of agreement, become slaves to the old man, all the same. The old man then took the six men to the court where they were officially branded as slaves and they remained so for as long as the old man lived."

This sort of nonsensical speech may be amusing but it is not true and is not beneficial. This kind of speech is never spoken by the Buddha.

Then Prince Abhaya said to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, when wise princes, wise Brahmins, wise householders and wise monastics come to you with their various questions, do you have answers thought out beforehand to fit their possible questions? Or do the answers come to mind instantly?"

The Buddha said to the Prince: "Prince Abhaya, in that case, I will put a question to you. You may answer it in any way you like. Now, what do you think of this? You are an expert in chariots, are you not?"

"That is true, venerable sir, I am an expert about the chariot and its various components."

"Prince, what do you think of this? If anybody should ask you: 'What is this part of the chariot called?' Would you have the answer thought out beforehand, or would you answer it straight away instantly?"

"Venerable sir, I am reputed as an expert about chariots. I am skilful about all the components of a chariot. All the components of the chariot are clear in my mind. Therefore any question concerning a chariot is at my finger tips."

"Prince, in much the same way, when wise princes, wise Brahmins, wise householders, and wise monastics come to me with their various questions, the answer comes to my mind instantly. This is because the Realised One is possessed of the Dhamma-element (*Dhamma-dhātu*), which is omniscience, the penetrating knowledge about all things knowable."

When this was said in a wonderfully amiable manner, Prince Abhaya was deeply impressed. He begged of the Buddha to be his refuge, the Dhamma to be his refuge, the Saṅgha to be his refuge, and became a disciple of the Buddha

> Later Prince Abhaya became a monastic, and taking up monastic practice ardently, he became an Arahat with the four discriminations (*paṭisambhidā*), the six special apperceptions (*chaḷ-abhiññā*) and the knowledge of five outstanding features: penetration, facility, quickness, breath and brilliance.[257]

5. He knows the conditioned arising of all beings (*loka-vidū*).

Loka means the five aggregates that are clung to (*upādānakkhandha*); in another sense, the world of sentient beings (*satta-loka*), the world of conditioned phenomena, (*saṅkhāra-loka*), the world as the bases of various planes of existence (*okāsa-loka*). *Vidu* means the one who has analytical knowledge and complete comprehension.

The the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) explains *loka-vidū* in two ways:

1. Under the first method, *loka* is interpreted as the five aggregates that are clung to. These five are understood:

1. As suffering (*dukkha*).
2. As originating in craving (*taṇhā*).
3. As ceasing when Nibbāna is realized.
4. As the noble path that is the true path leading to Nibbāna, the cessation of the aggregates.

Thus *loka-vidū* means the Buddha has complete knowledge about the five aggregates that are clung to.

In knowing about the world of the five aggregates that are clung to, the Buddha knows not only the five aggregates but knows them in their four aspects that make his knowledge complete and perfect. The four aspects are:

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[257] For details refer to Tha-ap 549.

1. He understands that the five aggregates that are clung to are suffering indeed (*dukkha*).
2. He understands the originating aspect of these five aggregates, that craving is the origin of the five aggregates.
3. He understands Nibbāna, the cessation aspect of the five aggregates.
4. He understands the way leading to cessation, the noble path.

Thus the Buddha has a complete understanding of the five aggregates that are clung to. That is why the Buddha is called *loka-vidū*. Under the first method, the complete all-round knowledge from the four aspects of the five aggregates of clinging is the attribute of *loka-vidū*. The five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.

2. Although the first method of interpretation is complete about the world of the five aggregates, the method does not describe *loka* fully yet. Therefore, the commentary gives a second interpretation.

Under the second method, *loka* is taken to mean the world of sentient beings (*satta-loka*), the world of conditioned phenomena (*saṅkhāra-loka*) and the world constituting the bases for the various planes of existence (*okāsa-loka*). *Loka* means that which rises and falls, that undergoes rise and fall. In the Abhidhamma point of view, the aggregates of living things are called the aggregates connected with the faculties (*indriya-baddha-khandā*). The aggregates of non-living things are called the aggregates divested of the faculties (*anindriya-baddha-khandā*).

1. The aggregates of living things are liable to attachment to visible objects, and so on, and hence are called *satta* (attached). Since these aggregates form the bases of merit or demerit that rise and fall, they are also called (*loka*). Thus, we have the term *satta-loka* (the world of attached beings).
2. The aggregates of non-living things, such as the infinite world-elements (*cakka-vāḷa*), the bases of sentient existence (*bhūmi*) and mansions, etc. are the bases where sentient beings exist, whether they are liable to get frightened as in the case of worldlings, Stream-enterers and Once-returners, or are free from fear as in the case of Non-returners and

Arahats, and are called *okāsa*. And since these bases are the places where sentient beings rise and fall, they are called *loka*. Thus we have the term *okāsa-loka* (the world of what is possible).

3. Both the living things and non-living things are conditioned by causes and are called conditioned (*saṅkhāra*). The world is subject to rising and falling, and hence called *loka*. Thus we have the term *saṅkhāra-loka* (the conditioned world). This conditioned world is fully understood by the Buddha.

We shall expand on this as explained in The Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*): *Eko loko sabbe sattā āhāraṭṭhitikā*, "all beings have each its own conditioning factors; this is a world in itself."[258] Therefore, *loka* here means the conditioned world (*saṅkhāra-loka*). This is because although reference is made to all beings, the crucial point here is the conditioned nature which is causing the rise and fall of all beings. [1117]

1. The Buddha has full knowledge about the conditioned world in that he knows it:

1. As a single factor that causes all conditioned things.
2. As two conditioned things, mind and matter.
3. As three conditioned things in the three kinds of sensation.
4. As four conditioned things in the four conditional factors.
5. As five conditioned things in the five aggregates that are clung to.
6. As six conditioned things in the internal sense spheres.
7. As seven conditioned things in the seven stations of consciousness.
8. As eight conditioned things in the eight worldly conditions.
9. As nine conditioned things in the nine bases of existence for beings.
10. As ten conditioned things in the ten corporeal sense spheres.
11. As twelve conditioned things in the twelve sense bases.

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[258] [The Path of Discrimination (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*) is quoted here.]

12. As eighteen conditioned things in the eighteen elements.

2. Just as the Buddha has full knowledge of the conditioned world, so also he knows fully about the world of living beings in that:

1. He knows the proclivities of individuals (*āsaya*).
2. He knows the latent tendencies in individuals (*anusaya*).
3. He knows the habitual conduct of individuals (*carita*).
4. He knows the leanings or dispositions of individuals (*adhimutti*).

He knows individuals who have little dust of defilements in their eye of wisdom, and he knows individuals who have a thick layer of dust of defilements in their eye of wisdom. He knows individuals who have sharp faculties such as conviction, and he knows individuals who have dull faculties. He knows individuals who have a natural desire for liberation and individuals who have little desire for liberation. He knows individuals who are endowed with righteousness such as conviction and wisdom that facilitate them to win path-knowledge, and individuals not so endowed. He knows individuals who are free from drawbacks in their previous deeds, defilements and resultants that mar the attainment of path-knowledge and individuals not so free.

1. Proclivities (*āsaya*).

Proclivities means the mental bent or disposition of individuals. For example, a forest deer is naturally disposed to live in the forest; he may go out to the fields to graze but his home is the forest. Similarly, individuals attend their mind to various sense objects but, after wandering about from object to object, the mind of those who are bent on faring in the round of existences remain in wrong views, whereas the mind of those who are bent on liberation from the round of existences, are pure, and remain in knowledge. So wrong views and knowledge are called proclivities (*āsaya*).

The proclivity of wrong views, *diṭṭhi-āsaya*, is again of two kinds: the proclivity towards the wrong view of annihilation (*uccheda-diṭṭhi*), and the proclivity towards the wrong view of eternalism (*sassata-diṭṭhi*).

The proclivity towards wisdom, *paññā-āsaya*, also is of two kinds: insight knowledge tending to path-knowledge (*vipassanā-paññā-āsaya*), and path-

knowledge itself which is the knowledge in seeing things as they really are (*yathā-bhūta-ñāṇa-āsaya*).

In knowing the proclivities of individuals, the Buddha knows:

1. That this individual is bent on faring in the round of existences and has a proclivity towards the wrong view of annihilation.
2. That this individual is bent on faring in the round of existences and has a proclivity towards the wrong view of eternalism.
3. That this individual is bent on liberation from the round of existences, a pure being, and has insight knowledge.
4. That this individual is bent on liberation from the round of existences and has path-knowledge.

2. Latent tendencies (*anusaya*).

These are defilements that have not been eradicated by path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*) and are liable to arise perceptibly whenever circumstances prevail. These latent tendencies are of seven kinds. They are called the elements of latent tendencies. They are:

1. The latent tendency of passion (*kāmarāgānusaya*).
2. The latent tendency of attachment to existence (*bhavarāgānusaya*).
3. The latent tendency of hatred (*paṭighānusaya*).
4. The latent tendency of conceit (*mānānusaya*).
5. The latent tendency of wrong view (*diṭṭhānusaya*).
6. The latent tendency of uncertainty (*vicikicchānusaya*).
7. The latent tendency [1118] of ignorance (*avijjānusaya*).

In knowing the latent tendencies of individuals, the Buddha knows that this individual is full of the latent tendency to passion; that this individual is full of the latent tendency of attachment to existence, that this individual is full of the latent tendency of hatred … the latent tendency of conceit … the latent tendency of wrong views … the latent tendency of uncertainty … the latent tendency of ignorance.

Anusaya-kilesa, it should be noted, is of three degrees according to its tendency to occur, namely:

1. The latent tendency to defilements.
2. The defilements that have actually arisen with their three phases of arising (*upāda*), developing or momentary presence (*ṭhīti*), and dissolution (*bhaṅga*).
3. The defilements that have erupted into physical or verbal misconduct.

Let us illustrate this: Supposing some worldling in whom defilements have not yet been eradicated by path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*) was making an offering. Even during the meritorious act, while great wholesome thoughts (*mahā-kusala-citta*) are arising in his mind, if he were to meet with some pleasant sense object, this circumstance tends to bring alive sensuous thoughts, it is the latent tendency of passion in the supporter because being a worldling, he has not eradicated passion.

When further contact occurs with the sense object that is agreeable to him, that latent tendency of passion grows into decidedly defiled thoughts (*pariyuṭṭhāna-kilesa*). Then, if he checks himself with right attention, the thoughts defiled by passion may subside.

If, however, instead of right attention, he is driven by wrong attention, the defiled thoughts become translated into wicked acts, either bodily or verbally. This is the eruptive stage of the defilement of passion (*vītikkama-kilesa*).

This is an example of the way the defilement of passion grows from its latent tendency or seed element to overt acts in three progressive stages. The same principle also applies to the other defilements, such as hatred, conceit, etc.

3. Habitual conduct (*carita*).

Habitual conduct means meritorious actions or demeritorious actions. In another sense, it refers to the six kinds of habituated action or habitual conduct that occurs frequently in the present life: greed (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*), delusion (*moha*), faith (*saddhā*), intelligence (*buddhi*), and cogitation (*vitakka*).

> The two Pāḷi terms *carita* and *vāsanā* should be distinguished. The vague impression of habituated acts, whether good or bad, in previous existences

> that persist till the present existence, is called *vāsanā*. Out of the six kinds of conduct described above, the one which is apt to occur for most of the time in the present existence is called *carita*.

The Buddha knows the habitual conduct (*carita*) of every individual, such as this individual is predominantly of good conduct (*sucarita*); this individual is predominantly of bad conduct (*duccarita*); this individual is predominantly of greedy conduct (*rāga-carita*); this individual is predominantly of hateful conduct (*dosa-carita*); this individual is predominantly of deluded conduct (*moha-carita*); this individual is predominantly of faithful conduct (*saddhā-carita*); this individual is predominantly of intelligent conduct (*buddhi-carita*); this individual is predominantly of a cogitative conduct (*vitakka-carita*). Further, the Buddha also knows the nature of these six types of conduct, the defiling conditions, the purifying conditions, the essential conditions, the results, and the consequences of these six types of conduct.

4. Leaning or disposition (*adhimutti*).

Disposition means the natural leaning of individuals. There are two kinds of disposition: the natural preference for, or leaning towards, ignoble things (*hīnādhimutti*), and the natural preference for, or leaning towards, noble things (*paṇītādhimutti*). People generally associate with persons of like nature; those of ignoble disposition associate with persons of ignoble disposition; those of noble disposition associate with persons of noble disposition.

The Buddha knows the type of disposition in every individual, such as whether a certain [1119] person is of ignoble disposition or of noble disposition.

Further, the Buddha knows the degree of disposition in each individual, such as whether it is high, or lower, or lowest. Disposition depends on the degree of faith, endeavour, mindfulness, concentration, and knowledge, which are the five faculties.

Thus the Buddha knows fully about living beings in respect of the four proclivities (*āsaya*), the seven latent tendencies (*anusaya*); the three volitions (*abhisaṅkhāra*) or the six types of habitual conduct (*carita*), and the types and degrees of disposition (*adhimutti*).

3. Just as the Buddha has complete knowledge of the world of living beings, he also has complete knowledge of the world of non-living things; the places where

living beings have their abodes, such as the world-elements (*cakka-vāḷa*), mansions, forests and mountains, etc.

> [A long section included here on The Cosmos has been moved to the Further Explanations.]

In this way the Buddha has a complete knowledge of the infinite world-elements as bases for sentient existence. This complete and clear knowledge of the world of living beings, the world of conditioned phenomena and the world of non-living things is the attribute of *loka-vidū*. The five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.

6. He is incomparable in taming those who deserve to be tamed (*anuttaro purisa-damma-sārathi*).

The Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) gives the explanation of *anuttaro purisa-damma-sārathi* in two separate ways: *anuttaro* explained as one attribute and *damma-sārathi* as another. And it also gives a combined meaning as one attribute. We shall describe both the interpretations here:

Anuttaro. The Buddha is incomparable in morality and so on, in the whole world, so that he reigns supreme in this attribute among the world of living beings. To explain this further: The Buddha reigns supreme in morality, in concentration, in wisdom, in emancipation, and in knowledge leading to emancipation. This supremacy is the attribute of *anuttaro*; the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of that attribute.

Purisa-damma-sārathi. He who tames those who deserve to be tamed [1122] (*purisa-damma*), those beings deserving to be tamed; *sarathi*, the tamer, i.e. a skilful teacher or instructor. Those deserving to be tamed include humans, Devas and Brahmas. For example, the Buddha tamed Nāga kings: Apalāla, Cūḷodara, Mahodara, Aggisikha, Dhūmasikha, and Aravāḷa, Dhanapāla the elephant king, etc. and made them abandon their savagery and established them in the three refuges. Then the Buddha tamed Saccaka; the wandering ascetic, Niganṭhaputta; Ambaṭṭha, the young man; Brahmins Pokkharasāti, Soṇadanta and Kūṭadanta, etc. He also tamed powerful Devas, such as Āḷavaka, Sūciloma, Kharaloma and even Sakka, the Lord of the Devas.

The Buddha not only tamed individuals from their savage stage into being disciples, but also uplifted those virtuous persons who had had purity of morality to attain the first absorption (*jhāna*), or the noble ones (*ariya*) who were Stream-enterers, to attain the three higher paths by showing the method of training. So his taming also includes leading already half-tamed persons to the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*). Therefore, *purisa-damma-sārathi* means establishing savage beings in the lower morality, and guiding those possessed of lower morality, i.e. those half-tamed, to attain the higher benefits leading to the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*). This knowledge of instructing others is the attribute of *damma-sārathi*. The five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

In the combined interpretation of *anuttaro* and *purisa-damma-sārathi*, only a single attribute is counted, to mean the Buddha, who is unrivalled in taming those who are untamed. To explain this: When a horse tamer trains a horse, he does not and cannot train it into the desired state in a day. He has to train it over many days repeatedly. The same holds true with other animals, such as elephants, bullocks, etc. Even when a horse is supposed to be tame it is not free from pranks. The same holds true with other animals. But the Buddha can tame a person at once in the course of one dialogue to attain the eight absorptions (*jhāna*) or attain the Arahat fruition. When the disciple has became an Arahat he becomes completely tamed never showing any more mad frolics. Therefore the Buddha is unrivalled in taming the untamed. The knowledge of tutoring the untutored, ignorant, persons is the attribute of *anuttaro purisa-damma-sārathi*; the five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

7. He is the teacher of Devas and humans (*Satthā Deva-manussānaṁ*).

This means the Buddha guides Devas and humans to gain for themselves the benefits at present, the benefits in the future, and the ultimate benefit of Nibbāna. The Buddha teaches, exhorts and instructs all beings to gain present benefits for some; to gain benefit in future existences, for others; and to attain the ultimate benefit of Nibbāna, for others; each according to his or her sufficiency of past merit. Therefore the knowledge in helping Devas and humans to gain present benefits, benefits in the future, and the benefit of Nibbāna is the attribute of *Satthā Deva-manussānaṁ*. The five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

Another explanation: the Buddha is like the master of a caravan, hence he is called *Satthā Deva-manussānaṁ*.

To explain it further: A wise leader of a caravan (*satthā*) conducts the caravan safely over a difficult and dangerous journey. There are five kinds of difficult and dangerous journeys:

1. A journey notorious for highway robbers.
2. A journey through wild country where ferocious beasts, such as lions or tigers, roam.
3. A barren stretch of land where food resources are not available.
4. A journey over parched country with no water resources.
5. A journey passing through a country infested with Yakkhas.

Just as a good leader of a caravan safely conducts the caravan through the above five kinds of hazardous journey, so also the Buddha gives protection to the wayfarers of the journey of life against the hazards of the journey marked by rebirth, aging, disease and death, grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow and anguish, lust, hatred, delusion, conceit, wrong view and demeritorious deeds, and conducts them to the safety of Nibbāna. Therefore, the doctrine of the Buddha which leads beings to Nibbāna is the attribute of *Satthā Deva-manussānaṁ*; the [1123] five aggregates of the Buddha is the possessor of this attribute.

> The attribute *Satthā Deva-manussānaṁ* should not be taken to mean to cover Devas and humans only. The term *Deva-manussānaṁ* is used to give prominence to beings of the fortunate existences and who are fit to become liberated. However, the Buddha also gives appropriate guidance and counsel to animals so that they also benefit from it and are thereby equipped with sufficing conditions to attain the paths and fruitions in their next existence or in their third existence. The commentary gives the example of Maṇḍūka Devaputta which is related below.

Maṇḍūka Devaputta

At one time, the Buddha was staying at a monastery close to Gaggarā Lake, near the city of Campā, which served as his place for collecting daily alms food. One morning, on his usual Buddha routine of entering the absorption of compassion, he saw that, if he held a discourse in the evening, a frog would come, and being

absorbed in the sound of the Dhamma speech, it would be killed accidentally, and be reborn in the Deva realm. And that Deva would come to him, accompanied by his big retinue which would be seen by the large audience who would gain knowledge of the four truths and so make an end of suffering.

After having this foreknowledge through his absorption of compassion, the Buddha went into the city of Campā for alms round in the morning. When the morning meal was finished, he went to the monastery, received the homage paid by the monastics, and went into seclusion in his scented chamber, spending the day in the bliss of the absorption of the Arahat fruition.

In the evening, when the four kinds of assembly were gathered at the lecture hall near Gaggarā Lake, the Buddha came out of his scented chamber, took his seat in the lecture hall, and delivered a discourse. At that time, a frog came out from the lake, listened to the voice of the Buddha, and knowing that "this is the voice of the Dhamma," was absorbed in it.

> Although animals do not have the capacity to understand the meaning of the discourse, at least they can know the voice as one of Dhamma or righteousness or as one of wrongness, as the case may be.

Then a cowherd came upon the scene and being deeply impressed by the Buddha's splendour in delivering the discourse and the deep silence in which the audience were listening to the discourse, he stood there leaning on his staff in hand. He did not notice that there was a frog on whose head his staff was resting.

The frog died on the spot, even while it was absorbed in the sweet voice of the Dhamma. As it died in full consciousness of the clear conviction in the goodness of the Dhamma, it was reborn in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm, with a golden mansion twelve leagues wide as his residence, waited upon by a large retinue of Devakaññā, or Divine Maidens.

Then he pondered on his new state: "How have I got into this Deva existence? I was just a frog in my previous existence. What merit sent me, a mere animal, to this high state?" And he saw no other merit than his getting absorbed in the voice of the Buddha's discourse which was the voice of the Dhamma.

Then he went to the Buddha, while himself staying in his mansion, in the company of the divine maidens. He and his divine maidens descended from the

mansion in full view of the human audience and stood before the Buddha in worshipping attitude.

The Buddha knew the Deva, who was the frog which was stamped to death just a moment ago. Still, to let the audience realize the workings of productive deeds (*kamma*), as well as to show the abnormal psychic power of the Buddha in seeing the past existences of all beings, he spoke to the Deva in the following verse:

> "Surrounded by a large retinue, shedding resplendent light all around with such powerful possession of a personal aura, who is it that pays homage to me?"

And the Deva who, just a moment ago, had been a frog replied: [1124]

> "Venerable sir, in my previous existence, I had been a frog, born and brought up in the water. Even while I was absorbed in your voice teaching Dhamma, a cowherd caused my death with his staff.
>
> Venerable sir, just at the instant of my death, due to the serenity of my mind in listening to the Fortunate One's voice, I was reborn a Deva. And now, venerable sir, see my glorious state, replete with retinue, my personal appearance and everything, and, above all, my effulgence that reaches twelve leagues!
>
> Gotama, may those, who have for a long time listened to the Dhamma taught by you, attain the Peace of Nibbāna through path-knowledge and become free from all sorrow."

Then the Buddha delivered the discourse in detail, suited to the audience, by judging their past merits that would serve as sufficing conditions for Awakening. By the end of the discourse, 84,000 beings comprehended the four truths and made an end of suffering. The Deva who had been a frog attained Stream-entry. He made obeisance to the Buddha, turned round with the Buddha on his right, and also worshipping the Saṅgha, returned to the Deva realm in the company of his large retinue of Devakaññā.

8. He is the Awakened One (*Buddha*).

He is called the Buddha because he knows fully all knowable things. In another sense, he is the knower of the truths and also makes the four truths known to beings fit to know them. Hence, he is called the Buddha.

The distinction between the second attribute of *Sammā-sambuddha* and the eighth attribute of *Buddha* lies in that the former refers to the four truths, while the latter refers to the omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*). If, however, the attribute *Buddha* is taken as supreme knowledge as the same for *Sammā-sambuddha*, then the former relates to the penetrative knowledge (*paṭivedha-ñāṇa*) of the Buddha's wisdom while the latter relates to the skilful aspect of the Buddha's wisdom in enlightning others (*desanā-ñāṇa*).

9. He is endowed with the six exalted qualities (*Bhagavā*).

This attribute of the Buddha is explained in a variety of ways in the Long Exposition (*Mahā-niddesa*). The commentary also explains it in six different ways, while the sub-commentary to the Path to Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) gives seven different interpretations. Here we shall discuss the first method of explanation in the Pāḷi which is also the third method of explanation in the commentary. This is the meaning generally given by Myanmar translators in their close literal renderings of the word, i.e. "He who is endowed with six exalted qualities," *bhaga*, the six exalted qualities; *vanta*, being possessed of.

The Buddha is called the Fortunate One (*Bhagavā*) because he is endowed with the six exalted qualities unattainable by the disciples namely: 1) Supremacy (*issariya*); 2) the 9 supermundane attainments (*Dhamma*); 3) fame (*yasa*); 4) glory (*sirī*); 5) accomplishment (*kāma*) and 6) diligence (*payatta*).

1. Supremacy (*issariya*).

It means the innate power of the Buddha to bend things to his will. Supremacy is of two kinds, supermundane will power (*lokuttara-cittissariya*) and mundane will power (*loka-cittissariya*).

As regards supermundane will power, the Buddha has unsurpassed will power. In [1125] displaying the twin miracle, to get a stream of water from the desired part of his body, he enters into the preliminary absorption of the water meditation object (*āpo-kasiṇa*) and then makes the resolve: "May there be a stream of water," which is a separate impulsion thought process (*adhiṭṭhāna-vīthi*). Then he enters into the preliminary absorption of the water meditation object again. Then the special impulsion thought-process (*abhiññāṇa-vīthi*) arises that causes the stream of water to appear from whatever part of his body as he has willed it.

Thus, to effect a stream of water from the desired part of his body, the Buddha has to go through four different thought-processes. Likewise, to get a stream of fire glow from the desired part of his body, the Buddha enters into the preliminary absorption of the fire meditation object (*tejo-kasiṇa*) and then makes the resolve: "May there be a stream of fire," which is a separate impulsion thought-process. Then he enters into the preliminary absorption of the fire meditation object again. Then the special impulsion thought-process arises that causes the stream of fire to appear from whatever part of his body he has willed it.

Briefly speaking, to get a stream of water to flow from the body, the Buddha has to go through four separate thought-processes. The same is required to get a stream of fire to burn from the body. The mastery of the Buddha's will power is such that in going through the thought-process in entering into the preliminary absorptions he can bring to a stop the thought-process in any number of thought-moments he chooses. The life continuum thought-moments (*bhavaṅga-citta*) that have to intervene between the separate thought-processes are also limited to two.[259] The mastery in arranging the separate thought-processes and the life continuum thought-moments as desired are the astonishing features of the Buddha's accomplishment in will power. This is the power in controlling mundane absorption (*jhāna*).

Likewise, in supermundane consciousness of the Arahat fruition, the Buddha has unsurpassed power of will. Due to this power, he enters into the absorption of the Arahat fruition at such little odd moments when he takes a pause between making a point in his discourse and going on to the next, during which the audience would be saying: Well done! As a matter of fact, there is not the shortest of odd moments when the Buddha does not dwell in the absorption of the Arahat fruition.[260] This is how the Buddha has amazing control of will power in supermundane consciousness.

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[259] Compare this to the case with the disciples who would need as many life-continuum thought-moments as they feel necessary.

[260] See the sub-commentary to the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭhasālinī*).

Eight Mundane Features of the Buddha's Willpower

In the teaching, eight mundane features of the Buddha's willpower are generally cited. The eight are briefly described below:

1. The Buddha can transform himself as small as small can be, even to an atomic size (*animā*). This was the power he employed in taming Brahma Baka, where assuming the power of invisibility which was the bet between them.

2. He can transform himself as big as big can be, (*mahimā*) even making himself taller than Mount Sineru, and up to any conceivable size that might cover up the entire world-element, and still appear proportionate and glorious. This was the power he employed to impress the Lord of the Asuras who had previously thought he might have to look down on the Buddha because of his own enormous size.

3. He can levitate at will and travel in the air (*laghimā*) due to this power which causes lightness of the body comparable to his lightness of the mind.

4. He can travel to any far away place at will (*patti*). Ordinary people lacking in this power cannot travel bodily to far-off places as fast as their mind can travel. The Buddha can travel even to the Deva realms and Brahma realms bodily in an instant.

5. He can accomplish anything that he wishes (*pākamma*). In the eight assemblies he resolved to appear as one of their kind, i.e. among Devas in the Deva realm he appears as a Deva, and so on. In teaching the doctrine to the inhabitants of the other world-elements, he assumes the form, the voice, etc. of one of the kings of those places.[261] [1126]

6. Dominating the will of others (*īsitā*). All the Buddha-routine is accomplished through this power; all beings have to fulfil the wishes of the Buddha.

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[261] See DN 16.

7. Mastery of psychic powers and absorptions (*vasitā*). This is the power used to tame very powerful and arrogant individuals such as the Uruvelā Nāga, overpowering their powers in every respect, such as emitting fire, vapour, etc.

8. He has complete control over the absorptions and in displaying miracles and is able to terminate them as he wills (*yatthakāmāvasāyitā*). It is this power which accomplishes the twin miracle of fire and water emerging out of the various parts of his body, with fire glowing from the upper part of the body while water flows from the lower part of the body, and then suddenly even when the audience is watching in awe, making fire glowing from the lower part of the body while water flows from the upper part of the body, etc.

The above eight powers of the will in mundane consciousness are included in the knowledge by which supernormal powers are accomplished (*iddhi-vidha-abhiññā*). The Buddha stands unrivalled in this knowledge.

These eight mundane powers and the mastery in mundane willpower and supermundane willpower mentioned above together are called the first of the six exalted qualities, i.e. supremacy (*issariya*).

> O Fortunate One! Your Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) consciousness is marked by the mastery of supermundane will-power, as well as the eight forms of mastery of mundane will-power, such as in turning yourself into an infinitesimal form. O Fortunate One! May this be my humble adoration to you!

2. Knowledge of the Nine Supramundane Factors (*Dhamma*).

This glorious quality is the knowledge of the Buddha in his unique attainment of the nine factors of the supermundane sphere: the four paths, the four fruitions and Nibbāna that destroy all defilements so completely that no faint suggestion of their presence due to past habits remains. The meaning is obvious.

Verse in adoration of the exalted quality of Dhamma:

> O Steadfast One! You are imbued with the four noble paths, the four noble fruitions, and Nibbāna that destroy all the defilements, leaving not

> the faintest trace. O Glorious font of the Dhamma! May this be my humble adoration to you!

3. Fame and Followers (*yasa*).

The glorious reputation surrounding the Buddha is no empty boast, but it is true to its every detail, and well deserved. In that sense the Buddha's reputation is pure, unadulterated and unexaggerated. There are certain personages of wide repute, deserving of them but their repute does not reach the three worlds, the human world, the Deva realm and the Brahma realm.

The reputation attributed to the Buddha is such that the achievers of non-material absorptions (*arūpa-jhāna*) can remain in the non-material Brahma world (*arūpa-brahma*) and contemplate on the nine supreme attributes of the Buddha. Since the Buddha's fame reaches even the non-material Brahma world, it hardly needs saying that this fame spreads in the form realm and the sensuous sphere as well.

> O Steadfast One! [1127] You are attributed with glorious fame spreading over the three worlds, purely deserved by you. O paragon of personal repute! May this be my humble adoration to you.

4. Splendour of Physical Perfection (*sirī*).

The Buddha's glorious quality of physical perfection was such that all humans, Devas and Brahmas could never satisfy themselves in gazing at his superb appearance, for he was endowed with the 32 marks of the Great Man, as well as with the 80 lesser characteristics. Those who went to see the Buddha had to leave only because the proper time to stay before his presence had run out but they were not content with feasting their eyes on the sheer majesty of the person of the Buddha.

> O Resplendent One! You are endowed with physical excellence in every aspect. That makes you the cynosure of all humans, Devas and Brahmas. O fairest of all men! May this be my humble adoration to you!

5. Accomplishment (*kāma*).

The Buddha accomplishes all he sets out to accomplish and the steadfast purpose, the steady effort underlying this power of accomplishment, is called *kāma*. Since as Bodhisatta Sumedhā, he received the assurance of being a Bodhisatta from

Buddha Dīpaṅkara, he had set his mind on leading humanity to liberation: "May I become enlightened and may I be able to lead the multitudes to Awakening (*Buddho bodheyyaṁ*). May I attain liberation from the round of rebirth, and may I be able to lead the multitudes to liberation (*mutto moceyyaṁ*). May I cross over to the shore of safety and may I be able to ferry across the multitudes to the shore of safety (*tiṇṇo tāreyyaṁ*)."

That earnest desire, that steadfast purpose, had never waned in the Buddha. It was that purposefulness that led him to attain perfect Awakening through path and fruit, thus fulfilling his earnest desire. He had thus gained Awakening, had gained liberation from the round of rebirth, and had crossed over to the safe shore that is Nibbāna.

There are some people who may have earlier desired for the good and welfare of oneself as well as of others. But once their welfare is fulfilled, they are apt to forget about others' welfare, or are unable to carry out their set purpose concerning others. The Buddha attaining Buddhahood was reinforced by the path-knowledge in devoting himself to his original task of helping others. This zeal was the principal cause of his accomplishment in making the multitudes see the four truths, enabling them to cross over to the safe shore of Nibbāna. Therefore the steadfast wish (*adhigama-chanda*) that was responsible for the glorious accomplishment of the Buddha's mission both for himself and for others, is *kāma*.

> O Steadfast One! You have long wished for the good of yourself as well as of others. That earnest wish has found fulfilment now. [1128] O Achieving One! May this be my humble adoration to you!

6. Diligence (*payatta*).

Diligence means having an unrivalled diligence. His untiring zeal in keeping up the fivefold Buddha routine earned him the love and esteem of the whole world. The right effort (*sammā vayana*) that entitles him to the warm regard of the whole living world is the glorious quality of diligence (*payatta*).

> The fivefold Buddha routine:
>
> 1. Early morning routine: Going on alms round, acceptance of meals by supporters, giving discourses of appreciation to supporters.

2. After meal routine: Advice to Saṅgha, meditation practice suitable for each monastic, short rest, survey of the world to find sentient beings ready for liberation, discourse to laity in the afternoon.

3. First watch of the night: Bathing, slight rest, giving a discourse to the Saṅgha.

4. Middle watch of the night: Giving a discourse to Devas, Brahmas.

5. Last watch of the night: Walking exercise, sleep for four hours from 10pm to 2am, survey of the world of sentient beings ready for liberation.

O Diligent One! You possessed right effort, that steadfastness which won the highest esteem by the whole world. O steadfast One! May this be my humble adoration to you!

The Buddha's Attributes in a Nutshell

The attributes of the Buddha are infinite. Out of them, the nine supreme attributes are mentioned in the scriptures for easy understanding and memorizing by humans, Devas and Brahmas.

All of the Buddha's glorious attributes can be put into two main categories:

1. The attributes that proclaim the accomplishment of the Buddha by himself (*atta-hita-sampatti*).
2. The attributes that stand testimony to the Buddha's service to the general weal of the multitudes (*para-hita-paṭipatti*).

In the first category there are two aspects,

1. The success the Buddha achieves in overcoming the defiling tendencies.
2. The endowment of a variety of knowledges.

The innate powers of the Buddha that he is invested with flow from these two sources.

In the second category of the Buddha's attributes too, there are two aspects:

1. The severity of effort in teaching the Dhamma to the multitudes purely out of compassion, untinged with any expectation of gain or fame.

2. The infinite patience in wishing well even to persons antagonistic to him and in awaiting the ripeness of time on the part of the hearers to comprehend his teaching.

The Buddha's acceptance of offerings of the four monastic requisites is another form of doing useful service to the supporters who thereby gain great merit. Thus the nine attributes such as being Worthy (*Arahaṁ*), are taught to signify the two above aspects of his own accomplishments and his service for the welfare of others.

The nine supreme attributes are read into the above two aspects in the following way: Being Worthy (*Arahaṁ*) clearly describes the Buddha's success in getting rid of all defilements.

Being perfectly Self-Awakened (*Sammā-sambuddho*) and knowing the conditioned arising of all beings (*loka-vidū*) clearly describe the Buddha's endowment of a variety of knowledges.

> Here, it might be asked: "Does knowing the conditioned arising of all beings also not stand for Perfect Self-Awakening?" The answer is: "Yes, it does." However, there is this distinction: Being perfectly Self-Awakened stands for the efficacy of Perfect [1129] Self-Awakening while knowing the conditioned arising of all beings signifies the efficacy of the Buddha's discriminating knowledge about the mental framework of his hearers, such as tendencies, etc. Hence two different attributes are proclaimed.

Being endowed with the three knowledges (*vijjā-caraṇa-sampanno*) completely conveys the comprehensive accomplishment of the Buddha by himself.

Being Well-gone (*Sugato*) proclaims both the Buddha's accomplishment by himself and the achievement in working for the welfare of others, together with the underlying cause of both.

Being incomparable in taming those who deserve to be tamed (*anuttaro purisa-damma-sārathi*) and beiung the teacher of Devas and humans (*Satthā Deva-manussānaṁ*) clearly demonstrate the Buddha's achievement in bringing welfare to others.

Being the Awakened One (*Buddho*) brings out the meaning of accomplishment by himself as well as accomplishment for the good of others.

> After mentioning being perfectly Self-Awakened (*Sammā-sambuddho*), the Buddha further proclaims being the Awakened One (*Buddho*) because the former indicates his penetrative knowledge whereas the latter conveys his knowledge in imparting knowledge.

Being endowed with the six exalted qualities (*Bhagavā*) highlights both the Buddha's accomplishment for himself and the success in bringing the welfare of others.

Considered in another light, the supreme attributes of the Buddha fall under three categories, namely:

1. Attributes that are root causes (*hetu*).
2. Attributes that are results (*phala*).
3. Attributes that bring welfare to others (*sattūpakāra*).

> These three may be called success in root cause, success in result and success in the welfare of the world.

Four attributes, viz. Worthiness (*Arahaṁ*), perfectly Self-Awakened (*Sammā-sambuddho*), endowed with the three knowledges (*vijjā-caraṇa-sampanno*), and knowing the conditioned arising of all beings (*loka-vidū*), portray the root causes of attributes that the Buddha is endowed with.

Being incomparable in taming those who deserve to be tamed (*Anuttaro purisa-damma-sārathi*) and being the teacher of Devas and humans (*Satthā Deva-manussānaṁ*) clearly describe the Buddha's success in working for the good of others.

Being the Awakened One (*Buddho*) clearly points out the Buddha's endowment of happy root cause as well as accomplishment for the good of others.

Being Well-gone (*Sugato*) and being endowed with the six exalted qualities (*Bhagavā*) reveal the endowment of the three kinds of success, i.e. in root cause, in result and in the welfare of the world.[262]

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[262] See the sub-commentary to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*), Vol. I.

Contemplation of the Buddha

Devotees should recite these verses at a speed neither too slowly nor too fast, reflecting on its meaning. One who reflects on the attributes of the Buddha, while doing so, prevents the arising of thoughts of lust, hatred and delusion, besides gaining concentration which clears the mind of lethargy and distraction, and rendering it possible for a righteous thought-process to arise through equanimity.

When the concentration gets stronger through this meditation practice, the hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) fall off, and defilements are quelled and consequently, the five faculties beginning with faith (*saddhā*) become very pure and effective. The repeated reflection on the Buddha sharpens initial application of the mind (*vitakka*) and sustained application of the mind (*vicāra*). When these two factors are functioning well, delightful satisfaction (*pīti*) arises. Due to the delightful satisfaction, serenity of mental concomitants and serenity of mind arise, as the result of which physical and mental uneasiness, which are defilements associated with subtle forms of distraction, are quelled. When there is serenity of mind and serenity of mental concomitants, happiness that causes the arising of concentration becomes pronounced. The thought-process being enriched by happiness is firmly fixed on the object of meditation.

Thus the factors involved in meditation, beginning from initial application of the mind, become more and more efficient stage by stage. The mind is neither retarded nor distracted so that the medium attitude of mental exercise or equanimity is maintained and the five [1130] faculties such as faith are functioning in a balanced way. Now, the five factors of absorption (*jhāna*): initial application of the mind, sustained application of the mind, delightful satisfaction, happiness and one-pointedness of mind, arise simultaneously at every thought moment with the great meritorious consciousness (*mahā-kusala-citta*) of the contemplation on the Buddha which is mental cultivation pertaining to the sensuous sphere (*kāmāvacara-bhāvanā*). Thus, neighbourhood concentration or access concentration (*upacāra-jhāna*) is achieved. When this concentration arises together with the great meritorious consciousness of the contemplation of the Buddha, which is mental cultivation pertaining to the sensuous sphere, the meditator is called one who has achieved access concentration based on the contemplation of the Buddha.

> Contemplation of the Buddha can, at best, reach the level of threshold or neighbourhood concentration (*upacāra-jhāna*) pertaining to the sensuous sphere only, and not fixed or full absorption (*appaṇā-rūpāvacara-jhāna*). Why is it so? It is because the attributes of the Buddha are ultimate phenomena and are too profound to be fully concentrated on up to the full absorption stage. It is like a vessel that cannot remain stable on very deep waters.

It might then be asked: "In contemplating the attributes of the Buddha, the names of the ultimate qualities of the nine attributes, such as Worthiness (*Arahaṁ*), etc. are still made objects of contemplation. Why are these names said to be ultimate qualities?" The answer is, again, that the attributes of the Buddha are so profound that, although at the initial stage of meditation, these names, such as Worthiness, are made as objects of meditation, when concentration is developed the mind passes on from mere names to ultimate reality.

Again, one might further ask: "Are not some ultimate qualities such as the first non-material consciousness (*paṭhamārūpa-viññāṇa*) used as an object of meditation and full absorption (*appanā-jhāna*), such as the second non-material absorption, achieved thereby?" That is true, but that is a case of a single object of meditation. The attributes of the Buddha are not a single object. They are a complex variety. So the comparison is not valid.

It may then be questioned: "A yogi contemplating on the 32 aspects or parts of the body, although starting with a number of them, after concentration becomes developed, fixes his mind on a single aspect or part only and achieves the first fine-material absorption (*jhāna*). Then why is the same process not true in the case of the contemplation of the Buddha?" This is not an appropriate analogy. For, although there are as many as 32 aspects or parts of the body, all of them have a single reality, which is loathsomeness, which truly becomes the object of meditation leading to the achievement of full absorption (*appanā-jhāna*). In the case of the attributes of the Buddha, they are replete with meaning in a variety of ways, and hence achievable concentration belongs only to the sensuous sphere, and only up to access (*upacāra-jhāna*) stage.

"Why not concentrate on only one of the nine attributes then?" The answer is: When concentration becomes developed, the attributes of the Buddha are

comprehended by the yogi so that he cannot fix his mind on only one of them because his faith grows so much as to know no bounds.

Benefits of Contemplation of the Buddha

A virtuous one, who repeatedly contemplates the attributes of the Buddha, has exceptional esteem of him which is comparable to the noble ones' devotion to him. Repeated recollection of the Buddha develops his mind such that he has a stable mindfulness. The profundity of the Buddha's attributes, on which his mind is trained, makes him a person of profound wisdom. The nine attributes in themselves are the fertile field for sowing merit, therefore constant recollection of them is highly meritorious.

Reflection on the Buddha is a mental exercise conducive to delightful satisfaction (*pīti*), one of the Seven Factors of Awakening. The yogi becomes possessed of much delightful satisfaction, first of the feeble kind but, later, of an ecstatic kind. The mindfulness that dwells on the attributes of the Buddha overcomes fear, therefore the yogi becomes indifferent to fear and dread, great or small. Since this mental exercise has the nature of [1131] warding off physical pain, the yogi acquires a kind of tolerance to pain. He also feels that he is together with the Buddha. The body of one, whose mind is absorbed in the thoughts of the Buddha, is like a shrine containing the Buddha so that it becomes worthy of adoration. His mind is always inclined to Supreme Awakening.

The yogi's mind is constantly reminded of the attributes of the Buddha with the result that any evil thought that might arise is driven away before any evil word or deed is committed, as if being shameful to do it, and being abhorrent to do it in the presence of the Buddha. Contemplation of the Buddha is a basis for gaining path and fruit. If the yogi does not gain path and fruit in this existence for want of sufficient past merit, he is reborn in the fortunate existences.

These are the benefits of contemplating the Buddha as explained in The Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*). For greater details the reader may refer to the Traditions about the Elder Monk Subhūti (*Subhūtitthera-apadāna*, Tha-ap 23).

The Six Supreme Attributes of the Dhamma

Svākkhāto Bhagavatā Dhammo,
sandiṭṭhiko akāliko,

ehipassiko opaneyyiko,
paccattaṁ veditabbo viññūhi.

The Dhamma has been well-proclaimed by the Fortunate One, is visible, not subject to time, inviting inspection, onward-leading, and can be understood by the wise for themselves.

1. The Dhamma, consisting of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna and the doctrine (*pariyatti*) is well-proclaimed (*svākkhāto*) because:

1. It is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle and excellent at the end, in the utterance of each word in strict accordance with the six rules of grammar and ten rules of articulation of the Magadhan language.
2. And because it shows the middle way, avoiding the two extremes, and because it quells the fires of defilements and completely extinguishes them.
3. Because it explains the nature of permanence, stability, pacification and deathlessness.

2. The Dhamma, i.e. the four paths, the four fruitions and Nibbāna, is visible (*sandiṭṭhiko*) because it is practiced and realized by the noble ones (*ariya*) who have thus exhausted the defilements; and also because it is the instant destroyer of defilements, it wins the laurels of victory.

3. The Dhamma, the nine supermundane factors, is not subject to time (*akāliko*) because it comes to fruition immediately, in that the fruition (*phala*) of the path (*magga*) is attainable without a moment's delay.

4. The Dhamma is inviting inspection (*ehipassiko*) because it is clearly visible like the majestic moon in a clear sky, free of mist, smoke, cloud, etc., or like the Manohara gem that is found on Mount Vepulla, inviting all to come and see for themselves.

5. The Dhamma is onward-leading (*opaneyyiko*) because the four paths serve as the raft for crossing over to the safety of Nibbāna, while the fruitions (*phala*) and Nibbāna bestow upon the noble ones (*ariya*) the realization of a safe haven.

6. The Dhamma can be understood for themselves (*paccattaṁ veditabbo*) because it must be realized, through individual effort, by the wise (*vinnū*).

Explanation of the Above Attributes

1. Well-proclaimed (*svākkhāto*).

In well-proclaimed (*svākkhāto*), Dhamma refers to the doctrine (*pariyatti*), the four paths, the four fruitions (*phala*) and Nibbāna. That is, the doctrine and the nine supermundane factors.

The doctrine (*pariyatti*) is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle and excellent at the end, because it is perfect in meaning and in words and because it proclaims the threefold training and the noble path (*magga*), as the pure and complete way of practice.

The doctrine (*pariyatti*) is perfect because even within a single verse, its first line is perfect, and therefore perfect in the beginning; its second and third lines are perfect and therefore perfect in the middle; its fourth line is perfect and therefore perfect at the end.

In a discourse, it has an introduction that makes it perfect in the beginning. It has a conclusion that makes it perfect at the end. And the middle portion, with its logical connections between various points, makes it perfect in the middle.

In a discourse consisting of a [1132] number of connected thoughts, the first connection of logical relationships is perfection in the beginning. The last connection of logical relationship is perfection at the end. The remaining logical relationships are perfection in the middle.

In another way: In the Discourse and Discipline Collections, all of the discourses mention the place where the event took place, for instance Sāvatthī, Rājagaha, etc. which is perfection in the beginning. The compatibility of the discourse with the natural bent of the hearers on that particular occasion, the incontrovertible truth contained in the meaning of the discourse, the substance, and the illustrations make the middle perfect. The benefit gained by the audience through their faith and conviction, the proper conclusion of theme, make the end perfect.

In brief, the whole of the doctrine (*pariyatti-dhamma*), comprising the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*), essentially proclaim morality, concentration and insight-wisdom; the paths, fruitions (*magga-phala*) and Nibbāna. They pronounce the true Buddha, the true Dhamma and the true Saṅgha. They clearly prescribe the noble and correct practice that leads to Buddhahood, or Perfect Self-Awakening, the Awakening of a Paccekabuddha and the Awakening of a disciple (*sāvaka*). Thus, the Three Baskets have intrinsic excellence in the beginning in morality; intrinsic excellence of the middle in concentration and insight-wisdom; and intrinsic excellence at the end in Nibbāna. Or taken in another light, they are excellent in the beginning through morality and concentration; excellent in the middle through insight wisdom, and the paths (*magga*); and excellent at the end through the fruitions (*phala*) and Nibbāna.

Or, put it in another way, they are excellent in the beginning by declaring the true Buddha, excellent in the middle by declaring the true Dhamma, and excellent at the end by declaring the true Saṅgha. Again, anyone, who takes up the practice as shown in the doctrine (*pariyatti-dhamma*) or the Three Baskets can attain any of the three classes of Awakening, and are therefore excellent in the beginning through Perfect Self-Awakening; excellent in the middle through becoming a Paccekabuddha and excellent at the end through Awakening as a disciple.

The Buddha's doctrine requires his disciples to take two steps: The first step is for them to listen attentively with a certain faith, and the second is to take up the practice of the Dhamma. When the above steps are taken in order and the proper practise is done, a disciple attains the Arahat fruition. Therefore, in listening to the doctrine, if you have the ultimate objective of the Arahat fruition, you gain the knowledge of what has been heard (*suta-maya-ñāṇa*), the repeated arising of which can put away the hindrances of the mind. Hence paying good attention to the doctrine is excellent in the beginning. If you take up the practice of the Dhamma after repeatedly listening to it, you get the calm and happiness that comes with concentration (*samatha-sukha*), and then if pursued correctly, you gain insight into phenomena which gives you peace and satisfaction (*vipassanā-sukha*). Thus the practice of the Dhamma is excellent in the middle. Since proper practice leads to the Arahat fruition, the result of the practice is excellent at the end. In this way is the doctrine (*pariyatti*) excellent in

the beginning, in the middle and at the end, and therefore it is truly acclaimed as well-proclaimed (*svākkhāto*).

The Buddha's doctrine (*pariyatti*) clearly marks out two modes of the practice, the practice conforming to the teaching (*sāsana-brahma-cariya*), and the noble practice of the path (*magga-brahma-cariya*). Of those two, the first refers ordinarily to the threefold training and kindred teachings while the second refers to the very essence of the threefold training and the successful measure of the threefold training: the noble path (*ariya-magga*). In teaching these two modes of the practice, the Buddha defined the noble practice in terms of the deepest significance in meaning. For instance, if a religious teacher were to give emphasis on such mundane words as gruel, rice, or men or women, these terms do not have any intrinsic value that can lead to the ending of the suffering of the round of existence. So such words do not carry any significant meaning from a truly religious point of view. The Buddha rejects giving emphasis on these mundane terms but expounds the four foundations of steadfast mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), the four earnest endeavours (*sammappadhāna*), etc. in detail which have the effect of gaining release from the round of [1133] existences. Thus, the doctrine (*pariyatti*) defines the noble practice in these significant absolute terms, replete with profound meaning.

> [A section here on the rules of proninciation has been moved to the Further Explanations.]

The doctrine expounded by the Buddha is perfect because it contains the five qualities: morality, concentration, wisdom, emancipation and insight leading to emancipation so that there is no essential thing or no other element to add to it.

Again, the doctrine expounded by the Buddha is perfect in the sense that there is nothing that is harmful and is to be discarded, for it has no trace of the defiling things such as wrong views or conceit, but is purely productive of liberation from the suffering round of existences. In another sense, there is no flaw whatsoever in this doctrine, since it is not something that is delivered to anyone with an eye on material gain or for fame and applause. Therefore, it is pure in all aspects.

Thus the doctrine taught by the Buddha is truly well expounded (*svākkhāta*) because of its perfection in meaning, in words and phrases, and by its very

nature it is perfectly pure, laying down the practice of purity in its twofold modes. [1134]

Taken in yet another light, the doctrine taught by the Buddha is well-expounded because it does not deviate from what is claimed for it. Consider this: Holders of doctrines other than the Buddha's, preach about impediments which are not truly impediments, and their words about emancipation are not productive of emancipation. Hence, their doctrines deviate from what is claimed for it, and are therefore not well-expounded, but ill-expounded.

The veracity of the Buddha's doctrine is never called in question. What the Buddha declares as impediments to the attainment of absorption (*jhāna*), paths (*magga*), fruitions (*phala*) and Nibbāna are truly impediments. What the Buddha declares as factors conducive to emancipation are truly so. Nowhere does the doctrine deviate from its avowed claims. That is why the doctrine is truly well-expounded (*svākkhāto*).

The above two interpretations of the attribute of well-expounded is all the more remarkable when they are seen in association with the four kinds of perfect self-confidence of the Buddha (*catu-vesārajja-ñāṇa*). The commentaries usually relate well-expounded to these four factors or knowledges. The four are given below.

The Four Kinds of Perfect Self-Confidence

1. The Buddha made his bold declaration that: "I am the Supremely Awakened Buddha endowed with All-knowing Wisdom," and truly he possesses All-knowing Wisdom.
2. He made his bold declaration that: "I am an Arahat who has destroyed all the defilements," and truly is he an Arahat.
3. He boldly declared with his All-knowing Wisdom that: "Such and such factors are impediments that do not lead to good destinations, to the absorptions (*jhāna*), paths (*magga*) and fruitions (*phala*)," and truly those factors are impediments.
4. He boldly declared with his All-knowing Wisdom that: "Such and such factors are those that lead to emancipation from the suffering round of existences," and truly are those factors productive of emancipation.

1. That being so, there is no one who can challenge the Buddha on good grounds saying: "You claim to be omniscient, but you do not know such and such a thing." And there is indeed not a single thing that the Buddha does not know, that would provide good grounds for anyone to make such a challenge. Knowing himself thus unassailable, the Buddha has perfect self-confidence that his attainment of Perfect Awakening is truly perfect; and this self-confidence gives him great delightful satisfaction coupled with the reviewing knowledge of his own attainment. This is the first kind of perfect self-confidence dependent on his successful knowledge.

2. Likewise, there is no one who can question the Buddha's claim about purity. No one can challenge him, on good grounds saying: "You claim to be completely pure, yet you still have such and such an impurity or defilement." For there is indeed no defilement that the Buddha has not rid himself of that would provide good reasons for anyone to make such a challenge. Knowing himself thus unassailable, the Buddha has perfect self-confidence that his purity is truly perfect; and this self-confidence gives him great delightful satisfaction coupled with the reviewing knowledge of his purity. This is the second kind of perfect self-confidence dependent on his successful abandoning of defilements.

3. Likewise, there is no one who can challenge the Buddha, on good grounds, saying: "The factors that you declare to be obstructions against going to the good destinations, to the absorptions (*jhāna*), paths (*magga*), fruitions (*phala*) and Nibbāna, have no obstructing effects on those who resort to them." For there is indeed no impediment he taught that fails to obstruct the achievement of due results in the practice of the Dhamma. Knowing himself thus unassailable, the Buddha has perfect self-confidence that what he has declared to be impediments are truly impediments to the noble practice; and this self-confidence gives him great delightful satisfaction coupled with the reviewing knowledge of his own doctrine. This is the third kind of perfect self-confidence dependent on his special accomplishment in imparting [1135] knowledge.

4. Likewise, there is no one who can challenge the Buddha, on good grounds, saying: "The factors that you declare to be leading to emancipation from the suffering of the round of existences, do not lead to emancipation of those who take up these factors." For there is no factor of emancipation he taught that does not bring emancipation to the diligent. Knowing himself thus unassailable, the

Buddha has perfect self-confidence that what he has declared to be emancipating factors are truly emancipatory; and this self-confidence gives him great delightful satisfaction coupled with the reviewing knowledge of his own doctrine. This is the fourth kind of perfect self-confidence dependent on the peaceful security of the Dhamma.

The above four kinds of perfect self-confidence of the Buddha are called the four kinds of perfect self-confidence (*vesārajja-ñāṇa*). Of these four, the first two go to prove the fact that the doctrine expounded by the Buddha is well-expounded in that it is excellent in the beginning, in the middle and at the end. It is perfect in meaning and in wording. It need not be either added to or expunged. It is perfectly pure in its prescription of the noble practice in its two modes, which is the first interpretation of well-expounded (*svakkhāto*) above.

The remaining two substantiate the fact that the doctrine is well-expounded because whatever are declared as impeding factors are truly impediments and also because whatever are declared as contributory factors to emancipation are truly emancipatory, which is the second interpretation above. This is how the doctrine (*pariyatti*) is well-expounded (*svākkhāto*).

The supermundane is well expounded in that it leads to Nibbāna through the practice of the four paths declared by the Buddha thus: “This is the correct practice, the way to Nibbāna, and this is the Nibbāna that is attainable by this practice.” This is how paths and Nibbāna are well expounded.

Of the three aspects of the supermundane, i.e., paths (*magga*), fruitions (*phala*) and Nibbāna, the noble path (*ariya-magga*) is well expounded, in that it avoids the two extremes and steers the middle course as the correct practice. The fruition (*phala*) of the path (*magga*), i.e. the ordinary fruitions attained by a noble one (*ariya*), which are four in number, are the factors where no burning defilements exist. And the declaration of this truth that: “The four fruits are the factors where no burning defilements remain,” is the attribute of its being well-expounded. Nibbāna is permanent, deathless, the ultimate, unconditioned element and this Nibbāna which is declared by the Buddha in terms of permanence, deathlessness, etc., is the attribute of its being well-expounded. This is how path (*magga*), fruition (*phala*) and Nibbāna, the supermundane factors, are well-expounded (*svākkhāto*).

2. Visible (*sandiṭṭhika*).

This attribute only relates to the supermundane self (*saṁ*), the truth realizable (*diṭṭha*) by the noble ones (*ariya*). All nobles, be it a Stream-enterer, or a Once Returner, or a Non-returner, having destroyed the various defilements, each according to his status, have no wish of harming themselves or harming others, or harming both because they are not subject to defilements such as passion (*rāga*). Therefore, they have no bodily pain. Since the defilements are extinct, they are free from mental pain. On pondering over this bodily and mental ease, the noble one (*ariya*) perceives that his freedom from physical and mental troubles is due to the absence of the defilements, such as passion which he has destroyed through path-knowledge. He knows it from personal experience and not from hearsay. Thus, the noble path (*ariya-magga*) is visible by the noble one (*ariya*) from his own experience, i.e., it is visible (*sandiṭṭhika*).

Explained in another way, the noble one (*ariya*) through the path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*) attained by him, experiences its fruition or (*phala-ñāṇa*) and realizes Nibbāna. Just as a person with good eyesight can see visible objects, so also the noble one, by means of his reviewing knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇā*) sees his own paths, its fruitions, and Nibbāna. Thus the whole of the nine factors of the supermundane are said to be visible by the noble ones (*ariya*) from their own experience, hence it is visible (*sandiṭṭhika*). [1136]

Another interpretation: Self (*saṁ*), that which is extolled (*diṭṭha*), through path-knowledge; the Dhamma that overcomes the defilements. As we say “the king who conquers his enemies by means of his chariot,” so also it is through path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*) which is the condition, that he overcomes the defilements. Nibbāna, through path-knowledge which makes it its mind-object, overcomes the defilements. Thus all the nine factors of the supermundane, through path-knowledge which is worthy to be extolled, overcome the defilements, and are visible (*sandiṭṭhika*).

Yet another interpretation: When the nine supermundane factors are fully comprehended through a good grasp of mental cultivation and realization, and through the reviewing knowledge, then the whole set of factors that constitute the vicious circle of rebirths fall away completely. Remember how the noble ones (*ariya*) make an end of suffering (*dukkha*) by uprooting all defilements

through clear comprehension of the nine supermundane factors. Here the interpretation is: "That the nine supermundane factors are worthy of comprehending."

Sandiṭṭhaṁ arahatī tī sandiṭṭhiko; *saṁ diṭṭhaṁ*, "comprehension," *arahati*, "is worthy or worthwhile," *iti*, "means," *sandiṭṭhiko*, "visible." The supermundane is worthwhile comprehending by anyone who means to make an end of suffering (*dukkha*). The supermundane is therefore indispensable for those who wish to break the bonds of the suffering round of existences. There is no other way to attain emancipation. Hence the supermundane is truly visible (*sandiṭṭhika*).

3. Not subject to time (*akālika*).

This attribute relates only to the noble path. Refer to the meaning not subject to time (*akāliko*) given above. The noble path fructifies without delay, and so it is timeless in bringing benefit. Consider mundane merit and its benefit which must take a day or at least a few hours to fructify, even if it is the type of merit bearing fruit in the present. With the supermundane Noble Path, it is not so. No time elapses between the arising of path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*) and the fruition-knowledge (*phala-ñāṇa*). The path-knowledge gives rise to the fruition-knowledge immediately. Hence the supermundane path is timeless (*akālika*) in its fruition.

The important point to note, in respect of this attribute, is that according to Abhidhamma, in a path thought-process, path consciousness arises for just one thought-moment, after which, not a wink intervenes before fruition consciousness arises, which is the fruition of the path-knowledges. A noble one (*ariya*) who attains path is a "path-attainer" just for a single thought-moment after which he is a "fruition-attainer" in no time. This is because the thought-process of the arising of the path and its fruition come in a continuous uninterrupted flow.

4. Inviting inspection (*ehipassiko*).

The nine supermundane factors are real things in the ultimate sense. They exist in truth and reality. They are beautiful things because they are pure, not defiled by mental taints. They are worth inspection. "Come, see for yourself, experience it yourself! Try it out yourself!" They seem to be inviting. For example, if you have nothing worthwhile in hand to show, such as a piece of gold or silver, you

cannot invite others: “Come and see what is here.” Again, if you have something horrible or detestable in hand, such as excreta, you cannot gladly invite others to come and see it. Rather, something detestable or impure is only kept hidden and is not displayed.

The nine supermundane factors are real things in the ultimate sense. They are like the full disc of the moon in a clear sky, or like a big ruby placed on a white velvet cloth. These factors are stainless, spotless and perfectly pure. They are therefore worth inspection, worth appreciation. They invite anyone to testify for himself their presence and their true worth. [1137]

5. Onward-leading (*opaneyyiko*).

Worldlings do not have the experience of the supermundane. Their mind has never attained path-consciousness and fruition-consciousness. Therefore, they have never realized Nibbāna. It is just because they have never attained path-consciousness and fruition-consciousness and never realized Nibbāna that they wallow in the mire of the suffering round of existences endlessly. If the lowest level of the supermundane knowledge, as Stream-entry, is attained, if Stream-entry consciousness has ever arisen in one, the yogi, as a noble one, has realized Nibbāna as clearly and unmistakably as he has seen something with his own eyes. Once this realization has taken place, he can make an end of all the suffering round of rebirths (*dukkha*) in the seven further existences in the fortunate destinations at the utmost.

On one occasion, the Buddha placed a pinch of dirt on his finger-nail and said to the monastics: “Monastics, which is greater, this pinch of dirt on my finger-nail or the great earth?” And the monastics replied: “Venerable sir, the dirt on the finger-nail is infinitesimal; the great earth is far greater, beyond comparison.”

“Similarly, monastics,” said the Buddha, “the number of existences that have been prevented from arising by Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*), by a noble one (*ariya*), is as great as the great earth. The number of existences that remain to arise for him is as little as the pinch of dirt on my finger-nail, there are only seven at the most.”

Thus the supermundane factors have the effect of cutting down the lives in Saṁsāra into a few further existences only, with the ultimate effect of total release from Saṁsāra, according to the attainment of each individual; that being

so, a virtuous one, wishing to make an end of suffering, should give top priority to gaining the paths and fruitions. Even if one's head be on fire, the extinguishing of the fire is not such a matter of urgency as the gaining of path-knowledge because fire on the head can destroy the present life only whereas, the fire of defilements within can cause endless trouble throughout Saṁsāra. The supermundane should be borne in mind diligently until path-knowledge with its fruition is attained. Nibbāna should be made the mind-object with diligence. Thus, the nine supermundane factors are worthy of being constantly borne in one's mind because they are onward-leading (*opaneyyiko*).

6. Understood by themselves (*paccattaṁ veditabbo*).

Under this attribute, three types of noble ones (*ariya*) should be noted, namely:

1. The one who attains path and fruit after hearing the gist of a discourse on the Dhamma (*ugghaṭitaññū*).
2. The one who realizes path and fruit after hearing an explanation of the Dhamma (*vipañcitaññū*).
3. The one who gradually comes to comprehend the truth after getting further elaboration and guidance (*neyya*).

[For more on these see the three types of Bodhisattas see the First Treatise on the Perfections in the Further Explanations below.]

All three types, after attaining the path, know for themselves that they have taken up the noble practice, that they have attained the paths, the fruitions, and have realized Nibbāna through their own experience. For the eradication of defilements is to be accomplished directly by oneself. A close disciple cannot discard his defilements through the attainment of the path by his master. Nor can he dwell in the fruition of the path through the attainment of the fruition by his master. Neither can he make Nibbāna his own mind-object through the master's making Nibbāna his mind-object. Only by the attainment of the path by one's own self, can one get rid of the defilements within oneself. Dwelling in fruition is possible only when one has attained the fruition-knowledge for oneself. Nibbāna also is likewise a matter for direct experience, and not realizable through another's experience. Thus, the nine supermundane factors are not to be considered as ornaments that adorn other people and have no real

benefit to oneself but are only the property of the noble ones (*ariya*) who enjoy them. Since they pertain to the wise, these factors are beyond the pale of fools. Thus the nine supermundane factors are the property of the noble ones (*ariya*) who alone can realize them in their own minds and enjoy them (*paccattaṁ veditabbo*). [1138]

Contemplation of the Dhamma

The yogi who wishes to contemplate the Dhamma should commit to memory the six attributes of the Dhamma in both Pāḷi and in translation. He should recite each of them at a speed neither too slow nor too fast, and reflect on its meaning. One who reflects on the attributes of the Dhamma, while doing so, prevents the arising of thoughts of lust, hatred and delusion, besides gaining concentration which clears the mind of lethargy and distraction, and rendering it possible for a righteous thought-process to arise through equanimity.

As the concentration gets stronger through this meditation practice, the hindrances fall off and consequently the defilements are quelled. The five faculties, such as faith, become very pure and effective. The repeated reflection on the Dhamma sharpens the initial application of the mind (*vitakka*) and sustained application (*vicāra*) of the mind. When these two factors are functioning well, delightful satisfaction (*pīti*) arises. Due to the delightful satisfaction, serenity of mental concomitants and serenity of mind arise, as the result of which, physical and mental uneasiness are stilled. When there is serenity of mind and serenity of mental concomitants, happiness (*sukha*) that causes the arising of concentration becomes pronounced. The thought-process being enriched by happiness is firmly fixed on the object of meditation, the Dhamma.

Thus the factors involved in meditation beginning from initial application of the mind become more and more efficient stage by stage. The mind is neither lethargic nor distracted so that equanimity of meditative practice is maintained and the five faculties, such as faith (*saddhā*), are functioning in harmony. The five factors of absorption (*jhāna*): initial application of the mind, sustained application of the mind, delightful satisfaction, happiness and one-pointedness of mind, arise simultaneously at every thought-moment with the great meritorious consciousness through the contemplation of the Dhamma which is

mental cultivation pertaining to the sensuous sphere. Thus, neighbourhood concentration or access concentration (*upacāra-jhāna*) is achieved. When this concentration arises together with the great meritorious consciousness of the contemplation of the Dhamma, which is mental cultivation pertaining to the sensuous sphere, the yogi is called one who has achieved access concentration via the contemplation of the Dhamma.

A yogi, who contemplates the Dhamma repeatedly, is imbued with the intrinsic value of the Dhamma, in its being worthy of constant companionship so much so that he feels a deep sense of awe and gratitude towards the Buddha, the fount of the Dhamma. For, this Dhamma propounded was never by any other teacher, except a Buddha. Thus, through the habitual contemplation of the Dhamma, one naturally becomes devoted to the Buddha, exceeding devotion to any other person. Therefore, his devotion to the Buddha is comparable to that of the noble one. He gains a stable mindfulness, a profound wisdom, and much merit. He becomes possessed of much delightful satisfaction, first of the feeble kind but later, of an ecstatic kind. He becomes indifferent to fearful things, great or small. He becomes tolerant of pain. He feels that he is in the company of the Dhamma. The body of one whose mind is steeped in the Dhamma is like a shrine worth paying homage. His mind is always inclined to and desirous of attaining the nine supermundane factors. Being constantly aware of the attributes of the Dhamma, he is incapable of allowing himself to commit evil, through shame and dread to do it, whenever occasion for it arises. Contemplation of the Dhamma is a sure basis for gaining the paths and fruitions. If the yogi does not attain the paths and fruitions in this existence for want of sufficient past merit, he is reborn in the fortunate abodes. These are the benefits of contemplating the Dhamma.

A special point to note: The commentary says that of the six attributes of the Dhamma, only the first one, well-proclaimed (*svākkhāta*), [1139] relates to the doctrine as expounded by the Buddha, and that the remaining five relate to the nine supermundane factors.

The sub-commentary to the Path to Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) discusses this matter in another light which is briefly reproduced below: Although the commentary says that in specific terms the five attributes beginning with being visible (*sandiṭṭhika*) belong to the supermundane, they can also be considered as belonging to the doctrine (*pariyatti-dhamma*) on the following grounds: A wise

person, who is learned, who has memorized much Pāḷi, who is of very stable mindfulness, can perceive the doctrine as being excellent in the beginning, the middle, and the end and so the doctrine is visible (*sandiṭṭhika*), as visible (*sandiṭṭhika*) is defined as it conquers other doctrines through being visible (*sandiṭṭhiyā jayatī ti sandiṭṭhiko*), as the knowledge of the doctrine can be a tool to conquer the believers of other doctrines, it is specifically visible (*sandiṭṭhika*).

In conquering the defilements, knowledge of the doctrine is a contributing factor and so the doctrine is by inference visible (*sandiṭṭhika*); or, as another definition puts it: *Sandiṭṭhaṁ arahatī ti sandiṭṭhiko*, "it is evidently worthy, therefore it is visible." The doctrine has been expounded to clear away all defiling factors and directed at the promotion of purely meritorious factors, it is therefore worthy to be studied closely to gain perception. Hence it is visible (*sandiṭṭhika*).

Since the doctrine is the true condition for the attainment of the supermundane path, which may be realized at all times, it is not subject to time (*akālika*), considered from the point of probable result.

The doctrine itself is real and is perfectly pure. So it also is open to inspection and can invite the world to come and see it, to learn it, and to examine it. Hence it is also inviting inspection (*ehipassika*).

Being replete with these attributes, the doctrine is worthy of being constantly borne in mind by the wise who wish to make an end of suffering (*dukkha*). Therefore it is onward-leading (*opaneyyika*).

One who studies the doctrine with a mind intent on becoming an Arahat will get delightful satisfaction both on account of its excellence in language and excellence in meaning. This quality of giving delightful satisfaction to the wise individually, according to their capacity, is truly because it can be understood by the wise for themselves (*paccattaṁ veditabbo*).

This is the explanation given in the sub-commentary to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) about how the five later attributes of the Dhamma can also belong to the doctrine.

The Nine Supreme Attributes of the Saṅgha

Suppaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvaka-saṅgho,
ujuppaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvaka-saṅgho,
ñāyappaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvaka-saṅgho,
sāmīcippaṭipanno Bhagavato sāvaka-saṅgho.
Yad-idaṁ cattāri purisayugāni, aṭṭha-purisa puggalā,
esa Bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho
āhuneyyo pāhuneyyo
dakkhiṇeyyo añjalīkaraṇīyo
anuttaraṁ puññakhettaṁ lokassa.

The Fortunate One's Saṅgha of disciples are good in their practice, the Fortunate One's Saṅgha of disciples are straight in their practice, the Fortunate One's Saṅgha of disciples are systematic in their practice, the Fortunate One's Saṅgha of disciples are correct in their practice, that is to say, the four pairs of persons, the eight individual persons, this is the Fortunate One's Saṅgha of disciples, they are worthy of offerings, of hospitality, of gifts, and of reverential salutation, they are an unsurpassed field of merit for the world.

1. The Saṅgha of the disciples of the Buddha, the eight classes of the noble Saṅgha (*ariya-saṅgha*) take up the monastic practice well and hence are good in their practice (*suppaṭipanna*).

2. The Saṅgha of the noble disciples of the Buddha are endowed with straightforward uprightness (*ujuppaṭipanna*) because they follow the straight and middle way.

3. The Saṅgha of the noble disciples of the Buddha strive to attain Nibbāna, hence they are systematic in their practice (*ñāyappaṭippanna*).

4. The Saṅgha of the noble disciples of the Buddha are endowed with correctness of practice, being ashamed to do evil and they abhor evil, being always mindful, and controlling their conduct, even being prepared to die rather than lose morality, hence they are correct in their practice (*sāmīcippaṭipanna*).

The disciples of the Buddha, the noble Saṅgha (*ariya-saṅgha*) consisting of the eight categories of disciples in four pairs. These really great persons:

5. Are worthy of receiving offerings brought even from afar (*āhuneyya*),

6. Are worthy of receiving offerings specially set aside for special guests (*pāhuneyya*), [1140]

7. Are worthy of receiving offerings made for the sake of Nibbāna (*dakkhiṇeyya*),

8. Are worthy of receiving obeisance by the three worlds (*añjalīkaraṇīya*),

9. Are the incomparably fertile soil for all to sow the seed of merit in (*puññakkhettaṁ lokassa*).

Miscellaneous Notes

The eight classes of noble ones (*ariya*) are the Saṅgha of disciples (*sāvaka-saṅgha*) in their true meaning. However, the virtuous monastics are also called, in an extended meaning, the Saṅgha of disciples since they also follow the teaching of the Buddha obediently. The word disciple (*sāvaka*) is defined as: *Sakkaccaṁ suṇantī ti sāvakā*, "they listen to the teaching respectfully, therefore they are disciples." Here, "to listen respectfully" means to live up to the teaching that will lead to them becoming Arahats. According to this definition, only noble ones (*ariya*) are a Saṅgha of disciples in the true sense and worldlings are called a Saṅgha of disciples as an extended meaning.

> Listening respectfully is accomplished only by the Arahats who have accomplished the noble practice. However, worldlings who are on the noble path are sure to become Arahats and so they are also called a Saṅgha of disciples (*Sāvaka-saṅgha*) in an extended sense of the word.

The Saṅgha are of the same moral standard. Hence Saṅgha in the true sense refers only to noble ones (*ariya*). This is because noble ones have their morality based on the path (*magga*) and are of the same purity, just as gold bullion cut in two equal pieces are of equal value.

In the nine attributes of the Saṅgha, the first four beginning with good in their practice (*suppaṭipanna*) are the conditions that have the five latter ones as consequence.

The four attributes are in fact not four different kinds of practice: If the right practice which is shown as the noble path (*ariya-magga*) is carried out, all four attributes are accomplished at once.

This is because the Buddha's teaching, in the last analysis, is right practice as a constituent of the noble path. It is this right practice that was presented to the multitudes over the 45 years of the Buddha's mission in a multitude of ways to suit the natural bent of the hearer. Thus the right practice is the Buddha's true message, the essential feature of his entire teaching. One who follows the right practice is one who is good in their practice (*suppaṭipanno puggalo*).

1. The Saṅgha of the disciples of the Buddha are endowed with good practice because they follow the right practice.

2. The right practice, which is a constituent of the Noble Path, has the quality of destroying the opposing factors which are defilements. Therefore, the right-practice is the practice that is unfailing and straight. The Saṅgha of the disciples of the Buddha who follow the right practice are therefore called the noble ones who are endowed with the straight practice.

3. The systematic practice, which is a constituent of the noble path, is the practice that does not go against Nibbāna, but is in conformity with Nibbāna. The Saṅgha of the disciples who take upon themselves the systematic practice that conforms to Nibbāna, that is not against Nibbāna, are endowed with the systematic practice leading to Nibbāna.

4. The correct practice, which is a constituent of the noble path, is the practice that is in conformity with the nine supermundane factors, and is therefore called the correct practice, the practice that conforms to the Dhamma. Hence the Saṅgha is endowed with correctness of practice.

Of the eight categories of noble ones (*ariya*), the four who are established in path-knowledge, are endowed with the above four aspects of the right practice, which is a constituent of the noble path. The four who are established in the fruition knowledge are endowed with the above right practice in the sense that it was through that right practice that they now enjoy the fruition of the path and Nibbāna. [1141]

Further Explanation

1. The noble Saṅgha (*ariya-saṅgha*) take upon themselves the doctrine and discipline as taught by the Buddha. This is taking up the true practice, the faultless practice. Hence they are endowed with the good practice.

2. The Saṅgha takes up the eight constituents of the path and thereby steer the middle course, avoiding the two extremes of sense-gratification and self-mortification. This practice is also straight, without the slightest deviation or crookedness, in any examples of the three examples of crookedness. Hence they are endowed with the straight practice.

3. Nibbāna is penetrable only by path-knowledge and fruition-knowledge. Since the Saṅgha strives for realizing knowledge (*ñāṇa*), they are systematic in the practice leading to Nibbāna.

4. Worshipping, welcoming, raising joined palms by way of obeisance and offerings of the four monastic requisites are acts of veneration called correct (*sāmīci-kamma*).

Devas and men perform these acts of veneration towards the Saṅgha, having regard for the morality, concentration and wisdom of the Saṅgha. Anyone, lacking in morality, concentration and wisdom, does not deserve veneration. As for the Saṅgha of the disciples of the Buddha, the taking up of the right practice which is the noble path, endows them with morality, concentration and wisdom as the necessary threefold training. And so they deserve veneration. Since they conduct themselves to be worthy of veneration through their noble practice, they are endowed with correct practice (*sāmīcippaṭipanna*). These four attributes are the conditions for their homage worthiness.

The Eight Categories of Ariyas in Four Pairs

1. The noble one (*ariya*) established in the first path or the Stream-enterer and the noble one established in the fruition thereof.
2. The noble one established in the second path or the Once-Returner and the noble one established in the fruition thereof.
3. The noble one established in the third path or the Non-returner and the noble one established in the fruition thereof.

4. The noble one established in the fourth path or the Arahat on the path (*Arahatta-magga-puggalo*) and the noble one established in the fruition thereof or the Arahat with fruition (*Arahatta-phala-puggalo*) is the person who is an Arahat.

Those four pairs, making eight categories of noble ones (*ariya*), being endowed with the four attributes as conditions, such as good practice, are entitled to the five noble privileges such as being worthy of offerings (*āhuneyya*) which also are their attributes as consequences.

5. They are worthy of offerings (*āhuneyya*). Grammatical analysis: *ā*, even brought from afar; *huna*, the four requisites as offerings; *eyya*, entitled to receive. The noble Saṅgha (*ariya-saṅgha*) can, on account of their four attributes such as good practice (*suppaṭipanna*) bestow great merit to the supporters who offer them the four monastic requisites. Therefore, if the supporter has these articles ready to offer when the noble Saṅgha goes for alms collection, he should offer them gladly. If those articles are not at hand, he should try and procure them even from afar and offer them. Those articles brought from afar and offered are called *āhuna*. The noble Saṅgha who are endowed with the four conditions are entitled to receive those offerings brought from afar and more so because in accepting them, the supporters earn great merit. Therefore the noble Saṅgha is possessed of the attribute of being worthy of offerings (*āhuneyya*).

Another interpretation: *ā*; even brought from afar; *huneyya*, worthy to be offered the four monastic requisites. The noble Saṅgha can bestow much merit on the supporter because they are endowed with the four noble conditions. Therefore the supporter, wishing to gain much merit, should make offerings not only when the Saṅgha goes to them on alms collection, but should go and make offerings to the Saṅgha at their monastery which may necessitate a [1142] long journey. The four requisites that are offered after making a journey for that purpose are called *āhuna*. The noble Saṅgha deserves to receive such offerings on account of the four conditions that they are endowed with. In this sense also the noble Saṅgha are possessed of being worthy of offerings (*āhuneyya*).

Still another interpretation: The noble Saṅgha is endowed with being worthy of offerings (*āhuneyya*) because they deserve to receive offerings from Sakka, the

Lord of the Devas, and such powerful personages. Taken in another light, in the Brahmin tradition, they keep a sacrificial fire called *āhavanīya*, which has the same meaning as *āhuneyyo*. They believe that, if they feed butter to this fire as offering, they earn much merit. If the offering to the sacrificial fire brings merit, and is thus called *āhavanīya*, the noble Saṅgha, who can bestow greater merit to the supporter, are truly worthy of offerings (*āhuneyya*). For the so-called *āhavanīya* of the Brahmins do not bring any real benefit: the butter that they feed the sacrificial fire just gets consumed and becomes ash. The noble Saṅgha, being possessed of the four noble attributes as condition, unfailingly bestow much merit to the supporter, and are truly worthy of offerings (*āhuneyya*). Note this verse (Dhp 107):

> *Yo ca vassa-sataṁ jantu, aggiṁ paricare vane,*
> *ekañ-ca bhāvitattānaṁ, muhuttam-api pūjaye,*
> *sāyeva pūjanā seyyo, yañ-ce vassa-sataṁ hutaṁ.*
>
> One may tend the sacrificial fire in the forest for one hundred years, one may, on the other hand, make offerings reverentially just once to those noble ones who dwell in insight-meditation. This offering is indeed of greater benefit than one hundred years of tending the sacrificial fire.

The above verse brings out the significance of being worthy of offerings (*āhuneyyo*), an attribute of the noble Saṅgha.

6. They are worthy of hospitality (*pāhuneyyo*). Guests who visit you from all the various quarters are called *pāhuna*. Gifts and offerings such as food, made ready for them are also called *pāhuna*. In this context the second meaning applies. *Pāhuna*, gifts and offerings meant for guests; *eyya*, deserve to receive. Gifts and offerings set aside for guests should be offered to the Saṅgha, if the Saṅgha visits your place, guests come only next to the Saṅgha. The Saṅgha deserve top priority because they are endowed with the four attributes discussed above. That indeed is so because, however important one's guests may be, the noble Saṅgha appear in the world only when the Buddha appears. And the arising of a Buddha is very rare. Further, the Saṅgha are so imbued with noble qualities that they are a source of pleasure, and are the incomparable friend or relative that calls at your door. For these reasons the Saṅgha are entitled to receive hospitality meant for one's valued guests (*pāhuneyya*).

7. They are worthy of gifts (*dakkhiṇeyya*): *Dakkhaṇti etāya sattā yathādhippetāhi sampattīhi vaḍḍhantī ti dakkhiṇā,* "the volition, through which beings are blessed with whatever they wish to have or to be, is called being worthy of gifts (*dakkhiṇā*)."[263] This means that the gift or offering made with a view for future well-being is called being worthy of gifts (*dakkhiṇā*). If someone does not believe in the hereafter, if he holds an annihilist view, then he will not make offerings for future well-being.

According to the Buddha's doctrine, Arahats such as the Buddha and his Arahat disciples, having eradicated ignorance and craving for existence, which are the root causes of the round of existences, will not be reborn in a new existence. Until the two root causes have been eradicated, rebirth is inevitable, however much one holds an annihilist view. Just as a [1143] tree whose tap roots are not cut off will remain growing and bear fruit, but when its tap roots are completely cut off it cannot thrive and cannot bear fruit, so also ignorance and craving for existence must be understood as the tap roots of rebirth. All worldlings, Stream-enterers, Once-returners, Non-returners will have rebirth because these two tap roots have not been completely destroyed. Only on becoming Arahats are the two tap roots completely destroyed and rebirth is stopped.

Only one who does not hold the wrong view of annihilism believes in the afterlife. Only when existence after death is believed in, will there be alms giving for one's own well-being in future existences. Only when volitional acts of giving are done, can there be the fulfilment of whatever one may aspire to as the result. Thus, any act of giving with the belief in its good result in future existences is called being worthy of gifts (*dakkhiṇā*). Therefore a worthy gift means an object that is given, motivated by the belief in a future benefit.

The noble Saṅgha can make that object of offering efficacious as is desired by the supporter because they are endowed with the four supreme attributes mentioned above. In that sense, they deserve to receive offerings that are called worthy (*dakkhiṇā*). Hence they are possessed of the noble attribute of being worthy of gifts (*dakkhiṇeyya*).

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[263] See the sub-commentary to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*).

Another interpretation: The noble Saṅgha purify the object that is being offered (*dakkhiṇā*) in the sense that they bestow the merit on it through their nobility. *Dakkhiṇāya hito dakkhiṇeyyo*, "the noble Saṅgha bestow merit on the offering." This is another meaning by which the attribute of being worthy of gifts (*dakkhiṇeyya*) may be understood.

8. They are worthy of reverential salutation (*añjali-karaṇīyo*). Being endowed with the four noble qualities based on their right practice, the noble Saṅgha is worthy of reverential salutation. The term for this attribute is defined as those wishing to earn merit pay obeisance to these eight noble ones (*ariya*), hence the noble Saṅgha is worthy of reverential salutation (*añjalī-karaṇīyā etthā ti añjali-karaṇīyo*).

9. They are an unsurpassed field of merit for the world (*anuttaraṁ puññakkhettaṁ lokassa*): Unsurpassed (*anuttaraṁ*); there is no better field for sowing merit than the noble Saṅgha (*atthi ito uttaran-ti anuttaraṁ*). Although by definition "there is no better field than the noble Saṅgha," but, in fact there is not even any field of merit equal to the noble Saṅgha. Hence this attribute has been rendered as "unsurpassed field of merit for the world."

Field (*khetta*) means a field for the cultivation of crops. Field of merit (*puñña-khetta*) means a field where merit is cultivated, a metaphor for the noble Saṅgha. Just as a field nurtures the seeds sown in it, so also the noble Saṅgha nurtures the seeds of good deeds sown in them. Here the Saṅgha nurtures the good deeds of the supporters through the morality, concentration and wisdom which are like the nutrients of the soil. Thus the noble Saṅgha bestows great merit to the good deeds done towards them, and are called the field that nurtures the seeds of merit.

A field where the king sows his seeds is called the king's field. Likewise, the noble Saṅgha where all the three worlds sow their seeds of merit is called the unsurpassed field where the whole world sows their seeds of merit (*anuttaraṁ puññakkhettaṁ lokassa*).

Contemplation of the Saṅgha

The yogi who wishes to contemplate the Saṅgha should commit to memory the nine attributes of the Saṅgha in Pāḷi and its translation as given above. He should recite each of them, such as good in their practice (*suppaṭipanno*), at a

speed that is neither too slow nor too fast, reflecting on its meaning. One who reflects on the attributes of the Saṅgha, while doing so, prevents the arising of thoughts of lust, hatred and delusion, besides gaining concentration which clears the mind of lethargy and distraction, and rendering it possible for a righteous thought-process to arise through equanimity. [1144]

As the concentration gets stronger through this meditation practice, the hindrances fall off and consequently the defilements are quelled. The five faculties, such as faith (*saddhā*), become very pure and effective. The repeated reflection on the Saṅgha sharpens the initial application of the mind and the sustained application of the mind. When these two factors are functioning well, delightful satisfaction arises. Due to the delightful satisfaction, serenity of mental concomitants and serenity of mind arise, as the result of which, physical and mental uneasiness are stilled. When there is serenity of mind and mental concomitants, happiness that causes the arising of concentration becomes pronounced. The thought-process, being enriched by happiness, is firmly fixed on the object of meditation, the Saṅgha.

Thus, the factors involved in meditation, beginning with initial application of the mind, become more and more efficient stage by stage. The mind is neither lethargic nor distracted so that the medium attitude in mental exercise is maintained and the five faculties, such as faith, are functioning in harmony. The five factors of absorption (*jhāna*): initial application of the mind, sustained application of the mind, delightful satisfaction, happiness and one-pointedness of mind, arise simultaneously at every thought moment with the great meritorious consciousness of the contemplation of the Saṅgha which is mental cultivation pertaining to the sensuous sphere. Thus access concentration (*upacāra-jhāna*) is achieved. When this concentration arises together with the great meritorious consciousness of the contemplation of the Saṅgha, which is mental cultivation pertaining to the sensuous sphere, the yogi is called one who has achieved access concentration via the contemplation of the Saṅgha.

The Benefits of Contemplating the Saṅgha

The virtuous one, who repeatedly contemplates the Saṅgha, becomes exceptionally devoted to the Saṅgha comparable to the noble ones' devotion to the Saṅgha. He gains a stable mindfulness, a profound wisdom, and much merit.

He becomes possessed of delightful satisfaction, at first of the feeble kind, but later of an ecstatic kind. He becomes indifferent to fearful things, great or small. He becomes tolerant to pain. He feels that he is always in the company of the Saṅgha. His mind is always ennobled by the awareness of the attributes of the Saṅgha so that his body is like the boundary halls (*sīma*) where the Saṅgha are being assembled, and therefore is worthy of veneration. His mind is bent on acquiring the attributes of the Saṅgha. Being constantly aware of the attributes of the Saṅgha, he feels like he is in the very presence of the Saṅgha and is incapable of committing any evil, through shame and dread to do it, whenever occasion for it arises. Making the contemplation of the Saṅgha as the bases, one may, after gaining concentration, meditate for gaining insight into conditioned phenomena with facility and succeed in it. If he does not attain path and fruit in this existence for want of sufficient past merit, he is reborn in the fortunate existences. These are the benefits of contemplating the Saṅgha.[264]

> [The three discourses, the Discourse setting the Dhamma Wheel Turning (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*, SN 56.11), the Discourse about the Characteristics of Non-Self (*Anatta-lakkhaṇa-sutta*, SN 22.59) and the Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*, Khp 6, Sn 2:1) that were included here have been moved to their proper places, earlier in the narrative.

[264] [Five sections on the various attributes of the Buddha are moved from here to the Further Explanations.]

The Saṅgha Treasure

43: The Life Stories of the Monks

I shall now narrate the stories of the great disciples on the authority of the exposition of the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) commentary[265] beginning with the story of the great elder Koṇḍañña, taken from among the members of the noble Saṅgha, the Buddha's Disciples who were endowed with such attributes as practising well (*suppaṭipañña̱tā*). In narrating the stories of these great disciples, I shall do so in three stages:

1. Aspiration in the past.
2. Ascetic life adopted in final existence.
3. Foremost title achieved.

1. Ven. Koṇḍañña

Aspiration in the Past

Counting backward from this Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*), over 100,000 aeons ago, there appeared the Buddha Padumuttara.

> The reason for the Buddha having this name has been mentioned in chapter 9: The Chronicle of Buddha Padumuttara: … about nine jars-full of pollen rose up and spread all over his body of 58 cubits in height as though powder of red orpiment and sulphuret of arsenic was sprinkled on it. On account of this particular happening, the Buddha was renowned as Buddha Padumuttara.

Having appeared among the three classes of beings, Buddha Padumuttara, in the company of 100,000 monks, made his alms rounds visiting a series of villages, townships and royal cities in order to compassionately release many from suffering, and arrived at his native city of Haṁsavatī. His father, King Ānanda, heard the good news of his son's visit and together with his people and officials extended welcome to the Buddha. As the Buddha gave a discourse to the crowd

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[265] Commentary to the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*, PTS 1.14 ff).

headed by King Ānanda, some became Stream-enterers, some Once-returners, some Non-returners and the rest Arahats at the end of the discourse.

The King then invited the Buddha for the next day's meal, and the next day he sent for the Buddha with a message about the meal-time and made a grand offering of food to him and his company of 100,000 monks at his golden palace. Buddha Padumuttara gave a talk in appreciation of the meal and went back to the monastery. In the same way, the citizens gave their great gift (*mahā-dāna*) the following day. The third day saw a gift again by the king. Thus the great gifts performed by the king and the citizens on alternate days went on for a long time.

At that time, a man of good family, the future Koṇḍañña, was born in a prosperous household. One day, while the Buddha was teaching, he saw the citizens of Haṁsavatī with flowers, perfumes, etc. in their hands, heading to where the Buddha's was to deliver his discourse and he went along with them too.

In the meantime, Buddha Padumuttara declared a certain monastic as the first of all long-standing (*rattaññū*) monastics to realize the four truths and thereby to gain release from Saṁsāra in his Dispensation. When Koṇḍañña, the man of good family, heard this, he reflected: "Great indeed is this man! It is said that, leaving aside the Buddha himself, there is no other person before him who has realized the four truths. What if I too become a monk like him, realizing the four truths before all others do in the Dispensation of a coming Buddha!" At the close of the Buddha's teaching, the man of good family approached the Buddha and gave an invitation to him, saying: "Please accept my offering of food tomorrow, exalted Buddha!" the Buddha accepted the invitation by keeping silent.

Knowing clearly that the Buddha had accepted his invitation, the man of good family paid his respects to the Buddha and returned home. During the whole night, he spent decorating the seats with fragrant festoons of flowers and also by preparing delicious food. The following day, he treated the Buddha and his company of 100,000 monks at his house to a sumptuous feast of fine rice with gruel and other courses as side-dishes. When the feast was over, he placed at the feet of the Buddha entirely new and soft, but thick pieces of cloth, made in the

country of Vaṅga and enough to make three robes. Then he reflected as [1177] follows: “I am not a seeker of a small religious post but I am a seeker of a big one. One day’s great gift (*mahā-dāna*) may not be adequate if I aspire for a lofty designation. Therefore, I shall aspire after it by performing a great gift for seven days successively.”

Thus, the man of good family gave a great gift in the same manner for seven days. When the meal-offering was over, he had his storehouse of garments opened and put fine and nice clothes at the feet of the Buddha and offered three-piece sets of robes to the 100,000 monks. He then approached the Buddha and said: “Exalted Buddha, just as the monastic whom you declared as foremost seven days ago, may I be able to become the first to penetrate the four truths after donning the robe in the Dispensation of a coming Buddha.” Having said so, he paid respects by prostrating at the Buddha’s feet.

Hearing the man of good family’s words of aspiration, Buddha Padumuttara tried to see in his vision, saying to himself: “This man of good family has done many significant deeds of merit. Will his aspiration be fulfilled or not?” He then came to know clearly that: “It definitely will be!”

Indeed, there is no hindrance at all, even as an atom, that would cover his vision when a Buddha tries to see the past or the future or the present events. All the events in the past or the future, though there is a barrier of a millions of millions of aeons, or all the events in the present, though there is a barrier of thousands of universes, they are all associated with reflection. As soon as they are reflected, they become manifest distinctly. In this way, with his intellectual power that knew no hindrances, Buddha Padumuttara saw in his vision thus: “100,000 aeons from now, there will arise a Fortunate One, Gotama by name, among the three classes of beings. Then will this man of good family’s aspiration be fulfilled!” Knowing thus, the Buddha predicted to the man of good family: “Dear man of good family, 100,000 aeons from now, a Buddha, by the name of Gotama, will appear in the three worlds. When Buddha Gotama delivers the first discourse, the Turning of the Dhamma Wheel, you will be established at the end of this discourse with its three functions, together with 180 million Brahmas, in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

Mahākāla and Cūḷakāla

Having performed deeds of merit such as alms giving for a period of 100,000 years, the wealthy man of good family, the future Koṇḍañña, was reborn in a celestial abode on his death. While he was repeatedly being reborn either in the Deva realm or human world, 99,909 aeons elapsed. After living through such a long duration, 91 aeons, when counted backwards from this Fortunate Aeon, the future Koṇḍañña, was born in the family of a householder and named Mahākāla, in a village near the gate of the royal city Bandhumatī. His younger brother was known as Cūḷakāla.

At that time, the Bodhisatta Vipassī expired from the Tusita Realm and took conception in the womb of Bandhumatī, the Chief Queen of King Bandhuma,[266] and, in time, became an omniscient Buddha. As he was requested by Mahā Brahma to preach, he pondered as to whom he should preach first. He then saw his own younger brother Prince Khaṇḍa and the chaplain's son, the young Tissa. "These two," he decided, "are capable of penetrating the four truths first." He decided thus: "I will preach to them. I will also do a favour to my royal father." He then took an aerial journey, by his psychic power, from the Mahā Bodhi tree and descended at the Deer Park called Khemā. He sent for Prince Khaṇḍa and Tissa and taught them a discourse, at the end of which, both of them became Arahats, together with 84,000 sentient beings.

The 84,000 clansmen, who went forth together with the Bodhisatta Vipassī, heard of the event and went to him to listen to his Dhamma and they duly became Arahats also. Buddha Vipassī appointed Ven. Khaṇḍa and Ven. Tissa to the position of chief disciples and placed them on his right and left hand side respectively.

On receiving the news, King Bandhuma became desirous of paying homage to his son, [1178] Buddha Vipassī, and went to the park, listened to the discourse and took the three refuges. He also invited the Buddha for the next day's meal and departed after paying his respects to the Buddha. On arrival at his palace, an idea arose to him while sitting in his grand pavilion: "My older son has renounced the word and has become a Buddha. My second son has become chief

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[266] As has been described in chapter IX.

disciple on the Buddha's right-hand side. The chaplain's son, the young Tissa, has become chief disciple on the left. The rest of the 84,000 monks used to surround and attend upon my son while they were laymen. Therefore, the Saṅgha, headed by my son, was under my charge before and so should they be now too. I alone, will be responsible for the provision of them with the four requisites. I will give others no chance to do so."

Thinking thus, the king had the walls of acacia wood built on either side of the route, from the gate of the monastery to the palace and had them covered with canvas. He had festoons hung which were as thick as the trunk of a toddy palm and decorated with gold stars; he also had canopies put up. As for the ground, he had it covered with exquisite spreads. On both sides of the route within the walls, he had pots filled with water and placed near the flowering bushes and had perfumes placed among flowers and flowers among perfumes. Then he sent the Buddha a message that it was now time for the meal. In the company of his monks, Buddha Vipassī came to the palace along the fully covered route and partook of his meal and went back to the monastery. Nobody else had a chance even to see the Buddha. How could one have an opportunity to offer food and to honour him?

Then there took place a discussion among the citizens: "It has now been seven years and seven months since the arising of the Buddha in the world. But we have so far had no opportunity even to see the Buddha, what to speak of offering food, honouring him and listening to his sermons, we have no such privileges at all. The king personally attends to the Buddha adoringly with the notion that: "The Buddha is my Buddha only, the Dhamma is my Dhamma only and the Saṅgha is my Saṅgha only." The arising of the Buddha is for the welfare of the world of sentient beings, together with Devas and Brahmas, and not only for the king's welfare. Indeed, it is not that hell-fire is hot only for the king and is like a cool blue lotus to others. It would be better, therefore, if the king gave us our right of service to the Fortunate One; if not, we shall battle with the king and take over his rights to donate to the Saṅgha and do deeds of merit towards them. Let us fight for our right. But there is one thing, we citizens alone might not be able to do so. Let us, therefore, find a chief who will lead us."

Accordingly, they went to the general of the army and openly told him of their plan and directly asked: "General, will you be one of us or will you join the

king?" Then the general said: "I will be one of you. But there is one condition: You must give me the first day for my service to the Buddha." And the citizens agreed.

The general went to the king and said: "The citizens are angry with you, Great King." When asked by the king about the reason, he said: "Because you alone are attending to the Buddha and they do not have such a chance, so they say. Great King, it is not too late yet. If they were given permission to serve the Buddha, they would no longer be angry. If not, they say they will give battle against you." Then the king replied: "General, I shall wage war but by no means shall I give up right to serve the Saṅgha." – "Great King," said the general, putting the king in a difficult position, "your servicemen are threatening that they will take up arms against you. Whom would you call up to encounter the looming war?" – "Are not you my general?" asked the king persuasively. "I cannot fight after being separated from the citizens, Great King," said the general.

The king then realized: "The force of the citizens is great. The general too is one of them." He therefore made a request, saying: "In that case, friends, let me feed the Saṅgha for another period of seven years and seven months only." But the citizens did not agree and rejected the request. The king reduced the duration of his proposed gift step by step to six years, five years, and so on and finally to seven days. Then the people came to a unanimous decision, saying among themselves: "Now that the king has asked for only seven days to perform the act of food offering, it is not good for us to be so stubborn in [1179] rivalry with him."

King Bandhuma gave away, in seven days, all his offerings, which were meant for seven years and seven months. For the first six days, he did so without letting the people see. On the seventh day, however, he invited the citizens and showed them his grand gift offering, saying this to sound them out: "Friends, will you be capable of giving such a grand alms giving (*dāna*)?" – "Great King," retorted the citizens, "your gift took place only with our help, isn't it?" And he asserted it was true. "Yes, we are capable," they said. Wiping the tears with the back of his palm, the king paid respects to the Buddha and said: "My dear son, exalted Buddha, I have decided to support you together with 168,000 monks for life with the four requisites, giving no assignments to others. But now I am compelled to

allow the people to attend to you. In fact, they were angry with me and complaining about the deprivation of their right of giving alms. My son, exalted Buddha, from tomorrow onwards, please do allow them to serve you!" Thus did he pathetically utter words of compliance in his despair. The next day, the general gave a grand gift to the Saṅgha with the Buddha at its head, according to the agreement he had with the people.

Faithful Sumanā

On the day allotted to him the general, while supervising his grand gift (*mahā-āna*), issued the order saying: "Care must be taken so that no other person should get a chance to offer even a spoonful or ladleful of rice," and he placed sentries to keep watch around the area. That very day, a widow of a wealthy merchant of Bandhumatī was crying in great distress because she did not get a chance to offer her share of gifts on the first day. She complained pitiably, saying to her daughter who had just come back from the games she had been playing with her 500 female playmates: "My darling daughter, if your father were alive, today I could have been the first to feed the Buddha." The daughter responded with words of comfort: "Mother, please do not worry! I will do something so that the Saṅgha, headed by the Buddha, will accept and partake of our meal first."

After that, the daughter filled the gold bowl which was worth 100,000 coins with milk rice unmixed with water. She added butter, honey, molasses, etc. to enrich the food. She covered it with another gold bowl turned upside down and tied both the gold bowls with garlands of jasmine so that it might look like a garland of flowers. When the Buddha entered the city, she carried it herself on her head and left the house in a company of her many attendants. On the way a dialogue took place between the wealthy lady and the watchmen:

Watchmen: Do not come here, daughter!

Lady: Dear uncles! Why don't you allow me to go?[267]

Watchmen: We are to keep watch by the general's order, that nobody else must be allowed to offer alms food, daughter.

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[267] People of past good deeds speak endearing words, and others are not able to reject their repeated request.

Lady: But, uncles, do you see any food in our hands that warrants you to bar me like this?

Watchmen: We see only the garland of flowers.

Lady: Well, did your general say even an offering of flowers was not allowable?

Watchmen: As for an offering of flowers, it is allowable, daughter.

The lady then said to the watchmen: "In that case please go away. Do not prevent us, uncles," and she went to the Buddha and offered her gift with a request: "Please, exalted Buddha, accept my offering of a garland of flowers."

The Buddha glanced at a watchman, signalling him to bring the floral garland. The lady made obeisance and said: "Exalted Buddha, may my life throughout Saṁsāra be free from want and worry. May I be lovable to many, like this garland of jasmine (*sumanā*) flowers, and may I be named Sumanā in all my coming existences." [1180] The Buddha answered: "May you be well and happy," and the lady then paid respects to him joyfully and departed.

The Buddha went to the general's house and took the seat prepared for him. The general brought rice gruel and offered it him. The Buddha covered the bowl with his hand. The general thought that the Buddha did not accept the gruel because the monks had not all come yet. When all had come, the general reported to the Buddha saying that all were present and seated. The Buddha said: "We have already had a bowl of food which we received on the way. When the covering jasmines were removed from the bowls the milk rice with puffs of steam was found. Then the general's young serviceman who had brought the floral garland said: "General, I have been cheated by a lady who told me that it was just a garland of flowers." The milk rice was sufficient for all the monks beginning with the Buddha. Only after giving the milk rice to the Buddha did the general hand over the offerings that were made by himself. When the partaking of food was over, the Buddha delivered a discourse on auspiciousness and left.

When the Buddha had left, the general asked his men about the lady's name and they told her that she was the daughter of a wealthy merchant. "What a wise woman she is! If such a wise woman administers a household, it may not be difficult for the householder to attain divine pleasures." Speaking in praise of

the lady, the general managed to take her in marriage and placed her as the mistress of the house.

While taking charge of the wealth of both houses, her father's as well as the general's, she gave gifts to the Buddha till the end of her life. She was reborn in the celestial abode, the world of sense pleasures. At that very moment, a rain of jasmines fell heavily, filling the whole divine city to about knee deep. "This divine damsel has brought her own name, even by herself," so saying all the Devas named her Sumanā Devī.

Sumanā Devī had no suffering states for 91 aeons, taking rebirth in divine and human abodes. Wherever she was reborn, there rained jasmines continuously and she continued to be known only as Sumanā Devī or Sumanā Kumārī. In the Dispensation of the present Buddha, she was born of King Kosala's Chief Queen. Simultaneously, in the households of the king's various ministers, all her maids were born on the same day as Sumanā. At that very moment jasmine flowers rained very heavily to about knee deep.

Seeing that phenomenon, the king thought: "My daughter must have done a unique act of merit in the past," and became overjoyed. "My daughter has brought her name by herself," and he let her bear the very name Sumanā. Pondering: "My daughter must not have been born alone," the King had her birth-mates searched for all over the city and hearing that 500 girls were born, the king took the responsibility for feeding, nursing and bringing up all the 500 birth-mates. He also ordered that each month the 500 girls must be brought and presented to his daughter.

When Princess Sumanā was seven, the Buddha, in the company of monks, visited Sāvatthī as he had been invited by the wealthy Anāthapiṇḍika through a messenger, for he had completed the construction of the Jetavana monastery. Anāthapiṇḍika went to King Kosala and said: "Great King, the Fortunate One's visit to our city of Sāvatthī means auspiciousness for you and us. Therefore, please send Princess Sumanā and her 500 maids with water-filled pots, perfumes, flowers, etc. to welcome the Fortunate One and receive him. The king replied, saying: "Very well," and did as told by the merchant. Under the orders of the king, Sumanā approached the Buddha and paid him homage with perfumes, flowers, etc. and stood at a suitable distance. When the Buddha taught Sumanā,

even on his way, she and all her companions were established together in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). So were the 500 girls, 500 women and 500 male lay devotees established in the same fruition at the Buddha's assembly. In this way, on the day the Buddha visited the monastery, before he reached it but while on the way, 2,000 people became Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*).

When the princess came of age, King Kosala gave her 500 chariots and emblems of royalty so that she might use them on her travel with her 500 [1181] companions. In those days, there were three women who received 500 chariots and royal emblems from their parents. They were:

1. Cundī, daughter of King Bimbisāra.
2. Visākhā, daughter of the wealthy merchant Dhanañjaya.
3. Sumanā, daughter of King Kosala.

As had been said, the day after the general had the permission from the king and performed his great gift (*mahā-dāna*) to the Buddha on a grand scale. The citizens organized an offering that was greater than the king's and gave great gifts to the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha. When the meal-offering by the whole city was accomplished, the villagers near the city-gate arranged to pay homage, as it was their turn to do so.

Then the householder Mahākāla discussed with his younger brother Cūḷakāla: "Our turn to pay homage to the Fortunate One is tomorrow. What kind of homage shall we offer?" – "Brother," replied Cūḷakāla, "please think by yourself of what is proper." Then Mahākāla said: "Dear brother, if you follow my plan, from our land of 28 acres,[268] full of ripening fine rice paddy, we shall take out the newly ripened paddy from the ears and cook milk rice, which is befitting to the Fortunate One." Cūḷakāla presented his view: "Brother, if we do so, nobody will be benefited. Therefore I do not agree to that."

Then Mahākāla said: "If you do not agree to it, I wish to have my share of property." So the 28 acres of land was divided into two halves, each measuring 14 acres and a fence was erected in the middle of the two portions. Then Mahākala took out the tender grain from the ears, to which he added milk

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[268] 28 acres approx.

unmixed with water. He had it cooked and the four sweet things (*catu-madhu*) put to it, and offered:

1. The first food to the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha.

The strange thing was that the ears from which the grain had been taken out became full again with grain as before. It was a gift of the first grain formed in their earliest stage of development. Mahākāla similarly gave the following in generosity:

2. The first portion of the paddy that had partially developed to yield newly appeared grain, yet to be pounded.
3. The first portion of the paddy that had fully developed or ripened.
4. The first portion of the paddy that had been reaped.
5. The first portion of the paddy that had been made into sheaves.
6. The first portion of the paddy that had been piled up in sheaves.
7. The first portion of the paddy that had been threshed.
8. The first portion of the paddy that had been winnowed.
9. The first portion of the paddy that had been stored up in the granary.

In this way, each time he grew paddy, he accomplished gifts of the first portion (*agga-dāna*) nine times. And never did the harvest of his paddy become low despite his gifts. In fact, the amount of paddy even increased and became bigger than before. This indeed was his wholesome deed in connection with his expressed aspiration made in the past.

The virtuous Mahākāla, the future Koṇḍañña, performed deeds of merit in this way throughout the Buddha's life as well as throughout his own, and he wandered from the human abode to the divine abode and back and enjoyed divine and human luxuries.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

When our Buddha was about to arise he was reborn in a wealthy Brahmin family in the village of Doṇavatthu, near the city of Kapilavatthu. On his naming day, the young Brahmin was given the name of Koṇḍañña. While being brought up,

he was educated in the three Vedas and was accomplished in the physiognomy of a great man.

At that time, our Buddha had passed away from the Tusita Realm and was conceived in the womb of Mahā Māyā, Chief Queen of King Suddhodana of Kapilavatthu, and was later duly born. On the naming day, the king presented 108 Brahmins with absolutely new garments and fed them with sweet pure milk rice. He selected from among them eight highly intelligent Brahmin wise men and let them be seated in serial order in the courtyard. He then had the little prince, the Bodhisatta, put down on white linen and brought to the Brahmins who were to examine the baby's body-marks.

The Brahmin, who occupied the first seat among the eight, raised his two fingers and [1182] predicted: "If this boy remains a layman, he will become a Universal Monarch. If he lives an ascetic life, he will definitely become a Buddha in the three worlds!" In the same way six more Brahmins declared the same by putting up two fingers. Of those eight Brahmins, Koṇḍañña was the youngest. When his turn to predict came, he studied very carefully the marks on the body, and noticed that the one who would become a Universal Monarch should not have the mark of a Universal Monarch on his soles, but the boy had that mark on his soles, so he put up only one finger, boldly predicting: "There is absolutely no reason for the prince to stay in a household. The prince will indeed become a Buddha!"

After the predictions, the wise Brahmins went back to their respective homes and summoned their sons and gave instructions saying: "Dear sons, we have become old. We may or may not be living by the time Prince Siddhattha, son of King Suddhodana, attains omniscient Buddhahood. When the prince does, you, dear sons, should become monks in his Dispensation."

King Suddhodana brought up his son in comfort by providing him with protection, facilities and resources beginning with his appointment of attendants. When he became sixteen years of age, the prince enjoyed Deva-like royal luxuries and at the age of 29, when he became intellectually more mature, he saw the disadvantages of sense-pleasures and the advantages of renunciation. So, on the day his own son Rāhula was born, he performed a great act of renunciation by riding the royal steed, Kanthaka, in the company of his connatal

and personal officer, Channa, going through the city-gate that was opened by the Devas.

On that single night, he passed through the three cities of Kapilavatthu, Koliya and Devadaha, and proceeded to the bank of river Anomā where he put on the robe and other paraphernalia which were brought and offered by Brahma Ghaṭikāra.

Soon, he arrived at the city of Rājagaha in a very pleasing manner, like a great elder of 60 years' standing and 80 years of age. After going on alms round, he partook of his meal in the shadow of the Paṇḍava Hill. Though King Bimbisāra invited him to stay on and promised to give his kingdom, he turned down the offer, and proceeding in due course he reached the grove of Uruvelā.

"Oh!" he exclaimed, "this flat ground is very pleasant! For clansmen who wish to devote themselves to meditation, it is an ideal place." With this reflection, he sojourned in that grove and commenced his meditation and ascetic practice.

By the time of the Bodhisatta's renunciation, all the wise Brahmins, except Koṇḍañña, had deceased. The youngest, Koṇḍañña, alone remained in good health. On hearing the news that the Bodhisatta had gone forth, he visited the sons of these deceased Brahmins and said: "It is said Prince Siddhattha had become an ascetic. No doubt the prince will really become a Buddha. If your fathers were alive, they would go forth even today. Come, if you wish to do so. Let us become monks in the wake of that great man." But the seven sons were not unanimous in their aspirations, and three did not like the idea. Only the remaining four donned robes under Koṇḍañña's leadership.

After becoming ascetics, the Group-of-Five (*Pañca-vaggiya*) went round for food in villages, towns and royal cities and reached the Bodhisatta's dwelling eventually. While the Bodhisatta was practising his austere meditation for six long years, they entertained great hope, thinking: "He will soon become a Buddha! He will soon become a Buddha!" So thinking, they attended to the Bodhisatta, staying and moving about him.

In the sixth year, the Bodhisatta came to realize that the ascetic practice (*dukkara-cariyā*) would absolutely not earn him the noble paths and fruitions, though he had spent time eating just a rice-grain, just a sesame seed, etc., and had become emaciated and weary. He collected food in the village of

Senānigama and ate whatever was available, such as rice and hard cakes. Then the Group-of-Five, as compelled by the law that dictates the lives of all Bodhisattas, were fed up with the Bodhisatta and left him, and went to Isipatana and the Deer Park.

After the Group-of-Five had thus left him, by eating whatever was available, such as rice and hard cakes, the Bodhisatta's skin, flesh and blood became normal in two or three days. On the full moon day, the day he was to become enlightened, he took the excellent milk rice [1183] food offered by Sujātā, wife of a wealthy merchant. He then placed his bowl in the river Nerañjarā and came to decide that he would definitely become a Buddha on that very day.

In the evening, after the Nāga King Kāḷa have spoken in praise of him, he went to the site where the Mahā Bodhi tree was and sat crossed-legged on the undefeated throne, the unshakable seat, facing the east. Having developed his fourfold exertion, he drove away the deity Māra just before sunset, acquired the knowledge of previous lives (*pubbe-nivāsa-ñāṇa*) in the first watch of the night, the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu-ñāṇa*) in the middle watch and in the last watch he was absorbed in the wisdom of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*). He reflected, with his diamond-like great insight knowledge (*mahā-vajira-vipassanā-ñāṇa*), on its twelve factors forward and backward, up and down, and finally become a Buddha, having gained unique omniscience (*asādhāraṇa-sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*), which belongs to all Buddhas as has been told in the section of the Buddha's Awakening. On that very throne under the Mahā Bodhi tree, the Buddha passed seven days, being absorbed in the Arahat fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*).

In this way, the Buddha stayed in the seven places, and later on being requested by Brahma Sahampati, he considered, asking himself: "To whom should I preach first?" Then he came to know that the religious teachers, Āḷāra and Udaka, had deceased and when he continued to think, he reflected thus: "To the Group-of-Five I am very thankful. They served me while I was engaged in the austere practices. What if I should preach to them first?" Such an idea is conceived by all Buddhas as a rule. With the exception of Koṇḍañña, there was none who could first grasp the four truths in the Dispensation of the Buddha. As for Koṇḍañña, his capability to grasp the four truths, first and foremost was because

he had performed significant deeds of merit for 100,000 aeons and had given the unique gifts of the first crop, nine times to the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha, as has been told above.

Taking his bowl and robe, the Buddha set out for the Isipatana Deer Park and duly reached the dwelling of the Group-of-Five monastics. The five monastics saw the Buddha coming and they made an agreement among themselves not to fulfil their obligatory duties, but, as the Buddha was approaching nearer they could not keep their original agreement, and one took the bowl and robe from the Buddha, another prepared the seat for him, still another brought water for washing his feet, the fourth washed the Buddha's feet, and the fifth brought a round fan made of palm-leaf to fan him, thus they rendered their respective services.

When the five monastics had taken their seats near the Buddha after doing their duties, the Buddha delivered the Discourse setting the Dhamma Wheel Turning (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*, SN 56.11) with three functions to the five monastics, with Ven. Koṇḍañña as the principal listener in his presence.

At that time the Buddha thought: "As the ascetic Koṇḍañña was first to penetrate the four truths which I have understood with thousands of difficulties, he deserves the name Aññāsi Koṇḍañña," and so he uttered a solemn utterance: *Aññāsi vata bho Koṇḍañño; aññāsi vata bho Koṇḍañño!* "Koṇḍañña has penetrated the four truths! Koṇḍañña has penetrated the four truths!" Because of this solemn utterance, Ven. Koṇḍañña came to be known as Aññāsi Koṇḍañña, Koṇḍañña the One-who-Knows, from that time onwards.

Foremost Title Achieved

In this way, Ven. Koṇḍañña became a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) on the full moon day of July (*Āsāḷha*) in the year 528 BCE, the same year the Buddha become a Buddha. Likewise, the day after the full moon, Ven. Bhaddiya also became a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*); two days after the full moon, Ven. Vappa, three days after the full moon, Ven. Mahānāma, and four days after the full moon, Ven. Assaji. Five days after the full moon, at the end of the delivery of the Discourse about the Characteristics of Non-Self (*Anatta-lakkhaṇa-sutta*), all five members of the Group-of-Five were established in the Arahat fruition

(*Arahatta-phala*). At that time, the number of Arahats amongst human beings were therefore six, the [1184] Buddha himself and the Group-of-Five.

From that time onwards the Buddha led 55 friends headed by Yasa, the son of a wealthy merchant to the noble paths and fruitions; he also led the 33 Bhadda princes, in the Kappāsika grove; 1,000 former matted-hair ascetics, on the stone plateau of Gayāsīsa and others. After leading a large multitude of people to the noble paths and fruitions, on the full moon day of January (*Phussa*), in the same year, the Buddha arrived in Rājagaha and established Brahmin householders, numbering 110,000 headed by King Bimbisāra in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) and 10,000 such householders in the three refuges.

Having caused the abundant blossoming and fruition of his teaching, with the eight wonders and three trainings, throughout Jambudīpa, the entire land of which he caused to be illuminated bright with the colour of the robes and caused the environs to be blown by the rushing wind from the moving monks and other noble ones. Later on, once he had arrived at the Jetavana monastery of Sāvatthī and while remaining there at the monastery and sitting on the Dhamma throne, the seat for a Buddha, he delivered a discourse and in the course of his delivery, he became desirous of declaring that his eldest son, Koṇḍañña, was the best of all who were first to realize the four truths; and he uttered:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ rattaññūnaṁ yad-idaṁ Aññāsi Koṇḍañño.*
>
> O monks, of my monastic disciples who are of long standing (*rattaññū*), Aññāsi Koṇḍañña is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

Thus speaking in praise of Ven. Koṇḍañño, the Buddha declared him the foremost of those of long standing (*rattaññū-etad-agga*).

Herein long standing (*rattaññū*) literally means one who knows the nights, that is to say: “One who has passed through a long duration of many nights since one’s renunciation.” In the Buddha’s Dispensation there was none who realised the four truths earlier than Koṇḍañña. Hence Koṇḍañña was the one who knew many nights, and lived over the greatest number of years, since he became a monk. According to this explanation, a long standing (*rattaññū*) individual means the senior-most in monkhood.

Or, as Ven. Koṇḍañña realized the four truths before all others, since his realization, he had passed through many a night. According to this, the word in question means the earliest knower of the four truths.

Or, as every Arahat is conscious of daytime and night-time, he earns the epithet of knower of nights (*rattaññū*), one who is aware of the divisions of day and nighttime. Because Ven. Koṇḍañña was the earliest of all Arahats, he stood out from other long standing Arahats knowing the divisions of time.

After his Attainment

Ven. Aññāsi Koṇḍañña became an Arahat on the fifth day after the full moon of July (*Āsāḷha*). On the full moon day of January (*Phussa*) that year, the Buddha arrived in Rājagaha and on the first waxing day of February (*Māgha*) the future chief disciples, Sāriputta and Moggallāna, donned the robes. On the seventh day, Ven. Moggallāna became an Arahat and Ven. Sāriputta did so on the full moon day. In this way, there arose complete categories of Arahats, such as chief disciples, great disciples and ordinary disciples, in the Buddha's Dispensation, all going for alms round in a single line, with the most senior in front and the most junior last in the line. When the Buddha gave a discourse, he sat on the Dhamma throne, the Buddha-seat decorated in the middle of the assembly. The captain of the Dhamma, Ven. Sāriputta, sat on the right side of the Buddha and Ven. Moggallāna sat on the left side.

At the back of the two chief disciples, a seat was prepared for Ven. Koṇḍañña. The remaining monks took their seats surrounding him. Because Koṇḍañña was the first to understand the four truths in the Buddha's Dispensation and because he was senior also by age, the two chief disciples were respectful to him, they regarded him as Mahā Brahma, as [1185] a huge mass of fire, or as a highly poisonous serpent. They felt somewhat scared, though they occupied the front seats. They were also shy and embarrassed. Ven. Koṇḍañña then reflected: "For the front seats, these two chief disciples had fulfilled the perfections (*pāramī*) for one immeasurable period and 100,000 aeons. Though they are taking those seats they are less confident, shy and embarrassed. I shall do whatever is necessary to make them live at ease." This was a reason for his vacant seat.

Besides, Ven. Koṇḍañña was a highly powerful great elder. Like the attributes of the Buddha, his attributes spread among the people in this universe as well as

among the Devas and Brahmas of the 10,000 world-element. Therefore, whenever divine and human beings visited and honoured the Buddha with perfumes, flowers, etc. They immediately after that approached Ven. Koṇḍañña and honoured him, remembering: "This venerable was the first to comprehend the unique doctrine of the four truths." There is also a religious custom, according to which the visited monk is to give a Dhamma talk or to exchange greetings with them. As for venerable Koṇḍañña he was inclined only to remain blissfully in the attainment of fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*). Therefore, to him, Dhamma talks given to, and greetings exchanged with, the visitors appeared superfluous. This was another reason.

For these two reasons, venerable Koṇḍañña desired to stay away from the master. As he foresaw that his nephew, the young Puṇṇa, son of the Brahmin lady Mantānī, would become a famous Dhamma-preacher (*Dhamma-kathika*), he went to the Brahmin village of Doṇavatthu and made his nephew a monk and helped him become a resident pupil (*antevāsika*) with the thought that he would stay behind near the Fortunate One. Then he approached the Buddha and made a request: "Exalted Buddha, to me a rural residence is not suitable. I am not capable of staying with the laity. Therefore, kindly permit me to live in the Chaddanta forest." And the permission was granted by the Buddha.

Having obtained permission from the Buddha, Ven. Koṇḍañña packed up his bedding, and taking his bowl and robe, he went to Lake Mandākinī in the Chaddanta forest. In the region around Chaddanta, 8,000 elephants, who were experienced in serving Paccekabuddhas and who were long-lived, like spirits, became happy as they thought: "A large expanse of a fertile field has come to us so that we might sow the seeds of meritorious deeds." So they shovelled a path with their feet and got rid of grass to make a meditation path for the venerable.

They also cleared the meditation path of twigs and branches that might be in his way and after making his residence clean, the 80,000 elephants held a discussion among themselves thus: "Friends, if we expect 'this elephant will do what is necessary for the venerable,' or, 'that elephant will do it for him,' the venerable will then have to return to his dwelling from alms round with his bowl washed as before, as if he had been to a village of his relatives. Therefore, let us serve him by taking turns so that there might be no negligence. We must be careful

especially when it is an assignment of a particular sort and do it without thinking selfishly."

And so they took turns in serving the venerable. The elephant on duty would arrange water for washing the face, and twigs for brushing the teeth, and so on, and the arrangement went on like this. The elephant, whose assignment was to serve, made fire by rubbing dry firewood that could easily burn, such as pine. With this fire he baked stones and rolled them down by means of sticks into the water in the stone basins. After ascertaining if the water was hot enough, he would place a tooth brush made of firewood sticks. Then the same elephant assigned would sweep the meditation hut that was Koṇḍañña's dwelling, both inside and outside with a broom made of branches. He would also perform other duties including his feeding of Koṇḍañña in the way that will soon be described.

Lake Mandākinī, where Koṇḍañña resided, was 50 leagues wide. The middle area of the lake, measuring 25 leagues, was entirely free from algae and other aquatic plants. The water was crystal clear. In its outer circle, where the water was waist deep, there flourished white-lotus thickets of half a league's width, surrounding the lake of 50 leagues, beyond the white lotus thickets existed red lotus thickets also of half a [1186] league's width, beyond them white lotus-thickets, beyond them blue-lotus thickets, beyond them red lotus thickets, beyond them fragrant red paddy fields, beyond them creeper thickets full of such tasty vegetables as cucumber, gourd, pumpkin, etc. and measuring half a league in width; beyond them existed sugar-cane thickets also of half a league width, encircling the lake. The sugar-cane stalks growing there were as thick as the trunk of an areca palm.

Beyond the sugar-cane thickets lay banana tree thickets, also of half a league's width encircling the lake. Those who happened to have eaten two bananas or so would suffer, feeling stiff and uneasy; beyond the banana trees lay jack-fruit groves bearing fruit, each being the size of a large jar; beyond that lay cherry groves; beyond that lay mango groves; in this way there lay more groves of fruit trees. In short, it could not be said there were no edible fruit around Lake Mandākinī, there were fruits of all kinds.

During the flowering period, the wind blew, carrying the pollen from the blossoms and placed them on the lotus leaves. Drops of water fell on these leaves.

By the heat of the sun, the pollen was cooked and became solidified milk. It was called lotus-honey comb. It was brought to Ven. Koṇḍañña by the elephants in turns.

The lotus stems were as thick as a tilling log. These stems too the elephant took and gave to Ven. Koṇḍañña. The lotus stems were as large as a drum head. Each joint of the stems contained about one measure of lotus milk. That lotus milk too the elephants brought and offered to Ven. Koṇḍañña.

The elephants mixed the lotus stems with honey and offered it to Ven. Koṇḍañña. They placed the sugar-cane plants, which were as thick as areca palm, on a stone slab and crushed them with their feet. The juice then flowed into stone cups and holes and was cooked by the heat of the sun and it became solidified sugar-cane cakes that were like solidified milk. They then brought these sugar-cane cakes and offered them to Ven. Koṇḍañña.

On the Kelāsa hill, in the Himavanta, lived a god named Nāgadatta. Ven. Koṇḍañña sometimes went to the doorway of his mansion. The god filled Ven. Koṇḍañña's bowl with pure milk food made of newly produced butter and powder of lotus-honey. The god gave an alms giving (*dāna*) of sweet smelling butter and milk by the lot for 20,000 years during the life time of the Buddha Kassapa. Hence, such pure milk food containing butter and powder of lotus-honey appeared to him as nourishment. In this way Ven. Koṇḍañña dwelt near Lake Mandākinī in the Chaddanta forest.

Ven. Koṇḍañña's Passing

Later, when he reflected on his life process (*āyu-saṅkhāra*), he found that it was coming to an end. When he further reflected as to where he should decease, it occurred to him thus: "These 8,000 elephants who have served me for twelve years have done what is difficult to do. I am very grateful to them. I shall first go to the exalted Buddha and seek his permission to pass into Parinibbāna and then I will return and do so in the meditation hut near these elephants."

Having decided thus, he immediately appeared at Veḷuvana monastery in Rājagaha and visited the Buddha. He bowed his head touching the feet of the Buddha and kissed them with his mouth; he also pressed them with his hand forcefully. He then mentioned his name in his supplication to the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha! I am Koṇḍañña; Gracious One! I am Koṇḍañña."

> Herein, the reason for Ven. Koṇḍañña's mention of his own name was this: at that time among the monks around the Buddha some elderly monks knew him but the younger ones did not. Therefore, it occurred to him: "The young monks who do not know me might offend me with the thought who is this white-haired, bent, toothless and failing old monk? Who is he that is talking with the exalted Buddha?" Those young monks who wronged me might land in a suffering state. If I mention my name, those who previously did not know me will now realize who I am. Thus the two groups of monks, the one older and aware of my name and the other younger and coming to know me now, will be pleased and faithful at the thought: "Ah, here is a Great Disciple (*Mahā-sāvaka*) who has renounced like the exalted Buddha throughout the 10,000 worlds system, and this would lead them to the realm of Devas." In order to close the road to the suffering states, and open that to [1187] the Deva Realms, the venerable disclosed his name in his announcement to the Buddha.

At that time, a thought arose in the mind of Ven. Vaṅgīsa thus: "This Ven. Aññāsi Koṇḍañña visited the Fortunate One after twelve long years; he touched the feet of the Fortunate One with his head and kissed his feet with his mouth. And, he also pressed them with his hand. Mentioning his name, he also said: "Exalted Buddha! I am Koṇḍañña; Gracious One! I am Koṇḍañña." What if I should sing appropriate verses in praise of this Ven. Koṇḍañña in the presence of the Buddha." So he rose from his seat, adjusted his robe so that it covered his left shoulder, raised his joined hands towards the Buddha and addressed him thus: "Exalted Buddha, these improvised verses (*paṭibhāna-gāthā*) occurred to me! Gracious One, these improvised verses occurred to me!"

Thereupon, the Buddha granted permission, saying: "Dear son Vaṅgīsa, you may recite some improvised verses." Accordingly, Ven. Vaṅgīsa sang the verses in praise of Ven. Koṇḍañña in the presence of the Buddha as follows (SN 8.9):

> *Buddhānubuddho so thero Koṇḍañño tibba-nikkamo,*
> *lābhī sukha-vihārānaṁ vivekānaṁ abhiṇhaso.*

That venerable who is known by his clan name Koṇḍañña and who has visited the supremely exalted Buddha, is distinguished as Awakened through following the Buddha (*Buddhānubuddha*), for he is the first who understood the four profound truths, having contemplated the Buddha's teachings intelligently. He is endowed with the unique, forceful energy of

the right exertions. He achieves without interruption the three forms of seclusion, the means of blissful living.

Yaṁ sāvakena pattabbaṁ, Satthu Sāsana-kārinā,
Sabbassa tam-anuppattaṁ, appa-mattassa sikkhato.

The Saṅgha of noble disciples, who follow the Buddha's exhortation, should attain the four paths, the four fruitions, and the analytical knowledges, etc., through their wisdom. That supreme person of glory, Ven. Koṇḍañña, attained them all, ahead of other disciples, smoothly supported by the necessary facilities, for he possessed mindfulness and practised assiduously in the threefold training.

Mahānubhāvo tevijjo, ceto-pariyāya-kovido,
Koṇḍañño Buddha-dāyādo pāde vandati Satthuno.

The venerable, who is known by his clan name Koṇḍañña, who is highly powerful, who clearly possesses the threefold knowledge of the remembrance of former rebirths, the divine eye and the extinction of all pollutants, who can read others' minds, as he knows all the mental activities, who has inherited first and foremost the supermundane legacy of the Buddha, has indeed respectfully paid homage at the Buddha's lotus feet by touching them with his head, kissing them with his mouth, and gripping them with his hands.

By the time these verses had been sung, silence reigned in the assembly. Knowing of the silence, Ven. Koṇḍañña exchanged a few words with the Buddha and asked for permission: "Exalted Buddha, my life process has come to an end. I am going to pass into [1188] Parinibbāna." – "Where will you pass into Parinibbāna, my dear son Koṇḍañña?" asked the Buddha. Ven. Koṇḍañña replied: "Exalted Buddha, the elephants who served me for twelve years have done something that is difficult to do. Therefore, I shall pass into Parinibbāna somewhere around the elephants, by the lake in the Chaddanta forest." The Buddha granted his permission by keeping silent.

When Ven. Koṇḍañña requested permission to attain Parinibbāna, if the Buddha had not granted permission, it might be thought that Ven. Koṇḍañña took delight in the round of suffering in the three worlds, which he himself had taught to be something sickening. On the other hand, if the Buddha were to grant permission, it might mean that he encouraged him to

die. In order to avoid these two ends, therefore, the Buddha asked a neutral question: "Where will you pass into Parinibbāna?"

Thereupon Ven. Koṇḍañña made obeisance to the Buddha and spoke: "Exalted Buddha, formerly when you were practising the ascetic practice (*dukkara-cariyā*), we visited you for the first time to attend to you. In other words, my first obeisance took place in the Deer Park. Now this is my last obeisance!" While many people were lamenting, Ven. Koṇḍañña paid homage to the Buddha, came out from his presence and, standing at the doorway, admonished the people: "Do not be sad! Do not lament! There is none among those conditioned, be they Buddhas or disciples, who will not come to destruction." While the people were looking on him, Ven. Koṇḍañña disappeared from there and reappeared near the lake, in the Chaddanta forest, where he bathed. Thereafter, he put on the robe properly, put away his bedding and spent the three watches of the night engaged in the meditation of fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*). Just before morning came with its very brilliant light, Ven. Koṇḍañña entered the Parinibbāna with no grasping at existence remaining.

No sooner had Ven. Koṇḍañña entered Parinibbāna than all the trees in the Himavanta burst open with flowers and fruit both at the top and bottom and they bent down as well. The elephant, whose turn it was to serve Ven. Koṇḍañña, performed his usual duties early by placing water for washing the face and a tooth-brush made of twigs, stood at the end of the wall without knowing about Ven. Koṇḍañña's Parinibbāna. Not seeing Ven. Koṇḍañña coming, though he had waited till sunrise, the elephant began to wonder: "The noble Ven. Koṇḍañña used to take an early walk and used to wash his face. But now he has not come out from his dwelling even at sunrise. What could be the reason for this?"

So he opened the door of the dwelling wide enough to see into it, and saw Ven. Koṇḍañña sitting. He stretched out his trunk to investigate whether there was in-breath or out-breath and it came to know there was neither. Then, coming to know that Ven. Koṇḍañña had entered Parinibbāna, he put his trunk in his mouth and trumpeted aloud. The sound of its trumpet echoed all over the Himavanta.

The elephants discussed the situation in unity. Ven. Koṇḍañña's body was put on the largest elephant. The others surrounded him, each carrying branches that

had fully blossomed. After repeatedly going around the Himavanta and paying homage, they conveyed the remains to the lake in the Chaddanta forest.

Then Sakka summoned Deva Vissakamma and gave him an order: “Dear Vissakamma! Our elder brother, Ven. Koṇḍañña, has passed into Parinibbāna. Let us do homage to him. Create a coffin measuring nine leagues and adorn it with a pinnacle!” Vissakamma created what he was asked for. The remains of Ven. Koṇḍañña were put in the coffin and returned to the elephants.

Carrying the coffin together and repeatedly moving around the whole Himavanta, measuring 3,000 leagues, the elephants paid homage. From the elephants, the coffin was taken by the Devas of the sky who performed the funeral rites. Thereafter, the coffin was taken by the Devas of the rain-clouds, the Devas of the cold-clouds, and the Devas of the hot-clouds, the Catumahārājika Devas, the Tāvatiṁsa Devas and so on. In this way, the pinnacled coffin containing Ven. Koṇḍañña’s body reached up to the realm of the Brahmas. Again the Brahmas returned it to the Devas and in this way the coffin went back to the elephants.

Each Deva or Brahma brought two sandalwood pieces, each being about the breath of [1189] four fingers. The pile of such sandalwood pieces was nine leagues high. Upon the pile of sandalwood the coffin carrying Ven. Koṇḍañña’s body was put. Five hundred monks appeared simultaneously and recited the Dhamma throughout the night. Ven. Anuruddha gave a discourse in the assembly, and, as a result, many Devas realized the four truths and were released from Saṁsāra thereby.

The night saw the burning of the remains. On the following morning, at dawn, the pile of burning fragrant wood was extinguished and the monks filled the water-filter with the relics, which were as white as jasmine buds and brought them to the Buddha, who was readily waiting and welcoming at the doorway of the Veḷuvana monastery.

Holding the filter containing the relics, the Buddha delivered a discourse befitting that occasion and causing spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) in the minds of those present, after which he stretched out his hand towards the earth. Instantly, a colossal shrine (*cetiya*) emerged, resembling a huge silver bubble, penetrating

the great earth. The Buddha enshrined the relics of Ven. Koṇḍañña with his hands in that shrine. It is said that the shrine exists even today.

2-3. Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Moggallāna

In this Dispensation, Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Moggallāna are known as the two chief disciples of the Buddha. These two venerables had mostly worked together to fulfil the Perfections during the period of their performance of meritorious deeds for that goal. In their last existence too, they renounced the world together and became monks together. Hence their accounts are given together in the commentaries and sub-commentaries. Following these treatises, in this book too, their accounts will be given together.

Aspiration in the Past

From this present aeon (*kappa*), one immeasurable period (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and 100,000 aeons ago, the future Sāriputta, a virtuous person, was born in a wealthy Brahmin family and was named Sarada the youth. The future Moggallāna, another virtuous man, was also born in another family and was named Sirivaḍḍhana the householder. They became intimate friends, having played together in their childhood.

One day, while Sarada the youth was examining and managing the wealth of his household, which was inherited from his forebears, as his father had died, a thought arose in him thus: “I know only about this existence. I do not know about the hereafter. It is absolutely certain that beings born are subject to death. It would be proper, therefore, if I become a recluse and seek the doctrine for liberation from Saṁsāra.”

Sarada went to his friend Sirivaḍḍhana and said: “Friend Sirivaḍḍhana, I shall become a recluse and seek the doctrine for liberation from Saṁsāra. Will you be able to come together with me?” – “No, friend, I am not,” answered Sirivaḍḍhana, “you, friend, go ahead.” Then it occurred to Sarada: “Among those who pass into the hereafter, there is none who is able to take his friends and relatives with him. It is indeed true that only his good or bad deeds are his own property as they do actually follow him.”

Thereupon, he opened his treasure houses and performed a great alms giving (*dāna*) to the destitutes, poor people, travellers and beggars. Thereafter, he made his way to the foot of a mountain and became an ascetic. Those who became matted-hair ascetics in the wake of Sarada numbered 74,000. The ascetic Sarada himself acquired the fivefold mundane psychic power and the eightfold absorption (*jhāna*) attainments. He also taught his followers how to make preparations for meditation on a device (*kasiṇa*), how to practise that meditation and they too gained the same power and attainments.

At that time, Buddha Anomadassī appeared in the world.[269] One day, when Buddha Anomadassī surveyed the world [1190] of sentient beings after emerging from his attainment of the absorption of compassion (*karuṇā-samāpatti*) at daybreak, he saw the ascetic Sarada and decided, thinking: "When I visit Sarada, a grand Dhamma talk will take place. The ascetic will express his aspiration to become a chief disciple, flanking on the right-hand side some other Buddha in the future. His friend, Sirivaḍḍhana, will do similarly for the other chief disciple, flanking on the left. By the end of the talk, Sarada's 74,000 followers, those ascetics who accompanied Sarada, will become Arahats. I should, therefore, pay a visit to Sarada's dwelling at the foot of the mountain." Taking his bowl and robe he set forth alone, without informing anybody else, like a lion-king. While Sarada's pupils were away gathering fruit, Buddha Anomadassī made a resolution that Sarada should come to know him as an omniscient Buddha, and while Sarada was looking at him, the Buddha descended from the sky and stood on the ground.

As he had seen the magnificence and the physical splendour of Buddha Anomadassī, Sarada studied them in accordance with the physiognomical treatises and unwaveringly came to the conclusion: "One who is possessed of these marks, will become a Universal Monarch if he were to live a household life, but, if he were to put on the robe, he would become an omniscient Buddha." He, therefore, welcomed the Buddha, paid homage by touching the floor in five ways and offered the prepared seat to him. The Buddha sat down in that seat and the recluse also took an appropriate seat for himself.

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[269] The city and other particulars have been given in chapter IX above.

At that time, the 74,000 pupils returned, carrying with them fruits of various sizes with immensely rich flavour and nutrition. Seeing the seating arrangement of the Buddha and that of their teacher, they remarked to him: “Master, we thought that there was no person higher than you in the world. But now it seems that this noble man is far superior to you.” The master reprovingly replied: “How dare you say so, pupils! You wish to compare a mustard seed with the great Mount Meru which is 168,000 leagues high. Do not weigh me against the Buddha.” Then the pupils said among themselves: “If this were an unworthy one, our master would not have given such a simile. Indeed he must be supreme!” So saying, they all prostrated at the feet of the Buddha and venerated him with their heads.

Thereafter, the recluse told his pupils: “Dear sons, we have no gift that is proper for the Buddha. It was during his hour for collecting alms food that he came to our residence at the foot of the mountain. Let us give alms to the best of our ability. Pupils, bring big and small fruits that appear nice and wholesome.” Thus, he had the fruit brought and having washed his hands he himself offered the fruit after putting them in the bowl. No sooner had the Buddha accepted the fruit than Devas put ambrosia in the bowl. Sarada offered water that he had duly filtered. Having eaten the fruit, the Buddha washed his hand and sat calm and quiet. While the Buddha was sitting thus, Sarada summoned all his pupils and spoke to the Buddha words that ought to be remembered for long. Then the Buddha resolved that his two chief disciples should visit him in the company of the monks at this mountain foot. The two chief disciples, Ven. Nisabha and Ven. Anoma, knowing the Buddha’s desire, immediately appeared, accompanied by 100,000 Arahats and, after paying homage to the Buddha, stood at suitable places.

Thereupon, the recluse Sarada called his pupils and ordered: “Dear sons, the seat made for the Buddha is still low. The 100,000 monks are also without seats. You, dear sons, should today do high honour to the Buddha. Bring beautiful and fragrant flowers from the foot of the mountain.” The time spent on giving the order seemed even longer. The power of the mighty ones is wonderful beyond imagination. Instantly, therefore, the pupils miraculously brought flowers of beauty and fragrance and made them into the Buddha seat, measuring a league. The floral seat made for the two chief disciples measured three miles each and

the seat for the rest of monks measured half a league or two miles. Even for the youngest monk, the seat was one half a mile (*usabha*) in height.

After making the seats in this manner, Sarada stood before the Buddha and addressed him with his joined hands raised: "Exalted Buddha, please take this seat of flowers for my long welfare and happiness." Buddha Anomadassī mounted the seat and sat down and remained there, engaging in the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*) for seven days. Knowing what the [1191] Buddha was doing, the two chief disciples and the rest of the monks, while remaining in their respective seats, in the wake of the master, engaged themselves in the absorptions (*jhāna*).

Sarada the recluse stood holding a floral umbrella over the Buddha. While the Buddha was absorbed in the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*), the pupils sought various roots and fruits during the food gathering hour and ate them. For the rest of the time, they stood, raising their joined hands in the direction of the Buddha. Sarada, however, did not move even for searching for fruit but held the umbrella over the Buddha and spent the time living on the food of rapture (*pīti*).

Emerging from the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*), the Buddha asked the chief disciple, Ven. Nisabha, who was sitting near him on his right side: "Teach, dear son, a discourse in appreciation of the flowers, to the honourable recluses." With his mind immensely gladdened, as a heroic warrior who had received a great reward from the Universal Monarch, Ven. Nisabha taught them by virtue of his perfect intelligence as a disciple. At the end of Ven. Nisabha's teaching, the Buddha asked the other chief disciple, Ven. Anoma, who was on the left side: "You too teach a discourse, dear son." Reflecting on the Buddha's words contained in the Three Baskets, Ven. Anoma gave a discourse.

The realization of the truths and the attainment of release did not affect yet a single recluse despite the teaching of the two chief disciples. Thereafter, Buddha Anomadassī, in his incomparable state as a Buddha, taught the Dhamma. By the end of his teaching all 74,000 matted-hair recluses attained Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*). Sarada alone remained unaffected. Then the Buddha stretching his right arm and pronounced: "Come, monks." At that very moment

the hair and beard of all these ascetics disappeared and they became monks already equipped with the eight items of requisites.

Sarada's Aspiration for Chief Discipleship

It may be asked: Why did he fail to become an Arahat though he was a great teacher? The answer is because he was distracted. Since the time when Ven. Nisabha the chief disciple, one who sits on the right, started teaching, Sarada had been repeatedly distracted by the thought: "It would be well if I should gain the same position as this chief disciple's in the Dispensation of a Buddha to come." Because of this distraction, Sarada failed to penetrate and gain the knowledge of the paths and fruitions. He was left behind with no acquisition of the paths and fruitions (*magga-phala*).

After his pupils had become monastics, Sarada the recluse paid homage to the Buddha and while standing before him asked: "What is the name of the monk who is sitting just next to you?" When the Buddha replied: "His name is Nisabha, my right-hand side chief disciple, who, in my Dispensation, can turn the wheel-treasure of the Dhamma after me, who had reached the apex of the perfect wisdom of a disciple and who had penetrated the fifteen forms of wisdom (*paññā*)." Sarada the recluse said: "As a result of my act of merit by honouring you with a floral umbrella held over you for seven days, I do not long for the state of a Sakka nor that of a Brahma but I wish to become a chief disciple, one who sits on the right, like this noble Ven. Nisabha, but during the Dispensation of a Buddha in the future."

When Buddha Anomadassī enquired with his knowledge of the future (*anāgataṁsa-ñāṇa*) into whether Sarada's wish would be fulfilled, he foresaw that it would be fulfilled after one immeasurable period (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and 100,000 aeons (*kappa*). So he said to the recluse: "Your wish will not go unfulfilled, when an immeasurable period and 100,000 aeons have elapsed, the Buddha Gotama will appear in the three worlds. His mother will be Queen Mahā Māyā; his father, King Suddhodana; his son, Rāhula and the chief disciple on the left hand side, Moggallāna. But you will become Buddha Gotama's chief disciple on the right hand side, by the name of Sāriputta." Having predicted this, he gave a Dhamma talk and afterwards he rose into the air in the company of the monks.

Sarada the recluse then approached the venerables who had been his old pupils and said: “Venerable sirs, please tell my friend Sirivaḍḍhana the householder thus: ‘Your friend [1192] Sarada the recluse has aspired, at the foot of the Buddha Anomadassī, for the rank of chief disciple on the right hand side. For that of the chief disciple on the left hand side of Gotama, a coming Buddha, you, householder, may decide.’ ” After giving the message thus, Sarada went hurriedly ahead of them by another road and stood at the door of the house of Sirivaḍḍhana.

Thinking: “My master has come after a long time after being absent,” Sirivaḍḍhana gave a seat to Sarada and he himself sat down in a lower seat and asked: “Venerable sir, your retinue of residential pupils is not seen.” – “They are not, friend. Buddha Anomadassī visited our recluses; we honoured the Saṅgha headed by him to the best of our ability. The Buddha taught us, and by the end of the teaching, all 74,000 recluses became Arahats and monks, except for myself.” – “Why you did not become a monk?” asked Sirivaḍḍhana. “Having seen Ven. Nisabha, the Buddha’s chief disciple on the right hand side,” replied Sarada, “I wished for a similar position during the Dispensation of the coming Buddha Gotama. You too can wish for the second chief discipleship on the Buddha’s left hand side.” When the recluse urged him thus, his friend replied: “I have no experience of talking with a Buddha.” Then Sarada said, encouraging him: “Let the talking with the Buddha be my responsibility. On your part, make an arrangement for your great aspiration (*adhikāra*).”

Having listened to Sarada’s advice, Sirivaḍḍhana levelled the ground measuring 14 acres in front of the doorway of his house and covered it with white sand, scattered over it confetti of flowers of the five kinds with parched rice as the fifth. He also built a shed roofed with blue lotus flowers, prepared the seat for the Buddha and arranged things that were dedicated in honour of the Buddha. Then only did he give a signal to Sarada to bring the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha. Taking his cue from Sirivaḍḍhana, Sarada brought the Saṅgha, with the Buddha at its head, to Sirivaḍḍhana’s house.

Sirivaḍḍhana welcomed the Buddha and took his bowl and robe and respectfully brought him into the shed and offered water together with excellent food to him and his Saṅgha. When the meal was over, he gave highly valuable robes to the Buddha and his Saṅgha. Thereafter, he said: “Exalted Buddha, this act of merit

performed by me is not intended for a small reward. Therefore, kindly do me a favour in this way for seven days." The Buddha kept silent in agreement. Sirivaḍḍhana then performed a great alms giving (*mahā-dāna*) in the same manner for a week. On the last day of the alms giving, while standing with his joined hands raised respectfully in the direction of the Buddha, he said thus: "Exalted Buddha, my friend Sarada has aspired for the position of a chief disciple on the right hand side of the Buddha Gotama. I too aspire for the position of the chief disciple on the left hand side of that very Buddha Gotama."

When the Buddha surveyed the future, he saw that the aspiration of Sirivaḍḍhana would be fulfilled. So he predicted: "An immeasurable period (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and 100,000 aeons from now, you will become a second chief disciple on the left hand side." Hearing the Buddha's prophecy, Sirivaḍḍhana was overjoyed. After giving a talk in appreciation of the alms giving, the Buddha returned to the monastery in the company of the monks. From then onwards, till his death, Sirivaḍḍhana made efforts to perform deeds of merit. On his passing away from that existence, he was reborn in the Heavenly Sense Realms (*Kāmāvacara-deva-loka*). Sarada the recluse developed the four sublime practices (*Brahma-vihāra*) and was reborn in the Brahma realm.

Ascetic Life in their Final Existence

The commentary says nothing much about their good works done during the existences after their lives as the recluse Sarada and the householder Sirivaḍḍhana, but it gives an account of their lives in the last existence.

Just before the appearance of our Buddha Gotama, a virtuous man, the future Ven. Sāriputta, who had formerly been recluse Sarada, was conceived in the womb of a Brahmin woman, a merchant's wife, Rūpasārī by name, in the village of Upatissa, near the city of Rājagaha. On that very day, another virtuous man, formerly Sarada's friend, Sirivaḍḍhana, the future Moggallāna, took conception in the womb of Moggalī, wife of another merchant, in the village of Kolita, also near Rājagaha. These two great families had been [1193] very friendly households for seven generations.

When they were born, after ten months had elapsed, each boy was looked after by 66 nurses. On the naming day, the son born of Rūpasārī was named Upatissa because he was the scion of the head of Upatissa village. The son born of

Moggalī was named Kolita as his family was chief in Kolita village. When the two boys grew up, they became accomplished in all kinds of crafts.

The ceremonial paraphernalia of the youth Upatissa included 500 golden palanquins to accompany him constantly whenever he paid a visit to the river, to the garden or to the hill for sport and pleasure. As for the youth Kolita, it was 500 chariots drawn by the best breed of horses that usually went along with him. In Rājagaha, there was an annual festival held on the hilltop. For the two friends the couches were fixed and prepared at the same place. Both took their seats together, and while watching the show, they laughed when there was humour and they were shocked when there was horror; they also gave awards when they were supposed to do.

After enjoying the show in this manner many times, one day they became more sober at the show and were no longer amused by the funny scenes, nor frightened by the horrible ones. Also, there were absolutely no more awards given where they were expected. Both of them thought thus: "Where are those things attractive to the eyes on this festive occasion? Those who participate in the show and those who come to see it will all disappear before the end of 100 years. We should therefore search for some form of spirituality for our escape from Saṁsāra." They reflected on the miseries of life.

Thereafter, Kolita said to his friend Upatissa: "Friend Upatissa, you show no satisfaction as on the other days. What are you thinking about, friend?" Upatissa replied: "Friend Kolita, I found nothing worthy in watching the show. Enjoyment of the festivity is useless; it is empty. I was, therefore, sitting with the thought that I ought to seek something for myself that would lead to liberation from Saṁsāra." Having said this, he asked: "Friend Kolita, why are you also wearing a long face and looking displeased?" Kolita's answer was the same as Upatissa's. Knowing that his friend was contemplating the same thing, Upatissa consulted, saying: "Our common idea, dear Kolita, is something well conceived. Those who seek release from Saṁsāra should adopt an ascetic life. Under whom shall we become ascetics?"

At that time, the great wandering ascetic, Sañjaya, the leader of a religious sect, was staying in Rājagaha with a large gathering of pupils. The two friends agreed to become ascetics in the presence of Sañjaya, each with his 500 attendants.

Since the time of the two friends' association with him, Sañjaya attained the height of his possession of retinue and fame.

Within two or three days, the two wanderers, Upatissa and Kolita, became well-educated in all the doctrines of the teacher Sañjaya and they asked: "Teacher, is that all that you have mastered? Or, is there still some more that we have to learn?" – "That is all I have mastered," replied Sañjaya, "you have learned all of my doctrines."

The two friends then discussed between them: "In that case, it is useless to remain observing celibacy (*brahma-cariyā*) under this teacher, Sañjaya. We have come from the life of householders in quest of release from Saṁsāra. Never shall we be able to achieve that release in his presence. Jambudīpa is vast, if we wander about villages, towns and royal cities and search, certainly we shall find some teacher who will give us the means leading to liberation."

From that time onwards, they visited various places, which they learned were the resort of learned monks and Brahmins and had doctrinal dialogues and discussions. There were, however, no monks and Brahmins who were really learned and able to answer the questions raised by the two wandering friends. In fact, it was the two friends who had to solve the problems put forth by the so-called learned sages. Having failed to find someone whom they should regard as their teacher, though they had roamed about all over Jambudīpa [1194] and made inquiries, they returned to their ascetic dwellings and made an agreement between themselves that whosoever received the doctrine concerning the deathless earlier, should inform the other.

The time was the first waxing moon of February (*Māgha*), about half a month after the arrival of the Buddha in the city of Rājagaha.

> Readers are now referred to chapter 16. That chapter contains such episodes as the conversion of the two friends and their pupils from the state of wandering ascetics to that of monastics called forth in the presence of the Buddha and their attainment of the height of wisdom as disciples. These episodes are only summarized here.

Foremost Title Achieved

In the year he became enlightened, the Buddha passed his Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in the Deer Park; thence he went to the Uruvelā forest and converted 1,000

recluses headed by the three Kassapa brothers and established them in Awakening by means of the Instruction about Burning (*Āditta-pariyāya-sutta*, SN 35.235). On the full moon day of January (*Phussa*), he arrived at Rājagaha in the company of 1,000 monks. After a fortnight, on the first waxing moon of February (*Māgha*), Upatissa met the Arahat, Assaji, a member of the Group-of-Five, in Rājagaha. Having listened to the verse beginning with *Ye Dhamma hetuppabhavā*, "whatever things have a cause and source," from Ven. Assaji, Upatissa became a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*). So did Kolita, after having heard the verse through Upatissa. Thereafter, both noble Stream-enterer friends and their followers became monastics summoned by the Buddha. Before they became monks, their followers became Arahats the moment they heard a discourse from the Buddha. As the wisdom of discipleship was much greater to achieve, the future chief disciples had still not attained that state, and it was on the seventh day of his monastic life that Ven. Mahā Moggallāna became an Arahat and it was on the fifteenth day, that is, on the full moon day of February (*Māgha*) that Ven. Sāriputta did.

In this manner, the two venerables reached the apex of their Perfections and wisdom in chief discipleship while the Buddha was staying in Rājagaha. But, at a later time, while he was at the Jetavana monastery, Sāvatthī, he uttered this in praise of them (AN 1.14):

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikhūnaṁ*
> *Mahā-paññānaṁ yad-idaṁ Sāriputto.*
>
> Monks, among my disciples who are of great wisdom, Sāriputta is the foremost.
>
> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *iddhimantānaṁ yad-idaṁ Mahā Moggallāno.*
>
> Monks, among my disciples who are of great supernormal powers, Mahā Moggallāna is the foremost.

With these words, the Buddha placed Ven. Sāriputta the foremost in great wisdom and Ven. Moggallāna as foremost in supernormal powers.

These two venerables had practised for the welfare of sentient beings for 44 years since they became monastics. The discourses given by them are quite numerous in the Five Collections and the Three Baskets. They are so numerous

that it is almost impossible to reproduce them here, especially, the Path of the Analytic Knowledges (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*), the Long Exposition (*Mahā-niddesa*) and the Short Exposition (*Cūḷa-niddesa*) which embody the words of Ven. Sāriputta. His verses in the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*) contain many of his doctrines. So do Moggallāna's verses, his doctrinal miscellany. Those who desire to, may read the translations of the texts concerned. Here in this work, however, only the account of their attainments, after making efforts for the welfare of sentient beings for 44 years will be given.

Ven. Sāriputta's Attainment of Parinibbāna

Having observed his last and 45 Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at the small village of Veḷuva, near the city of Vesālī, the Buddha emerged from that Rains Retreat and, as has been stated above, left the village by the same road which he had taken in reaching there. After setting forth for the [1195] last time, the Buddha arrived in Sāvatthī and entered the Jetavana monastery. The Captain of the Dhamma, Ven. Sāriputta, served the Buddha and went to his dwelling. When his pupils had fulfilled their duties to him at his dwelling and left, he would sweep the place and spread the leather mat; then he washed his feet, sat down crossed-legged and engaged in the Arahat fruition state (*Arahatta-phala*).

When the prescribed time for meditation was over, Ven. Sāriputta rose from it and wondered whether the Buddha would attain Parinibbāna first or his chief disciples. He came to know that the disciples usually did earlier. And when he examined his life process, he found that it would go on only for seven more days. He further considered where his attainment of Parinibbāna should take place. "Ven. Rāhula attained Parinibbāna in Tāvatiṁsa and Ven. Koṇḍañña at the lake in Chaddanta. Where should I do so?" he pondered repeatedly and remembered his mother, the Brahmin lady Rūpasārī as follows: "My mother has no faith in the Three Treasures: the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, despite her being the mother of seven Arahats. Does that mother of mine possess the spiritual potential for any of the paths and fruitions?"

When he reflected thus, he came to know that she had, from her past deeds of merit, the potential that would lead to Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*). He continued to reflect as by which approach she would realize the four truths, and it became manifest to him thus: "My mother's realization of the four truths and

conversion will happen by my teaching to her and not by any other way. If I were to be indifferent without caring to convert her, people may speak words of reproach, saying: "Ven. Sāriputta is a dependable person to others. This is true. The day the Ven. Sāriputta taught the Discourse on the Even-Minded (*Sama-citta-sutta*, AN 2.37). 1,000 billion Devas and Brahmas became Arahats. Those who attained lower fruitions are countless. Those who gained liberation by realizing the four truths elsewhere have also been witnessed. Besides the celestial families, those who have faith in Ven. Sāriputta are 80,000 in number. Ven. Sāriputta is now helpless even to remove the wrong views of his own mother." Therefore, after eradicating my mother's false notions, I shall attain Parinibbāna in the very chamber in which I was born."

Having decided thus, an idea to inform the Buddha, seek his permission and set out even on that day, appeared in him. So he ordered his young brother Ven. Cunda: "Dear Cunda, inform my 500 monastic pupils to make themselves ready with their bowls and robes. The Captain of Dhamma, Ven. Sāriputta, is desirous of going to Nālaka, his native village." Ven. Cunda did as he was told by his older brother.

The 500 monks packed their beddings, took their bowls and robes and gathered round their master in unison. The great elder himself packed his own bedding, swept his dwelling, stood at its doorway and viewed the place, thinking: "This is the last time I will see this place. I will not come here again." Together with the company of his 500 pupils, he went to the Buddha, paid homage to him and said in supplication: "Exalted Buddha! May the Fortunate One give me permission to leave. May the Gracious One grant me permission to leave. The time has come for me to attain Parinibbāna. My life-process has been given up."

> Herein, the word *anujānātu* of the sentence: *anujānātu me bhante Bhagavā*, of the text is translated "give me permission" and such is the required meaning. Its literal meaning, however, is: "May you know of my proposed entry into Parinibbāna," that is to say, "I am aware of my coming attainment of Parinibbāna. May you also be aware of it."
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> When other disciples, who were also Arahats, came and sought permission for their demise, if the Buddha had said: "Do so!" those with wrong views would blame him: "The Buddha speaks in praise of death!" If, on the other

> hand, he said: "No, dear son, do not do that yet!" they would blame him all the same, saying: "He speaks in praise of suffering!" [1196]

The Buddha asked Ven. Sāriputta: "Dear Sāriputta, where will you attain Parinibbāna?" Ven. Sāriputta answered: "There is, exalted Buddha, my birthplace, Nalaka village, in the country of Magadha. There I will do so." – "Now you are aware, dear son, of the time of your Parinibbāna. It may be very difficult for your brethren, particularly, to no longer see a man of your stature any longer. You had better give them a discourse."

Understanding that the Buddha wanted him to engage in teaching preceded by a performance of miracles, the noble Ven. Sāriputta paid homage to the Buddha, rose up into the air to the height of a toddy palm tree, came down and paid homage at the Buddha's feet. Again he rose into the air to the height of two toddy palm trees, came down and paid homage at the feet of the Buddha once more. In this way he rose up to the height of three, four, five, six and seven toddy palm trees and displayed hundreds of miraculous feats.

While so doing, he taught. How did he preach? He taught while showing himself; he taught while hiding himself; he taught while showing and hiding the upper part of his person; he taught while showing and hiding the lower part of his person; sometimes he created and showed the shape of the moon; sometimes he created and showed that of the sun; sometimes he made the shape of a great mountain; sometimes he made the shape of a great ocean; sometimes he became a Universal Monarch: sometimes he became the Deva King Vessavaṇa; sometimes he became Sakka, the Lord of the Devas; sometimes he became Mahā Brahma. In this way the great elder taught while performing hundreds of miracles. The entire city of Sāvatthī assembled. Having taught in this way to his heart's content, he came down and paid homage at the Buddha's feet and stood firmly like a golden gatepost.

Then the Buddha asked: "Dear son Sāriputta, what is this kind of teaching called?" Ven. Sāriputta replied: "Exalted Buddha, it is called the sport of a lion (*sīha-vikīḷita*)." The Buddha delightedly approved of Ven. Sāriputta's reply by saying: "Dear son Sāriputta, yours is indeed the sport of a lion! Yours is indeed the sport of a lion."

Ven. Sāriputta's Last Homage to the Buddha

Firmly holding the feet of the Buddha by the ankles with his hands dark red like the colour of liquefied lac, the noble Ven. Sāriputta said in supplication: "Exalted Buddha, I have fulfilled the perfections (*pāramī*) for an immeasurable period (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and 100,000 aeons just to pay homage at these two feet of yours. The result of the fulfilment of my heart's desire has now successfully reached its apex. There is no prospect of reunion with you elsewhere in some existence through rebirth from now on. Familiarity or friendliness connected with this life has been totally cut off. Now will I enter the city of Nibbāna, which is free from old age, death and danger, which is blissful, calm, secure, which hundreds of thousands of Buddhas have entered. Should there be any wrong doings, physical and verbal, done by me to your displeasure, kindly forgive me. The final moment for me has now come, exalted Buddha."

"My son Sāriputta, I forgive you. There is nothing whatsoever wrong physically or verbally on your part. You may now go, my dear son, wherever you wish." Thus, the Buddha gave his permission.

Immediately after the Buddha had given permission, Ven. Sāriputta pressed and gripped the Buddha's feet most vigorously. When he stood up, the great earth quaked instantly down to the water below, very strongly as though it were saying: "Though I am able to shoulder Mount Meru, the universe, the Himavanta and the seven surrounding mountains, I cannot today bear this aggregate of virtues." A loud crash of thunder occurred, roaring tumultuously across the entire sky. Huge clouds arose in a second and let a lotus rain (*vassa*) fall heavily.

The Buddha thought: "Sāriputta has paid homage to me as I am sitting. Now I shall let him do so as I am standing." So he rose from the Dhamma throne, the Buddha-seat, from which he usually gave sermons, and walked towards the fragrant chamber and stood on the wooden board studded with gems. Ven. Sāriputta circumambulated the Buddha, who was thus standing, [1197] keeping him on his right and made obeisance from the front, from the back, from the left and from the right of Buddha.

Then he made his last supplication: "Exalted Buddha, I expressed my wish, prostrating at the feet of the Buddha Anomadassī an imeasureable period and 100,000 aeons ago, just for seeing you. My wish has now been fulfilled, I have

had a chance to see you. When I expressed my wish, I listened continuously to the prophetic word of Buddha Anomadassī, and I visualized you through my knowledge and that was my first sight of you. My seeing you now is my last. There is no more chance for me to see you again."

Thereafter he raised his joined hands, which were graceful and bright with the ten nails, towards the Buddha and walked backward till the visibility of the Buddha ended. Having paid respect thus, he departed together with his 500 pupils. Then again the earth failed to bear Ven Sāriputta's excellence and quaked down to the water below.

The Buddha asked the monks surrounding him: "Dear sons, go and see your elder brother off!" All four classes of the assembly then left the Buddha alone at the Jetavana monastery and went out without anyone remaining there, to give Ven. Sāriputta a send-off. The citizens of Sāvatthī too learnt that Ven. Sāriputta was leaving Jetavana to attain Parinibbāna after seeking permission from the Buddha. Wanting to get a glimpse of the noble Ven. Sāriputta, they came out from the city gate that was wholly crowded, with no room for exit or entry. Carrying perfumes and flowers and with their hair dishevelled, they wailed: "Venerable sir, to which venerable should we go now, enquiring: 'Where is Ven. Sāriputta of great wisdom? Where is Ven. Sāriputta, the Captain of the Dhamma?' Into whose hands do you entrust the exalted Buddha and leave, noble venerable?" Wailing in this way, they followed Ven. Sāriputta step by step.

As Ven. Sāriputta was of great wisdom, he exhorted the crowd briefly: "This path leading to the death of every arising being is something which no one can avoid." He also asked the monks: "You too stay behind, monks, and do not neglect the Fortunate One." Thus he sent them back and headed for Nālaka village together with his own followers. To those people who went along with him lamenting: "Formerly the noble one used to travel only to come back. But his journey now is of no return?" Ven. Sāriputta gave an exhortative discourse, saying: "Dear supporters, virtuous ones! Be mindful. Conditioned things, whether physical or mental, happen like this: after arising, they end by passing away!" By this advice concerning mindfulness, Ven. Sāriputta persuaded them to go home.

Ven. Sāriputta goes Home

After uplifting the people on the way for seven days, spending just one night at each place, but without prolonging his stay, he travelled on and on till he reached Nālaka one evening. He stopped and rested at the foot of a banyan tree near the village gate.

Then the nephew of Ven. Sāriputta, a boy by the name of Uparevata, came out of the village. Seeing the noble Ven. Sāriputta, he went up to him and stood, paying respects. Ven. Sāriputta asked his nephew: "Uparevata, is your grandmother at home?" When the boy answered that she was, Ven. Sāriputta said: "Go and tell her of our arrival in the village. If she asks the reason for our coming here, say that we shall stay here the whole day and ask her in my name to clean the chamber where I was born and also to arrange lodgings for 500 monks."

Uparevata, went to his grandmother Rūpasārī and told her: "Grandmother, my uncle Upatissa has come." – "Where is he now?" asked the grandmother. The boy answered: "At the city gate." – "Is he alone or is there somebody else too?" – "Yes, there are 500 monks who have come along." – "Why did he come?" the grandmother asked him again, and the boy related all as instructed by Ven. Sāriputta. "Oh, why does he want me to clean and arrange lodgings for such a great number of monks?" wondered the lady. "After becoming a monk in his youth, perhaps he desires to return to lay life now that he has grown old." With this thought, she cleaned the chamber which was the birthplace of Ven. Sāriputta and prepared the accommodation for the 500 monks. She also lighted the [1198] standing lamps and sent for Ven. Sāriputta.

The noble Ven. Sāriputta, having ascended to the upper terrace together with the 500 monks and having entered the chamber and sat down there, dismissed them saying: "Go to your respective places." As soon as the monks were out, a severe ailment occurred to Ven. Sāriputta's body. Deadly pains, with discharge of blood, developed incessantly. The care given to him involved an exchange of a vessel in for a vessel out. Thinking: "I do not like the way my son is suffering," the Brahmin lady Rūpasārī stood, leaning against the doorway of her chamber.

Then the Four Great Kings surveyed the present whereabouts of the noble Ven. Sāriputta, the Captain of the Dhamma and they saw him lying on his deathbed in

his chamber, his birthplace, in the village of Nālaka, and they decided to go there to pay their last respects and to give their last treatment. On arrival, they stood near him while paying respects. When Ven. Sāriputta asked who they were, they answered that they were the Four Great Kings. "Why did you come?" enquired Ven. Sāriputta and they answered: "We come to look after you, sir." He sent them back, saying: "Enough! I have a monk as my nurse. You may return!" When they went back, Sakka came and spoke in exactly the same way. When Sakka departed, Mahā Brahma came and spoke in exactly the same way. Both Sakka and Mahā Brahma were sent back by Ven. Sāriputta with the same words.

Having seen the coming and going of Devas and Brahmas, the Brahmin lady Rūpasārī became desirous of knowing who those beings were that came and paid homage to her son. She went to the doorway of the chamber and asked her younger son Ven. Cunda who was already there: "Dear son Cunda, what is the matter?" Ven. Cunda explained to his mother that Ven. Sāriputta was sick, and he told Ven. Sāriputta of their mother's presence. When Ven. Sāriputta asked why she came untimely, the mother replied that she did so to see her ailing son, and asked: "Who are those persons, dear son, that visited you earlier?" – "Those who came to me, madam, are the Four Great Kings." – "Are you superior to those Four Great Kings, son?" Ven. Sāriputta answered: "Madam, those Four Great Kings are like the guardsmen of our residence. Armed with their swords they have protected our master, the exalted Buddha, since his conception." The mother continued to ask: "Who came immediately after the Four Great Kings?" – "He was Sakka." – "Are you superior to Sakka too?" Ven. Sāriputta answered: "That Sakka, madam, is like a young novice who carries my bowl and other articles. When our master, the exalted Buddha, descended from the Tāvatiṁsa abode to the human world after his teaching of the Abhidhamma there, Sakka came along carrying the master's bowl and robe." The mother asked again: "Who is he that came shinning, immediately after Sakka's visit?" – "Madam," answered Ven. Sāriputta, "the one who came last was Mahā Brahma, your god and master." – "Dear son, are you also superior to Mahā Brahma, our god?" Then Ven. Sāriputta said: "Oh, yes, madam! On the day our teacher, the exalted Buddha, was born, four Mahā Brahmas, not just one, came and received the Bodhisatta, the Supreme One, with a gold net."

Rūpasārī attains Stream-Entry

Then his mother reflected: "What I have seen now is my son's magnificence. I wonder what the magnificence of my son's master, the exalted Buddha, would be like? It must indeed be inestimable!" While she was thus wondering, the five kinds of joy (*pīti*) occurred to her and pervaded her whole body. Ven. Sāriputta perceived: "Now joy and happiness (*pīti-somanassa*) has occurred to my mother. This is a very suitable occasion for me to give a Dhamma talk to her." So he asked: "Madam, what are you thinking about?" – "I am wondering, son, I have seen my son's magnificence, but what is your master's magnificence like, for it must be inestimable." Then Ven. Sāriputta explained: "Madam, when our master, the Fortunate One, was born, when he gave up the world, when he gained Awakening and when he delivered the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, the system of the 10,000 world-element trembled roaringly. There is none in the world who equals our master in such virtues as morality, mental concentration, wisdom, emancipation and [1199] insight through emancipation. For these reasons, he is the possessor of such attributes as *Arahaṁ*, and *Sammā-sambuddha*." With this introductory speech, Ven. Sāriputta gave a Dhamma talk expounding elaborately on the attributes of the Buddha.

At the end of the discourse by her beloved eldest son, the mother was established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) and said reprovingly: "My dear son Sāriputta, why did you fail to give me such wonderfully substantial happiness? Why did you have the heart to do like this?" Thinking: "I have paid my debt of gratitude to my mother for my birth. Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) is good enough for her." Ven. Sāriputta sent her away, saying: "Go, madam!" Then he asked his brother Ven. Cunda about the time. When the reply was: "Almost daybreak," Ven. Sāriputta called a meeting of the monks and when Cunda informed him that the monks had assembled, he asked Ven. Cunda to help him sit up.

Ven. Sāriputta, asking for forgiveness, addressed the assembly: "Friends, if there is any unpleasant deed or word on my part while you were wandering along with me for 44 years, kindly forgive me." The assembly of monks replied: "Venerable sir, during our wandering with you, without deserting you for 44 years, we saw no unpleasant deed or word of yours. In fact, it is you, venerable sir, who must forgive us." When they had asked for forgiveness, he gathered his robe and covered his face and lay on his right side. Like the Buddha, he entered

upon the nine absorptions (*jhāna*) that were to be taken up in order; he was absorbed in them progressively and then regressively; again he proceeded in his absorption from the first absorption up to the fourth absorption. Immediately after his emergence from the fourth absorption, Ven. Sāriputta attained Parinibbāna, complete extinction of the physical and mental aggregates, the element of Nibbāna without any remnants of the aggregates remaining, causing immediately the great earth to roar and echo.

Being aware that her son did not say a word and wondering what had happened to her son, the mother Rūpasārī enquired by running her hands on the back of his sole and she came to know that her son had attained Parinibbāna. So making a loud noise, she touched Ven. Sāriputta's feet with her head and cried, uttering: "Dear son, we did not know of your virtues previously. Now we have no opportunity to invite hundreds of thousands of monks, with you at their head, to my house for feeding! There is no chance to offer you robes! No occasion to have hundreds of dwellings built!" Thus, she wailed till dawn. As soon as dawn came, his mother summoned goldsmiths, had the treasuries opened and gold bars weighed with a huge pair of scales and handed them over to the goldsmiths, ordering: "Brothers, make with this gold bullion 500 spired halls and 500 pavilions."

Sakka too called Vissakamma and commanded him: "Friend Vissakamma, the Captain of the Dhamma, Ven. Sāriputta, has attained Parinibbāna. Create 500 spired halls and 500 pavilions of gold." Vissakamma created them all under Sakka's command. In this way, there were 500 spired structures and 500 pavilions built by his mother, and another 500 spired halls and 500 pavilions created by Vissakamma, totalling 2,000 golden structures.

Thereafter, a large hall was built with a big golden pinnacle in the middle, at the centre of the Nālaka village and other pinnacles were made for lesser halls. Then the ceremony for funeral rites took place. In this ceremony, Devas mingled with humans and humans with Devas and thus they all paid homage to the remains of Ven. Sāriputta, making the ceremony more crowded.

The Story of Revatī the Female Devotee

Ven. Sāriputta's female devotee, Revatī by name, came to the funeral with three golden vases made to honour her master. At that moment, Sakka too came to the

human world with the intention to do honour to Ven. Sāriputta and with him were divine dancing girls as his companions, numbering twenty-five million (25,000,000). Learning of Sakka's visit, people turned back and moved away. In the crowd was Revatī, who also tried to move back like [1200] the others, but as she was heavy with child, she could not get to a safe place and fell down in the midst of the people. Not seeing her, the people trod on her and went away. Revatī died on the spot and was reborn in a golden mansion in Tāvatiṁsa. Instantly she had a body about three miles long, resembling a huge gem stone. Her ornaments were about a load of 60 boxes and her retinue of divine maids were 1,000 in number.

Then the maids placed a big mirror in front of her. When she saw her luxuries, she pondered: "This wealth is great indeed! What kind of good works have I done?" And this led her to know: "I paid homage to Ven. Sāriputta with three golden vases. The people stomped on me and went away. I died on the spot and instantly took rebirth in this Tāvatiṁsa heaven. I shall tell the people clearly of the result of my wholesome deeds done to Ven. Sāriputta. So she went down in her own flying mansion to the realm of human beings.

Seeing the golden mansion from a distance, the people were amazed wondering: "What is happening? Are there two suns rising brightly?" While they were thus talking, the big mansion descended near them, and showed its shape. Then they said: "This is not a sun. It is a gigantic gold mansion!" While the people were talking among themselves, the golden mansion descended in a moment and halted in the sky just above the funeral pyre of fragrant wood piled up to burn the remains of Ven. Sāriputta. The goddess Revatī left the mansion in the sky and went down to earth. "Who are you?" asked the people and Revatī replied: "Do you not know me? I am Revatī by name. After honouring Ven. Sāriputta with three golden vases, I was trodden to death by the people and was reborn in Tāvatiṁsa heaven. Behold my fortune and splendour. You too now give alms. Do other deeds of merit as well." Thus she spoke in praise of the beneficial results of good works. She paid homage and circumambulated the funeral pyre by keeping it on her right, then she went back to her divine abode in Tāvatiṁsa heaven.

Ven. Cunda Conveys the Relics to Sāvatthī

Having performed the funeral rites for seven days, the people made a heap of fragrant wood, its height measuring 99 cubits. They put Ven. Sāriputta's remains on top of the fragrant wooden heap and lighted it with fragrant grass. On the site where the cremation took place, a Dhamma talk was given throughout the night. At daybreak, Ven. Anuruddha extinguished the fire of the funeral pyre with scented water. Then Ven. Sāriputta's younger brother, Ven. Cunda put the relics in the water filter, and thinking: "I must not stay here now in this Nālaka village. I shall report the attainment of Parinibbāna by my older brother, Ven. Sāriputta, the Captain of the Dhamma, to the Fortunate One." So he took the water-filter containing the relics and collected Ven. Sāriputta's requisites, such as bowl, robes, etc., and went to Sāvatthī. He spent only one night, not two nights, at each stage of his journey and eventually arrived at Sāvatthī.

Then Ven. Cunda bathed in the lake near the Jetavana monastery, returned to the shore and put on his robes properly. He reflected: "Buddhas are great personalities, to be respected, like a stone umbrella. They are difficult to approach like a snake with its hood erect or like a lion, tiger or an elephant in heat. I dare not go straight to the Fortunate One to inform him. Whom should I approach first?" Reflecting thus, he remembered his preceptor: "My preceptor, the custodian of the Dhamma, Ven. Ānanda, is a very close, good friend of my brother. I shall go to him and relate the matter and then I shall take him with me and speak to the Fortunate One." So he went to Ven. Ānanda, paid respects to him and sat down at a proper place. And he said to Ven. Ānanda: "Venerable sir, Ven. Sāriputta has attained Parinibbāna. This is his bowl and this is his robe, and this is the water-filter containing his relics." Thus he presented one article after another while speaking to Ven. Ānanda.

Then Ven. Ānanda said: "My friend Cunda, we have a reason to see the Fortunate One. Come, friend Cunda, let us go. Let us approach the Fortunate One and tell him of the matter." So saying Ven. Ānanda took Ven. Cunda to the Buddha, paid respects [1201] to him, and they took their proper seats.

Thereafter Ven. Ānanda said to the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, this Ven. Cunda who is a novice (*samaṇuddesa*) has informed me that Ven. Sāriputta has attained Parinibbāna. This is Ven. Sāriputta's bowl, this is his robe and this is his

water-filter with his relics." So saying, Ven. Ānanda handed over the water-filter to the Buddha.

The Buddha stretched out his hand to receive the water-filter and placed it on his palm and addressed the monks: "Monks, my dear sons, fifteen days ago Sāriputta performed a number of miracles and sought my permission to enter Parinibbāna. Now only his bodily relics remain which are as white as a newly polished conch shell.

Monks, that monk Sāriputta was one who had fulfilled the perfections (*pāramī*) for an immeasurable period (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and 100,000 aeons. He was the individual who turned the Dhamma Wheel that had been turned by me previously or one who had taught the Dhamma Wheel that had been taught by me. Marvellously did he occupy the place that was next to me.

That monk Sāriputta light up the assembly of disciples (*sāvaka-sannipāta*), with his presence extremely well, the assembly of disciples which emerged on the day he became an Arahat. Besides me, he was peerless in possessing wisdom throughout the field of births (*jātikhetta*), the system of the 10,000 worlds.

That monk Sāriputta was of great wisdom, of vast wisdom, of active wisdom, of quick wisdom, of sharp wisdom, and of wisdom destructive to the defilements (*kilesa*), of few wants, easily contented, free from the hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*), who didn't mix with people and was highly energetic. He admonished others by pointing out their faults, and he condemned evil deeds and evil doers regardless of their social positions.

Dear monks, that monk Sāriputta embraced asceticism after renouncing great wealth in 500 existences; that monk Sāriputta had forbearance that was as mighty as the great earth; that monk Sāriputta was least conceited like a horn-broken bull; that monk Sāriputta was as humble-minded as a beggar's son.

Dear monks, behold the relics of Sāriputta who was of great wisdom! Behold the relics of Sāriputta who was of vast wisdom, of active wisdom, of quick wisdom, of sharp wisdom, of wisdom penetrative of the defilements, of few wants, easily contented, free from the hindrances, who did not mix with people and was highly energetic. He admonished others by pointing out their faults, condemned evil deeds and evil doers regardless of their social positions!"

After uttering this in prose, the Buddha went on to speak the following verses. These verses are from the commentary to the Discourse to Cunda (*Cunda-sutta*, SN 47.13):

Yo pabbajī jāti-satāni pañca,
pahāya kāmāni mano-ramāni.
Taṁ vīta-rāgaṁ susamāhitindriyaṁ,
Parinibbutaṁ vandatha Sāriputtaṁ.

O my dear sons, monks! That noble monk, named Sāriputta, unflinchingly and completely discarded sense pleasures that would delight the foolish mind. He adopted an ascetic life with great faith for 500 existences. To that noble monk, named Sāriputta, who now has totally cut off craving and passion, whose sense-faculties were well restrained, who has attained Parinibbāna and ceased suffering, bow your heads in homage with respectful faith and conceit destroyed.

Khanti-balo paṭhavi-samo na kuppati,
na cāpi cittassa vasena vattati. [1202]
Anukampako kāruṇiko ca nibbuto,
Parinibbutaṁ vandatha Sāriputtaṁ.

O my dear sons, monks! That noble monk, named Sāriputta, had great forbearance as his strength; resembling the great earth he showed no anger to others; he never yielded to the whims of the unstable mind; he looked after many beings with loving-kindness; he was immensely compassionate; he quenched the heat of the defilements. To him, who has attained Parinibbāna and ceased suffering, bow your heads in homage with respectful faith and conceit destroyed.

Caṇḍāla-putto yathā nagaraṁ paviṭṭho,
nīca-māno carati kaḷopi-hattho.
Tathā ayaṁ vicarati Sāriputto,
Parinibbutaṁ vandatha Sāriputtaṁ.

O my dear sons, monks! Just as the son of a poor beggar who enters towns and villages looking for food with a worn out cup made of bamboo strips in his hand, wanders without conceit but humble-minded, even so this noble monk, named Sāriputta, wandered knowing no pride but in all

humility. To him, who has attained Parinibbāna and ceased suffering, bow your heads in homage with respectful faith and conceit destroyed.

Usabho yathā chinna-visāṇako,
aheṭhayanto carati purantare vane.
Tathā ayaṁ vicarati Sāriputto,
Parinibbutaṁ vandatha Sāriputtam.

O my dear sons, monks! Just as the horn-broken bull wanders in towns, villages and forests, absolutely harmless to other beings, even so the noble monk, named Sāriputta, wandered doing no harm to others and lived in harmony in the four postures of lying, sitting, standing and walking. To him, who has attained Parinibbāna and ceased suffering, bow your heads in homage with respectful faith and conceit destroyed.

Beginning thus the Buddha praised the virtues of Ven. Sāriputta in 500 verses. The more the Buddha praised in every way Ven. Sāriputta's virtues the greater was Ven. Ānanda's helplessness. As a chicken near a cat's mouth trembles, so did Ven. Ānanda helplessly tremble. Accordingly, he asked the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, having heard of Ven. Sāriputta's Parinibbāna, I feel as though my body is stiff, the directions are blurred to my eyes, the Dhamma does not manifest itself to me. I am not inclined to learn any unlearnt Dhamma texts nor am I interested to recite what I have learnt."

Then in order to cheer him up the Buddha said as follows: "My dear Ānanda, did Sāriputta attain Parinibbāna taking with him the aggregate of your virtues (*sīla*) or taking with him the aggregate of your concentration (*samādhi*), your wisdom (*paññā*), your freedom (*vimutti*), your knowledge and seeing of freedom (*vimutti-ñāṇa-dassana*)?"

Thereupon Ven. Ānanda replied: "Exalted Buddha, Ven. Sāriputta when attaining Parinibbāna, does not take the aggregate of my virtues (*sīla*) or take with him the aggregate of my concentration (*samādhi*), my wisdom (*paññā*), my freedom (*vimutti*), my knowledge and seeing of freedom (*vimutti-ñāṇa-dassana*).

In fact, exalted Buddha, Ven. Sāriputta, the great elder exhorted me, made me plunge into the Dhamma, made me understand the Dhamma, and made me set up the Dhamma. He made me become ardent and happy to practise the Dhamma. He was anxious to preach to me. He respected his co-residents. I always

remember his [1203] Dhamma influence, his Dhamma instruments and his righteous support."

The Buddha knowing that Ven. Ānanda was really in great distress, said to him as follows, for he desired to abate his sorrowful feelings: "My dear Ānanda, have I not spoken to you long before about separation from one's beloved while alive (*nānā-bhāva*), separation by death (*vinā-bhāva*) and separation in different existences (*aññathā-bhāva*)? Dear Ānanda, herein how could it be possible to wish that something, having the nature of coming to life, coming into existence and being subject to conditioning and destruction, should not pass away? Indeed there is no such possibility!

My dear Ānanda, while a big substantial tree is standing, its largest branch might come to destruction; similarly, while the community of worthy monks is existing, Sāriputta ceases to live. Herein how would it be possible to wish that something, having the nature of coming to life, coming into existence and being subject to conditioning and destruction, should not pass away? Indeed there is no such possibility.

My dear Ānanda, do not live depending on others but live depending on yourself. Live not by relying on other doctrines but by relying on the supermundane ones! My dear Ānanda, how should a monk not live depending on others but live depending on himself? How should one live not relying on other doctrines but by relying on supermundane ones?

My dear Ānanda, in this Dispensation, a monk lives, eradicating craving and grief that tend to appear in the world, by putting forth strong effort, by reflecting, by being mindful, by repeatedly seeing the body as the body. By putting strong effort, by reflecting, by being mindful, one lives, eradicating craving and grief that tends to appear in the world, by repeatedly seeing feelings as feelings, by repeatedly seeing the mind as mind, by repeatedly seeing phenomena as phenomena. My dear Ānanda, in this way a monk lives not by depending on others but by depending upon himself. He lives not by relying on other doctrines but by relying on supermundane ones.

My dear Ānanda, if monks, at present or after my demise, live by not depending on others but by depending on themselves, by not relying on other doctrines but

by relying on supermundane ones, all of them will become noble Arahats, indeed among those, who take up the three trainings."

Speaking to him in this way, the Buddha gave some relief to Ven. Ānanda. Thereafter, he had the bone relics of Ven. Sāriputta placed in a shrine (*cetiya*) in the city of Sāvatthī.

> Herein, the Buddha attained Awakening on the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*). On the first waxing day of February (*Māgha*) Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Moggallāna joined the Saṅgha, and on the seventh day Ven. Moggallāna became an Arahat. On the fifteenth day, the full moon of February, Sāriputta became an Arahat.
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> On the full moon day of November (*Kattikā*) of the year 483 BCE, the day the Buddha completed 45 Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) and the two chief disciples, 44 Rains Retreat, Ven. Sāriputta attained Parinibbāna in his native village Nālaka. It should [1204] be noted briefly in advance that Ven. Moggallāna did the same at the Kālasilā stone slab on Mount Isigili, Rājagaha, on the new-moon day of that same month of November (*Kattikā*) in the same year.

Ven. Moggallāna's attainment of Parinibbāna

After having the relics of Ven. Sāriputta placed in a shrine in Sāvatthī, as has been said, the Buddha gave a hint to Ven. Ānanda that he would travel to Rājagaha. Ven. Ānanda then informed the monks of the Buddha's proposed journey to that city. In the company of a large number of monks, the Buddha set out from Sāvatthī to Rājagaha and took residence in the Veḷuvana monastery.

While the Buddha was staying at the Veḷuvana monastery of Rājagaha, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna was sojourning to the stone slab, named Kāḷasilā, on Mount Isigili. As Ven. Mahā Moggallāna was at the height of his supernormal powers, he used to visit the realm of Devas as well as to that of Ussada hell. After seeing for himself the great enjoyment of divine luxuries by the Buddha's followers in the realm and the great suffering of the heretical disciples in Ussada, he returned to the human world and told the people that such and such a male or female supporter was reborn in a certain realm, enjoying great luxuries but among the followers of heretics such and such a man or a woman was reborn in a certain hell. People therefore showed their faith in the Buddha's teaching and

avoided heretics. For the Buddha and his disciples, the people's honour and hospitality increased whereas those for the heretics decreased day by day.

So the latter conceived a grudge against Ven. Mahā Moggallāna. They discussed it and decided, saying: "If this monk Moggallāna lives longer our attendants and supporters might disappear and our gains might diminish gradually. Let us have him killed." Accordingly they paid 1,000 pieces of money to a chief robber, named Samaṇaguttaka, to put the noble Ven. Mahā Moggallāna to death.

With the intention to kill Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, the chief robber Samaṇaguttaka, accompanied by a large number of robbers, went to Kālasilā. When Ven. Mahā Moggallāna saw him, he disappeared into the air by means of his supernormal powers. Not finding Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, the chief robber went back that day and returned again the next day. Ven. Mahā Moggallāna evaded him in the same way. Thus six days elapsed.

On the seventh day, however, due to a misdeed done in the past, the unwholesome deed that comes to fruition in a future life (*aparāpariya-akusala-kamma*) took effect.

The unwholesome deed of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna was as follows: In one of his former existences, when he was inexperienced, wrongly following the slanderous words of his wife, he wished to kill his blind parents. So he took them in a small vehicle to the forest and pretending to be plundered by robbers, he attacked his parents. Being unable to see who attacked them because of their blindness and believing that the attackers were real robbers, they cried for the sake of their son, saying: "Dear son, these robbers are striking us. Run away, dear son, to safety!"

With remorse, he said to himself: "Though I myself beat them, my parents cried, worrying about me," and he realised: "I have done a wrong thing!" So he stopped attacking them and making them believe that the robbers were gone, he stroked his parents' arms and legs and said: "Mother and father fear not. The robbers have fled," and he took them home.

Having no chance to show its effect for a long time, his evil deed remained like a live charcoal covered by ash and now, in his last existence, it came time to seize upon and hurt him. A worldly simile may be given as follows: When a hunter sees a deer, he sends his dog for the deer, and the dog, following the deer,

catches up at the right place and bites his prey. In the same way, the evil deed done by Ven. Mahā Moggallāna now had its chance to show its result in this final existence of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna. Never has there been any person who escapes the result of his evil deed when it finds the opportunity to show up at an opportune moment.

Knowing full well his being caught and bitten by his own evil deed, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna was unable to get away by his supernormal power at the seventh attempt. This was the power that had been strong enough to make even the Nāga King Nandopananda tame and to make the Vejayanta palace tremble, but as a result of his past wickedness, he could not disappear into the air. The power that had enabled him to defeat the Nāga King and to make the Vejayanta tremble had now become weak because of his former unwholesone deed.

The chief robber, Samaṇaguttaka, arrested Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, and together with his men he hit him and pounded him so that the bones broke to pieces like broken rice. After doing this [1205] deed known as pounding the bones to dust so they become something like straw used as a cushion to put something on (*palālapiṭhika*), and thinking that Ven. Mahā Moggallāna was dead, the chief robber threw the body into a bush and left together with his men.

Becoming conscious, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna thought of seeing the Buddha before his demise, and having fastened his pounded body with the bandage of his psychic powers, he rose into the sky and appeared before the Buddha and paid homage to the master. Thereafter, the following conversation took place between Ven. Mahā Moggallāna and the Buddha:

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna: Exalted Buddha, I have given up the control of my life process (*āyu-saṅkhāra*), I am going to attain Parinibbāna.

Buddha: Are you going to do so, my dear son Moggallāna?

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna: Yes, I am, venerable sir.

Buddha: Where will you go and do that?

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna: At the place where the Kālasilā stone slab is, exalted Buddha.

Buddha: In that case, dear son Moggallāna, give a Dhamma talk to me before you go. I will not have another opportunity to see a disciple like you.

When the Buddha said thus, the noble Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, replying: "Yes, exalted Buddha, I shall do as you say," and he paid homage to the Buddha and flew up into the air up to the height of a toddy palm tree, then that of two palm trees and in this way he rose up to the height of seven trees, and as Ven. Sāriputta had done before on the day of his Parinibbāna, he displayed various miracles and spoke of the Dhamma to the Buddha. After paying homage respectfully, he went to the forest where Kālasilā was and attained Parinibbāna.

At that very moment, a tumult arose in all six planes of the Deva realms, and they spoke among themselves, saying: "Our master, Ven. Moggallāna, is said to have attained Parinibbāna." Devas and Brahmas brought divine unguents, flowers, fragrance, smoke and sandalwood power as well as various divine firewood. The height of the funeral pyre made of sandalwood was 99 cubits. The Buddha himself came together with his monks and standing near the remains, supervised the funeral arrangements and had the cremation conducted.

On a vast funeral site a rain of flowers fell. At the funeral ceremony, there were human beings moving about among Devas and Devas moving about among human beings. In due course, among Devas stood demons; among demons, Gandhabbas; among Gandhabbas, Nāgas; among Nāgas, Garuḷas; among Garuḷas, Kinnarās; among Kinnarās, umbrellas; among umbrellas, fans made of golden yak (*camara*) tail; among these fans, round banners, and among round banners were flat ones. Devas and humans held the funeral ceremony for seven days.

The Buddha had the relics of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna brought to him and a shrine (*cetiya*) was built. In it the relics were enshrined near the gateway of the Veḷuvana monastery.

The Murderers are Punished

The news of the murder of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna spread throughout the whole of Jambudīpa. King Ajātasattu sent detectives to all places to investigate and arrest the murderous robbers. While the murderers were drinking at a liquor shop, one of them provokingly slapped down the liquor cup of another fellow. Then to pick a quarrel the provoked man said: "Hey, you wretched one, you stubborn fellow! Why did you do that and make my cup fall to the ground?" Then the first man asked annoyingly: "Hey, you scoundrel! How was it? Did you

dare to hurt Ven. Mahā Moggallāna first?" – "Hey, you evil one! Did you not know that I was the first and foremost to harm that monk?" the other man defiantly retorted.

Hearing the men discussing among themselves: "It was I who did the killing. It was I who murdered him!" the king's officers and detectives seized all the murderers and reported to King Ajātasattu on the matter. The king summoned them and asked: "Did you kill the [1206] Ven. Mahā Moggallāna?" – "Yes, we did, Great King," the men replied admitting it. "Who asked you to do so?" – "Great King, those naked heretics did, and they gave us money," the men confessed.

The king had all the 500 naked heretics caught and buried together with the murderers in the pit, navel-deep in the courtyard. They were covered with straw and burnt to death. When it was certain that they all had been burnt, they were cut to pieces by ploughing over them with an iron plough.

> Herein, the account of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna's attainment is taken from the exposition of the Birth Story about the Teacher Sarabhaṅga (*Sarabhaṅga-jātaka*, Ja 522); that of the punishment of the murderers from the exposition of the Story about Mahā Moggallāna (*Mahā Moggallāna-vatthu*) of the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, 123) commentary.

Regarding the fact that the Buddha himself supervised the funeral of Ven. Moggallāna, the monks in the Dhamma Hall remarked: "Friends, since Ven. Sāriputta's Parinibbāna did not take place near the Buddha, he did not receive the Buddha's honour. On the other hand, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna received it because he attained Parinibbāna in the neighbourhood of the Buddha." When the Buddha came and asked the monks what they were talking about, they told him. The Buddha then said: "Monks, Moggallāna was honoured by me not only in this life but also in the past." The Buddha told them the Birth Story about the Teacher Sarabhaṅga (*Sarabhaṅga-jātaka*, Ja 522).

Soon after the Parinibbāna of the two chief disciples, the Buddha went on a great circular (*mahā-maṇḍala*) tour in the company of monks and reached the town of Ukkacelā where he made his alms round, and delivered the Discourse at Ukkacelā (*Ukkacela-sutta*, SN 47.14) on the sand banks of the Ganges.

4. Ven. Mahā Kassapa

Aspiration in the Past

100,000 aeons ago, Buddha Padumuttara appeared and, with the city of Haṁsavatī as his alms resort, he resided in the Khemā Deer Park. While he was so residing, a wealthy person owning 800 million, named Vedeha, who was the future elder Mahā Kassapa, had his delicious early meal and kep the Observance Day (*Uposatha*). With unguents, flowers, etc. in his hand, he went to the monastery where he made obeisance and sat down at a proper place.

At that time, the Buddha spoke about his third disciple, Mahā Nisabha by name, saying: "Monks, among my disciples who themselves practise the austerities (*dhutaṅga*) and advise fellow monks to practise the same, Nisabha is foremost (*etad-agga*)."

Hearing the Buddha's words, Vedeha was very pleased and his faith increased and when the audience had left as the occasion came to an end, he respectfully paid homage to the Buddha and said: "Exalted Buddha, please accept my alms food tomorrow." – "Supporter," replied the Buddha, "the monks are too many!" – "How many are they, exalted Buddha?" When the Buddha said they were 6,800,000, he said boldly: "Exalted Buddha, without leaving even a single novice at the monastery, kindly have my meal offering together with all of your monks." The Buddha accepted the invitation of the devotee Vedeha by keeping silent.

Knowing that the Buddha had accepted his invitation, Vedeha returned home and prepared a great offering and on the next morning sent a message to the Buddha announcing the time for having the meal. Taking his bowl and robe, the Buddha went to Vedeha's house in the company of monks and sat on the prepared seat. When the pouring of the waters of dedication was over, the Buddha accepted the rice gruel, and other food, and the distribution and partaking of food was made. Sitting near the Buddha, Vedeha was pleased.

At that time, while on alms round, Ven. Mahā Nisabha came to that road. Seeing Ven. Mahā Nisabha, Vedeha got up from his seat and drew near to him, showing his respect, he asked: "Venerable sir, please hand your bowl to me." The noble Ven. Mahā Nisabha handed his [1207] bowl to Vedeha. "Please come into my house," said Vedeha, "the Fortunate One is still seated there." – "It is

unbecoming to come into the house," Ven. Mahā Nisabha replied. So the devotee filled the bowl with food and offered it to him.

After sending off the noble Ven. Mahā Nisabha and returning home, Vedeha took his seat near the Buddha and said: "Exalted Buddha, although I told him that the exalted Buddha was still in my house, he did not want to come in. Does he possess virtues that are greater than yours?"

Never has a Buddha any reluctance to speak in praise of others (*vaṇṇa-macchariya*), accordingly the Buddha gave his reply as follows, immediately after the lay devotee had asked: "Supporter, expecting food, we are seated in your house, but Nisabha never sits, waiting for food. We occupy a dwelling near a village, but Nisabha stays in a forest dwelling. We stay under a roof, but Nisabha dwells only in open air. These are Nisabha's unusual attributes."

The Buddha elaborated on Ven. Mahā Nisabha's virtues as though he filled the ocean with more water. As for Vedeha, he developed greater faith with greater satisfaction as though more oil was poured into the lamp that is burning with its own oil. So he came to a conclusion: "What use is there for me with human and divine luxuries? I shall resolve to become foremost among those who speak about austerity (*dhuta-vāda*), monks who themselves practise austerities (*dhutaṅga*) and advise their co-residents to do so."

Again, the lay devotee Vedeha invited the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha to his food for the next day. In this way, he offered a great alms giving (*mahā-dāna*) and on the seventh day, he distributed, in generosity, three robes to each of the monks. Then he fell at the feet of the Buddha and told his wish as follows: "Exalted Buddha, with the development of deeds accompanied by loving-kindness (*mettā-kāya-kamma*), words accompanied by loving-kindness (*mettā-vacī-kamma*), and thoughts accompanied by loving-kindness (*mettā-mano-kamma*), I have performed deeds of merit for seven days such as this great alms giving (*mahā-dāna*). I do not long for the bliss of Devas, the bliss of Sakka nor the bliss of Brahma as a result of my good works, but may it be the wholesomeness will enable me to strive for becoming foremost among those who practise the thirteen ascetic (*dhutaṅga*) practices in the lifetime of a coming Buddha, similar to the position that has been achieved now by Ven. Mahā Nisabha."

Buddha Padumuttara surveyed Vedeha's future with his psychic power, wondering whether he will achieve it or not for it is so great an aspiration, and he saw the man's wish would definitely be fulfilled. So the Buddha said prophetically as follows: "Supporter, you have expressed your wish for the position you love. In future, at the end of 100,000 aeons, a Buddha by the name of Gotama shall arise. You shall then become the third disciple, named Mahā Kassapa, of the Buddha Gotama!"

Having heard the prophecy, lay devotee Vedeha was happy as though he was going to attain that position even the following day, for he knew that a Buddha speaks only the truth. For as long as he lived, Vedeha performed various sorts of generosity, kept the precepts and did other wholesome deeds and on his death, was reborn in a divine abode.

Life as Ekasāṭaka Brahmin

From that time onwards, the devotee enjoyed luxury in the divine and human worlds. Ninety-one aeons ago, Buddha Vipassī appeared and was staying in the Deer Park called Khemā, with the city of Bandhumatī as his alms resort. The lay devotee, former Vedeha, then passed from the divine world and took rebirth in an unknown and poor Brahmin family.

Buddha Vipassī used to hold a special convocation, once in every seven years and gave discourses. In so doing, he held day and night sessions so that every being might be able to attend. For the day session, he taught in the evening and for the night-session, he spent [1208] the whole night. When the convocation was drawing near, there arose a great noise and Devas, roaming about the whole Jambudīpa, announced that the Buddha would deliver a discourse.

The Brahmin, the future Mahā Kassapa, heard the news. But he had only one garment. So did his housewife, the Brahmin woman. As for the upper garment, the couple had but one. That was why he was known all over the town as "Ekasāṭaka Brahmin, the Brahmin with only one garment." When a meeting of Brahmins took place to discuss some business, the Brahmin himself went to the meeting leaving behind his wife at home; when an assembly of Brahmin women occurred, the Brahmin stayed at home and his wife went there, putting on the same piece of upper garment.

On the day the Buddha was to speak, Ekasāṭaka asked his wife: “Dear wife, how is it? Will you go to hear the discourse at night or will you go for the day session?” – “We women are unable to listen to sermons at night, I shall attend the day session.” So saying she left her husband at home and went along with other female lay devotees and supporters to the day session wearing the upper garment. There, she paid respect to the Buddha, sat at a proper place and listened to the sermons and went home together with the female companions. Then, leaving his wife, the Brahmin, in his turn, put on the same piece of upper garment and went to the monastery at night.

At that time Buddha Vipassī was gracefully seated on the Dhamma throne and, holding a round fan, spoke the Dhamma-words like a man swimming in the celestial river, or like a man stirring up the ocean forcefully with Mount Meru as a churning stick. The whole body of Ekasāṭaka, who was sitting at the end of the assembly and listening, was filled with the five kinds of joy (*pīti*) profusely, even in the first watch of the night. Hence he folded the upper garment and was about to give it to the Buddha. Then he became reluctant to do so as stinginess (*macchariya*) occurred in him, manifesting 1,000 disadvantages of giving it away. When stinginess thus occurred in him, he utterly lost his willingness to offer it because worry overwhelmed him as follows: “We have only one upper garment between my wife and myself. We have nothing else for a substitute. And we cannot go out without it.”

When the second watch of the night came, the five kinds of joy reappeared in his mind, and he lost his enthusiasm once more as before. During the last watch too he felt the same joyful emotion. But this time the Brahmin did not allow stinginess to appear again and was determined, saying to himself: “Whether it is a matter of life or death, I will think about the clothing at a later time.” With this determination, he folded the garment, placed it at the feet of the Buddha and whole-heartedly offered it to the Buddha. Then he slapped his bent left arm with his right three times and uttered aloud three times: “Victory is mine! Victory is mine!”

At that time, King Bandhuma, seated behind the curtain, at the back of the throne, was listening to the Dhamma. As a king, it was he who should declare victory; so the shout: “Victory is mine!” did not please him. He, therefore, sent one of his men to enquire what the shout meant.

When the man went to Ekasāṭaka and asked about it, the Brahmin answered: "Man, all princes and others, riding elephants, horses, etc and carrying swords, spears, shields and cover, defeat their enemy troops. The victory achieved by them is no wonder. As for me, like a man who with a club strikes the head of a bull and made the beast run away, so I have defeated my stingy heart and successfully given in generosity the upper garment of mine to the Buddha. I have overcome miserliness and I am invincible."

The man came back and reported the matter to the king. The king said: "Friend, we do not know what should be given to the Buddha. But the Brahmin does." So saying, he sent a set of garments to the Brahmin. The Brahmin thought to himself: "The King gave me nothing as I kept silent at first. Only when I talked about the Buddha's attributes did he give this to me. What use is there for me with this set of garments that occurred to me in association with the Buddha's attributes?" So thinking he also [1209] offered that set of garments to the Buddha.

The king asked his men as to what the Brahmin did with the garments given by him and came to know that the poor man had given it away to the Buddha. So he had two sets of garments sent to the Brahmin. Again the Brahmin gave them away to the Buddha. The King then had four sets sent to the Brahmin, who again gave them away to the Buddha. In this way the king doubled his gift each time and had 32 sets sent to the Brahmin. This time the Brahmin thought: "Giving away all to the Buddha without leaving some for us seems to mean that we are increasingly receiving the garments." Accordingly, out of the 32 sets, he took one set for himself and another set for his wife and gave the rest to the Buddha. After that the Brahmin became friendly with the master.

Then one day, in the extremely cold evening, the king saw the Brahmin listening to the Dhamma in the presence of the Buddha. He gave the Brahmin his red mantle which he had on and which was worth 100,000 coins, asking him to cover himself while listening to the Dhamma. But the Brahmin reflected: "What is the use of covering this putrid body of mine with this mantle?" he therefore made it into a canopy and offered it to the Buddha, fixing it above the Buddha's couch in the fragrant chamber. Touched by the Buddha's six-coloured radiance, the mantle became all the more beautiful. Seeing the mantle, the King remembered what it was and said to the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, that mantle

once belonged to me. I gave it to Ekasāṭaka Brahmin to put on while attending your Dhamma assembly." The Buddha replied: "Great King, you honoured the Brahmin, and the Brahmin honoured me." The king thought to himself: "The Brahmin knows what should be given to the exalted Buddha, but we do not." So thinking, the king gave all kinds of useful articles to the Brahmin, each kind numbering 64. Thus, he performed the act of generosity called the eight by eight (*aṭṭhaṭṭhaka*) to the Brahmin and appointed him as his Brahmin chaplain.

Understanding that eight by eight equals 64 the chaplain sent 64 vessels daily of food for distribution among the monks by lot. Thus, he established his alms giving (*dāna*) for as long as he lived, and on his death, he was reborn again in the realm of Devas.

Life as a Householder

Passing away from the Deva realm, the future Mahā Kassapa was reborn in the house of a layman, in the city of Bārāṇasī, during the period between the two Buddhas (*Buddhantara*), Koṇāgamana and Kassapa, who appeared in this Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*). When he grew old, he married and while living a householder's life, he one day took a stroll towards the forest. At that time, a certain Paccekabuddha was stitching a robe near a river-bank, and as he did not have enough cloth to make a hem he folded up the unfinished robe.

When the householder saw the Paccekabuddha, he asked the latter why he had folded the robe. When the Paccekabuddha answered that he had done so because he did not have enough cloth for the hem. Hearing this, he gave his own clothes, saying: "Please make the hem with this, venerable sir." Then he expressed his wish, praying: "In my coming existences in Saṁsāra, may I know no lack of such things."

Later on, at the householder's residence, there was a quarrel between the householder's sister and his wife. While they were quarrelling, a certain Paccekabuddha appeared, to receive alms food. Then the householder's sister offered the food to the Paccekabuddha and said: "May I be able to avoid the householder's wife even from a distance of hundred leagues." While standing at the doorway, the wife heard the wish, and thinking: "May the Paccekabuddha not partake of the other woman's food," she took the alms bowl and threw away the food and filled the bowl with mud before she gave it back to the

Paccekabuddha. Seeing what the wife was doing, the sister scolded her, saying: "Hey, you stupid woman, you may abuse me, or even beat me if you wish, but it is not proper to throw away the food and fill the bowl with mud and give it to the Paccekabuddha, who has fulfilled the perfections (*pāramī*) for so long a period of innumerable years."

Then only did the householder's wife regain her moral sense and said: "Wait, please, venerable sir." Then she begged his pardon and threw away the mud from the bowl and washed it thoroughly and rubbed it with fragrant powder. She then filled the bowl with [1210] the four sweet things (*catu-madhu*), and poured butter which was white like the colour of a thickly grown lotus, and added brilliance thereby. Handing the bowl back to the Paccekabuddha, the wife said: "Just as this food shines, even so may my body emanate a brilliant radiance." The Paccekabuddha spoke words of appreciation, gave his blessing and flew up into the sky. The husband and wife performed meritorious deeds throughout their lives and upon their death they were reborn in the divine world.

Life as a Bārāṇasī Merchant

Again, when they passed away from the divine world, the householder was reborn during the lifetime of the Buddha Kassapa, in the city of Bārāṇasī, as the son of a wealthy merchant who owned 800 million. Similarly, his wife became the daughter of another wealthy merchant.

When the son came of age, that very daughter was brought to his home as his wife. Because of her past misdeed, the result of which until then had been latent, as soon as she passed the threshold while entering the house, a putrid smell issued forth from her body, as though the toilet was opened. When the merchant son asked whose smell it was and came to know that it was the odour of the bride who had just come, he ordered that the bride be expelled and sent back to her parents' house in the same pomp and grandeur that had attended her when she came. In this way, she had to return to her parents' home from seven different places because of the foul smell that appeared as soon as she entered the threshold of her husband-to-be's house. Terrible indeed is an evil deed!

At that time, as Buddha Kassapa had attained Parinibbāna, people began to erect a relic shrine (*dhātu-cetiya*), a league high with bricks of gold worth 100,000 made from pure gold bullion. While the shrine was under construction, it

occurred to the lady thus: “I am the one who had to return from seven places. What is the use of my living long?” So she sold her jewellery and with the money thus obtained she had a gold brick made, one cubit long, half a cubit wide and four fingers thick, and then took the gold brick together with orpiment and eight lotus stalks and went where the shrine was situated.

At that moment, a brick was wanted to fill the gap that appeared when an encircling layer of bricks was laid as part of the shrine. So she said to the master mason: “Please, sir, fill the gap with my brick.” – “Lady,” replied the master mason, “you have come at an opportune moment. Do it by yourself.”

When permitted wholeheartedly thus, the wealthy daughter climbed up to that spot and, having mixed the orpiment with the liquid, she filled the gap with her brick by means of that cohesive mixture. Then she paid homage by placing the lotus stalks at the brick and expressed her wish: “In whatever existence in Saṁsāra, may sandalwood fragrance emanate from my body and lotus fragrance from my mouth!” After worshipping the shrine respectfully she went home.

At that moment, the wealthy merchant’s son, to whom the lady was to be married first, remembered her. A festival was held in full swing then. The son asked his men: “Once there was a girl brought to my house; in whose house is she now?” When the men answered that the young lady was still at her father’s house, the man said: “Friends, go and fetch her. Let us enjoy the festival together with her.” So saying he sent his men for her.

When they got to the young lady’s residence, they paid respect to her and stood there. When the lady asked about their visit, they spoke of their purpose. “Brothers,” said the lady, “I have offered all my ornaments in honour of the shrine. I have no more to put on.” The men reported the matter to their master who replied: “You just bring the girl, she will get some jewellery.” So the lady was brought to him by his men. As soon as the merchant’s daughter entered the house, the whole house was filled with sandalwood fragrance as well as that of lotus.

The wealthy son asked: “The first time you came here your body issued forth a foul smell. But now it is sandalwood fragrance from your body and lotus fragrance from your mouth. What is the reason for that?” When the whole story of her meritorious act was told, the man’s faith developed as he thought: “Ah,

the Buddha's teaching is indeed able to free one from the [1211] cycle of suffering!" Accordingly, he wrapped the golden shrine, measuring a league, with velvet blankets. At certain places, he made decorations in the form of golden lotus flowers so as to add exquisite beauty to the shrine, the flowers being the size of a chariot's wheel. The hanging stems and stalks of the golden lotus were twelve cubits in length.

Life as King Nanda

Having done meritorious deeds in that existence, the wealthy husband and wife lived the full span of life and were reborn in a divine realm on their death. Again, when they passed away from that realm, the husband was reborn at a place a league away from the city of Bārāṇasī, in the family of a noble man, while the wife became the eldest princess in the palace in that city.

When both came of age, an announcement was made to hold a festival in the village where the noble man's son Nanda lived. Then Nanda asked his mother for clothes to put on while enjoying the festive amusements and got a washed, second hand cloth. The son asked for another cloth on the ground that the one given to him was coarse. The mother gave another cloth as a substitute. But it was also rejected because of its roughness. When the rejection was repeated several times in this way, the mother said: "We are of such a noble man's household, dear son. We are not fortunate enough to have clothes better than this." – "In that case, mother, I shall go where finer clothing is available." – "I wish you kingship of Bārāṇasī, dear son," replied the mother, "even today." Thus the mother gave her consent with such auspicious words.

Having done obeisance to his mother, the young Nanda asked her permission to go. And the mother willingly gave her permission. But she did so because of her conviction, thinking: "Where is my son going? He has nowhere else to go. He will be staying here and there in my home." But Nanda left his village for Bārāṇasī and took a nap with his head covered on the stately stone-couch in the royal garden. That was the seventh day after the king's demise.

The ministers performed the funeral rites and held a meeting in the courtyard, discussing among themselves: "Only a daughter was born to the king. He had no son. A kingdom without a king is unseemly. Who should become the monarch?" They proposed one another for kingship saying: "Be our king!" – "No, you

should become the ruler." Then the Brahmin chaplain said: "We should not see many persons to choose from. Let us send the state chariot to search for the deserving one!" When the chaplain's decision was agreed by all, they let the state chariot loose and it was followed by the four army divisions with the five kinds of musical instruments playing.

The chariot departed through the eastern gate of the city and ran towards the royal garden. Some people suggested that the chariot should be turned back because it was running towards the garden as a result of its force of habit. The suggestion, however, was rejected by the chaplain. The chariot entered the garden, circumambulated Nanda three times and stopped and set itself ready for Nanda to get on. After removing the edge of the covering cloth from Nanda, the chaplain studied his soles and declared: "Let alone Jambudīpa, this man is worthy to rule over the four continents with their 2,000 surrounding smaller islands." He also ordered the musicians to play three times.

Then Nanda removed the cloth that covered his face and saw the ministers, with whom he entered into a conversation:

Nanda: For what purpose did you come here?

Ministers: Great King, the kingship of Bārāṇasī has come for you.

Nanda: Where is the king?

Ministers: He has passed away, sir.

Nanda: How many days have elapsed since his passing away?

Ministers: Today is the seventh day.

Nanda: Did not the late king have a son or a daughter? [1212]

Ministers: He had only one daughter, but no son, great king.

When the ministers said thus, he accepted the kingship, saying: "In that case, I shall act as king." Then the ministers constructed a pavilion for consecration and brought the princess who was fully bedecked and made him king of Bārāṇasī after duly holding a royal consecration ceremony.

Thereafter, the ministers offered a dress costing 1,000 to the consecrated Nanda. "Friends, what sort of clothing is it?" asked King Nanda. "Great King, it is for

you to put on." – "Friends," enquired the king, "this is but coarse clothing. Have you not got a finer one?" – "Great King, there is no finer one among the clothes to be used by men," replied the ministers. "Did your late king put on such a dress?" asked Nanda. When the ministers answered in the positive, King Nanda remarked: "Your late king did not seem to be one of great fortune. Bring a golden jar full of water. We shall get very fine clothing." The ministers brought it and handed it to the king.

Rising from his seat, the king washed his hand and mouth, and carrying the water with his cupped hand, he tossed it in the direction of the east. Then eight wish-fulfilling trees emerged, breaking up the great massive earth. When he did the same in the southern, the western and northern directions, eight trees in each direction emerged. In this way there were 32 wish-fulfilling trees in the four directions. King Nanda wrapped the lower part of his body in a divine robe and put on another one for the upper part. Then he had an announcement made by the beat of drum. The announcement being: "In this state of King Nanda let no women spin yarn!" He also raised the royal white umbrella, bedecked himself with adornments, entered the city on the back of an elephant, ascended the upper terrace of the palace and enjoyed a great kingly life.

After some years of Nanda's enjoyment of kingly life, the queen, watching his life, showed her manner, expressing pity as she thought: "Rare indeed is a new act of merit!" When the king asked why her manner expressed pity, she reminded him: "Your luxurious life is really great. That is because you have truly performed good deeds with faith in the past. But now you do nothing for future happiness." – "To whom should we give alms?" asked the king, "there are no virtuous recipients!" – "Great King, Jambudīpa is not void of Arahats. You had better arrange things to be given. I shall bring worthy individuals to receive," said the queen boldly.

The next day the king had the offerings arranged at the eastern gate of the city. The queen performed a vow early to observe the precepts and facing to the east and prostrating, invited by word of mouth: "If there be Arahats in the eastern direction, may they come and accept our alms food!" Since there were no Arahats in that direction, nobody came to do so. The offerings had to be made to destitutes and beggars. On the next day, similar arrangements took place at the

southern gate. The third day saw them too at the western gate. But no Arahats came from those directions either as there were none.

On the fourth day, the offerings were arranged at the northern gate, and when the queen extended her invitation as before, the Paccekabuddha, Mahā Paduma, the oldest of 500 Paccekabuddhas, who were all sons of Queen Padumāvatī, addressed his younger brothers: "Brother Paccekabuddhas, King Nanda has invited you. Accept his invitatione!" The noble ones accepted the invitation with pleasure. They washed their faces at Lake Anotatta and then disappeared from there and reappeared at the city's northern gate.

The citizens went to the king and informed him: "Great King, 500 Paccekabuddhas have come." With the queen, the king went to the Paccekabuddhas and welcomed them with folded hands. Holding the alms bowl, he brought the 500 Paccekabuddhas to the upper terrace of the palace after performing a great alms giving. When the performance was over, the king, sitting at the feet of the eldest member of the assembly; and the queen, at the feet of the youngest member, made a request, saying: "Venerable sirs, if you stay in our garden, you all will be happy with our supply of requisites. There will also be a growth of merit on our part. Therefore, please give us your promise to stay in the garden of Bārāṇasī city." The promise was given to the king, who made full accommodations, such as 500 lodgings, 500 meditation paths, etc., in the [1213] royal garden. The four requisites were also provided to them so that they might find no trouble.

When such provision had lasted for some time, a state of unrest and disturbance took place in the border areas. The king asked his queen to look after the Paccekabuddhas during his absence to quell the border rebellion.

As the king had instructed, the queen supported the Paccekabuddhas with the four requisites carefully. After some days, just before the king's return, the life process of the Paccekabuddhas came to an end. So the eldest one, Mahā Paduma, spent all three watches of the night in absorption (*jhāna*), and standing and leaning against the wooden backrest, attained Parinibbāna with no grasping remaining. In the same manner the rest of Paccekabuddhas attained Parinibbāna.

On the next day, the queen prepared the seats for the Paccekabuddhas by applying cowdung, strewing flowers and pervading the air with perfumes, and

waiting for their arrival. As she did not see any signs of their approaching, she sent a male servant, saying: “Go, my son, and find out the reason. Is there any mental or physical discomfort for the venerable ones?”

When the royal servant went to the garden and looked for Paccekabuddha Mahā Paduma, after opening the door of his dwelling, he did not see him there. So he went to the walk and saw him standing and leaning against the wooden board. After paying homage to him, the servant invited the Paccekabuddha saying: “It is time to have a meal, venerable sir!” There was no reply at all. Thinking that the Paccekabuddha was sleeping, the servant moved nearer and felt the back of his feet. After making such investigations, he came to know full well of the Paccekabuddha’s attainment of Parinibbāna, for his feet were cold and stiff. So he went to the second Paccekabuddha and then subsequently, to them all until the last one. When he investigated thus, he realized that the Paccekabuddhas had all reached the state of Parinibbāna. On his return to the palace, the Queen asked him: “Where are the Paccekabuddhas, son?” – “They have all attained Parinibbāna, madam,” answered the servant. The queen wept bitterly and went out from the city to the royal garden with the citizens and performed funeral rites and cremation. She took their relics and had a shrine built and the relics enshrined.

Having brought the border areas to normalcy, the king returned to the city and on seeing the queen who had come to meet him, he asked: “Dear queen, did you attend to the Paccekabuddhas without any negligence? Are the noble ones well?” When the queen replied that they had passed into Parinibbāna, the king was shocked and reflected: “Even to these wise ones, of such a nature, death occurred! How can there be liberation from death for us!”

The king did not proceed to the city but immediately went to the royal garden. He called his eldest son and handed the kingship over to him and himself adopted the life of a recluse, like a monk in the Dispensation of a Buddha. The queen too, thinking: “If the king becomes a recluse, what is there for me to do? There is nothing!” and she followed suit as a female ascetic in the royal garden. Having developed the absorptions (*jhāna*), both were reborn in the realm of the Brahmas.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

While they were still in the Brahma realm, the time had come for our Buddha to arise. At that time, Pippali the youth, the future Mahā Kassapa, took conception in the womb of the wife of a wealthy Brahmin, named Kapila, in the Brahmin village of Mahātittha, in the Magadha country whereas, his wife, the future Bhaddā Kāpilānī, took conception in the womb of the wife of another wealthy Brahmin, a Kosiyan descendant, in the city of Sāgala, also in the Magadha kingdom.

When they grew up, the young Pippali, being 20 years of age and Bhaddā Kāpilānī being sixteen, the former's parents noticed that their son had come of age and insisted that he be married, saying: "Dear son, you have come of an age to raise a family. One's lineage should last long!" As Pippali had come from the Brahma world, he refused to agree and [1214] said: "Please do not utter such words into my ears. I shall attend to you as long as you live, and when you are gone, I shall take up a homeless life as a recluse." After two or three days, the parents again spoke to him. The son remained resolute. Another persuasion took place but that too fell on deaf ears. From that time onwards, the mother was insistent.

When the insistence became too unbearable, Pippali thought: "I shall let my mother know how much I want to become a monk!" So he gave 1,000 ounces of gold to the goldsmiths, asking them to create a gold statue of a girl out of it. When the statue had been created and polishing had been done, he dressed the statue with red garments and adorned it with colourful flowers and brilliant ornaments. Then he called his mother and said: "Mother, I shall remain at home until I get a girl as beautiful as this statue! If not, I shall not do so."

Since the Brahmin mother was wise, she considered: "My son is one who has done good works, who has performed alms giving, who has expressed his noble aspiration. While he was engaging in deeds of merit in his past existence, it was unlikely that he did them alone. Indeed my son must have had an excellent woman, very pretty like the golden statue, with whom he did meritorious deeds." So considering, she summoned eight Brahmins, had great honour made to them and had the gold statue placed on a chariot and said: "Go, brothers! If you see a girl resembling this gold statue in a family who equals ours in caste, lineage and

wealth, give the statue to her as a gift or as a pledge." With these words she sent the Brahmins away.

The eight Brahmins concurred, saying: "This indeed is a task to be done by the wise like us." So saying, they left the village and discussed among themselves on the destination of their journey. Then they decided unanimously thus: "In this world, the country of Madda is the home of beautiful women. Let us go to Madda." So they went to the city of Sāgala which lay in that state. Having left the statue at the bathing ford in that city, they watched from a remote place.

At that time, the female attendant of Bhaddā Kāpilānī, the daughter of a wealthy Brahmin, bathed her and bedecked her with ornaments and left her in the chamber of splendour before she went to the bathing ford. On seeing the statue she thought: "My mistress has come ahead of me!" Then she scolded her and grumbled in various ways. "Hey, you stubborn daughter! Why are you here alone?" As she said: "Go home quick!" she raised her hand to strike her mistress. When she actually did strike the back of the statue, the whole of her palm hurt as though she had struck a stone slab. The female attendant stepped back and spoke harshly to pick a quarrel: "Although I saw this woman with such a thick neck, how foolish I have been to mistake her for my mistress! She is not worthy ever to hold my lady's skirt!"

Then the eight Brahmins surrounded the attendant, asking: "Is your mistress of such beauty?" – "What beauty is this lady? Our lady's beauty is more than 100 times or 1,000 times superior to that of this lady," retorted the attendant, "if she sits in a room of twelve cubits, it is not necessary to light a lamp there; darkness can be expelled by her natural complexion." – "In that case," said the Brahmins, "come, let us go!" So saying they took the attendant, and having brought the gold statue, they went to the house of the wealthy Brahmin of the Kosiya clan and stopped at the doorway to announce their visit.

The Brahmin treated them well as a host and asked them as to where they came from. They replied that they came from the home of the wealthy Brahmin Kapila of Mahātittha village, in the kingdom of Magadha. When the host asked the reason, they told him of the purpose of their visit. "Friends," said Brahmin Kosiya: "It is a welcome purpose. Brahmin Kapila is equal to me by birth, by descent and by wealth. I shall give our daughter as a bride." Having promised

thus, Brahmin Kosiya took the statue. The visiting Brahmins then sent a message to Brahmin Kapila, saying: “The bride has been found. Go ahead with whatever is necessary.”

Getting the news, the servants of Pippali transmitted it to him gleefully, saying: “Master, it is learnt a bride has been found for you, who looks like your gold statue!” But Pippali reflected: “I thought it was impossible to find such a one, but now they say: ‘The bride has been [1215] found!’ As I do not want her, I shall write a letter and send it to her.”

So he went to a secluded place and wrote a letter as follows: “I would like my dear sister to marry another man equal by birth, descent and wealth. I will adopt the life of a recluse in a forest. I do not wish you to be in distress later on.” Then he sent the letter secretly to Bhaddā Kāpilānī.

When Bhaddā Kāpilānī, learnt the news that her parents were desirous of giving her in marriage to Pippali the youth, the son of the wealthy Brahmin Kapila of Mahātittha village in Magadha country, she similarly went into seclusion and wrote the following letter: “I would like my brother to get married with another woman of equal caste, family and wealth. I am going forth and will become a female recluse. I do not want you to be unhappy afterwards.” She then sent the letter in secret to Pippali.

When the two parties of messengers met midway, Bhaddā Kāpilānī’s men asked: “From whom is the letter you are carrying, friends, and to whom is it going?” Pippali’s men replied honestly: “The letter is sent by our master Pippali to Bhaddā Kāpilānī.” They also asked in return: “From whom is the letter you are conveying and for whom is it meant?” Bhaddā Kāpilānī’s men gave a straightforward reply: “It is from our mistress to Pippali.”

Then the messengers from both sides agreed to open and read the letters, and they were amazed to know the spiritual sense of the letters and said: “Look what the groom and the bride are doing!” Then they tore up both the letters and threw them away in the forest. They also wrote two new letters expressing reciprocal agreement and gladness and sent them to their respective senders. In this way, the time for marriage between Pippali, the son of a wealthy merchant, and Bhaddā Kāpilānī, the daughter of another wealthy merchant, came about as

arranged by their parents and the middlemen, despite their unwillingness to be joined in the household life.

On the day of their marriage both of them brought a garland of flowers each; he placed his and she hers in the middle of their bed. Having had their dinner both simultaneously went to their bed and got on to it, Pippali on his right side and Bhaddā Kāpilānī on her left. They made an agreement thus: "The garland of whose side withers is to be regarded as having lustful thoughts. And the garlands should be left untouched." Both of them spent the night without being able to sleep throughout all three watches lest one should unconsciously touch the other. The garlands remained unwithered. By day, they behaved like brother and sister even without a smile tinged with pleasure.

Both the wealthy son and the wealthy daughter kept themselves aloof from fondness of sensual pleasure (*lokāmisa*) and took no care of their household business at the same time. Only when their parents passed away did they manage the business. The wealth belonging to Pippali was great: his gold and silver was worth 870 million. Even the gold dust which he threw away each day after using it for rubbing his body would amount to twelve Magadha cups if collected. He owned sixty mechanized dams. The measurement of his farm was twelve leagues. He had fourteen large villages as the colony of his servants and workers, fourteen divisions of elephant troops, fourteen divisions of cavalry and fourteen divisions of chariots.

One day, the wealthy Pippali went to his farm riding a fully equipped horse and while he was stopping at the edge of the farm, he saw crows and birds picking up earthworms and insects and eating them. He asked his servants what the crows and birds were eating and the servants answered that they were eating earthworms and insects. Again he asked: "Who is responsible for the evil deeds of the crows and birds?" – "As the farm is ploughed for you, [1216] sir, you are responsible for those evil deeds," replied the servants. The reply stirred up Pippali's spiritual urgency, causing him to reflect seriously thus: "If I am responsible for the evil deeds done by the crows and birds, what is the use of 870 million worth of gold and silver. Indeed none! Nor is there any use of my riches, such as the vast twelve-league farm, the sixty mechanized dams and the fourteen large villages of my workers. Indeed there is no use of them all! Therefore, I

shall hand over these riches to my wife Bhaddā Kāpilānī and go forth to become a monk!"

At that moment, his wife, Bhaddā Kāpilānī, had sesame from three big jars spread out on mats and placed in the sun. While seated and surrounded by her maids, she saw crows and other birds picking and eating sesame worms. When she asked her maids, she came to know what the birds were eating. On further enquiry she was informed that she must be responsible for the evil deeds done by the birds as the job was done for her sake. She too reflected seriously thus: "Oh, it is enough for me, if I just get four cubits of cloth to wear and a cupful of cooked rice to eat. I cannot wear more than four cubits of cloth; nor can I eat more than one cupful of cooked rice. If I am responsible for these wrongdoings done by others, surely I will not be able to remove myself from Saṁsāra, the cycle of suffering, even after 1,000 existences. When my husband comes, I shall give all my wealth to him and leave household life and become a female recluse."

The Couple's Going Forth

The wealthy Pippali returned home and had a bath, went up to the upper terrace and sat down on a high seat, which only noble personalities deserve. Then a feast worthy of a Universal Monarch was arranged and served to the merchant. Both the wealthy Pippali and his wife Bhaddā Kāpilānī ate the meal, and when their servants went away, they retired to their quiet resort and stayed quietly at ease. Thereafter, the two discussed the situation between themselves as follows:

Pippali: Madam Bhaddā, when you came to this house, how much wealth did you bring?

Bhaddā: I brought my wealth in 55,000 carts.

Pippali: The wealth brought by you and the wealth extant here in this house, such as 870 million in riches, sixty mechanized dams, etc., I entrust them all to you.

Bhaddā: Oh, but where are you going?

Pippali: I am going to become a recluse, madam.

Bhaddā: Oh, sir, I too have been readily waiting for the time of your coming back. I too shall become a female recluse.

To these two individuals who were endowed with the perfections, the three existences of sense (*kāma*), form (*rūpa*) and the formless (*arūpa*) realms manifested as three leaf-huts blazing with fire. The two great personalities endowed with the perfections, therefore, had the robes and bowls bought from the market and had their hair shaved by the other. Saying: "We dedicate our renunciation of the world to the noble Arahats." They came down from the main terrace with their bags, in which were put their bowls, hanging from their left shoulders. None of the servants and workers at home, male or female, recognized the two renunciants.

Then the couple left the Brahmin village of Mahātittha and went out by the servants' village gate. There they were seen and it was recognized from their behaviour that they were the master and mistress. Crying bitterly the servants fell at their feet and asked sorrowfully: "Master and mistress, why do you make us helpless?" The couple replied: "We have become recluses as we were shocked by the likeness between the three existences and a leaf-hut on fire. If we were to set you free from servitude, one after another there will be no end even after 100 years. Wash your heads and be liberated from servitude and live free." So saying, they left while the servants were wailing. [1217]

Parting Company with Each Other

While he was going ahead, the noble Pippali thought in retrospect thus: "This beautiful Ven. Bhaddā Kāpilānī, who is as precious as the whole Jambudīpa has been following me. There could be a reason for somebody to misunderstand us, thinking: "These two cannot part from each other even though they have become recluses; they are doing something which is not in harmony with their ascetic guise." And if one misunderstands us, one is in danger of been reborn in a state of woe. Therefore I should desert this fair lady, Bhaddā Kāpilānī."

As he went on ahead, the noble Pippali found a junction of two roads and stopped there. Having followed from behind, Bhaddā Kāpilānī stopped there too and stood with her hands joined in reverence. Then the noble Pippali addressed her: "Bhaddā, people seeing a beautiful lady like you following me might offend against us by thinking: 'These two individuals cannot part from each other despite their ascetic life,' and then they would be reborn in a suffering state. So

take whichever road you choose between these two. I shall go by the road you do not prefer."

Bhaddā too replied thus: "Oh, yes, sir! Womankind is a blemish for a monk. People would also blame us, saying that we are unable to leave each other even after becoming ascetics. You, sir, follow one road. I shall follow the other. Let us be separated." Then she circumambulated exactly three times, and paid homage respectfully with the five kinds of veneration at the four places, such as the front, the back, the left and the right of Pippali. With her hands joined and raised, she said: "Our love and intimacy as husband and wife that started 100 aeons ceases today." She added: "You are of nobler birth, so the road on the right befits you. We womenfolk are of lesser birth, so the left one suits me." Saying thus she proceeded by the left road.

When the two walked on separate paths, the great earth quaked, roaring echoingly as if it were uttering: "Though I can bear up the Cakkavāḷa mountains and Mount Meru, I cannot do so with regard to the virtues of these two marvellous personages!" There appeared thundering sounds in the sky, too. The Cakkavāḷa mountains and Mount Meru grew up higher and higher because of the earthquake.

Meeting with the Buddha

By that time, the Buddha had arrived in Rājagaha after observing the first Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) and in the year of his Awakening was still sojourning in the Veḷuvana monastery, before his journey to Kapilavatthu. While he was staying in the fragrant chamber of the monastery, he heard the noise of the quake of the great earth and he reflected as to the cause of the earthquake, and came to know: "It is on account of the power of the virtues of Pippali the young man and Bhaddākāpilāni the young woman who have become ascetics after unflinchingly renouncing their incomparable wealth, and dedicating their lives to me. The quake took place at the junction where they parted. On my part, it will be proper only if I do a favour to them." So he went out of the fragrant chamber, personally carrying his bowl and robe. And even without asking any of the 80 great disciples to accompany him, he travelled alone for a distance of three miles to extend his welcome. He sat cross-legged at the foot of the banyan tree, known as Bahuputtaka, between Rājagaha and Nālanda.

What was peculiar to the Buddha now was that he did not sit there as an unknown monk practising austerities (*dhutaṅga*). In order to promote the faith of Ven. Mahā Kassapa, who had never seen him before, the Buddha did not conceal his natural splendour that shone forth with the major and minor marks, and he sat there emanating the Buddha-radiance and illuminating everything brilliantly up to a distance of 80 cubits. The radiance that was of the size of a leafy umbrella, or that of a cart-wheel or that of a pinnacled gable, spread from place to place brightening the whole forest grove, as though it were a time when 1,000 moons or 1,000 suns rose with all their brightness. Therefore, the whole forest grove was very pleasant with the splendour of the 32 marks of a great man, like the sky brightened by stars, or like the water surface with the five kinds of lotus blossoming in groups and clusters. Though the natural colour of the [1218] trunk of the banyan tree must be white, that of the leaves green and the old leaves red, by the splendour of the Buddha's body the whole of the Bahuputtaka banyan trees, with many branches, was all golden and yellow on that very day, as they were bathed with the luminous radiance of the Buddha's light.

Ven. Mahā Kassapa thought: "This venerable one must be my teacher, the Buddha. Indeed I have become a monk, dedicating my monkhood to this very teacher." From the spot on which he stood and saw the Buddha, Ven. Mahā Kassapa walked nearer. At all three places he adoringly venerated the Buddha and received his discipleship by declaring three times thus: *Satthā me Bhagavā, sāvakohaṁ asmi*, "exalted Buddha, you are my teacher! I am your disciple!"

Then the Buddha replied: "Dear son Kassapa, if you showed such immense reverence to the great earth, it might not be able to withstand it. As for me, who have fared well like former Buddhas, the tremendous reverence shown by you, who are aware of the immensity of my qualities, cannot make a single hair of my body tremble. Dear son Kassapa, be seated, I shall give you an inheritance."

> This is how the exposition of the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) commentary and the exposition of the commentary on Mahā Kassapa's Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*) records it. In the Discourse about Robes (*Cīvara-sutta*, SN 16.11), however, it is said as follows: When Ven. Kassapa solemnly declared his discipleship thrice, the Buddha said: "Kassapa, if a man, without knowing a pupil of all-round

perfect mentality, says: 'I know,' or, without seeing him, says: 'I see,' his head will fall off. As for me, I say: 'I know,' because I do know him, or I say: 'I see,' because I do see him."

Herein the meaning is: If a teacher, outside the Dispensation of the Buddha, claimed that he knew or saw without actually knowing or seeing an extremely faithful disciple who showed extreme veneration like Ven. Mahā Kassapa did, the head of that teacher would drop off from his neck, as a ripe toddy-palm fruit does from its stem. Or it might split into seven pieces.

Herein, it may further be explained as follows: If Ven. Mahā Kassapa were to direct his great veneration, generated by such faith, to the great ocean, its water might disappear like drops of water falling into a tremendously hot iron pan. If he were to direct his veneration towards the mountain of the universe, it would break up into pieces like a ball of husks. If he were to direct it to Mount Meru, the mountain would be destroyed and tumble down in disarray like a lump of dough pecked by a crow's beak. If he were to direct it towards the great earth, its soil would be scattered like a great pile of ashes being blown off by the wind.

But Ven. Mahā Kassapa's veneration of such might could not make a hair on the back of the Buddha's instep tremble. Let alone Ven. Mahā Kassapa, even thousands of monks equal to Ven. Mahā Kassapa, would be unable to do so by performing their veneration. They were powerless even to disturb a soft hair on the Buddha's instep, or even to shake a single thread of the robe made of rags that the Fortunate One was wearing. So great was the might of the Buddha.

Ordination as a Monastic

[This is based on the Discourse about Robes (*Cīvara-sutta*, SN 16.11).]

Having said: "Dear son Kassapa, be seated. I shall give you my inheritance," as has been mentioned before, the Buddha gave Mahā Kassapa three pieces of advice: "Kassapa, you must therefore practise thinking thus: 'I shall abide by conscience and concern (*hiri-ottappa*) in dealing with those monks of higher standing, lower standing, or of equal standing.' Kassapa, you must, therefore, practise thinking thus: 'I shall listen to all teachings on wholesomeness. I shall listen attentively to all these teachings respectfully, reflecting on them and bearing them well.' [1219] Kassapa, you must therefore practise, thinking thus:

'Mindfulness of the body (*kāyagatā-sati*) accompanied by happiness (*sukha*) shall never desert me!' "

The Buddha gave him these three pieces of advice. Kassapa also received them respectfully. These pieces of advice amounted to Mahā Kassapa's ordination, lower as well as higher. Mahā Kassapa was the only one to receive this kind of ordination in the Buddha's Dispensation, which is known as ordination through acceptance of the Buddha's advice (*ovāda-paṭiggahaṇa-upasampadā*)."

> Herein the Buddha granted Mahā Kassapa ordination as a monastic by means of these three pieces of advice. Of these three, the first is: "Dear son Kassapa, you must develop first the two effective virtues of conscience and concern (*hiri-ottappa*) as you encounter the three classes of fellow monastics: those of higher standing, those who are senior to you by age and ordination; those of lower standing, those who are junior to you; and those of medium standing, who are equal to you." By this first advice, Ven. Mahā Kassapa was taught to abandon pride in birth, for he was of the Brahmin caste.
>
> The second advice is: "Dear son Kassapa, while you are listening to the faultless teaching, you must be respectfully attentive by lending both your ears, the wisdom ear as well as the natural one, in all three phases of the teaching, the beginning, the middle and the end." By this second advice Ven. Mahā Kassapa was taught to abandon arrogance springing from his wide knowledge, for he was highly intelligent.
>
> The third advice is: "Dear son Kassapa, you must strive not to let the first absorption (*jhāna*) get away from your mental process, the absorption (*jhāna*) which is accompanied by feelings of happiness (*sukha-vedanā*) originates in mindfulness of the body (*kāyagatā-sati*) and the sense object of breathing-in and out (*ānāpāna-ārammaṇa*)." By this third advice Ven. Mahā Kassapa was taught to abandon craving and greed (*taṇhā-lobha*) developing from possession of a strong personality (*upadhi*), for he was good looking.

Having made Mahā Kassapa a monk upon receiving advice at the foot of the Bahuputtaka banyan tree, the Buddha left and set out on a journey with the noble Ven. Mahā Kassapa as his follower. While the Buddha had 32 marks of a great being on his body and was thus exquisitely splendored, Ven. Mahā Kassapa was graceful with the seven marks. The latter closely followed the Buddha like a

small golden boat trails a big golden one. After going some distance, the Buddha came down from the main road and gave a hint that he would like to sit at the foot of a tree. Knowing that the master was desirous of sitting, Ven. Mahā Kassapa folded his very soft upper robe fourfold and spread it saying: "May the exalted Buddha be seated here. The act of the exalted Buddha's sitting will bring me welfare and happiness for a long time."

The Exchange of Robes

Having sat on the double robe folded in four, the Buddha felt the edge of the robe with his hand, which had the colour of a lotus blossom, and said: "Dear son Kassapa, this upper robe of yours, made of an old piece of cloth, is very soft indeed!"

> If you are thinking: "Why did the Buddha utter these words of praise?" The answer is: Because he wanted to exchange robes with Ven. Mahā Kassapa. "Why did the Buddha want to make exchange of robes?" The answer is: Because he wanted to install Ven. Mahā Kassapa in his position.
>
> "For such installation were there not Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Moggallāna?" one might argue. The answers is: "Yes, they were there." But it occurred to the Buddha thus: "Both of them will not live long. They will attain Parinibbāna before me. Kassapa, however, will live for 120 years, four months after my Parinibbāna, in the cave where the seven leafed (*sattapanni*) tree grows, he will hold a Council (*Saṅgāyana*) at which a mass recital, in approval of the Dhamma and the Vinaya, will [1220] be made. He will thus render service to my Dispensation so that it may last for 5,000 years." The Buddha also was of the opinion that: "If I install him in my monastery, monks will show obedience to him." For this reason the Buddha desired to install Ven. Mahā Kassapa in his own position. It was for this reason that the Buddha was desirous of an exchange of robes. It was because of this desire that the Buddha spoke in praise of Ven. Mahā Kassapa.

If somebody spoke admiringly of the good quality of the bowl or that of the robe, it was a natural practice of the noble Ven. Mahā Kassapa to say: "Please accept the bowl, venerable sir," or "Please receive the robe, venerable sir." Therefore, knowing by hint that: "The exalted Buddha would like to put on my double robe, for he admired its softness," Ven. Mahā Kassapa said: "Exalted Buddha, may the Fortunate One please put on this double robe." – "Dear son

Kassapa, which robe will you don then?" asked the Buddha. "If I get the kind of robe you are wearing, I will don it," replied Ven. Mahā Kassapa. Then the Buddha said: "Dear son Kassapa, can you do that? This robe made of rags has become very old because of long use. Indeed, when I picked it up, that day saw this great earth quake down to the waters. Those of less virtue are unable to wear this kind of robe that is worn out. Only those who engage themselves in the Dhamma practice and who, by nature, are used to such attire, deserve it." So saying the Buddha gave his robe to Ven. Mahā Kassapa. After the exchange of robes was done in this way, the Buddha put on Ven. Mahā Kassapa's robe and Ven. Mahā Kassapa donned the Buddha's robe. At that moment, the great earth quaked violently down to the waters as if it were saying, though it lacks mind and volition: "Exalted Buddha, you have done something difficult to do. There has never been in the past such an occasion in which a Buddha gives his robe to his disciple. I cannot bear up this virtue of yours."

Foremost Title Achieved

On the part of Ven. Mahā Kassapa, no arrogance arose in him by receiving the Buddha's robe; he never thought: "Now I have obtained the robe previously used by the Fortunate One: I have nothing to strive for now, either for higher paths and fruitions." Instead, he made a vow to practise the thirteen austere practices (*dhutaṅga*) most willingly as taught by the Buddha. Because he put great efforts into developing the ascetic practices, he remained only for seven days as a worldling and on the eighth day, at early dawn, he became an Arahat with the fourfold analytical knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*).

Setting Ven. Mahā Kassapa as an example, the Buddha delivered many discourses as contained, for example, in the Thematic Discourses concerning Kassapa (*Kassapa-saṁyutta*, SN 16).

The Buddha admired Ven. Mahā Kassapa through many discourses such as the Like the Moon Discourse (*Candūpama-sutta*, SN 16.3), in which the Buddha says: *Kassapo bhikkhave candūpamo kulāni upasaṅkamati*, "monks, Kassapa approached his supporters of the four social classes by controlling his deeds, words and thought like the moon, being absolutely free from physical, verbal and mental roughness, in this way does he approach his supporters."

Later on the Buddha declared, by citing the noble Ven. Mahā Kassapa as the foremost (*etad-agga*) in ascetic (*dhutaṅga*) practices, as preserved in the Thematic Discourses concerning Kassapa (*Kassapa-saṁyutta*, SN 16):

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *dhuta-vādānaṁ yad-idam Mahākassapo.*
>
> Monks, among my disciples, monastics, who practise by themselves and who teach and exhort others to practise the excellent ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*) which shake off the defilements (*kilesa*), Mahā Kassapa is the foremost.

5. Ven. Anuruddha

Aspiration in the Past

100,000 aeons ago, in the lifetime of the Buddha Padumuttara, the future [1221] Anuruddha was an unknown householder. One afternoon, he went along with a crowd of people to the monastery to listen to the Dhamma. Having respectfully paid homage to the Buddha, he stood at the edge of the audience, paying attention to the Buddha's discourse. After delivering his discourses in serial order, the Buddha declared a monk foremost in achieving the psychic power of the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu-abhiññā*).

Then it occurred to the householder: "This monk was declared foremost in achieving the psychic power of the divine eye by the Buddha himself, therefore, he is indeed superior. What if I were to become the best among the monks who achieved the divine eye in the Dispensation of some future Buddha?" So thinking, he went through the audience, and invited the Buddha and his Saṅgha. The next day, he performed a great alms giving to the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha.

Thinking: "I have aspired for a very high post," he invited the Buddha as before, day after day, saying: "Please come today for my act of merit." "Please come tomorrow for my act of merit." Having invited thus, he gave a great alms giving (*dāna*) for seven days.

Offering excellent robes to the Buddha and his company of monks, he expressed his aspiration as follows: "Exalted Buddha, I made these offerings, not to obtain

divine luxuries, nor to enjoy human pleasure. Seven days ago you declared a monk as the foremost in the divine eye. I wish to be like him, as the foremost among those with similar power in the Dispensation of a Future Buddha."

Having expressed his aspiration thus, the householder fell at the feet of the Buddha. When the Buddha surveyed the future, he foresaw that the fulfilment of the householder's wish, and so he predicted: "Supporter, at the end of 100,000 aeons in future, Buddha Gotama will appear. In the Dispensation of that Buddha, you will be Anuruddha by name, the foremost of those who acquire the psychic power of the divine eye." Having predicted this, the Buddha gave a discourse in appreciation of the meal-offering and returned to the monastery.

The householder did good works for as long as he lived and after the Buddha Padumuttara's attainment of Parinibbāna, he built a golden shrine which was seven leagues high. He approached the Saṅgha and asked: "Venerable sirs, what is the preparatory wholesome deed for acquiring the psychic power of the divine eye?" – "Supporter," replied the noble monks, "the gift of light should be given." He then had 1,000 big illuminated trees made first, each bearing 1,000 torches; just beyond these trees, he had 1,000 illuminated trees of medium size made; just beyond them, 1,000 illuminated small trees. In this way, 1,000s of trees and torches were offered. His other gifts of lights were innumerable.

Offering of Lights to Buddha Kassapa's Shrine

Having performed such meritorious deeds throughout his life, the householder, the future Anuruddha, was reborn either in the worlds of Devas or humans. When 100,000 aeons had elapsed, in the lifetime of the Buddha Kassapa, in this Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*), he was reborn as a householder in the city of Bārāṇasī. After the Buddha's Parinibbāna, he built a shrine of one league and had numerous gold cups made, each cup was filled with butter oil. In the middle of the cups, he placed a cake of solidified molasses and lighted it. He also lighted the gold cups around the shrine, the round brim of each cup touching that of the next. For himself, he had the biggest vessel made of gold and had it filled also with butter-oil. A thousand wicks placed around the brim were lighted. For the middle wick, however, he had a piece of cloth twisted and lighted it. Holding on his head the bowl of 1,000 lights, he went round the shrine and honoured it for all three watches of the night. In that existence too, he performed wholesome

deeds as long as he lived, and upon his death he was reborn in the realm of the Devas.

Life as Annabhāra

Again, before the lifetime of our Buddha, he was reborn in a poor family, also in Bārāṇasī, and lived depending upon a wealthy merchant named Sumana. The poor man's [1222] name was Annabhāra. The merchant Sumana gave lavish alms at the gate of his house to destitutes, travellers and beggars.

One day a Paccekabuddha by the name of Upariṭṭha engaged in the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*) at Mount Gandhamādana, and when he emerged from that absorption (*jhāna*), he pondered: "Whom should I help today?" Paccekabuddhas are very kind by nature to the poor. So, the Paccekabuddha Upariṭṭha decided to help poor Annabhāra for the day. Knowing that the man was about to come back from the forest, the Paccekabuddha, taking his alms bowl and robes disappeared from Mount Gandhamādana and reappeared before Annabhāra at the village gate.

Seeing the Paccekabuddha carrying an empty bowl, he respectfully made obeisance to him and asked: "Venerable sir, would you obtain food?" When the Paccekabuddha replied that he would, Annabhāra said: "Please wait here for a while," and quickly went home and asked his wife: "Lady, is there a portion of food you set aside for me? Or is there not?" When the wife said there was, he returned to the Paccekabuddha and took the bowl from his hand. On returning home, he said to his wife: "Lady, because we did not perform deeds of merit in the past we are now always yearning for food. Though we have the desire to give, we have nothing to give. And when we have something to give, there is no recipient for it. Today I encountered the Paccekabuddha Upariṭṭha, and there is also my portion of food. Put that food of mine into his bowl."

The intelligent wife thought: "As my husband is giving his food to the Paccekabuddha, I should also do something for my share of merit." So she too put her portion of food in the bowl and handed it to the Paccekabuddha. He also said, expressing his desire: "Venerable sir, may we be liberated from such troublesome living." The Paccekabuddha replied predicting his future: "Supporter of great merit! May your desire be realised!" Having spread out his

top mantle at one place, Annabhāra said further: “Please sit down here, venerable sir, and have your meal.”

After sitting down on the seat made by Annabhāra, the Paccekabuddha had his meal, reflecting on the nine disgusting things which are:

1. Going on alms round (*gamana*).
2. Searching for alms (*pariyesana*).
3. Eating (*paribhoga*).
4. Excretions, such as phlegm, bile, blood and pus (*āsaya*).
5. Stomach into which comes newly eaten food (*nidhaha*).
6. Food in undigested state (*aparipakka*).
7. Food in digested state (*paripakka*).
8. Discharge and flowing or trickling from here and there from the body (*phala-nissanda*).
9. Smearing or soiling (*makkhana*).

> If discharge (*phala*) and flowing (*nissanda*) are taken separately, the number will be ten. Reflection on these nine or ten disgusting things is mentioned in the exposition of the Perception of the Disgusting Nature of Food (*Āhāre-paṭikūla-saññā*) of the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) in general, and in the section on the same in the Break Down of Form into its Ultimate Parts (*Paramattha-sarūpa-bhedāni*), authored by Mahāvisuddhārāma Sayādaw, in particular.

When the Paccekabuddha had taken the food, Annabhāra offered the water for washing the bowl. Having finished his meal, Paccekabuddha Upariṭṭha gave his blessing in appreciation of the food:

> *Icchitaṁ patthitaṁ tuyhaṁ, sabbam-eva samijjhatu,*
> *sabbe pūrentu saṅkappā, cando pannāraso yathā.*
>
> May all your desires and longings be realized. Just as the bright, round moon of the waxing fortnight is full, even so may all your right plans be successful!

Having said this, the Paccekabuddha proceeded on his journey.

Applause of a Goddess

At that moment, the guardian goddess of the ceremonial umbrella belonging to Sumana the merchant gave her applause three times by uttering a solemn utterance of joy: *Aho dānaṁ paramadānaṁ, Upariṭṭhe supatiṭṭhitaṁ*, "an excellent gift has been given to the Paccekabuddha Uparittha!" The merchant asked: "Goddess! Did you not see me performing alms giving for such a long time?" – "Merchant," replied the goddess, "I am not applauding your alms giving. I am doing it for Annabhāra the poor man's, as I am so pleased with it." It then occurred to the merchant thus: "This is something marvellous indeed! Though I have been giving alms for so long, I am not able to cause deities to [1223] applaud. But the poor Annabhāra, despite his dependence on me, by giving alms food just once when he encountered a proper recipient received applause. I should make his gift of food of mine by giving him something suitable." Accordingly, he summoned Annabhāra and asked: "Did you give somebody something today?" – "Yes, I did, sir," answered Annabhāra, "I gave my share of food to the Paccekabuddha Upariṭṭha." – "Take this, dear Annabhāra, take a coin and hand over your gift of food to me," demanded the merchant.

When Annabhāra refused, saying: "I cannot do so, sir," Sumana, the merchant, gradually raised his offer up to 1,000 pieces of money. Annabhāra remained firm in his rejection, saying: "Even for 1,000 pieces of money, I cannot give it away." Then Sumana gave up his attempt to buy, but demanded yet again: "Brother Annabhāra, if you cannot give it to me, let it be so. Accept the 1,000 coins and share your merit with me!" – "I do not know clearly whether I should share my merit with you. I will consult the Paccekabuddha Upariṭṭha and I will share, provided he advises me to do so." After saying this, he rushed after the Paccekabuddha and when he reached him, he asked: "Venerable sir, the merchant Sumana, is offering me 1,000 pieces of money and seeking a share of the merit I have earned by giving you alms food. Shall I give his share or shall I not?"

Then the Paccekabuddha said: "Wise man, I shall give you a simile. Suppose there is only one house where the lamp is lighted in a village of 100 households. If the remaining 99 householders came with their respective wicks soaked in oil

and lighted their lamps by means of yours, will the light remain in that house as it was before or will it be reduced?"

"It will not be reduced, venerable sir. The light will shine even brighter than before," answered the man.

Then the Paccekabuddha explained clearly: "In the same manner, wise man, if a man shares the merit accrued to him from his offering of alms food, be it a spoonful or a ladleful, whether he shares it with 100 persons or 1,000, his merit will only increase and become greater in accordance with the number of persons who have their shares. Now you have given one meal. If you share your merit with him, there will be two acts of giving alms food, one is yours which is the original, and the other is Sumana's which is an augment."

Freed from doubt but inspired and encouraged, Annabhāra respectfully made obeisance and went back to his master. He gladly shared his merit by saying: "Sir, take your share from the merit earned by me from my giving of alms food."

Then followed a dialogue between the wealthy merchant Sumana and Annabhāra the poor man:

Merchant: Well, brother, take the 1,000 coins.

Annabhāra: Master, I am not selling my alms food. In fact, with great pleasure I am sharing my merit with you.

Merchant: Brother, you share your merit with me with great pleasure. On my part, I give you the 1,000 coins as I wish to do honour to your virtue. Do take it, brother.

When asked thus, Annabhāra accepted the money, saying: "All right, as you like, sir." Thereafter Sumana said: "Brother from the time of your acceptance of the coins onwards, you have no work with your hands, you are no longer my employee. Build a house for yourself on the main road. I shall provide you with whatever material you need. Take it from my house." Thus the merchant added his promise.

Annabhāra, a Man of Great Wealth

The alms food offered to a Paccekabuddha who has just emerged from the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*) is a gift which has results on the day

of offering (*diṭṭha-dhamma-vedanīya*). Therefore, that very day, by virtue of his gift of alms food, the merchant took Annabhāra to the king's palace though he did not do so on previous days.

On arrival at the palace, because of Annabhāra's act of merit, the king overlooked the merchant and gazed upon Annabhāra. Then a conversation between the merchant and the [1224] king took place as follows:

Merchant: Great King, why are you gazing at this man?

King: Because I did not see him on the other days, merchant.

Merchant: Great King, this man is worth gazing on.

King: What are his virtues that make him worth gazing on, merchant?

Merchant: Great King, he did not have his portion of food today but sacrificed it to the Paccekabuddha Upariṭṭha, and he has won 1,000 pieces of money from me.

King: What is his name?

Merchant: Annabhāra, Great King.

King: As he has 1,000 pieces of money, he should win another 1,000 from me as well. I too would like to honour him. So saying, the king also awarded Annabhāra 1,000 pieces of money.

Later on, the king ordered his men to build a house for Annabhāra. Obeying the king's order, the men cleared an old site and, at every spot they dug they found jars of gold, the neck of one jar touching that of another, to their amazement. So they reported the matter to the king. The king ordered them to excavate but as they were digging, the jars sank further. The men told the king about it and he ordered them to continue their digging, saying: "Do it not in my name, but do it under Annabhāra's instructions." The men went back to the site and did the digging again while uttering: "We are doing this under the instructions of Annabhāra." As a result, at every spot dug, the jars of gold rose together like huge mushrooms.

The king's men collected the treasure of gold and silver and brought them, and piled them up near the king. The king held a meeting with his ministers and asked: "Leaving aside Annabhāra, who else possesses treasures of such proportions in this city of Bārāṇasī?" When the ministers answered that there

was none, the king issued an order stating: "Ministers, in that case, let Annabhāra be the royal merchant bearing the title Dhanaseṭṭhi in this Bārāṇasī city of mine." On that very day Annabhāra became the royal merchant known as Mahā Dhanaseṭṭhi, and was entitled to a white umbrella, a symbol of wealth, from the king.

Since he became the royal merchant Dhanaseṭṭhi by name, he performed good works till the end of his life, and upon his death, he was reborn in the realm of the Devas. This virtuous man, who was the future Anuruddha, was reborn only in the divine and human abodes for a long time.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

When our Buddha was about to appear, he was reborn in the royal residence of Sukkodana, a Sakyan prince. On his naming day, he was given the name of Anuruddha. Prince Anuruddha was the son of the Buddha's uncle Sukkodana and the brother of Prince Mahānāma. He was very gentle and yet very powerful at the same time.

The Buddha visited the city of Kapilavatthu for the first time and while sojourning on his return in the grove of Anupiya, Prince Anuruddha visited him together with Princes Bhaddiya, Ānanda, Bhagu, Kimila, Devadatta and the barber Upāli, and they became monks.

[These events have been given in detail in chapters 19-20a.]

Attainment of Awakening

The six Sakyan princes went together with Upāli the barber to the grove of Anupiya and they became monks in the presence of the Buddha. Of these seven monks, Ven. Bhaddiya became an Arahat in that Rains Retreat (*Vassa*). Ven. Anuruddha gained the psychic power of the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu*); Ven. Devadatta developed the eight mundane attainments; Ven. Ānanda was established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*); Ven. Bhagu and Ven. Kimila became Arahats later. The resolutions made in the past by these monks will be described in their respective sections.

As for Ven. Anuruddha, after becoming a monk he acquired in his first Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) the eight attainments [1225] and developed the psychic power and higher divine eye by which he was able to see 1,000 universes.

One day, he went to Ven. Sāriputta and said: "Friend Sāriputta,

1. I can see 1,000 universes by means of the particularly pure divine eye, which surpasses the eyesight of human beings.
2. I put forth effort unflinchingly. Not being unmindful, I possess mindfulness. There is no anxiety in my person and I am calm. My mind is one-pointed and well-concentrated.
3. Even then, my mind is not unattached to craving (*taṇhā*) and wrong views (*diṭṭhi*) and not liberated yet from the pollutants (*āsava*).

Then Ven. Sāriputta taught Ven. Anuruddha concerning meditation:

1. "Friend Anuruddha, the very fact that you are conscious and thinking: 'I can see 1,000 universes by means of the particularly pure divine-like eye, which surpasses the clear eyesight of human beings,' reveals that you have conceit (*māna*).
2. Friend Anuruddha, the very fact that you are conscious and thinking: 'I put forth effort unflinchingly. Not being unmindful, I possess mindfulness. There is no anxiety in my person and I am calm. My mind is one-pointed and well concentrated,' reveals that you have mental restlessness (*uddhacca*).
3. Friend Anuruddha, the very fact that you are conscious and thinking: 'Even then, my mind is not unattached to craving and wrong views and not liberated yet from the pollutants (*āsava*),' reveals that you have doubt and worry (*saṁsaya-kukkucca*).

Therefore I would like to give you words of advice as follows: 'Discard these three things, conceit, restlessness and doubt that are developing in your mind. Without being conscious of these things, direct your mind to the deathless Nibbāna!' "

Having learnt meditation, Ven. Anuruddha, after seeking permission from the Buddha, went to the country of Cetiya. Living in the Eastern Bamboo Grove in that country, he practised asceticism. For fifteen days or half a month, he did not sleep but put effort into his meditation by walking to-and-fro. He then became weary from his meditation so much so that he took rest by sitting under

a bamboo thicket. While sitting, the thoughts of a great man (*mahā-purisa-vitakka*) arose in his mind as follows:

1. The nine supermundane states (*dhamma*) can be realised only in one who is of few wants, i.e. one who has no desire (*icchā*) and craving (*taṇhā*), but not in one who is greedy.
2. The nine supermundane states can be realised only in one who is easily contented, but not in one who is discontented.
3. The nine supermundane states can be realised only in one who is quiet, but not in one who takes delight in company.
4. The nine supermundane states can be realised only in one who is energetic, but not in one who is indolent.
5. The nine supermundane states can be realised only in one who is evidently mindful, but not in one who is far from being mindful.
6. The nine supermundane states can be realised only in one who is of concentrated mind, but not in one who is not of concentrated mind,
7. The nine supermundane states can be realised only in one who is wise, but not in one who is foolish.

With regard to the individual who is of few wants; there are four kinds:

1. One who is of few wants concerning the four requisites (*paccaya-appiccha*).
2. One who does not let others know of one's attainment of path and fruition but keeps it secret (*adhigama-appiccha*).
3. One who does not let others know of one's learning but keeps it secret (*pariyatti-appiccha*).
4. One who does not let others know of one's austere practice but keeps it secret (*dhutaṅga-appiccha*). [1226]

1. The one who is of few wants concerning the four requisites (*paccaya-appiccha*) accepts only less, though offered much; when offered, he accepts less than what is offered; he never takes all.

2. The one who does not let others know of their attainment of path and fruition but keeps it secret (*adhigama-appiccha*), like Ven. Majjhantika, does not tell others of his spiritual attainment of path and fruition but remains quiet.

The story of Ven. Majjhantika in brief is as follows: He was an Arahat. But his alms bowl and robes were worth only a quarter of a coin. On the day of King Asoka's dedication of a monastery, he was heading a community of monks. Seeing his bowl and robes too old and worn out, people thought he was an inferior and aged monk; so they asked him to wait for a moment outside. Then only he thought: "If an Arahat like me does not make a contribution to the king's welfare, who else will?" So thinking, he instantly sank into the earth and received the first portion of alms food, which was meant for the head of monks, and was offered to him respectfully. Then he reappeared while others were unaware. In this way, the Ven. Majjhantika did not want others to know he was an Arahat prior to his acceptance of food.

3. The one who does not let others know of one's learning but keeps it secret (*pariyatti-appiccha*) does not want to reveal to others his knowledge of the scriptures though he himself is highly learned in the Three Baskets. He is like Ven. Tissa, a resident of Sāketa.

The story of Ven. Tissa in brief is as follows: Ven. Tissa was requested by other monks to teach them the texts and their commentaries. But he rejected their request, saying that he had no time to do so. Then the monks asked him, somewhat reproachfully: "Have you got no time even to die?" So he deserted his followers and left his dwelling for the Kaṇikāravālikasamudda monastery. He stayed there for the three month Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) like an unknown and illiterate monk. He fulfilled his duties there towards all his co-residents, be they senior or junior to him or be they of mid-standing. On the full moon day of October (*Assayuja*), at the meeting oat the Great Invitation (*Mahā-pavāraṇā-uposatha*) occasion, he taught, causing gooseflesh to rise on people's skin. They shouted with cheers and threw up their headdresses into the air. Thus he created wild acclaim among the audience. But lest the people should know he was the one who taught that night, he secretly went back to his original dwelling, for he was of the type keeps his leaning secret (*pariyatti-appiccha*).

4. The one who does not let others know of one's austere practice but keeps it secret (*dhutaṅga-appiccha*) does not like to inform others of his practice of austerity.

He is like the elder of two brothers. A brief account of the two brothers goes as follows: The two brother monks were dwelling on the Cetiya hill. The younger brother went to his brother with a stalk of sugar cane which was offered by a supporter to the elder one. "Please have it, sir," said the younger brother. As the elder brother had already finished eating and washed his mouth, he replied: "Enough, dear brother." – "Why," asked the younger brother, "have you taken a vow to observe the austere practice of eating one meal a day (*ekāsanika-dhutaṅga*)?" Then only did the elder brother ask his younger brother to bring the sugar-cane. Though he had observed this particular practice for 50 long years, he partook of the sugar-cane as he wished to keep his brother in the dark about his practice. After that, he washed his mouth and renewed his vow again.

> These descriptions of the four types of persons of few wants (*appiccha*) are given in the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) commentary, and the stories are reproduced from the Collection of the Middle Length Discourses (*Majjhima-nikāya*) commentary. In the latter, further details of the three kinds of wishes (*icchā*), the four with few wants (*appicchatā*), the twelve kinds of contentment (*santosa*), the three kinds of seclusion (*paviveka*), the five kind of contact (*saṁsagga*), etc. are given. [1227]

At the time, while Ven. Anuruddha was struggling with the seven thoughts of a great man (*mahā-purisa-vitakka*), the Buddha was sojourning in a forest sanctuary, Bhesakaḷā by name, near Susumāragiri town in the Bhagga country. The forest was to the west of the bamboo grove where Ven. Anuruddha was. Therefore, this place was known as the Eastern Bamboo Grove.

After working out the seven thoughts, Anuruddha was too tired to take a further step to think about the eighth one. It was true that the disciples, who had thought of the previous seven, such as few wants, easy contentment, calm, energy, mindfulness, mental concentration, and wisdom, were reluctant to go higher and ponder still another state (*dhamma*). For them, it is a rule that they should end up with wisdom. That was why Ven. Anuruddha, having reflected on the seventh

item of wisdom which is a thought of a great man (*mahā-purisa-vitakka*), was too tired to go on reflecting on the eighth thought.

Then the Buddha, while in the Bhesakaḷā forest, knew that: "Anuruddha is weary of reflecting on the eighth thought of a great man," and thought: "I shall cause Anuruddha's wish to be satisfied." Accordingly, he instantly appeared in Ven. Anuruddha's presence and sat down on the seat that had been already prepared.

Then the Buddha presented the missing eighth thought, saying: "Anuruddha, well done! Well done! The nine supermundane states can be fulfilled only in him who has few wants, but not in him who has many … the nine supermundane states can be fulfilled in him who is wise, but not in him who is foolish. Anuruddha! Your reflections belong to the noble ones.

Anuruddha, as it is the case with you, proceed to the eighth reflection. Which is: 'The nine supermundane states can be fulfilled in him who takes delight in Nibbāna that is free from Saṁsāra, from the expanding (*papañca*) factors: craving (*taṇhā*), conceit (*māna*) and wrong view (*diṭṭhi*), but not in him who takes delight only in the expanding (*papañca*) factors."

Thus, did the Buddha provide the missing eighth thought of a great man. The Buddha then continued to preach elaborately to Ven. Anuruddha so that, while engaging in these eight reflections, he could easily be absorbed in the first, second, third and fourth mundane absorptions (*jhāna*), and that while absorbed in the four mundane absorptions (*jhāna*), he could easily have the fourfold course of practice belonging to the lineage of the noble ones (*ariya-vaṁsa-paṭipadā*):

1. Contentment in robes (*cīvara-santosa*).
2. Contentment in food (*piṇḍapāta-santosa*), including medicine.
3. Contentment in dwelling (*senāsana-santosa*).
4. Delight in meditation (*bhāvanārāma*).

The elaborate preaching of the same may be read in the commentary to the Discourse about the Noble Lineage (*Ariya-vaṁsa-sutta*, AN 4.28).

After teaching this, the Buddha thought about the right dwelling for Ven. Anuruddha, a place that would suit his meditation and he came to know that the bamboo grove would be the right place. Accordingly he advised Ven. Anuruddha, saying: "Anuruddha, as the bamboo grove is suitable for your dwelling observe the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in this bamboo grove in the country of Cetiya."

Having advised him thus, the Buddha disappeared and reappeared at Bhesakaḷā forest where he expounded the eight thoughts of a great man (*mahā-purisa-vitakka*) in detail to the monks there.

After the Buddha's departure, Ven. Anuruddha put great efforts into his ascetic practice and soon, during the next Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), became an Arahat, the exhaustion of the pollutants (*āsava*), the state endowed with the threefold knowledge of knowledge of previous lives (*pubbe-nivāsa-ñāṇa*), knowledge of the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu-ñāṇa*) and knowledge of the destruction of the pollutants (*āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*). He then became elated and thought: "Oh, seeing my mental conditions, the exalted Buddha came and provided me with the eight thoughts of a great man (*mahā-purisa-vitakka*). My heart's desire also has now been fulfilled to the highest degree indeed!" Paying attention to the Buddha's discourse and the supermundane states, Ven. Anuruddha uttered a solemn utterance as in the Discourse on the Great Thoughts (*Mahā-vitakka-sutta*, AN 8.30):

> *Mama saṅkappam-aññāya, Satthā loke anuttaro,* [1228]
> *Mano-mayena kāyena, iddhiyā upasaṅkami.*
>
> The Fortunate One, who is the teacher of Devas and humans, who is peerless in the three worlds, knew my thoughts and, in his mind-made body, approaching by means of his psychic powers, and through his supernormal powers, he came to my presence in a moment.
>
> *Yathā me ahu saṅkappo tato uttari desayi,*
> *nippapañca-rato Buddho nippapañcam-adesayi.*
>
> To me occurred the thoughts of the noble one in the sevenfold manner. The exalted Buddha taught me, out of compassion, the eighth thought which is higher than the seven reflections of mine. The Buddha, who is named the omniscient one, the best of the world, who delights in the

unconditioned Nibbāna that is truly free from the three Saṁsāra expanding factors (*papañca*), taught me, out of compassion, the unconditioned Nibbāna that is truly free from the three Saṁsāra expanding factors (*papañca*).

Tassāhaṁ Dhammam-aññāya vihāsiṁ Sāsane rato,
tisso vijjā anuppattā kataṁ Buddhassa Sāsanaṁ.

I, Anuruddha, having comprehended the Dhamma taught by that Buddha, named the omniscient one, the best of the world, lived in bliss in this very existence always being delighted in the attainment of fruition in the Dispensation of the three trainings. The threefold knowledge starting with knowledge of past lives (*pubbe-nivāsa-ñāṇa*) is known by me, I have laboured and put it into practice, reaching the goal of becoming an Arahat, the teaching of the threefold training of the omniscient Buddha, the head of the world.

Foremost Title Achieved

Thereafter, when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery, he convened a meeting, in which he declared a large number of monks as foremost (*etad-agga*) in their respective attainments, and he admired Ven. Anuruddha, saying:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ
dibba-cakkhukānaṁ yad-idaṁ Anuruddho.

Monks among my disciples who are endowed with the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu*), Anuruddha is the foremost.

Saying thus, the Buddha declared Ven. Anuruddha as the foremost (*etad-agga*) in acquiring the divine eye.

Herein it may be asked: Why did the Buddha appoint Anuruddha only, despite the presence of other Arahats with the three understandings and Arahats with the six deep knowledges who had attained the divine-eye too? The answer is: It was true that other Arahats with the three understandings and the six deep knowledges had attained divine-eye too, but they did not make use of it as much as Ven. Anuruddha did. When Ven. Anuruddha went on alms round, except in partaking of food, at all times, he developed

the light-kasiṇa (*āloka-kasiṇa*) and surveyed beings by the psychic powers of his divine-eye.

In this way, Ven. Anuruddha gained the fivefold mastery of the divine eye and became more experienced than the other Arahats. This was the reason for the Buddha declaring him the foremost (*etad-agga*) in this particular field of attainment.

The alternative answer is this: Ven. Anuruddha had done meritorious deeds for a period of [1229] 100,000 aeons with the aim of acquiring this particular declaration of being foremost in attaining the divine-eye. Accordingly, in this existence too, which was his last, in which his perfections and aspirations were fulfilled, he made use of the divine-eye more than any other Arahat, as he had inclination to do so which was derived from his past resolution, and so the declaration was made by the Buddha.

Picking up a Rag Robe offered by a Deva

[Based on the commentary to the Dhamma Verses (Dhp 93).]

While the Buddha was sojourning at Veḷuvana, Rājagaha, Ven. Anuruddha was looking for rags, from which a robe was to be made, at dust heaps and other places. A deity, named Jālinī, who happened to be his wife three existences ago, was living in Tāvatiṁsa. Seeing that Ven. Anuruddha was searching for rags, she brought three pieces of divine cloth, each thirteen cubits long and four cubits broad. But she thought: "If I offer these pieces of divine cloth, in this shape, Ven. Anuruddha may not accept them." So she left them at a dust heap ahead of Ven. Anuruddha who was seeking rags; she did so in such a way so that only the edges of the pieces could be seen. When Ven. Anuruddha went there in search of rags, he saw the edges of the pieces of divine cloth, he picked them up at that very place and departed thinking that they were the best quality.

On the day Ven. Anuruddha was making robes, the Buddha, in the company of 500 monks, visited Ven. Anuruddha's dwelling and took his seat. The senior venerables, belonging to the community of 80 disciples, were also seated at the same place where the robe making was undertaken. Ven. Kassapa, Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Ānanda helped him in making the robes, taking their seats at the starting part, at the middle and at the far end respectively. Other monks also came to assist him by making sewing threads while the Buddha himself put the

thread through the eye of the needle. Ven. Moggallāna roamed about collecting other necessary things for the stitching.

The deity Jālinī entered the city and announced: "Citizens, the exalted Buddha, in the company of the 80 Arahat disciples, together with the 500 monks, is staying at the monastery to stitch robes for our master Ven. Anuruddha. Go to the monastery and offer rice gruel and other edible things." Thus the deity urged the womenfolk to assemble with the food. Ven. Moggallāna brought bunches of Jambu plums during the rest period, just before the meal-time. The 500 monks could not finish the fruit. Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, levelled the ground at the stitching site. Therefore, the ground looked like a place spread with liquid lac. The leftover food, such as gruel, solid things and rice, were plenty.

Then the monks blamed Ven. Anuruddha saying: "What is the use of bringing these kinds of food in such large quantities. In fact, you should have noted the amount of food required and should have asked your relatives, male and female servants and supporters, saying: 'Bring only this much.' Perhaps Ven. Anuruddha wanted us to know that he has a large number of relatives, servants and supporters." Then the Buddha asked them what they were talking about and when they told him what they were talking about, the Buddha asked them: "Monks, do you think all these foods were caused to be brought by Anuruddha?"

When the monks replied in the affirmative the Buddha said: "Monks, never does my dear son Anuruddha beg the four requisites in this amount. As a matter of fact, Arahats never speak with an emphasis on the requisites. This food occurred by the power of a deity!"

Having thus responded, the Buddha uttered the following verse in order to give a discourse (Dhp 93):

> *Yassāsavā parikkhīṇā, āhāre ca anissito,*
> *suññato animitto ca, vimokkho yassa gocaro,* [1230]
> *ākāse va sakuntānaṁ padaṁ tassa durannayaṁ.*

O monks, my dear sons! An Arahat, in whom the four pollutants (*āsava*): sense desires (*kāma*), continuation (*bhava*), wrong views (*diṭṭhi*) and ignorance (*avijjā*), are destroyed, without leaving even the slightest traces, is not attached to food with craving (*taṇhā*) and wrong views (*diṭṭhi*).

> In his attainment of fruition, he always resorts to Nibbāna, known as the freedom of emptiness (*suññata-vimokkha*), as there is no passion (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*) or delusion (*moha*) in it. Nibbāna, also known as the causeless freedom (*animitta-vimokkha*) is absolutely liberated from such causes as passion, hatred and delusion. Nibbāna is also known as freedom of desirelessness (*appaṇihita-vimokkha*) as it is absolutely liberated from such desires as passion, hatred and delusion. Just as what is in the air, is trodden by the feet, touched by the breath, the head and the wings of the bird that flies in the air, is impossible to know, even so his attainment of the element of Nibbāna after death, is impossible to know for ordinary individuals.

By the end of the discourse a large multitude attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) and other attainments.

6. Ven. Bhaddiya

This chapter on the Jewel of the Saṅgha contains two Ven. Bhaddiyas: one being this Bhaddiya, and the other being Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya, about whom we will tell his story next. The former Bhaddiya was one of the six Sakyan princes who became monastics as has been told in the story of Ven. Anuruddha.

Aspiration in the Past

This Bhaddiya was a son of a wealthy family in the lifetime of the Buddha Padumuttara, 100,000 aeons ago. He went to the monastery in the same way as was told in the story of Anuruddha, to listen to the Dhamma.

That day he saw the Buddha declare a monk as the foremost (*etad-agga*) among those belonging to high family (*uccā-kulika*). He became instantly inspired, thinking: “I should also become one like him in the Dispensation of a Future Buddha.” Accordingly, he invited the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha to a great alms giving (*mahā-dāna*) performed for seven days. Thereafter, prostrating at the feet of the Buddha, he said: “Exalted Buddha, I do not long for a luxurious life as a result of my great gift (*mahā-dāna*) but I do wish to become a monk who is foremost among those of high family.”

Surveying the future, the Buddha foresaw that his wish would be fulfilled and said: “This wish of yours will be fulfilled. A 100,000 aeons from now, the

Buddha Gotama will arise. Then will you become one declared foremost among the monks who come from a superior family." Having predicted this, the Buddha gave a discourse of appreciation concerning the meal and left for the monastery.

After receiving the prediction, he acquired good works conducive to that end and had seats for teachers made and donated, he had coverings for the seats made and donated. He donated fans for teachers' use while teaching, he gave offerings in honour of teachers, and lights outside the Hall of Discipline (*Sīmā*). In this way, he performed deeds of merit till the end of his life. On passing away, he was reborn either in divine or human abodes. Some time between the Buddhas Kassapa and Gotama, he was reborn as a householder's son in the city of Bārāṇasī.

At that time, a large number of Paccekabuddhas came from Mount Gandhamādana to Bārāṇasī and, having taken their seats on the bank of the river Ganges, where water was plenty, [1231] they partook of their food. Knowing that the Paccekabuddhas always went to that site and had their meals, the householder, the future Bhaddiya, placed eight great stone slabs there as his donation and gave the Paccekabuddhas food as long as he lived.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

During the interval between the two Buddhas, Kassapa and Gotama, lasting innumerable aeons (*Buddhantara-asaṅkhyeyya*), he was reborn only in the realms of Devas and human, and in the lifetime of this Buddha, his rebirth was that of a Sakyan Prince in the city of Kapilavatthu. He was named Bhaddiya by his parents.

When he came of age, he became a leading Prince amongst the six Sakyan princes, who all ordained along with the barber Upāli. While the Buddha was sojourning in the Mango Grove near the town of Anupiya, he received ordination as a monastic and became an Arahat in the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) of the same year.

> After attaining, as he lived in the bliss of fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) and uttered with joy: "Blissful I am! Blissful I am!" Worldling monastics did not know of his attainment and misunderstood him, thinking he uttered it from recalling his previous princely luxuries. They reported it

to the Buddha. The account of this may be read in the Exalted Utterances (*Udāna*, 2.10).

Foremost Title Achieved

At a later time, while the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery, he addressed the monastics regarding Ven. Bhaddiya:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ uccā-kulikānaṁ yad-idaṁ Bhaddiyo Kāḷi-godhāya-putto.*
>
> Monks, among my monastic disciples belonging to a high family, Bhaddiya, son of Kāḷigodhā, is the foremost.

Speaking thus in praise of him, the Buddha declared that Ven. Bhaddiya was the foremost (*etad-agga*) among those of high birth.

Herein, the original name of Ven. Bhaddiya's mother was Godhā. As she was slightly dark, she was called Kāḷigodhā, the Sakyan Princess. Hence Ven. Bhaddiya's name Kāḷigodhaputta Bhaddiya, "Bhaddiya, the son of Kāḷigodhā."

Kāḷigodhā was the oldest of all Sakyan princesses. At the time the Bodhisatta become a Buddha, his father, King Suddhodana, was over 90.[270] He was not strong enough then to perform his duties as a leading monarch unlike when he was younger. Therefore, he must have been the nominal head of the Sakyan princes.

So Bhaddiya was elected king, the choice was made from the senior to the junior families, and it therefore fell upon him. But the Prince gave up his kingship of the Sakyans and became a monk; hence, his appointment as the foremost amongst the monks belonging to a high family.

Alternatively, Ven. Bhaddiya had been king for 500 successive existences as a result of his resolution made in the past; hence, his title as foremost amongst those belonging to a high family.

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[270] This is an estimate.

7. Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya

Aspiration in the Past

This Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya was a son of a wealthy householder in the city of Haṁsavatī, in the lifetime of Buddha Padumuttara, and in the way mentioned in the story of Ven. Anuruddha he went to the monastery to listen to a discourse.

At that time, the Buddha declared a monk as the foremost (*etad-agga*) in having a very sweet voice. Seeing this, he became inspired to become like that monk in the lifetime of a Future Buddha. So he invited the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha and gave them a great alms giving (*mahā-dāna*) [1232] for seven days. Thereafter, he made supplication: "Exalted Buddha, I do not wish for any other result on account of this alms giving but to be declared a monk who is foremost (*etad-agga*) among those who has a sweet voice, in the Dispensation of a Future Buddha." So saying, he prostrated at the Buddha's feet.

Surveying the householder's future, the Buddha saw that his wish would be fulfilled. He therefore said: "Your wish will come true. A 100,000 aeons from now, Buddha Gotama will appear. Then you will become a monk in his Dispensation and be declared foremost among those possessing a sweet voice." Having predicted thus, the Buddha returned to the monastery.

Life as Cittapatta Cuckoo

Having received the prediction, the son of the wealthy man performed good deeds till his death and was reborn only in the realms of Devas and humans. When the Buddha Vipassī appeared, he was a cuckoo named Cittapatta and lived in the Khemā Deer Park. One day, he flew to the Himavanta and came back carrying a sweet mango in his beak. While seeing the Buddha surrounded by monks, it occurred to him: "On other days, I saw the Buddha but I had nothing to offer. However, I have brought this ripe mango today for my children to eat. I shall bring them some other fruit, but this mango I shall offer the Buddha." Then he flew down and was hovering overhead, but not resting on the ground yet. Perceiving the cuckoo's thought, Buddha Vipassī looked at his attendant, Ven. Asoka, who took out the alms bowl from its bag and placed it in the hand of the Buddha. Then the cuckoo put the mango, which he had brought in his beak, into the Buddha's bowl as his offering. At that very place, the Buddha ate

it while sitting. Filled with faith (*saddhā*), the cuckoo repeatedly reflected on the attributes of the Buddha as much as he had understood them and having paid respects to the Buddha, he returned to his nest where he remained for a week without even searching for food, instead spending the time feeling joyous and happy. In his life as Cittapatta Cuckoo, this much of his good deeds was done. As a result of this, Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya voice was very sweet and pleasant.

Life as a Master Carpenter

During the time of the Buddha Kassapa, the future Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya became a master carpenter. After the Buddha's Parinibbāna, his devotees discussed building the only shrine for the single body relic. The main disagreement was about the size of the shrine. Some said: "It should be seven leagues." Some said: "Seven leagues is too big, and the construction will not be finished. Let us make it six leagues." Some said: "Six leagues is still too big, and the construction will not be finished. Let us make it five leagues." In this way, the size was reduced to four leagues, three leagues, two leagues. Then the master carpenter, the future great elder Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya, as he was chief at the meeting decided: "Friends, come. No matter who said what, let us built a shrine (*cetiya*) which is easy to repair in the future." So saying, he took the measuring rope and went to the construction site. While measuring, he made the length of one mile and said: "Let each side of the shrine be one mile so that the four sides will make a league. As it will be a league at the base, so will be its height." The carpenter thus brought the discussion to an end.

In agreement with him, the people built the relic shrine (*dhātu-cetiya*), which was one mile on each side and one league in total and was one league in height. In this way, the master carpenter decided the size and the construction of the shrine dedicated to the Buddha who possessed incomparable attributes.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

As a result of his decision on the small size of the shrine of the Buddha, the possessor of unique attributes, he was small-bodied, shorter than others, in all his subsequent existences, and in his last existence in the lifetime of our Buddha, he was born in a wealthy family in the city of Sāvatthī. His parents named him Bhaddiya.

When the wealthy son Bhaddiya came of age, and while the Buddha was residing at Jetavana, he went to the monastery and listened to the Dhamma. So great was his faith that he [1233] was ordained and learned a meditation subject from the Buddha. Putting effort into insight (*vipassanā*) practice, he became an Arahat.

Teachings around Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya

Herein, the worthy and inspiring discourses in connection with the great elder will be reproduced in brief.

> This is a summary of the First Discourse about Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya (*Paṭhama-Lakuṇḍaka-Bhaddiya-sutta*, Ud 7.1).

After becoming a monk, he took a meditation subject from the Buddha and engaged in insight practice and attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) first. At that time, learners (*sekha*), such as Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*), Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmī*) and Non-returners (*anāgāmī*), approached Ven. Sāriputta to ask him for meditation subjects, or sermons, or answers to their problems for the sake of higher attainments. In complying with their requests, Ven. Sāriputta explained to them how to meditate; he gave them sermons and answered their questions. As the monks continued to strive, some became Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmī*), some Non-returners (*Anāgāmī*), some became Arahats and acquired the threefold knowledge, the sixfold psychic power or the four analytical knowledges.

Seeing these monks and poising himself to seize an opportunity for his own uplift, Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya reflected on his stoutness of heart and his being almost devoid of defilements; and reflecting thus, he approached Ven. Sāriputta and exchanged greetings with him and made a request for a discourse. Ven. Sāriputta on his part gave a discourse that was in harmony with the young Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya's inclination.

In accordance with Ven. Sāriputta's discourse, Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya developed his insight (*vipassanā*) wisdom along the lines set out in the teaching. On account of the two factors: The might of Ven. Sāriputta's teaching and Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya's possession of deeds of merit done in the past, the latter's insight knowledge improved, culminating in Awakening. Fully aware of this, the Buddha, at that time uttered a solemn utterance as follows (Ud 7.1):

Uddhaṁ adho sabbadhi vippamutto,
ayaṁham-asmī ti anānupassī,
evaṁ vimutto udatāri oghaṁ,
atiṇṇa-pubbaṁ apunabbhavāya.

An Arahat, who has destroyed the pollutants (*āsava*) is freed from above (*uddhaṁ*) from the material elements (*rūpa-dhātu*) and the immaterial elements (*arūpa-dhātu*), as well as from below (*adho*) from the elements of sensual pleasure (*kāma-dhātu*) and also with regard to all kinds (*sabbadhi*) of formations, is freed in the manner of the three kinds of deliverance: deliverance by elimination (*vikkhambhana-vimutti*), deliverance by cutting off (*samuccheda-vimutti*) and deliverance by calming (*paṭipassaddhi-vimutti*). That Arahat, who has destroyed his pollutants (*āsava*), no longer wrongly sees through conceit and false view, with regard to the five aggregates of form, feeling, perception, volitions and consciousness, taking it as: "This really I am!" The Arahat, who has thus been delivered in all ways from the ten fetters and all unwholesome things, has crossed the fourfold whirlpool or the whirlpool of Saṁsāra which he had never dreamed to do before the attainment of the noble path. He had crossed over to the other shore through total extinction (*anupādisesa-nibbāna*) and stands blissfully there, taking no new birth.

As has been described in the first discourse (*sutta*), while meditating based on the first advice received from Ven. Sāriputta, Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya became an Arahat. But Ven. Sāriputta was unaware of this through lack of reflection, and still thought [1234] that Bhaddiya was a learner.

This is a summary of the Second Discourse about Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya (*Dutiya -Lakuṇḍaka-Bhaddiya-sutta*, Ud 7.2).

On a later day Ven. Sāriputta taught him again in detail, how to reach Awakening, by doubling the length of the discourse and touching upon many points, just as a very generous supporter, when asked for a little, would lavishly give more than what was required. On his part, Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya did not react by thinking: "Now that I have done my duty as a monk, what is the use of this teaching of his," instead he listened to the teaching as before, with all reverence to the Dhamma (*Dhamma-gārava*).

Seeing the situation, the Buddha, staying at the Jetavana monastery of Sāvatthī, uttered a solemn utterance by means of his supernormal power so that Ven. Sāriputta might come to know of the destruction of the moral pollutants by Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya (Ud 7.2):

> *Acchecchi vaṭṭaṁ vyagā nirāsaṁ,*
> *visukkhā saritā na sandati,*
> *chinnaṁ vaṭṭaṁ na vattati,*
> *esevanto dukkhassa.*

In an Arahat, who has destroyed the pollutants (*āsava*), the round of moral defilements (*kilesa-vaṭṭa*) is cut off.[271] An Arahat, who has destroyed the pollutants (*āsava*), and reached the wonderful bliss of Nibbāna, is free from craving. In an Arahat who has destroyed the pollutants (*āsava*), the morally defiling river of craving that has flowed steadily has been dried up by the fourth sun of the Arahat path in the way the five great rivers were, because of the rising of the fourth sun when the world was on the verge of devolution.[272] By no means does the river-like craving flow any longer. The round of action that has been cut, the way the tree is uprooted, and never repeats its being.[273] The absence of the round of results due to the cutting off of the round of passion and actions, is the end of suffering.

Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya's Virtues

This is a summary of the Further Discourse about Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya (*Apara -Lakuṇḍaka-Bhaddiya-sutta*, Ud 7.5).

Once, while the Buddha was staying at Jetavana in Sāvatthī a large number of monastics visited him. At that time, Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya, after going on

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[271] Note that the cutting off of the round of moral defilements leads to the cutting of the round of deeds (*kamma-vaṭṭa*).

[272] Craving (*taṇhā*) is the cause of suffering (*samudaya-sacca*). Therefore, the elimination of craving means the elimination of all kinds of passion. Hence craving (*taṇhā*) is emphasised here.

[273] Note that the cutting off of the round of deeds (*kamma-vaṭṭa*) gives rise to the cutting off of the round of results (*vipāka-vaṭṭa*) that might otherwise take place in future.

alms round with many other monks in a village, having finished his meal, washed his alms bowl, dried it, put it in its bag, and carried it on his shoulder by means of a sling. He folded his outer garment and put it on his left shoulder. He had all forms of pleasant deportment, such as stepping forward, stepping backward, looking straightforward, looking sideward, bending, stretching, and casting down his eyes. He set out on foot to the Buddha with his mind well concentrated by both mindfulness (*sati*) and clear comprehension (*sampajañña*) treading evenly on the fore footstep with the hind footstep.

When he went thus, he did not mix with others but followed behind them because he led a solitary life (*eka-cārī*). Another explanation: His ugly dwarfish body structure brought jeers and contempt from such worldly monks as the Group-of-Six (*Chabbaggiya*). Remembering this, the considerate Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya thought: "May these few worldly monks not develop unwholesomeness, on account of me!" and hence he followed behind them. In this manner, these monastics and Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya arrived in Sāvatthī and entered the Jetavana monastery and approached where the Buddha was.

Seeing from a distance the pleasant deportment of Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya who was following behind the monks, it occurred to the Buddha thus: "These monks do not know the greatness of my son. Therefore, some of these worldly monks have overwhelmed my son with contempt and jeers. Such actions will bring them no benefit but cause suffering for a long time. Now, the time has come for me to reveal the virtues of my son to them and thereby [1235] set him free from their acts of contempt."

So the Buddha asked the monks: "Do you see, monks, that monastic who came behind you and who was bullied by some worldly monks with their mocking remarks because of his ugly dwarfish frame?" – "Yes, we do, exalted Buddha," answered the monks. Then the Buddha said: "Monks, this monastic is of great supernormal power. There is almost no absorption (*jhāna*) in which he has not engaged.

> That is to say, the monk had experience in all the absorptions (*jhāna*), such as the attainment of form absorption (*rūpa-samāpatti*), the attainment of formless absorption (*arūpa-samāpatti*), the attainment of the four sublime states (*brahma-vihāra-samāpatti*), the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-*

> *samāpatti*) and fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*). By this statement, Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya's possession of supernormal powers is indicated.

Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya has personally become an Arahat, even in this present life, by realizing it through extraordinary intelligence, the Arahat fruition that is the goal of the peerless and noble practice sought after by those clansmen who rightly chose to leave household life for monkhood.

> That is to say he is a monk who has continuously been absorbed in Arahat fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*). By this statement, Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya's possession of might was manifested. Arahat fruition-attainment (*phala-samāpatti*) was enjoyed by the noble Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya; hence it was his splendour (*ānubhāva*)."

After saying thus, the Buddha also spoke a solemn utterance in verse as follows (Ud 7.5):

> *Nelaṅgo seta-pacchādo, ekāro vattatī ratho,*
> *anīghaṁ passa āyantaṁ, chinna-sotaṁ abandhanaṁ.*

> Behold carefully this chariot-like body frame of my son Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya. It consists of the wheel, the principal component part of the chariot equal to the flawless morality of an Arahat; the coverings of the chariot are equal to the white and clean emancipation of an Arahat, the spokes of the wheel of the chariot equal to the incomparable mindfulness of an Arahat; the chariot-like body frame of my bosom son Bhaddiya moves about in full swing, even without lubrication. Following from behind a large number of monks, he has no suffering of defilement; all the oil of craving has been eliminated. He had none of the ten fetters.

Here, the Buddha was so overjoyed because of the virtues of Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya that he urged others to have a look at Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya's body.

> Others accounts and teachings concerning Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya may be noted from commentary to the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 260-261), the commentary to the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Lakuṇḍaka-bhaddiyathera-gāthā*, Thag 466), etc.

Foremost Title Achieved

At a later time, while the Buddha was staying at Jetavana and holding a meeting, he declared, in respect of Ven. Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ, bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *mañjussarānaṁ yad-idaṁ Lakuṇḍaka-bhaddiyo.*
>
> Monks, Lakuṇḍaka Bhaddiya is the foremost (*etad-agga*) among my disciples having a sweet voice.

8. Ven. Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja

Aspiration in the Past

The future Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja was reborn in a family of lions during the lifetime of Buddha Padumuttara and lived, moving about for food at the foot of a mountain. One morning, when the Buddha surveyed the world, he saw the lion having the potential to attain the paths, the fruitions and Nibbāna. Accordingly, the Buddha made his alms round in [1236] the city of Haṁsavatī and in the afternoon, while the lion was in search of food, he entered the lion's den and sat absorbed in the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*), with his legs crossed, in midair.

When the lion came back from his search for food and stood at the entrance of the den, he saw the Buddha miraculously sitting in midair and it occurred to him thus: "This man, who has come to my place, is able to sit in midair. This noble personage must be great and worthy of honour indeed! As he is worth honouring, he is able to sit cross-legged in midair in the cave. His body light also spreads and flashes everywhere. I have never seen such a miracle. This noble individual must be the best of all who ought to be honoured. I too should do honour to him to the best of my ability." So thinking, the lion brought all kinds of terrestrial and watery flowers from the forest and spread them on the ground up to the height where the Buddha was sitting. Then he stood right in front of the Buddha, worshipping him. The next day, he discarded the withered flowers and replaced them with fresh ones to make a similar seat and with it, honoured the Buddha.

In this way, the lion made floral seats for seven days and he took great delight in it. At the same time, he acted as a guard at the entrance of the cave honouring

the Buddha thereby. On the seventh day, the Buddha emerged from his attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*) and stood at the cave's entrance. Then the lion circumambulated him three times keeping him to his right and paid homage to him from the four cardinal points and stood still after stepping back. The Buddha, having realized that such a performance of meritorious deeds was efficacious enough for his attainment of the paths and fruitions, rose into the sky and returned to the monastery.

Life as Son of a Wealthy Merchant

As for the lion, because he was separated from the Buddha, he felt very unhappy and after his death took rebirth in the family of a wealthy (*mahā-sāla*) merchant in Haṁsāvatī city. On coming of age, he went along one day with other citizens and while listening to the Buddha's teaching, he saw him declaring a monk, the best among those who spoke boldly on the paths and fruitions. As in the case of the pervious venerables, the merchant's son performed a great alm giving (*mahā-dāna*) to the Buddha for seven days and aspired after a similar position in future.

Seeing that the man's wish would be fulfilled, the Buddha predicted to that effect. After receiving the prophecy, the merchant's son did good works till his death. When he passed away from that life, he was never reborn in the suffering states for 100,000 aeons but, instead, alternatively in the realms of Devas and human beings.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

Having been reborn thus from the human realm to the Deva realm and vice versa, Piṇḍola was born into the family of a wealthy Brahmin, in the city of Rājagaha, during the lifetime of the present Buddha and was named Bhāradvāja.

When Bhāradvāja came of age, he studied the three Vedas and when he had accomplished his studies, he became a teacher, going from place to place and teaching 500 Brahmin youths. As he himself was a teacher, at every feeding-place he personally received the food rather aggressively. As he was somewhat greedy with regard to food, he emphatically looked for food together with his students, asking: "Where is gruel available? Where is rice obtained?" On

account of his wandering and longing for food wherever he was, he came to be known as Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja, "Bhāradvāja, the seeker of food."

At a later time, Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja suffered economic misfortune and became poor. One day, the Buddha went to Rājagaha and gave a discourse. After listening to the discourse, the Brahmin developed faith and took ordination as a monastic. [1237]

Those who had joined the Buddhist Saṅgha were generally known by their clan name. Therefore, the monastic should have been known as Bhāradvāja. But he was not, instead he was called Ven. Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja. The reason for this was that he carried a pot-like bowl and ate a bowlful of gruel, or a bowlful of cakes and a bowl of rice. Then other monks told the Buddha of the monk's gluttony.

The Buddha forbade his use of the bag for the bowl. So the poor monk had to keep it upside down under the couch. When he kept it, he pushed it under the couch causing a friction between the brim of the bowl and the rough ground. When he took it out the same thing happened. As time went by, because of the repeated frictions, the bowl which originally was big like an enormous pot became a bowl with the capacity of cooked rice from a small measure (*ambaṇa*) of uncooked rice. Then the monks reported the matter to the Buddha, who from that time onwards permitted Ven. Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja to use the bag. Thus Ven. Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja was like one who adopted monkhood for food, hence he was called Piṇḍola. Because he belonged to the Bhāradvāja clan, he was named Bhāradvāja. Therefore, after becoming a monastic he was called Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja, a two-word name.

At a later time, when he strove to engage in development of the sense-faculties (*indriya-bhāvanā*), he became an Arahat (*Arahatta-phala*). After becoming an Arahat, he went from one dwelling place to another, from one monastic compound to another, carrying a curved iron rod used as a key and fearlessly roaring a lion's roar: "Those who have doubt as regards the path and the fruition, let them ask me!"

> A detailed account of this should be taken from the translation of the Discourse concerning Piṇḍola-bhāradvāja (*Piṇḍola-bhāradvāja-sutta*, SN 48.49).

One day, he brought down,[274] by means of his supernatural power, the sandalwood bowl that was hanging in the air from the top of a bamboo pole which was supported by a series of other poles to the height of 60 cubits by a wealthy merchant of Rājagaha. Surrounded by applauding people, Ven. Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja went to the Veḷuvana monastery and placed the bowl in the hand of the Buddha. Although knowing about it the Buddha asked: "Dear son Bhāradvāja, from where did you get this bowl?" When Ven. Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja explained, the master said: "You, dear son, have shown a superhuman state (*uttari-manussa-dhamma*), the absorptions (*jhāna*), paths (*magga*) and fruitions (*phala*), that surpass the ten wholesome courses of action belonging to men (*kusala-kamma-patha*) just for an unworthy gain. You, dear son, have done something that should not be done!" Beginning with these words, the Buddha rebuked Ven. Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja in many ways and set up a rule that forbade the performance of miracles.

Afterwards, three kinds of talk occurred amongst the monastics with regard to his virtues:

1. Ven. Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja, who was also known as the great elder Sīhanādī, as he was in the habit of making bold speeches, on the day he became an Arahat, fearlessly announced: "Those who have doubts about the paths and the fruitions, let them ask me!"
2. He reported his attainment of Awakening to the Buddha whereas other venerables kept silent.
3. He flew up and brought down the sandalwood bowl of the Rājagaha merchant.

The monastics told the Buddha of these three virtues put together. As it was the nature of Buddhas to reproach what should be reproached and to admire what should be admired, the Buddha only selected what was worth admiring, and said in praise: "Monks, by developing his three faculties and by repeatedly reflecting on them, the monk Bhāradvāja declared his Awakening, saying: 'I know that

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[274] A detailed account of this story may be read in chapter 33.

there is no more rebirth for me, I have practised the noble practice, that what was to be done has been done and I have nothing else to do concerning the path!'

What are the three faculties? The faculty of mindfulness (*satindriya*), the faculty of concentration (*samādhindriya*), the faculty of wisdom (*paññindriya*), by developing and by repeatedly reflecting on them, he declares he is an Arahat, saying: 'I know that there is no more rebirth for me, concerning the [1238] path! I have practiced the noble practice, that what was to be done has been done, and I have nothing further to do concerning the path!'

Monks, in what do these three faculties end? They end in bringing about destruction; but destruction of what? The destruction of rebirth, old age and death. Monks, as he knew full well that he had no more rebirth, old age and death, the monk Bharadvāja speaks of his being an Arahat: 'I know that there is no more rebirth for me, that I have practised the noble practice, that what was to be done has been done, and that I have nothing else to do concerning the path!' " The Buddha spoke thus in praise of Ven. Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja. It was this very great elder who gave a discourse to King Udena of Kosambī and established him as a lay devotee in the Three Treasures (see the Discourse concerning Piṇḍola-bhāradvāja (*Piṇḍola-bhāradvāja-sutta*, SN 48.49).

Foremost Title Achieved

While holding a ceremony at a later time, the Buddha declared admiringly of Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja as follows:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *sīha-nādikānaṁ yad-idaṁ Piṇḍola-bhāradvājo.*
>
> Monks, of my disciple monastics, who fearlessly speak like a lion's roar, Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja is the foremost (*etad-agga*)!

Thus the Buddha appointed Ven. Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja as the foremost (*etad-agga*) amongst those "making a lion's roar" (*sīha-nādika*).

9. Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa

> The venerable's original name was Puṇṇa. Since he was the son of Ven. Koṇḍaññā's sister, Mantāṇī, the Brahmin lady, he was known as Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa.

Aspiration in the Past

The man of good family, who would become Mantāṇiputta, was born into the wealthy Brahmin family, in the city of Haṁsavatī, before Buddha Padumuttara appeared 100,000 aeons ago. On his naming day, his parents and relatives gave him the name Gotama.

On coming of age, the Brahmin youth Gotama, son of a wealthy Brahmin, studied the three Vedas and also became skilful in all crafts. While going from place to place in the company of 500 youths who were his pupils, he reflected on the Vedas and on seeing in them no means for liberation from Saṁsāra, it occurred to him: "Like the trunk of a banana plant, these Vedas are smooth outside but there is no substance inside. My wandering with attachment to them resembles an act of grinding the chaff in the hope of getting rice. What is the use of these three Vedas? There is no use at all for me." Again he pondered: "I shall adopt an ascetic life and develop the absorptions (*jhāna*) based on the sublime states (*Brahma-vihāra*). Being one who never falls off from such absorptions, I shall take rebirth in the Brahma realm. Pondering thus he went together with his 500 pupils to the foot of a hill and lived there as an ascetic.

The followers of the ascetic Gotama were matted-hair recluses numbering 18,000. The master Gotama himself was accomplished in the five mundane psychic powers and the eight mundane absorptions and taught his 18,000 disciples how to develop concentration of mind by means of certain meditation devices. Following the teaching of their master, the 18,000 disciples also became accomplished in the five mundane psychic powers and the eight mundane absorptions.

In this way, as time went by, when the master Gotama became old, the Buddha Padumuttara was living amidst them with 100,000 monastics and having his native Haṁsavatī city as his resort for food. One day at daybreak, when the Buddha surveyed the world of sentient beings, he saw the potentials of the recluse disciples of [1239] Gotama.

He also foresaw that: "With my visit to the ascetic Gotama, he will aspire to be foremost (*etad-agga*) among those who could proclaim the Dhamma well in the Dispensation of a Buddha to come." Accordingly, he cleansed himself, took his bowl and robe and went in the guise of an insignificant man and stood at the

entrance of Gotama's hermitage, while the recluse's disciples were away in search of herbs and fruit.

Although he had not known beforehand that the Buddha Padumuttara had appeared, the ascetic teacher Gotama, on seeing the Buddha, guessed it was the great man from a distance: "Considering the physical perfection of this noble visitor, such a personality could become a Universal Monarch if he were to live a household life, but if he were to live an ascetic life, he could become a genuine omniscient Buddha, who burst opens the roof of the defilements (*kilesa*). Therefore, this man appears to me as one liberated from the three worlds." As soon as he saw the Buddha, he bowed his head most respectfully and said: "Exalted Buddha, please come this way!" So saying, he prepared and offered a seat to the Buddha, who then took the seat and taught Gotama.

At that time, his pupils, the matted-hair ascetics, returned. They had the thought: "We shall offer choice fruit and roots to our master and, as for us, we shall eat what remains," but, they were surprised by the sight of the Buddha sitting in a high place and their master in a lower place.

"Look, we have been roaming about under the impression that there was nobody else who was nobler than our master in the world. Now we have clearly seen a great man who let our master take a lower seat and who himself took a higher one. This noble person must be most honourable!" So thinking, they went on, bringing their fruit baskets. The master Gotama, fearing that the pupils might respect him in the presence of the Buddha, asked them from a distance: "Pupils, do not pay homage to me! The Supreme One in the world of sentient beings, together with the Devas and Brahmas, who deserves the homage of all, is seated here. Pay homage to him!" Trusting their teacher that he would not have spoken without knowing, they bowed at the feet of the Buddha.

"Pupils, I have no other food to give to the Buddha. Let us offer him these fruits and roots." So saying, he put the choice ones into the Buddha's bowl. Only when the Buddha had partaken of the fruits and roots did the recluse and his pupils eat their shares.

After partaking of the fruits as his meal, the Buddha wished: "May the two chief disciples come to me with 100,000 monastics." At that moment the chief disciple, Ven. Mahā Devala, considered: "Where has the Fortunate One gone?" and

knowing that "the Buddha wishes for our visit," he appeared in front of the Buddha with his head bowed, together taking 100,000 monastics.

Gotama addressed his pupils: "Pupils, we have nothing to offer to the assembly of monks. They have no choice but to stand miserably. Let us make seats of flowers for the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha. Bring aquatic flowers and terrestrial flowers quickly!" The ascetic pupils instantly brought beautiful and fragrant flowers by their supernormal powers from the foot of the hill. And, in the way stated in the story of the great elder Sāriputta, they made floral seats.

> The engagement in the attainment of cessation absorption (*nirodha-samāpatti-jhāna*) by the Buddha and his monks, the holding of floral umbrellas over them by the recluses and all the other accounts should also be understood in the way as mentioned in the story of great elder Sāriputta.

On the seventh day, when the Buddha emerged from the attainment of cessation absorption (*nirodha-samāpatti-jhāna*), he saw the recluses, who were surrounding him, and asked a monastic disciple, who was foremost (*etad-agga*) in teaching: "Dear son, these recluses have done a great honour. Dear son, give them a discourse in appreciation of the floral seats." The Arahat took the command respectfully and gave an appreciative discourse after reflecting on the teaching. At the end of the discourse, the Buddha himself taught in addition the means leading to attainment of the paths and the fruitions in a voice that resembled a Brahma's. When the teaching ended, the 18,000 matted-hair recluses became Arahats, except only for their master, Gotama. [1240]

As the master, however, was unable to realize the truth in that life, he asked the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, who is the monastic that gave a discourse earlier?" When the Buddha answered: "Ascetic Gotama, the monk who taught first is the foremost (*etad-agga*) among those who are able to teach well in my Dispensation." Gotama said: "Exalted Buddha, as the result of the merit of the service (*adhikāra*) given to you, may I, like the monk who taught me first, become the foremost (*etad-agga*) among excellent teachers in the Dispensation of a Future Buddha." Having said thus, he prostrated at the feet of the Buddha.

The Buddha surveyed the future and saw that the wish of the ascetic Gotama would be fulfilled without any doubt. Accordingly, he predicted: "In the future, 100,000 aeons from now, Buddha Gotama will appear. Then you will become

foremost among those who are excellent in teaching the Dhamma!" And he called the ascetic pupils who had now become Arahats: "Come, monks (*etha bhikkhavo*)." Then the hair and beard of all the recluses disappeared immediately without being shaved, and they were instantly robed and readily equipped with alms bowls and robes created by miraculous power. Their ascetic appearance vanished and they became like great disciples who were of 60 years' standing or 80 years of age. Buddha Padumuttara returned to the monastery accompanied by the whole company of monks.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

Having rendered his service to the Buddha till the end of his life and performed good works to the best of his ability, the ascetic Gotama took rebirth only in the realm of Devas or that of humans for 100,000 aeons. At the time of our Buddha's appearance, he was reborn in a wealthy family in the Brahmin village of Doṇavatthu. The child was named Puṇṇa by his parents and relatives.

Having attained the path and wisdom and become an Arahat having omniscience, the Buddha taught the first discourse and in the course of his journey, he stayed somewhere, with Rājagaha as his resort for alms food. While the Buddha was staying there, Ven. Aññāsi Koṇḍañña came to the Brahmin village of Doṇavatthu, near Kapilavatthu, and ordained Puṇṇa the youth, the son of his sister, and taught him how to practise as a monk. The next day, Ven. Koṇḍañña visited the Buddha and having venerated him respectfully and sought permission, he went to the Chaddanta forest, residing there till his death.

Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa, however, did not go along with his uncle to the Buddha, for he thought: "I shall go to the Buddha only after attainment of Awakening, the culmination of my duties as a monk." So he stayed behind in the city of Kapilavatthu. And when he put great efforts in his endeavours, he soon became an Arahat.

From Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa, 500 clansmen took ordination. As he himself followed and practised the ten bases for speech (*kathā-vatthu*), he gave an exhortation to the 500 monks involving the ten bases for speech.

> The ten forms of speech (*kathā-vatthu*) are: 1) Speech concerning few wants (*apiccha-kathā*); 2) speech concerning easy contentment (*santaṭṭhi-kathā*); 3) speech concerning seclusion (*paviveka-kathā*); 4) speech

> concerning freedom from the fivefold contact (*asaṁsagga-kathā*); 5) speech concerning industriousness (*viriya-kathā*); 6) speech concerning morality (*sīla-kathā*); 7) speech concerning mental concentration (*samādhi-kathā*); 8) speech concerning wisdom (*paññā-kathā*); 9) speech concerning liberation (*vimutti-kathā*); and 10) speech concering reflective wisdom (*paccavekkhaṇa-kathā*). As he himself engaged in these ten forms of speech, so did he advise these ten to his followers.

Being established in the exhortation of their teacher, all 500 monks worked to fulfil their ascetic duties and became Arahats. Knowing about the culmination of becoming Arahats by their performance of the ascetic duties, the 500 monks went to their preceptor (*upajjhāya*), Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa, and waited upon him. And they said: "Venerable sir, our ascetic works have culminated in their highest point by our becoming Arahats. We also practised the ten bases for speech quite easily. The time has come for us to visit the Fortunate One."

On hearing the words of the monks, [1241] Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa thought: "The Fortunate One knows my practice of the ten bases for speech. When I teach, I always make it a point to give such a speech. If I now go with them, surely they will surround me. It is not befitting for me to visit the Buddha when surrounded by such a community of monastics. Let them go earlier and visit the Fortunate One first." So thinking, he said to the monks: "Dear friends, you please go ahead and visit the Fortunate One before me. Also, worship at the feet of the Fortunate One in my name. I shall follow along after you on the same road."

The 500 monastics, who were all the natives of Kapilavatthu where the Buddha was born, who were all Arahats, free from the pollutants (*āsava*), and who had all made easy acquisition of the ten bases for speech, accepted the advice of their preceptor. They arrived at the Veḷuvana monastery of Rājagaha after covering a distance of 60 leagues, and having venerated the feet of the Buddha they sat down at a proper place.

Since it was a natural law (*dhammatā-āciṇṇa*) of Buddhas to exchange greetings with visitors, the Buddha spoke sweet introductory words by asking: "How are you, monks? Are you fit and well?" and so on. He also put another question: "Where did you come from?" – "We came from the region of Kapilavatthu, your birthplace," replied the monks. Then the Buddha asked: "Among the monks

of the region of Kapilavatthu, my birthplace, who is admired by his fellow monastics as one of few wants, who speaks words of Dhamma connected with few wants?" As a priority, the Buddha asked this question of monastics who easily practised the ten bases for speech. The answer, given unanimously by the 500 monks was: "Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa is like that, venerable sir." Overhearing the answer, Ven. Sāriputta was very keen to meet Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa.

The Buddha, thereafter, went from Rājagaha to Sāvatthī. Learning of the Buddha's visit to Sāvatthī, Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa went alone to Sāvatthī and met the Buddha personally without any monks leading him. The Buddha gave him a discourse with reference to the ten bases for speech (*kathā-vatthu*). Having listened to the discourse, Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa paid his respects to the Buddha, and went to Andhavana forest in order to live in seclusion and spent the day at the foot of a tree. Hearing that Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa was on his way to Andhavana, Ven. Sāriputta followed him, continuously watching the head of the foregoing Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa from behind, lest he should lose sight of him. After waiting for a chance, Ven. Sāriputta, in the evening, approached the tree where Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa was. Having exchanged greetings with him, Ven. Sāriputta asked him about the seven purities (*visuddhi*). Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa answered each and every question. Then one expressed to the other his appreciation of their Dhamma talks, see the Discourse on the Relay-Chariots (*Ratha-vinīta-sutta*, MN 24) for more details.

Foremost Title Achieved

At a later time, in an assembly of monks, the Buddha spoke in praise of Ven. Mantiṇiputta Puñña:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *Dhamma-kathikānaṁ yad-idaṁ Puṇṇo Mantāniputto.*
>
> Monks, among my monastic disciples who teach the Dhamma,
> Mantāniputta Puñña is the foremost.

Speaking thus, the Buddha placed the great elder foremost (*etad-agga*) among all excellent Dhamma teachers.

10. Ven. Kaccāyana

Aspiration in the Past

The good man, the future Kaccāyana, was brought up in a family of [1242] householders during the lifetime of the Buddha Padumuttara. One day, he went to the monastery and stood at the edge of the audience listening to a discourse. Seeing the Buddha declare someone as foremost (*etad-agga*) among those who were good at elaborately and analytically teaching the Dhamma which had been spoken of in brief, it occurred to him thus: "This monk is supreme indeed! He was praised by the Fortunate One as the best among those who can elaborate and teach in detail what is briefly taught by the Buddha, I too should become a monk with such a title in the Dispensation of a Future Buddha."

So thinking, he invited the Buddha and performed a grand alms giving (*mahā-dāna*) for seven days in the way mentioned above. "Fortunate One," said the man, "as a result of this seven days great alms giving, I do not wish for any other bliss but to be the foremost (*etad-agga*) like the monk, who, seven days ago, was declared as the best among those who can elaborately and analytically explain what has been briefly spoken." Having said thus, he prostrated at the feet of the Buddha.

When the Buddha Padumuttara surveyed the future, he saw that the man of good family's wish would be fulfilled. He therefore predicted saying: "Friend, at the end of 100,000 aeons from now, there will appear the Buddha Gotama. In his Dispensation, you will become the foremost (*etad-agga*) among those monastics who are able to expound in detail the meaning of the doctrines taught briefly." After giving an appreciative discourse the Buddha left.

Donation of Gold Bricks

Having performed meritorious deeds till he died, the man of good family was reborn either in the realm and the human world for 100,000 aeons and was then reborn in a good family, in the city of Bārāṇasī, during the lifetime of the Buddha Kassapa. When the Buddha entered Parinibbāna, the man of good family went to the site where a gold shrine (*cetiya*) was being built. There he donated bricks of gold worth 100,000 pieces of money in honour of the Buddha

and made the following wish: “Exalted Buddha, in whichever plane of existence I am born may the colour of my body be gold!”

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

Having performed deeds of merit, he was reborn either in the realm or the human world for one immeasurable period (*asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*) during the interval between two Buddhas. In the lifetime of our Buddha, he was a son of the Brahmin chaplain in the city of Ujjenī. On his naming day, his father remarked: “My son, having a golden complexion, brings his own name.” He was, therefore, named Kañcana (Gold) by his parents and relatives.

On reaching adulthood, the golden boy was accomplished in the three Vedas. When his father, the Brahmin chaplain, died he succeeded him in the same post. As the Brahmin chaplain, he was also known by the name of his clan, which was Kaccāna, which is a contracted form of Kaccāyana.

King Caṇḍapajjota summoned his ministers and said: “Ministers, a Buddha has emerged in the world. Those of you who are able to bring him to me may do so.” The ministers unanimously replied: “Great King, no one except the Brahmin chaplain Kaccāna is able to do so. He may be sent to bring the Buddha.” The king then summoned him and said: “Friend Kaccāna, go and bring the Buddha to me.” – “Noble King,” replied Kaccāna, “I shall go, provided I have your permission to become a monk.” – “Friend Kaccāna, do whatever you want, but bring the Buddha.” So saying, the king gave his permission.

Thinking: “Those who go to a Buddha should not do so in a large company,” he went to the Buddha with the seven others, he being the eighth. The Buddha taught a discourse, at the end of the discourse, the chaplain Kaccāna became an Arahat together with his seven companions, all being endowed with the analytical knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-patta*). Then the Buddha stretched out his right hand and called out: “Come, monks.” The hair and the beard of all eight instantly disappeared; and alms bowl and robes created by a miracle (*iddhi-maya*) appeared on their bodies. They achieved the ascetic life and their appearances became like that of great disciples of 60 or 80 years’ standing.

Having reached the apex of his monk’s life, which was becoming an Arahat, Ven. Kaccāna did not forget, but requested the Buddha to visit the city of Ujjenī by

reciting verses in [1243] praise of the journey, as did Ven. Kāḷudāyī. Hearing the words of Ven. Kaccāna, the Buddha came to know: "Kaccāna wants me to go to Ujjenī. Buddhas do not set out to a place which is not worth visiting due to any reason." Therefore, he asked Ven. Kaccāna: "Dear son, you alone go to Ujjenī. If you go, King Caṇḍapajjota will be pleased."

Being aware that: "Buddhas speak no word of ambiguity," Ven. Kaccāna made obeisance most respectfully and left for Ujjenī city with the seven monastics who were once his companions.

Two Daughters of Different Merchants

While on the way to Ujjenī, Ven. Kaccāna went on an alms round in the township of Telapanāḷi, which was situated in the middle of his journey. In that township lived two ladies whose fathers were merchants. Of them one belonged to the family of a merchant whose business had failed. When her parents died, she had to live depending upon her nurse. But she possessed a full and beautiful body; her hair was longer than that of others, softer and more pliant as well and jet black, resembling the colour of a bee. The other lady, living in the same township, had less hair. Prior to Ven. Kaccāna's visit, she tried to buy some hair from the lady with luxuriant hair through a messenger saying that she would pay her 100 or 1,000 pieces of money or any price demanded. But she had refused to sell.

On the day that Ven. Kaccāna came for alms food, the lady with the beautiful hair saw him together with the seven monastics, and noticed they had empty alms bowls. Then it occurred to her: "A golden descendant of Brahma has come with a bowl that has been washed; it is empty, but I have no other things to offer. This lady sent somebody to buy my hair. Now I shall get enough to make offerings for the noble one with the money from the sale of my hair." So she sent her nurse to invite the venerables and gave them seats in her house.

When the venerables began to sit down, the lady went into her chamber and asked her nurse to cut her hair and she sent her away, saying: "Mother, go and sell my hair to the lady of such and such a name and bring back whatever amount of money paid by her. We shall offer food to the venerables." The sad nurse wiped her tears with the back of the palm of her hand and holding up her

breast with the other hand, she went to the other lady, secretly carrying the hair so that the venerables might not see it.

It is a usual way of dealing on the part of the buyer to have no appreciation for the thing personally brought by the seller however much the merchandise is excellent and valuable, so the buyer tries to get it at a very low price. Hence, the wealthy lady lacking in hair thought: "Formerly I was unable to obtain the hair although I was willing to pay a lot of money for it. Now the hair has been cut off but she will not get the original price. She must accept any amount I am going to pay." Accordingly she said to the nurse: "Nurse, I failed to get the hair despite my offer of so much money to your mistress. The lifeless hair, which might have fallen from anywhere, is worth only eight coins." So she paid the nurse only eight coins, an unreasonably low price.

The nurse brought the money to her mistress who offered a portion of food worth a coin to each of the eight monks. When Ven. Kaccāna reflected, he saw the lady's act of merit was full of potential. So he asked: "Where is the lady now?" – "In her chamber, sir," answered the nurse. Ven. Kaccāna then asked the nurse to bring the lady before him.

The lady who gave the alms food came out at Ven. Kaccāna's request, made but once, for she had much respect for the monks and having bowed before them, she developed strong faith in them. The seeds of an alms giving sown in the Buddha's Dispensation is likened to the fertile soil which yields good results even in the present life. Hence, as soon as the lady bowed down, her hair became luxuriant as before. The venerables then received the food and rose into the sky even while she was watching them; and they descended at King Caṇḍapajjota's garden called Kañcanavana. [1244]

Having seen Ven. Kaccāna, the gardener went to the king and informed him: "Great King, our master, the chaplain Kaccāna, became a monk and is visiting the royal garden." King Caṇḍapajjota went to the garden and made obeisance to Ven. Kaccāna, who had finished his meal, venerating him with the hands, knees and forehead touching the ground and sat at a suitable distance and asked: "Venerable sir, where is the Fortunate One?" Ven. Kaccāna answered: "Noble King, the Buddha himself has not come yet, but he has sent me." The king asked again: "Venerable sir, from where did you get the meal today?" In replying to

the king's question, Ven. Kaccāna told the king all about the hard-earned merit of the lady who was his alms food giver.

Having provided Ven. Kaccāna with accommodation, King Caṇḍapajjota invited him to the next day's meal and returned to the palace where he called up the lady, the food donor, by royal order and made her his Chief Queen. This was the acquisition of wealth and happiness in the present life by the lady as the result of the first impulsive wholesome volition (*paṭhama-javana*).

> Herein the meaning is: In performing alms giving (*dāna*), there are seven impulsive moments concerning a great wholesome volition (*mahā-kusala-cetanā*). Of them, the first impulsive volition results in the present life, if there are favourable circumstances. Hence, the first impulsive volition is called a deed resulting in the present life (*diṭṭha-dhamma-vedanīya-kamma*).
>
> The seventh impulsive volition has a result in the second life, if there are favourable circumstances. Hence it is called the deed resulting in the immediately following life (*upapajja-vedanīya-kamma*).
>
> The volition of the middle five impulsions give results in successive lives from the third, if there are favourable circumstances; hence, any volition of these middle five impulsions is called a deed giving results in successive lives (*aparāpariya-vedanīya-kamma*). It means a deed that has results in successive existences.
>
> When a deed brings about its result, the result is of two kinds: existence (*bhava*) and acqusition of wealth (*bhava-samāpatti*). The resultant mental aggregates and the body formed by deeds (*kamma*) that emerge at the time of conception (*paṭisandhi*) and at the time of growing (*pavatti*) are called the existence (*bhava*) result. The mental aggregate and the body generated by deeds (*kamma*) are called the attainment of existence (*patti-bhava*). Various forms of wealth enjoyed in life are called the acqusition of wealth (*bhava-samāpatti*).
>
> Of the three kinds of resulting deeds, the deeds resulting in the immediately following life (*upapajja-vedanīya-kamma*) and the deed resulting in successive lives (*aparāpariya-vedanīya-kamma*) bring their respective existence result and acqusition of wealth result.
>
> As regards the first impulsive volition or the deed resulting in the present life, when it results presently, it brings only acqusition of wealth, the

> various forms of wealth to be enjoyed in that life, but not existence (*bhava*) because that result has already given by the birth-generation (*janaka-kamma*) that created conception as its result in this life. Therefore, the first impulsive volition or the deed resulting in the present life of the lady in question brought her only the acqusition of wealth (*bhava-samāpatti*) result which was wealth and property in the same existence.

From that time onwards, King Caṇḍapajjota did great honour to Ven. Kaccāna. Pleased with the teaching of Ven. Kaccāna, many became monks in his presence. Since then, the whole city of Ujjenī had been covered with the colour of the robes and blown by the breeze caused by the movements of the going and coming of the monks. The queen conceived a son and she gave birth to him after ten months, the prince was named Gopāla after his grandfather. Subsequently the queen became well-known by the name of Gopālamātā in relation to her son. As Queen Gopālamātā was so impressed by Ven. Kaccāna, she built a big monastery for him, in the garden of Kaccānavana and donated it to him with the king's permission. Having made the people of Ujjenī faithful in the Buddha's Dispensation, Ven. Kaccāna returned to the Buddha.

Foremost Title Achieved

At a later time, while staying at Jetavana, in the assembly of monks, the Buddha spoke in praise of Ven. Kaccāna and declared him foremost (*etad-agga*), in connection with the three discourses: 1) the Discourse on the Honey Ball (*Madhupiṇḍika-sutta*, MN 18, 2) the Kaccāna repetition (*Kaccāna-peyyāla*, probably MN 133ff) and the Discourse on the Way to the Beyond (*Pārāyaṇa-sutta*, [1245] SN 43.44).

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *saṁkhittena bhāsitassa vitthārena atthaṁ vibhajantānam*
> *yad-idaṁ Mahākaccāno.*
>
> Monks, among my disciples who are able to elaborate what has been taught briefly, Mahā Kaccāna is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

The sermons given by Ven. Mahā Kaccāna may he taken from the Traditions (*Apādāna*, Tha-ap 35) text and its commentary, the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*, Thag 8.1) and its commentary, etc.

11-12. Ven. Mahā Panthaka and Ven. Cūḷa Panthaka

Aspiration in the Past

100,000 aeons ago, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara, two householder brothers, who were native of Haṁsavatī city, having profound faith in the Three Treasures, constantly went to the Buddha to listen to the Dhamma. One day, the younger of the two saw a monk being declared foremost (*etad-agga*) in two qualities: 1) Among those who created mind-made images and 2) those who were skilfull in form absorption (*rūpāvacara-jhāna*). It then occurred to him thus: "Great, indeed is this monk. Despite his being such, he roams about practising two things. It would be nice if I too should roam about practising these two things in the Dispensation of a Future Buddha."

The younger brother invited the Buddha and performed a grand alms giving to him for seven days. Then he expressed his wish to the Buddha, saying: "Venerable sir, seven days ago, you declared a certain monk foremost (*etad-agga*) in the Dispensation by virtue of his two qualities: The ability of creating mind-made images and skill in form absorption (*rūpāvacara-jhāna*). As a result of this specially performed act of merit, may I be foremost with those two qualities also.' "

When the Buddha surveyed the future, he saw that this householder's wish would be fulfilled and said: "In the future, 100,000 aeons from now, there will arise the Buddha Gotama. That Buddha will declare you as the foremost concerning these two qualities." And after giving an appreciative discourse, the Buddha departed. This was the wish expressed by the younger brother.

As for the older householder brother, one day he saw a certain monk being declared by the Buddha the foremost (*etad-agga*) in the field of having skill in developing formless absorption (*arūpāvacara-jhāna*), and like his younger brother, he too performed special deeds of merit and, thereafter, expressed his wish: "May I be the foremost (*etad-agga*) in the field of formless absorption (*arūpāvacara-jhāna*)!" – "Your wish will be fulfilled," predicted the Buddha.

Both householder brothers did good works during the lifetime of the Buddha and when the Buddha attained Parinibbāna, they did homage by offering gold at the shrine which was built for the Buddha's bodily relics. Upon their death, they

were reborn in the abode of Devas. While they were being reborn either in the divine or human worlds only, and 100,000 aeons elapsed.

> Of the two brothers, an account of the meritorious deed done by the elder brother, Mahā Panthaka, in that interval, was not given particularly in the Great Commentary (*Mahā-aṭṭhakathā*).

As for the younger brother, Cūḷa Panthaka, he became a monk in the Dispensation of Buddha Kassapa, and for 20,000 years he practised meditation on a white meditation device (*odāta-kasiṇa*) and was reborn again in a Deva realm. Later, our Buddha attained Awakening, and, after teaching the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, he went to stay in the Veḷuvana at Rājagaha.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

The daughter of Dhanaseṭṭhi, a wealthy merchant in the city of Rājagaha, fell in love with her male servant, and fearing that others would come to know about their affair, she discussed with her lover: "We shall no longer live here. If my parents were to know of this affair of ours, they would kill me, and cut me into pieces. Let us go and live elsewhere!" [1246] They agreed with each other, and secretly taking her jewellery, she went out through the door that was left open. They then fled to live in another place where they were unknown to others.

While the two were living in this unknown place, the lady became pregnant owing to their intimacy. When her pregnancy reached maturity, she consulted with her husband, saying: "Sir, my pregnancy is now mature. It is too miserable for both of us if I give birth at a place away from our relatives or friends. Let us return to our parents' house." Her husband delayed the decision by saying, just to please his wife: "We shall go today," or "We shall travel tomorrow." Then the lady thought: "This stupid man dares not go, for his guilt is so serious. Parents certainly desire the welfare of their children. Whether the stupid man follows me or not, I should go." So thinking, while her husband was out, the lady departed alone after storing up her belongings and leaving a message with her next-door neighbour that she was going to her parents.

When her husband returned later and found that his wife had left for her parents' residence, he followed her in haste and eventually caught up with her midway. At the very spot of their meeting, the lady gave birth to a child. Asked by her husband: "What is this dear?" the lady answered: "Sir, a son has been

born." – "What shall we do now?" they discussed between themselves and decided, saying: "We were going to our parents' home to deliver the child. Now the delivery of the child has taken place in the middle of the journey. What is the use of going to our parents' place? Let us go home!" So the two agreed and went home, and they named the baby Panthaka (Highway), as he was born along the highway.

Before long, the lady conceived again, when the second son was nearing his birth, he too was born on the way to the home of his mother's parents. Hence the first son was renamed Mahā Panthaka (Big Highway), and the second named Cūḷa Panthaka (Small Highway).

The husband and wife then returned home, each carrying a son. While they were living there, hearing such terms as "younger uncle," "older uncle," "grandfather," "grandmother," etc. in the conversation of other children, the older son, Mahā Panthaka, asked his mother: "Mother, other children mention, 'grandfather,' 'grandmother,' and so forth. Do we also have relatives?" The mother said: "Well, you are right, dear son! You have no relatives here. But in Rājagaha, however, your grandfather is a great merchant of wealth. Your relatives are many in that city." – "Mother, why do we not go to Rājagaha?" asked Mahā Panthaka.

The mother did not give her son the reason for not going to the city of Rājagaha. When she was repeatedly asked by her sons, she said to her husband: "Sir, the children are troubling me very much. On seeing us, our parents will not cut our flesh and eat us. Let us go! Let us show our sons their grandparents' house. Let us send them there!"

"Madam, I dare not go to your parents' house," said the husband, "but I shall manage to send you, so that you will certainly get there." – "All right sir," said the wife, "the house of their grandparents should be shown to the children in one way or another." The couple then headed for Rājagaha, carrying their boys and in due course they arrived in the city. They lodged at a rest house, near the city-gate. The mother took the boys and informed her parents through somebody of their visit.

When the grandparents received the information, they considered as follows: "For those who roamed in Saṁsāra there is none who has not been their son, or their daughter. These two, however, have committed a great offence against us.

They cannot live in our presence. They do not deserve to be with us. But let them take this much of money and live in a comfortable place, and let them send the two boys to us." Then they sent a messenger. The lady took the money sent by her parents and handed over the two little sons to the messengers, to be taken to their grandparents. The two brothers, Mahā Panthaka and Cūḷa Panthaka grew up in comfort in the house of their grandparents.

Their Ordinations

Of the two brothers, Cūḷa Panthaka was very young and tender, while Mahā Panthaka [1247] always went along with his grandfather to the Buddha to listen to his discourses. As he had always been listening to the discourses in the presence of the Buddha, he was inclined to become a monk. Therefore, he sought permission from his grandfather, Dhanaseṭṭhi, saying: "Grandfather, if you will permit me, I would like to become a monk." – "What a wonderful thing you have said," replied the wealthy merchant, "for me, your becoming a monk is far better than the whole world! Go ahead, as you wish, grandson!" Replying thus gladly, the merchant accepted Mahā Panthaka's request and took him to the Buddha. "Merchant," addressed the Buddha, "how is it? Have you brought a boy?" – "Yes, exalted Buddha," answered the merchant, "this boy is my older grandson. He is asking me to make him a monk under you."

Then the Buddha ordered a nearby monk who used to go on alms round: "Have the boy ordained!" After explaining the meditation on the five component parts of the body "with skin as the fifth" (*taca-pañcaka-kammaṭṭhāna*) to the boy, the monk made him a novice. After he became a novice Mahā Panthaka learnt the words of the Buddha, and having completed 20 years of age, he took higher ordination upon himself. After becoming a monk, he engaged seriously in meditation that led him to mastery over the four formless absorptions (*arūpāvacara-jhāna*). Having emerged from the absorptions (*jhāna*), he assiduously devoted himself to insight (*vipassanā*) meditation and finally became an Arahat. In this way the Arahat Mahā Panthaka become foremost among those monastics who were extremely skilful in engaging in formless meditation.

Ven. Mahā Panthaka spent his time enjoying the bliss of fruition. One day, after considering whether it would be possible for him to give his younger brother

such wonderful bliss, he went to the wealthy merchant, his grandfather, and requested: "Dear sir, if you agree, I would like to make Cūḷa Panthaka a novice." When the grandfather gave his consent, saying: "Do as you wish! You may make him a novice!" Ven. Mahā Panthaka had him initiated and established in the ten precepts. Novice Cūḷa Panthaka tried to learn from his older brother the following verse (SN 3.12):

> *Padumaṁ yathā koka-nadaṁ sugandhaṁ,*
> *pāto siyā phullam-avītagandhaṁ.*
> *Aṅgīrasaṁ passa virocamānaṁ,*
> *tapantam-ādiccam-ivantalikkhe.*

> Just as the lotus flower named Kokanada, because of its many petals and beauty, and pervading sweet smell, is lovely with splendour and ever-present fragrance as it opens at daybreak, even so, the Buddha's fragrance, by his body and his personal virtue, shining by his glory, splendid whenever one sees him, emanates radiance of light from his body, resembling the round sun that rises and appears in the sky during the season of Sarada in November.

Whatever words he had been learnt previously disappeared from his memory whenever he proceeded to learn the next one. For four months, he was still trying to commit the verse to memory, but although four months had passed, he still could not learn it by heart.

> It is explained in the commentary to the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) that during the lifetime of Buddha Kassapa, Cūḷa Panthaka was a learned monk. He jeered at a dull monk in his learning of Pāḷi. As a result, the dullard gave up his pursuit in learning, for he felt so ashamed on account of the jeering, and he lost self-confidence. Owing to that evil act, as Cūḷa Panthaka, he became a dullard after becoming a novice. Hence, he forgot all that had been memorised as soon as he went on to the next portions.

Thereupon the elder brother, Mahā Panthaka, drove him out, saying: "Cūḷa Panthaka! In this Dispensation you are not capable (*adhabba*) of the paths and the fruitions. You cannot learn even a single verse in four months. How are you, who cannot learn a verse in [1248] four months, going to be able to become an Arahant in your monastic life? Get out of this dwelling!" Driven out by his elder

brother, the novice Cūḷa Panthaka dared not stay there and stood, weeping, at the edge of the dwelling where his brother would not see him.

A Meditation Subject given by the Buddha

At that time, the Buddha was sojourning in the Mango Grove monastery, built and dedicated by the physician Jīvaka, with Rājagaha as his resort for alms food. Then Jīvaka sent a man to the Buddha to invite him along with 500 monks for the next day's meal. At that moment Ven. Mahā Panthaka was in charge of food distribution (*bhattuddesaka*). The man therefore referred the matter to him, saying: "Venerable sir, please accept the food offerings for 500 monks." – "I accept the food for the monks" he replied, "except for Cūḷa Panthaka."

Hearing the reply, Ven. Cūḷa Panthaka was extremely dejected. Seeing Ven. Cūḷa Panthaka's plight and knowing that he would achieve liberation if he visited him, the Buddha went to him and, showing himself from a distance neither too near nor too far, asked: "Dear son Cūḷa Panthaka, why are you weeping?" – "Because, venerable sir, my brother Ven. Mahā Panthaka expels me," answered Cūḷa Panthaka. "Dear son Panthaka," addressed the Buddha, "your brother does not possess the power of knowing the intentions and inclinations of beings (*asayānusaya-ñāṇa*). But you are an individual who is able to be led by a Buddha (*Buddha-veneyya-puggala*). With these encouraging words, the Buddha gave him a piece of clean, but rough, cloth created by his spiritual power, and the Buddha added: "Dear son Panthaka, keep this in your fist, muttering: *Rajo haraṇaṁ, rajo haranaṁ*, 'This cloth is liable to stain! This cloth is liable to stain.' Meditate on it in this way."

Herein, Ven. Cūḷa Panthaka in a previous birth was a king and while touring the city for inspection, his forehead sweated and he wiped the sweat with his clean waist-garment. The garment became dirty. The king then spoke to himself: "Because of the impure body, such a clean cloth becomes impure, abandoning its own nature. Impermanent indeed are conditioned things!"

Thus he gained the perception of impermanence. Hence for Cūḷa Panthaka, the meditation subject of: 'This cloth is liable to stain!' was a forceful contribution to his becoming an Arahat. Therefore the Buddha gave him the clean, rough cloth as he saw that Ven. Cūḷa Panthaka's previous good act and as he wished to urge him to engage in meditation on a subject that matched with that good act.

Attainment of Awakening

Ven. Cūḷa Panthaka sat down rubbing with his hand the cloth given by the Buddha and muttering: *Rajo haraṇaṁ, rajo haraṇaṁ!* "This cloth is liable to stain! This cloth is liable to stain." When he rubbed it several times, the threads of the garment began to get dirty. When he repeated the rubbing, the cloth became even dirtier like a kitchen cloth. As the time came for his wisdom to ripen, the law of extinction and destruction manifested itself in his mind. And he reflected: "This piece of cloth was originally white and clean. But on account of its association with my body (*upādinnaka*), it is now full of dirt. My mind is also like this cloth. It is just like the cloth. The mind, originally pure and clean in its unperturbed state, tends to become soiled on account of its association with such unwholesome concomitant factors as greed, hate, delusion, etc. Having thus reflected on himself and his heart, he proceeded to strive for mental concentration and gained the four form absorptions (*rūpāvacara-jhāna*). When he, on the basis of these absorptions, engaged in insight (*vipassanā*) meditation, he became an Arahat together with the fourfold analytical knowledge. As he had mastered the form absorption involving mentally produced form (*manomaya-rūpāvacara-jhāna*), he was able to create many bodies from one or one body from many, and had other similar powers. Besides, he was accomplished in the teaching of the Three Baskets and endowed with the six psychic powers.

> Such happenings are called path accomplished learning (*magga-siddha-pariyatti*) and path accomplished powers (*magga-siddha-abhiññā*), without particularly learning and without particularly striving, one becomes learned in the teaching and possessed of psychic powers as soon as one attains the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*). Both learning and powers took place by the force of the path (*magga*). [1249]

The following day, the Buddha visited the house of the physician Jīvaka together with 499 monastics and sat there for meal offerings. Ven. Cūḷa Panthaka could not go along as his brother Ven. Mahā Panthaka did not accept the invitation for him. The physician Jīvaka managed first to make offerings of rice gruel. The Buddha did not take the gruel but covered his alms bowl with his hand. When Jīvaka asked: "Exalted Buddha, why do you not accept the gruel?" he said: "There is a monk left behind at the monastery."

Thereupon Jīvaka sent a man saying: "Go, friend! Bring the monk who has been left behind at the monastery." Prior to the arrival of the man, Ven. Cūḷa Panthaka had created, by his own power, 1,000 monastics, each different from the other in shape as well as in occupation, such as making a robe, etc.

Because the man sent by Jīvaka saw too many monastics at the monastery, he did not invite them all, for he had been asked by Jīvaka to bring just one monk. So he went back and said to the physician: "Master Jīvaka, the monks left behind at the monastery are more than all these monks who are in your house. I was at a loss and could not find the right one to bring." Jīvaka asked the Buddha: "What is the name of the venerable who was left behind at the monastery, exalted Buddha?" When the Buddha said that it was Cūḷa Panthaka, Jīvaka sent the man again, saying: "Go again, friend! And ask: 'Which of you is the noble venerable named Cūḷa Panthaka?' and when he answers bring him along."

The man returned to the monastery and asked: "Which of you is the noble venerable named Cūḷa Panthaka?" – "I am Cūḷa Panthaka! I am Cūḷa Panthaka!" answered all of the thousand monks. The man returned again and said to Jīvaka: "Master, all of the thousand monks replied: 'I am Cūḷa Panthaka! I am Cūḷa Panthaka!' I am puzzled as to whom I should invite, not knowing this one from that one?" As the physician Jīvaka was a noble (*ariya*) supporter who had realized the four truths, even by the way the man informed him, he came to know that the one left behind at the monastery was of supernormal power. "Go again, friend," said Jīvaka, "tell the one who answers first that he is summoned by the Buddha, and bring him along by holding the edge of his robe." Saying thus, Jīvaka sent the man back once more. The man went again to the monastery and did as his master had ordered. Instantly the thousand monastics disappeared. Then only could the man bring Cūḷa Panthaka. Then only did the Buddha accept the gruel and partake of it.

Having gone back to the monastery after partaking of the food, a discussion took place at a meeting of the monks thus: "Supreme indeed are the Buddhas. He could cause a monk, who failed to learn by heart a single verse in four months, to become such a powerful monk!" Knowing the minds of the monks, the Buddha came to the meeting and sat on the Buddha's seat. Then he asked: "Monks, what are you talking about?" When the monks replied: "Exalted Buddha, we were talking about nothing but your grace. We were saying that

Cūḷa Panthaka has received a big favour from you!" The Buddha said: "Monks, receiving supermundane inheritance now by following my advice is not so wonderful. While he was of immature wisdom long, long ago in the past, Cūḷa Panthaka received mundane inheritance by taking my advice." – "When was it, exalted Buddha?" asked the monks. And at their request the Buddha related the Birth Story about the Little Merchant (*Cūḷa-seṭṭhi-jātaka*, Ja 4) to the monks in the following manner:

The Story about the Little Merchant

Monks, once upon a time, King Brahmadatta was ruling over the city of Bārāṇasī. At that time, a wise merchant known as Cūḷa Seṭṭhi was an expert in reading omens. One day, on his way to the palace to wait upon the king, he saw a dead rat and, upon observing and reflecting at that time on the planets in the sky, he read the omen thus: "Any intelligent man, who takes this dead rat, will be able to maintain his family and will prosper in business." An unknown poor man, hearing the wise merchant's reading of the omen and being aware that this wise merchant would not say so without knowing it, picked up the dead rat, went to an inn and sold it as food for the cats and received a coin. With that coin, he bought some molasses and carried a pot of drinking water. Seeing some flower sellers, who had come back from the forest after collecting flowers, he gave a little portion of molasses and a cup [1250] of clean water to each of them for their refreshment. Out of gratitude, each flower seller gave a handful of flowers to the poor man.

> From this point onwards, the poor man will be referred to as the "talented pupil," partly because he was of talented mind and partly because he was a pupil receiving the instruction given by the wise merchant Cūḷa Seṭṭhi.

After selling those handfuls of flowers, he bought molasses as much as the flower money could buy and went to a park carrying the molasses and a pot of clean drinking water. On that day, the flower sellers equally shared their flowers with him and departed. In this way, the talented pupil had soon saved eight silver coins.

Again, on a stormy day, the talented pupil went to the big, old deserted garden and while he was making piles of branches, which were broken and cut down by the strong winds, for firewood, he received sixteen coins from the royal potter.

With the eight coins accrued from the flowers, he now had 24 coins, and thought to himself: “I have some good means of obtaining money, by making myself a water-supporter to the grass-cutters. Having thought thus, he set up a water jar at a place neither too near nor too far from the city-gate. Then he gave the drinking water free to the 500 grass-cutters who came from the outskirts of the city. The grass-cutters said to him: “Friend, you have done a great service to us. What can we do for you?” The talented pupil replied: “When some occasion arises, you may help me.” After saying these words of acceptance, he wandered about and made friends with the official of highways and the official of waterways.

One day, the highway official brought him the good news that a horse merchant would visit Bārāṇasī city with 500 horses. Getting the news, the talented pupil transmitted it to the grass-cutters and asked them each to bring an extra bundle of grass in addition to what they had brought in the previous days. When the time for the entry of the horses came, the talented pupil piled up the thousand bundles of grass near the inner doors of the city so that the grass was visible to the horse-merchant, after which he sat down. The horse merchant could not get fodder even though he roamed about the whole city in search of it. So he gave 1,000 pieces of money to the talented pupil and took away the thousand bundles of grass.

Two or three days later, his other friend, the waterway official had the information sent to him that a big cargo boat had moored inside the harbour. So he thought to himself: “Some means of earning money has come up again!” Then he hired a fully furnished chariot for eight coins of silver and went in it to the port. He gave a ring to the captain of the boat as an advance payment. At a place near the port, he had a curtain hung up, as though it was a house of brokerage. Sitting there, he gave orders to his employees saying: “If other merchants come to me, tell me by way of three stages, so that there are three places which the information must pass through to me.”

Hearing of the arrival of the cargo boat, merchants numbering 100, rushed from the city of Bārāṇasī to the port with an idea to buy the merchandise. The employees of the talented pupil were there before the other merchants came, and readily said to them: “You will not get the goods, for the merchant sitting in such and such a place has made an advance payment for the whole lot.” On

hearing these words, the hundred merchants of Bārāṇasī came to the talented pupil, who was now being called a great merchant.

The servants of the talented pupil respectfully informed him of the visit of the merchants, passed through the three stages, as they had been told beforehand, just to aggrandize the matter. Each of the hundred merchants gave him 1,000 pieces of money as gifts to become shareholders in the business. Again each of them offered another thousand coins to him as a profit by which method they made him resign as a shareholder and managed to pass the whole lot of goods on the boat to their monopoly. The talented pupil earned 200,000 in one sitting and brought the money to Bārāṇasī, thinking: "I should do something out of gratitude." He took 100,000 pieces of money and went to the wise merchant Cūḷa Seṭṭhi.

Then the wise merchant asked the talented pupil: "Dear son, how did you get such a lot of money?" The talented pupil related the whole story, saying: "Following the advice you [1251] gave on seeing the dead rat, I have become rich by 200,000 and 24 coins." The wise merchant then considered: "A young man of such a talent should not belong to others; he should be mine." So he gave him his daughter, who had come of age, in marriage and helped him become head of the household. Upon the death of the wise merchant, he was given the rank of that merchant and lived according to his lifespan and was reborn as determined by his deeds.

Having related both the present story and the past, the Buddha spoke words regarding the two events and uttered the following verse for the present life (Ja 4):

> *Appakenapi medhāvī, pābhatena vicakkhaṇo,*
> *Samuṭṭhāpeti attānaṁ, aṇuṁ aggiṁ va sandhamaṁ.*
>
> My dear sons, monks! As a wise man, by putting fuel into an very small fire and making efforts to blow repeatedly and continuously, turns it into a big mass of fire, so the wise man, who is far-sighted as well as retrospective, who is prudent and reflective, can create a great wealth out of a small and insignificant investment and he can raise himself in that wealth to the state of a millionaire.

In this way the Buddha delivered this Birth Story (*Jātaka*) to the monks in the Dhamma Assembly Hall.

Foremost Title Achieved

At a later time, while the Buddha was sitting on the Dhamma throne, surrounded by monks, he spoke in praise of Ven. Cūḷa Panthaka as follows:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *mano-mayaṁ kāyaṁ abhinimminantānaṁ*
> *yad-idaṁ Cūḷa-panthako,*
> *ceto-vivaṭṭa-kusalānaṁ yad-idaṁ Cūḷa-panthako.*

> Monks, among my disciples who are able to create mind-made bodies through psychic powers, Cūḷa Panthaka is the foremost; and among my disciples who are skilful in mind transformation leading to form absorption (*rūpāvacara-jhāna*)[275] Cūḷa Panthaka is the foremost.

Thus the Buddha declared Ven. Cūḷa Panthaka the foremost (*etad-agga*) in two qualities.

With regard to Ven. Mahā Panthaka, the Buddha spoke in praise of him as follows:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *saññā-vivaṭṭa-kusalānaṁ yad-idaṁ Mahā-panthako.*

> Monks, among my disciples who are skilful in perception transformation leading to formless absorption (*arūpāvacara-jhāna*), Mahā Panthaka is the foremost.

> Herein, when other monks created mind-made bodies through psychic powers, they were able to create only a few, say, three or four, etc., but they could not create a large number of such bodies. And when they did, they could bring about only the figures that resembled the creator and in the case of action, theirs was the one and the only kind.

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[275] [This is one meaning given in the sub-commentary for this difficult term, and the way Mingun Sayadaw saw it. Similarly for the interpretation of Mahā Panthaka's title just below].

Cūḷa Panthaka, however, created 1,000 figures at one stroke of advertence in the process of consciousness. Such mentally created figures were different in shape from one another, and that was why he was declared the foremost (*etad-agga*) in creating mind-made bodies. Though the words are explained in the commentary in various ways, the explanations are omitted here lest the reader should get confused.

The sermons connected with these two monastics should be taken in detail from the commentaries on the Traditions (*Apadāna*, Tha-ap 16), the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*, 8.3, 10.4), the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, 407), and the Exalted Utterances (*Udāna*, 5.10). [1252]

13. Ven. Subhūti

Aspiration in the Past

This Subhūti, a virtuous man of good family, was born in the family of a Brahmin householder before the appearance of Buddha Padumuttara, 100,000 aeons ago, his name then was Nanda.

When the young Nanda came of age, he was educated in the three Vedas but since he could not find any beneficial substance in them, he became an ascetic with other youths, numbering 44,000, at the foot of the mountain named Nisabha. He attained the five mundane psychic powers and reached the eight mundane attainments. He also helped his companions, the 44,000 ascetics, attain the absorptions and psychic powers.

At that time, Buddha Padumuttara appeared in the world and while he was sojourning in the royal city of Haṁsavatī, he surveyed the world of sentient beings one morning and saw the potentials of Nanda's pupils, the 44,000 matted-hair ascetics, to become Arahats. As for Nanda himself, the Buddha also saw that he would aspire to be a great disciple endowed with a twofold honour. Hence, he cleansed himself early in the morning and set out for the hermitage of Nanda, taking his bowl and robe by himself, in the way mentioned in the story of Ven. Sāriputta. The offering of various fruits, the spreading and offering of seats of flowers and the engagement in the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*) that took place at the hermitage was similar to that described in the account of Ven. Sāriputta.

What was different here was that when the Buddha rose from his attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*), he instructed a disciple, who was endowed with the twofold honour of living free from mental defilements and blissfully and being worthy of receiving excellent offerings, saying: "Dear son, deliver a discourse in appreciation of the offering of floral seats to me by the whole group of ascetics!" Remaining seated, the venerable delivered the discourse, reflecting on the Baskets (*Piṭaka*). At the end of the venerable's discourse, Buddha Padumuttara himself taught them. When this was over, all 44,000 ascetics became Arahats. As regards their teacher, the ascetic Nanda, he could not follow the Buddha's discourse attentively, as he was admiring the teaching monastic. As he was taking interest in the teaching monk, he could not pay full attention to the teaching of the Buddha. Stretching out his hand to the 44,000 pupils, the Buddha summoned them: *Etha bhikkhavo*, "come, monks." All of them instantly lost their head hair and beards and became equipped with the requisites made by supernormal powers, and turned into solemn monks with their sense-faculties well controlled, like great disciples of 60 years standing and 80 years of age.

Having saluted the Buddha, the ascetic Nanda stood in his presence and asked: "Venerable sir, who is the monk that gave the talk in appreciation of the offering of the floral seats." – "That monk," answered the Buddha, "is the foremost (*etad-agga*) who is free from the moral defilements, and is worthy of accepting excellent offerings in my Dispensation." The venerable Nanda made his aspiration: "I do not wish for any other human or divine pleasure as the result of this meritorious (*adhikāra*) act of mine, performed for seven days, but I do wish to become the foremost (*etad-agga*) in twofold virtue, in the Dispensation of a Future Buddha, like this venerable who has just given an appreciative talk." Seeing that his wish would come true without any obstacles, the Buddha made a prophecy and departed. As Nanda always listened to the Dhamma discourses in the presence of the Buddha and kept his absorptions (*jhāna*) in their undiminished state, he immediately took rebirth in the realm of the Brahmas on his passing.

> This was Ven. Subhūti's resolution and meritorious act performed in the past. His good works done during the interim period of 100,000 aeons are not mentioned in the commentary.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

When 100,000 aeons had elapsed and when the present Dispensation came into existence, the man of good family, who would become the great elder Subhūti, was reborn as a son of Sumana, the wealthy merchant, who was the brother of Anāthapiṇḍika, in the city of Sāvatthī and [1253] was named Subhūti. When our Buddha appeared and while he was staying with Rājagaha as his resort for alms food, Anāthapiṇḍika the merchant arrived at the house of his friend and brother-in-law, the merchant of Rājagaha, bringing with him goods produced in Sāvatthī. On his arrival, he heard of the emergence of the Buddha.

After going to the Buddha, who was staying now in Sītavana forest, he became established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) in his first meeting with him. And after becoming a noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), he requested the Buddha to visit Sāvatthī and had lodgings built, one at every league, along the journey of 45 leagues between Sāvatthī and Rājagaha, at the expense of 100,000 pieces of money. He also bought Prince Jeta's garden of 14 acres, for which the payment was made by placing gold coins, touching each other, covering the garden area. Then on the whole garden site, he built the Jetavana monastery for the Buddha and dedicated it to him.[276]

On the day of the dedication of the monastery, Subhūti went along with his older brother and listened to the Dhamma, and so strong was his faith that he adopted the monk's life. Having become a monk, he studied and was accomplished in the Two Rules for monks and nuns (*Ubhato-Pātimokkha*), after which he learned meditation and strove to perfect the ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*). All this led him to become an Arahat via the development of insight (*vipassanā*) based on absorption on the meditation on loving-kindness (*mettā-jhāna*).

Two Foremost Titles Achieved

When he gave a discourse, Ven. Subhūti did so objectively by concentrating on the Dhamma itself, and by not making any reference to an individual, the way

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[276] For a detailed account of this event please refer to chapter 29 and the story of Anāthapiṇḍika.

the Buddha did. This led him to be declared the foremost (*etad-agga*) in living free from mental defilements (*araṇa-vihārī*).

When Ven. Subhūti went on alms round, thinking: "If I adopt this method, great benefits will accrue to the supporters." At every house, he habitually engaged in loving-kindness absorption (*mettā-jhāna*) before he received the alms food. This caused him to be the foremost (*etad-agga*) in being worthy of excellent gifts (*dakkhiṇeyya*).

Later on, therefore, when the Buddha held a meeting with the assembly of monks, he spoke in praise of Ven. Subhūti as follows:

> *Etad-aggaṁ. bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *araṇa-vihārīnaṁ yad-idaṁ Subhūti,*
> *dakkhiṇeyyānaṁ yad-idaṁ Subhūti.*
>
> Monks, among my monastic-disciples who live detached from defilements, Subhūti stands foremost; and also he stands foremost among those who are worthy of the best offerings.

Herein, with reference to those who live detached from the moral defilements (*araṇa-vihārī-etad-agga*), such as passion (*rāga*), hatred (*dosa*), etc., are called lamenters (*raṇa*) because they lead to lamentation. Arahats, who live enjoying bliss, as they are free from moral defilements, are said to be non-lamenters (*araṇa-vihārī*).

Apart from Ven. Subhūti, there were other Arahats who lived such a life too. But when they taught, they did so by employing the method which considered making reference to a certain person (*puggalādhiṭṭhāna-dhamma-desanā*) whom they either praised or censured. But Ven. Subhūti adopted the method which required him to speak of the Dhamma itself as his objective (*Dhammādhiṭṭhāna*) – the Dhamma taught by the Buddha. That was why he was declared the foremost among the monastics who lived detached from defilements (*araṇa-vihārī*).

> The Analysis of Non-Conflict (*Araṇa-vibhaṅga-sutta*, MN 139) enumerates the six factors of living detached from conflicts (*araṇa-vihāra*), as follows: 1) He follows the middle path (*majjhima-paṭipadā*) which avoids the two evil extremes; 2) following the method which has Dhamma itself as his objective (*Dhammadhiṭṭhāna*), one says: "This is the thing to be praised.

This is the thing to be censured." If following the method which considers making reference to a certain person (*puggalādhiṭṭhāna-dhamma-desanā*), one says: "He is the person to be praised," and this amounts to flattering; and if one says: "He is the person to be censured," this amounts to humiliation. Hence he avoids both flattery and humiliation; 3) development of internal happiness (*ajjhatta-sukha*) after distinguishing between the two [1254] kinds of happiness; internal happiness derived from tranquillity (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*) meditation and external happiness (*bahiddha-sukha*) derived from the five senses; 4) speaking of any person, either in his presence or in his absence only, if one's speech is truthful and profitable; 5) speaking or teaching not in haste but smoothly; and 6) not arguing in a foreign land about a foreign language, which may be different from one's native language.

With regard to being worthy of excellent gifts (*dakkhiṇeyya etad-agga*), other Arahats were also worthy of receiving excellent gifts, but on receiving food at every house, Ven. Subhūti was aware that: "If I do in this way, special benefits will accrue to the supporters." Therefore, he first meditated on loving-kindness, then rose from his meditation and received the food. This, therefore, earned him the foremost amongst those worthy of receiving excellent gifts.

In this connection, it should be mentioned that the Captain of the Dhamma, Ven. Sāriputta, did the cleansing of the objects. "Cleansing of the object" means: "Cleansing of one's own self," so that one becomes worthy of the gift and the enhancement of its result. In this connection, it may be stated that Ven. Sāriputta, the Captain of the Dhamma, used to purify the object, and by "the object" is meant Ven. Sāriputta's own self, that was worthy of the gift and that was what enhanced the result of the gift through his engagement in the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*).

Ven. Subhūti, however, purified the act of giving and by "the act of giving" this is meant: When Ven. Subhūti engaged in meditation on loving-kindness, the supporters mentally reacted to his meditation; their hearts became softer and their respect more enthusiastic before they made the offering. Hence the purification of the charitable act and the development of its result took place also through the supporter, as the supporter is led by his mental tenderness and highly developed respect.

Elaboration: When Ven. Sāriputta went on alms round, he stood at the door and engaged in loving-kindness meditation for sometime until the

supporter came out bringing the food. Only when the supporter came out did he emerge from his meditation and receive the food. Ven. Subhūti, however, engaged in meditation on loving-kindness and only when the supporter reached him, did he emerge from his meditation and receive the food.[277]

The exposition of the Analysis of Non-Conflict (*Araṇa-vibhaṅga-sutta*, MN 139) in the commentary may be noticed in particular. Also the sermons with reference to Ven. Subhūti should be noted from the Traditions (*Apādāna*, Tha-ap 23) and commentary, etc.

14. Ven. Khadiravaniya Revata

Aspiration in the Past

The original name of this great elder was Revata. He was a younger brother of Ven. Sāriputta. As he dwelt in an acacia forest which was uneven and full of stones, he was thus known as Khadiravaniya Revata, "Revata of the acacia forest." In giving his account only the name Revata will be used for convenience sake.

The great elder Revata was a citizen of Haṁsavatī and a virtuous person during the lifetime of the Buddha Padumuttara, 100,000 aeons ago. He was operating a ferry at the port of Payāga, on the river Ganges. Buddha Padumuttara, in the company of 100,000 monks, arrived at Payāga port to cross over the river.

On seeing the Buddha, it occurred to the virtuous Revata thus: "It is impossible for me to see the Buddha always. Now that the Buddha has come, it is a good chance for me to do a meritorious deed." So he made a huge barge with a white canopy and he hung fragrant flowers on it. On the barge floor were spread exquisite coverings made of fibre of excellent quality. Then he ferried the Buddha and his 100,000 monastics to the other shore on that barge.

At that time, the Buddha declared a certain monk as the foremost forest-dweller (*araññaka*). Seeing this, the boatman thought: "I too should become like this monk in the Dispensation of a Buddha in the future." So he invited the Buddha,

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[277] [In the original translation the same way of receiving is stated for both venerables, which must be a mistake].

performed a grand alms giving (*mahā-dāna*) for him and, prostrating at the foot of the Buddha, he expressed his aspiration thus: [1255] "Exalted Buddha, like the monastic whom you have declared the foremost forest-dweller (*araññaka*), I too wish to become the foremost among those living in a forest in a Buddha's Dispensation in future." Seeing that his wish would be fulfilled in the future, the Buddha made the prophecy: "In the future, during Buddha Gotama's Dispensation, you will become the foremost forest-dweller!" and then he departed.

> Ven. Revata's further good works done during the interval were not mentioned in the Great Commentary (*Mahā-aṭṭhakathā*).

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

Due to his meritorious deeds, the good boat-man was reborn either in the divine or human worlds and never in any suffering state, and was conceived in the womb of his mother, Rūpasārī, the Brahmin lady, in the Brahmin village called Nālaka, in the country of Magadha. He was younger than the three brothers: Upatissa, Cunda and Upasena, and he had three sisters: Cālā, Upacālā and Sīsūpacālā, and was given the name Revata.

Thereafter, Revata's parents discussed between themselves and agreed thus: "Our children, wherever they grew up, are taken away and turned into novices by monks, sons of the Buddha. Let us bind him with the fetters of household life while he is still young, before he is made a novice by the monks."

Herein, after becoming an ascetic himself, Ven. Sāriputta had his three younger sisters: Cālā, Upacālā and Sīsūpacālā and two younger brothers: Cunda and Upasena, ordained. Only Revata, as a boy, was left behind.

Having discussed and agreed upon it, the parents brought a bride from a family of equal birth, wealth, and distinction and made them pay homage to the aged grandmother and they gave their blessings, saying: "Dear daughter, may you live longer than your grandmother here!"

> The parents gave such a blessing because they wished for the longevity of the bride. At that time, their grandmother was 120 years of age with white hair, broken teeth, wrinkled skin, her whole body was covered with black moles and her back was extremely bent like a rafter of a decaying house.

Mentally Stirred

On hearing that blessing given by the parents, it occurred to Revata thus: “This girl is young and in the first age of life. Such a youthful appearance of hers, it is implied, will become sinewy and old like that of my grandmother! I shall first ask about the desire of my parents.” Then he asked: “With what in your mind did you say so?” The parents replied: “Dear son, we wish this girl, your spouse, the attainment of longevity like your grandmother. That was why we uttered our blessing.” – “Mother and father!” asked Revata again, as he truly did not understand, “will the youthful look of the girl become old like grandmother’s?” – “What are you talking about, son? Only those who are of great merit, such as your grandmother, enjoy long life.” Thus the parents tried to reason with him.

Revata then reflected: “It is said that such a fair and tender looking girl will decay, and end up resembling my grandmother. She will become white-haired, toothless and have wrinkly skin. What is the use of being infatuated with physical beauty that has the nature of growing old and wrinkled? There is none! I shall follow the footsteps of my older brothers. So he pretended to play games as boys would naturally do, he called friends of his own age, saying: “Come on friends, let us play runners-and-chasers.” The parents prohibited him, saying: “Do not go outside the house on the day of your wedding!” Nevertheless, Revata pretended to play with his friends. When it was his turn to run, he ran only a little and delayed his return by pretending that he had to answer the call of nature. When a second time came for him to run, he ran and came back somewhat faster. On a third time, however, he considered that it was his best chance to run away for good and he ran as fast as he could in the direction he was facing. Arriving at a forest-dwelling of some monks who were observing the dust-robe (*paṁsukūlika*) form of asceticism (*dhutaṅga*) he paid respect to them and asked for the going-forth.

When the monks rejected his request, saying: “Virtuous young man, we do not know [1256] whose son you are. And you come here in full attire and with ornaments as on a special occasion. Who would dare to ordain you as a novice? Nobody would.” Revata raised his two hands, crying: “I am being robbed! I am being robbed!”

Other monks then gathered around him and said: "Virtuous young man, no one is robbing you of your garments or ornaments. But you are crying that you are being robbed! What do you mean by so saying?"

The boy Revata then said: "Venerable sirs, I do not mean that I am being robbed of my garments or ornaments. In fact, I am being robbed of the threefold bliss of Devas, humans and Nibbāna[278] as the going-forth has been denied to me. I am referring to the robbery of the threefold bliss. Let it be so, if you do not want to ordain me. However, do you know my eldest brother?" – "What is the name of your eldest brother?" asked the monks. "My eldest brother's name was Upatissa while a layman," replied Revata, "now he bears the name Sāriputta, so they say, venerable sirs."

Then the monks discussed among themselves: "Friends, in that case, this young man of good family happens to be our younger brother! Our elder brother, Ven. Sāriputta, the Captain of the Dhamma, has formerly left a message with us, saying: "My relatives are all heretics. If somebody comes and says that he is a relative of ours, let him be ordained in any possible manner." This boy is our brother, Ven. Sāriputta, the Captain of the Dhamma's very own younger brother, his closest relation. Let us therefore ordain him!" So they gave him the five objects ending with skin (*taca-pañcaka*) meditation subject and ordained him as a novice. Later on, when he completed 20 years of age, they ordained him as a monastic and made him make effort in meditation.

Having taken the meditation subject, Ven. Revata entered a forest of acacia trees, a rough and uneven place full of stones and pebbles, neither too near nor too far from his preceptors, and engaged in meditation practice. With a determination: "I will not see either the Fortunate One or my elder brother venerables until I attain the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*)."

Revata practised meditation assiduously and while he was so doing, three months elapsed. For a tender man of good family who was the son of a wealthy man the food he ate was so coarse that his mind became perplexed like wrinkled skin, and he could not achieve attainment of the Arahat fruition. But Revata was

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[278] The expression of the threefold bliss of Devas, humans and Nibbāna was used through hearing from others.

not discouraged, when the three months were over, he observed the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*); he did not move to another place at the end of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) but remained in the same forest and continued to follow the ascetic practices. The more he strove with energy and perseverance, the more his mind became concentrated. When Ven. Revata proceeded to work with insight (*vipassanā*), and reached the state of an Arahat.

The Buddha's Visit

Even at the time when Ven. Sāriputta learnt the news about the ordination of his younger brother Revata, he said to the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, I have learned that my younger brother Revata has been ordained. He may or may not be happy in this Dispensation of yours. Let me go and see him." At that time, Ven. Revata was strongly practising insight (*vipassanā*) meditation and knowing this, the Buddha prohibited his going twice. When the third request came, knowing that Revata had become an Arahat, the Buddha said: "I too shall go along with you, dear son Sāriputta. Inform the monks!"

Having gathered the monks, Ven. Sāriputta told them all this: "Friends, the Buddha is going on a journey. Those who wish to go along, may do so!" Whenever the Buddha travelled, the monks who stayed behind were very few. But those who went, thought: "We shall get a chance to have a continuous look at the golden complexion of the Buddha and also to listen to his sweet sermons!" As expected, the number of those who wished to follow the Buddha was overwhelming. The Buddha therefore left the monastery in a great company of monks with the intention: "I shall see Revata."

Supernatural Power of Ven. Sīvali

When they were setting out thus, while coming to the juncture [1257] of two roads at one place Ven. Ānanda asked: "Exalted Buddha, here is the juncture of two roads. By which road do you want the Saṅgha to go?" – "Dear son Ānanda, of the two roads which one is straight?" enquired the Buddha. "Exalted Buddha, the straight one, the shortcut, is 30 leagues. It is in the domain of Yakkhas, having scarce food and being rather dangerous. The curved road, the beaten track of the majority, is 60 leagues, safe, with plenty of food," replied Ven. Ānanda. Then the Buddha asked further whether Ven. Sīvali came along with them, Ven. Ānanda answered in the affirmative. "In that case, Ānanda," said the

Buddha, "let the Saṅgha take the straight road full of danger and with less food. We shall test his supernatural power founded on his past meritorious deeds."

Having said thus, the Buddha took the dangerous road with food scarcity in the grove. From the time they took the road, Devas had created a large city in advance at every league, as the lodgings for the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha. At every lodging occupied by the monks, Devas in the disguise of workers sent by the king of the city, brought rice-gruel, hard and soft food, etc. and enquired: "Where is Ven. Sīvali? Where is Ven. Sīvali?" Ven. Sīvali had all these offerings collected and went to the Buddha. Together with the monks, the Buddha partook of the food of various kinds offered to Ven. Sīvali by the Devas.

Having the offerings in this way, the Buddha travelled a league each day and covered the difficult journey of 30 leagues in one month, and eventually reached the agreeable dwelling which was prepared in advance by Ven. Revata, in the forest of acacia trees. As he knew beforehand of the Buddha's visit, Ven. Revata had created in his acacia forest, by his supernatural power, dwellings adequate for the monks headed by the Buddha. For the Buddha, he had made a fragrant chamber, places for day, as well as for night resort, and so on. Then he welcomed the Buddha, who entered the dwelling through a decorated and orderly way. Thereafter, he went into the fragrant chamber. Then only did the remaining monks bed according to their seniority in monkhood. Knowing that it is not a time to partake of food, the Devas offered eight kinds of juice to the monks, and half a month had passed from the arrival of the Buddha.

The Misunderstanding of Restless Monks

At that time, some restless monks sat down together, gossiping among themselves. "The exalted Buddha, the teacher of Devas and humans, came to see the one whom he refers to as a younger brother of the chief disciple, but who spends his time doing odd jobs. What are the Jetavana, Veḷuvana and other monasteries near Revata's dwelling for? This monk Revata is only a chore man busying himself with unimportant things. What kind of ascetic practice does such a busy man follow? Of course, it is nothing."

Then the Buddha considered: "If I stay here long, the place will be crowded with visitors of the four kinds. Forest-dwellers want to be in quietude, if I remain too long, uneasiness will occur for Revata." So he went to Ven. Revata's day-resort.

Ven. Revata saw the Buddha coming from a distance where he was sitting alone on a stone slab and leaning against a wooden board at the end of the walk. Then he welcomed the Buddha and made obeisance to him respectfully.

The Buddha asked: "Dear son Revata, this is a place inhabited by wild animals, such as lions, leopards, and tigers. What do you do when you hear the sounds of wild elephants, wild horses, etc?" – "Exalted Buddha," answered Revata, "to me the sounds of wild elephants, wild horses, etc. repeatedly bring delight in the forest (*arañña-rati*)." The Buddha taught Revata a discourse on the benefits of forest-dwelling in 500 verses. Next day, he went on alms round in the nearby area, without returning to Revata's dwelling in the forest of acacia trees. The Buddha let Ven. Revata go back; besides, he managed his supernatural power in such a way that the restless monks, who had spoken ill of Revata, forgetfully left behind their staffs, footwear, bottles of ointment and umbrellas.

These restless monks went back to Revata's dwelling to get back their belongings. Though they took the route by which they came, they could not remember the place. In [1258] fact, the monk on the previous days travelled by the decorated road created miraculously, and on the day of their return journey they had to take the naturally uneven road and could not help taking rest here and there as they were so weary.

At some places, they were compelled to walk on their knees. With such trouble and difficulty, they were bound to tread on small plants, bushes and thorns. When they reached a place which resembled their residence, they saw their umbrellas, footwear, ointment bottles and staffs, some hanging and others standing by acacia stumps. Then only did the restless monks realise that the monk Revata is a man of supernatural power indeed! Getting back their paraphernalia, they talked among themselves in great astonishment before they travelled to Sāvatthī: "Oh, what a wonder is the honour done to the Buddha."

The monastic supporter, lady Visākhā, invited the monks, who arrived ahead in Sāvatthī, as they went ahead of others, and when they were seated, she asked them: "Venerable sirs, is Ven. Revata's residence pleasant?" The monks replied: "Yes, dear supporter, Ven. Revata's residence is pleasant and delightful. It is exactly like the celestial gardens of Nandana and Cittalatā."

Later on, she asked the restless monks who were late-comers: "Venerable sirs, is Ven. Revata's residence pleasant?" The reply given by these monks was: "Do not ask us, dear lady supporter. The residence of Revata is not worth talking about. Apart from being a barren high ground, his place is a great acacia forest with an extremely uneven surface full of pebbles, stone slabs and rocks. There Revata lives miserably." Thus they recounted their experiences that they had very recently.

Noticing the difference between the two answers; one given by the earlier group monks and the other by the latter, and wanting to know clearly which answer was right, she paid a visit to the Buddha, bringing with her unguent and flowers. Having sat down in a suitable place, she asked the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, some monks praise Ven. Revata's residence while others ill-speak of it. Why are the two speeches different from each other, exalted Buddha?" Then the Buddha said: "Visākhā, a place in which the minds of the noble ones take delight is pleasant, whether it is pleasant or unpleasant in worldly terms." Then the Buddha uttered the following verse (Dhp 98):

> *Gāme vā yadi vāraññe, ninne vā yadi vā thale;*
> *yattha Arahanto viharanti, tam bhumi-rāmaṇeyyakam.*
>
> Visākhā, supporter of Pubbārāma and mother of Migāra! Whether it is a village that is thickly surrounded by the five worldly pleasures, or a forest away from these pleasures, or a low valley, watered by streams and green with dwelling at ease, in harmony with the four physical postures, the dwelling site of noble Arahats is truly a delightful place on the surface of the earth.

Foremost Title Achieved

At a later time, in an assembly of monks, the Buddha declared Ven. Revata the foremost (*etad-agga*) in forest dwelling, by praising him as follows:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *āraññakānaṁ yad-idaṁ Revato Khadiravaniyo*
>
> Monks, among my disciples who dwell in forests, Revata of the Acacia Forest is the foremost!

Herein, though other venerables dwelt in the forest, they did so only after studying the suitability of the place, the suitability of the water and the suitability of the village as an alms resort. But Ven. Revata ignored these conditions and dwelt in an acacia grove on a barren high ground with an uneven surface, full of pebbles, stone slabs and rocks. Hence it was he alone who was foremost in the practice of forest-dwelling. [1259]

The discourses connected with Ven. Revata Khadiravaniya may be taken from the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*, Thag 14.1), the Traditions (*Apādāna*, Tha-ap 11), the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 98) and their commentaries, etc.

15. Ven. Kaṅkhā Revata

Aspiration in the Past

100,000 aeons ago, during the lifetime of Buddha Padumuttara, the future Kaṅkhā Revata went to the monastery along with many other people, like those virtuous future great disciples of old times. And while standing at the edge of the audience and listening to a discourse, he saw the Buddha declaring a certain monk the foremost (*etad-agga*) among meditators. Thinking: "I too should become like this monk," he invited the Buddha for alms giving on a grand scale (*mahā-dāna*) for seven days. At the end of the discourse on the last day, in the wake of former aspirants, he made the aspiration: "Exalted Buddha, I do not wish for any other forms of bliss as a result of this wholesome meritorious (*adhikāra*) act but to be the foremost (*etad-agga*) among those engaged in meditation in the Dispensation of a Buddha in the future, like the monastic whom you declared such seven days ago."

When Buddha Padumattara surveyed the future, he saw that the man of good family's wish would be fulfilled and so he predicted before his departure: "At the end of 100,000 aeons, there will appear the Buddha Gotama. In the Dispensation of that Buddha, you will become the foremost (*etad-agga*) among the monks engaged in meditation!"

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

Due to his deeds of merit throughout his life, the man of good family was reborn either in the worlds of Devas or humans and, in the lifetime of our Buddha, he was reborn in the family of a wealthy household in Sāvatthī and was named Revata. One afternoon the rich man's son, Revata, went along with other people to Jetavana. While standing at the edge of the gathering and listening to the Buddha's discourse, confidence arose in him and he was ordained as a monastic fulfilling the monastic duties. After taking a meditation subject from the Buddha, while preparing himself for mental concentration, he became a man of mundane absorption (*jhāna*). Using those absorptions (*jhāna*) as a base, he engaged in insight (*vipassanā*) meditation and became an Arahat.

Foremost Title Achieved

Ven. Revata was able to absorb most forms of meditation which the Buddha engaged in during day and night. Thereafter, in the meeting of monks, the Buddha declared Ven. Kaṅkhā Revata the foremost (*etad-agga*) in meditation, praising him:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *jhāyīnaṁ yad-idaṁ Kaṅkhā-revato.*
>
> Monks, among my disciples who habitually engage in meditation, Kaṅkhā Revata is the foremost.

Account of the Name Kaṅkhā Revata

Once, the Buddha was travelling from Sāvatthī to Rājagaha and on the way Ven. Revata entered a hut in which molasses were made. Seeing that the molasses were mixed with dough and bran as part of the process, which was necessary to solidify the molasses, he became doubtful as to the permissibility of the solidified molasses which had the two other ingredients, for the latter two were raw food (*āmisa*). Saying: "The molasses with the raw ingredients is improper as it contains dough and bran, which are raw. It is against the Discipline, it is unlawful to enjoy such molasses in the afternoon." As such, he and his followers did not take the molasses that had been made thus into lumps.

Neither did the monastics who believed Ven. Revata's word and practised according to it. Other monastics reported the matter to the Buddha who asked:

"Monks, why did people [1260] put dough and bran into the molasses?" – "To harden it, exalted Buddha," answered the monks. "Monks, if dough and bran are put into the molasses in order to harden it, then the dough and the bran put into the molasses are only to be held as molasses. Monks, I allow you to take molasses, whenever you like," and the Buddha promulgated a rule (*anuññāta-sikkhāpada*).

On the journey, Revata saw mung beans (*mugga*) sprouting in some human faeces and said: "Mung beans are unsuitable for consumption, for cooked beans can sprout too." Thus, he doubted and, along with his followers, he did not take mung beans. The monastics, who trusted him, avoid eating those beans too. The matter was reported to the Buddha who laid down another rule allowing the eating of such beans whenever one desired. These accounts are given in the Chapter about Medicines (*Bhesajjakkhandhaka*, Vin Mv 6). In this way, Revata doubted even things that were permitted. Because he had great doubt as far as the Vinaya was concerned, he was known as Kaṅkhā Revata, Revata the Doubter.

The doctrines with reference to Kaṅkhā Revata may be taken from the Traditions (*Apādāna*, Tha-ap 544) and commentary, the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*, Thag 1.3) and its commentary, the Exalted Utterances (*Udāna*, Ud 5.7) and it commentary, etc.

16. Ven. Soṇa Koḷivisa

Aspiration in the Past

The virtuous man, who was to become Soṇa Koḷivisa, during the lifetime of Buddha Padumuttara, was reborn in the family of merchants in a remote past and was named Sirivaḍḍha. When Sirivaḍḍha came of age, as in the manner of former aspirant great disciples, he went to the monastery and listened to the Buddha's teaching, standing at the edge of the audience. Seeing the Buddha declaring a monk the foremost (*etad-agga*) among those putting forth strenuous effort (*āraddha-viriya*), he was inspired, saying to himself: "I too should become like this monk in the future!" When the teaching was over, he invited the Buddha and performed a great alms giving (*mahā-dāna*) for a week. Thereafter, he made known to the Buddha his aspiration. Foreseeing the fulfilment of

Sirivaḍḍha's wish, the Buddha predicted as before and then left for the monastery.

Life as a Clansman of Bārāṇasī

Due to his meritorious deeds, Sirivaḍḍha was reborn only in the realm of Devas or that of humans. When 100,000 aeons had elapsed, and Buddha Kassapa had attained Parinibbāna in this Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*) and before our Buddha appeared, Sirivaḍḍha was reborn as a man of good family in a virtuous family. One day, while the man of good family was enjoying a water-sport with his friends in the river Ganges, a Paccekabuddha appeared.

The Paccekabuddha, wearing an old robe, was thinking: "I shall spend the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) with Bārāṇasī as the food-resort, after building a dwelling on the bank of the river Ganges." Therefore he went to collect sticks and cane stalks that were brought by the river-currents. Thereupon, Sirivaḍḍha with his friends went to the Paccekabuddha, paid homage to him and while standing asked: "What are you doing, venerable sir?" – "Dear young man," replied the Paccekabuddha, "as the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) is drawing near, a dwelling is required for a monk."

Sirivaḍḍha then said: "Venerable sir, please wait a day by all means. Tomorrow we shall build a dwelling and offer it to you." Saying to himself: "I should grant my favour to this virtuous man of good family," which was the main purpose of his visit, the Paccekabuddha accepted his offer. Knowing the Paccekabuddha's acceptance, Sirivaḍḍha returned home. The next day, he prepared all kinds of offerings and waited, while standing, for the coming of the Paccekabuddha. The latter thinking about where he should collect food came to know of Sirivaḍḍha's idea and went to the gate of his house.

On seeing the Paccekabuddha's coming, Sirivaḍḍha was very pleased and took the alms bowl and offered food in it. He supplicated him, saying: "Please come to the gate of my house for food for the three months of this Rains Retreat (*Vassa*)." Getting the promise, and after the Paccekabuddha had left, he completed the construction of the dwelling with his friends [1261] with a walk-way, both day and night resorts for the Paccekabuddha and offered them to him.

What was peculiar about Sirivaḍḍha was this: When the Paccekabuddha entered the dwelling, Sirivaḍḍha, with the idea not to let the former's feet touch the mud

on the ground, smeared the ground with wet cowdung and then spread over it his red cloak, which he had put on and which was valued at 100,000 pieces of money. On seeing the colour of the red cloak and that of the Paccekabuddha's body were one and the same, he was very pleased, so he said: "Just as my cloak has become more beautiful since you stepped on it, even so may the colour of my hands and feet be red and beautiful like the colour of Hibiscus flowers! May the touch of my body be like the cotton wool that has been dressed 100 times!"

Sirivaḍḍha served the Paccekabuddha for the three months of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*). When the Paccekabuddha held the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*) ceremony at the end of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), he offered him a set of three robes. Equipped completely with bowl and robes, the Paccekabuddha returned to Mount Gandhamādana.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

Without being reborn in the four suffering states, Sirivaḍḍha was reborn in the realms of Devas or humans, and was finally conceived in the house of the merchant Usabha, in the city of Kāḷacampā, during the lifetime of our Buddha. Since the time of his conception, thousands of gifts had come to the merchant's house. On the day of his birth too, the whole of Kāḷacampā city was overwhelmed by gifts and offerings too. On his naming day, the two parents said: "Our son has brought his own name. His complexion is like something bathed in the liquid of red gold," and they called him Soṇakumāra or Soṇa, the merchant's son. But as he belonged to the clan of Koḷivisa, he was better known as Soṇa Koḷivisa. Then 60 nurses were appointed for him, and he was brought up blissfully like a celestial being.

Food Prepared for Soṇa

The following was the way food for Soṇa was prepared: First, the field, extending to 105 royal acres was ploughed and the finest rice (*sāli*) paddy was grown watering it with cow-milk, scented water and ordinary water.

Into the drain in the field, cow milk and scented water were poured from a large number of jars. When the stalks had absorbed the milk, in order to protect them against the danger of being eaten by birds and insects, and in order to make the crops tender, posts were erected in the field, leaving space between one pole and

another. On the poles were rafters, which were covered by mats. Screens were then erected for shelter and guards were placed at the corners.

When the crops ripened, granaries were renovated by smearing them with four kinds of unguent: saffron, cloves, rhododendron and tumeric powder. The air was laden with fragrance by applying precious unguent above the previous kind. Then only did farm workers go down to the farms and collect the crops carefully, tying it with strings and drying it. A layer of unguent was spread on the floor of the granaries; the dried bundles of stems were spread on the layer of unguents. In this way, the layers of unguent and the layers of crops were made alternately until the granaries became full. The doors were then closed and the crops kept for three years.

On completion of three years, the doors of the granaries were opened. The whole city of Campā was then diffused by the fragrance. When the best rice (*sāli*) paddy was pounded, drunkards rushed to buy the paddy husks and bran. The broken rice was, however, taken by the servants and workers. Only whole grains were collected for Soṇa.

The way of cooking rice was as follows: Whole grains were put in the washing-basket made of gold threads, and then, after filtering 100 times, the rice was immersed in the boiling water and, without letting it remain long, it was taken out. As the rice was cooked as [1262] soon as it was taken out from the water the cooked rice resembled jasmine flowers.

The rice was then put in a gold bowl which was then put on a silver cup which was full of boiled sweet rice-milk, free of water and boiled thoroughly so that the cooked rice remained hot. The food was then placed before Soṇa.

Soṇa Koḷivisa ate the best rice (*sāli*) food moderately. He washed his mouth and hands and feet with scented water. He was then given quids of betel of all kinds and other things to make his mouth smell sweet.

Wherever he went, fine and exquisite carpets were spread out. The palms of his hands and the soles of his feet were red like the colour of Hibiscus. His touch was very soft like that of the cotton wool that has been combed 100 times. The soles were covered with soft hair having the colour of the lotus threads in a spiral shape and existing in a ruby ear-plug. Whenever he was angry with somebody, he would threaten, saying: “You think about it carefully! Or I shall

put my feet down on the ground." On coming of age, three palaces were built for him, as in the case of Yasa the merchant's son, each for a particular season. His parents also made him enjoy the entertainment of female dancers. Taking pleasure in great luxury, the wealthy son was blissfully living a Deva-like life.

At that time, our Buddha had attained Awakening and had taught the Discourse setting the Dhamma Wheel Turning (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*, SN 56.11) and was staying with Rājagaha as his resort for alms food. Meanwhile, the righteous King Bimbisāra summoned Soṇa and sent him, in the company of 80,000 village-headmen, to the Buddha. Having listened to the Buddha's discourse, and developing immense faith, Soṇa asked the Buddha for ordination.

The Buddha then asked him as to whether he had obtained his parent's permission. When the answer was negative, the Buddha advised him saying: "Dear son Soṇa, Buddhas do not ordain those who do not have the permission of their parents." – "Very well, exalted Buddha," said Soṇa and in obedience he went back to his parents and obtained their permission before he approached the Buddha again. Under the instruction of the Buddha, he was ordained by a monastic.

> This is a brief account. A detailed account may be read in the Chapter about Skins (*Cammakkhandhaka*, Vin Mv 5).

While living in Rājagaha, after gaining monkhood, his relatives and friends adoringly made offerings in his honour. They spoke in praise of his handsome personality, and so it occurred to Soṇa: "Many people come to me. If they keep on coming to me, how will I engage in tranquillity and insight meditation? I will not be able to do so any longer. What if, after hearing a meditation discourse from the Buddha, I go to the cemetery at the Sītavana and put effort into practising asceticism! People will not go there for they abhor the cemetery. Then will my ascetic performance reach its apex, which is to become an Arahat." Accordingly, after listening to a meditation discourse from the Buddha, he went to Sītavana where he was inspired to begin his ascetic engagement.

Strenuous Engagement

"My body is so tender," thought Ven. Soṇa, "I am not in a position to attain the bliss of the paths and the fruitions easily. Therefore, I should apply energy working strenuously." So thinking, he did his meditation by indulging only in

the two postures of standing and walking, and rejecting entirely the other two postures of lying down and sitting. Then callouses appeared at the edges of his very soft soles of his feet and the whole terraced walk became deep red as the callouses burst and bled. When he was unable to walk, he practised by crawling on his elbows and knees which also were cut and the entire walk became doubly red.

In spite of such strenuous effort, he could not see any sign of positive result of his meditation. As a result, he conceived the following idea: "If somebody else were to put in strenuous effort, he too would do like me but not more than what I have done. Despite my effort, I was unable to make the paths and the fruitions. Perhaps I am not one who attains path and fruit after hearing the gist of a discourse on the Dhamma (*ugghaṭitaññū*), one who realizes path and fruit after hearing an explanation of the Dhamma (*vipañcitaññū*) or even one who gradually comes to comprehend the truth after getting further elaboration and guidance (*neyya*). Perhaps, I am one who will make no spiritual progress in spite of my effort either in the forest or the village monastery (*pada-parama*). As such, what is the use of bveing a monk? There's probably none. I shall revert to lay life. I shall enjoy worldly pleasures and while doing so, I shall do good works." [1263]

The Parable of a Harp

Knowing Ven. Soṇa's thought, the Buddha went in the evening in the company of the monastics to Soṇa's dwelling, and on seeing the walkway was red he asked: "Monks whose walkway is this that is red like a slaughter house?" The Buddha knew the answer but he asked with an intention of delivering a discourse. The monastics replied: "Exalted Buddha, the soles of Ven. Soṇa, who had put so much effort into his practice of walking meditation, must have been injured. The walkway that is now deep red like a slaughterhouse belongs to that monastic, Soṇa." The Buddha proceeded to Ven. Soṇa's meditation place and sat down on the seat made ready.

Ven. Soṇa came and made obeisance to the Buddha and took his seat at a suitable distance. When the Buddha asked him whether it was true that he had conceived the idea of returning to lay life, Ven. Soṇa admitted that it was true.

Thereafter, the Buddha gave a discourse on the parable of a harp (*vīnovāda*), explaining that the harp's strings should be set neither too loose nor too tight.

Buddha: Dear son, what do you think of the question that I am now going to ask? You may answer as you like. You are clever, are you not, in playing a harp formerly while a layman?

Ven. Soṇa: Yes, exalted Buddha.

> Herein, when Ven. Soṇa was young, his parents thought: "If Soṇa, would learn any other form of art, he would be weary. But playing a harp is something that can be learnt while sitting comfortably in a seat." So they made him learn to play the harp and he became an accomplished harpist.
>
> The Buddha knew: "Other forms of meditation would not benefit this monk Soṇa. While a layman, he was accomplished in the harp. He will quickly gain spiritual knowledge, if I teach him with reference to that art."

Buddha: Dear son Soṇa, what do you think of the question I am now going to ask? Suppose your harp-strings are too tight, will your harp make a pleasant sound? Will it last long?

Ven. Soṇa: Exalted Buddha, it is impossible. It will neither make a pleasant sound nor will it last long.

Buddha: Dear son Soṇa, what do you think of the question I am now going to ask? Suppose the strings are too loose, will your harp make a pleasant sound? Will it last long?

Ven. Soṇa: It is impossible, exalted Buddha. It will neither make a pleasant sound nor will it last long.

Buddha: Dear son Soṇa, how do you think of the question I am now going to ask? Suppose the strings are neither too tight nor too loose but set in perfect balance, will your harp make a pleasant sound? Will it last long?

Ven. Soṇa: It is possible, exalted Buddha, that the harp will make a pleasant sound and it will last long.

Buddha: In the same way, dear son Soṇa, if the effort put forth is too much it causes restlessness (*uddhacca*), because excess energy brings about restlessness. If the effort put forth is too little it causes indolence (*kosajja*), because

inadequate energy brings about indolence. Therefore, dear son Soṇa, set up energy (*viriya*) and concentration (*samādhi*) in equal amounts, and try to keep the balance of your energy and concentration. Know that your faculties such as faith (*saddhā*), energy (*viriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*) be in equal degree. Make the five faculties of equal proportion. When they are well balanced, try to have signs of tranquillity, etc. [1264]

Ven. Soṇa: Very well, exalted Buddha.

Having admonished Ven. Soṇa by setting the art of the harp as an example and having taught him the meditation practice involving the perfect balance of energy and concentration, the Buddha returned to the monastery on the Gijjhakūṭa hill.

Foremost Title Achieved

Considering in retrospect, the way of Ven. Soṇa Koḷivisa's meditation practice, the fact manifests itself that while others' energy had to be increased as it was deficient, his was to be decreased as it was too much. Therefore, at a later time, the Buddha praised him and declared him the foremost (*etad-agga*) in having strenuous energy (*āraddha-viriya*):

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *āraddha-viriyānaṁ yad-idaṁ Soṇa Koḷiviso.*
>
> Monks, among my disciples who possessed strenuous energy, Soṇa of the Koḷivisa clan is the foremost.

17. Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa

Aspiration in the Past

The virtuous man, the future Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa, during the lifetime of the Buddha Padumuttara, also went along with people to the monastery in the aforesaid manner. While standing at the edge of the audience and listening to the Buddha's discourse, he saw a monk being declared the foremost (*etad-agga*) among those who taught in a sweet voice. Soṇa then thought: "I, too, should become the foremost among those who teach in sweet voice in the Dispensation of a Future Buddha." So he invited the Buddha and performed a great alms giving (*mahā-dāna*) for seven days and at the end of which, he said: "Exalted

Buddha, seven days ago you declared a monk as the foremost (*etad-agga*) among those who teach in a sweet voice (*kalyāṇa-vākkaraṇa*), I too wish to be like that monk in the Dispensation of a Future Buddha as a result of this act of merit of mine." Seeing that the man's wish would be fulfilled without any hitch, the Buddha predicted: "Later, in the Dispensation of Buddha Gotama, your wish will be fulfilled." After saying this, the Buddha departed.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

Having performed meritorious deeds until his death, Soṇa was reborn only in the worlds of Devas and humans, without any rebirth in the four suffering states, and finally took conception in the womb of a devotee, named Kāḷī, the wife of a merchant, in the town of Kuraraghara, in the country of Avanti, before the appearance of our Buddha. When the pregnancy was in an advanced stage, Kāḷī went back to her parents in Rājagaha.

At that time, our Buddha had attained omniscient Buddhahood and had taught the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) in the Deer Park at Isipatana. The date then was the full moon day of July (*Āsāḷha*) 528 BCE. On the occasion of the teaching of the discourse, Devas and Brahmas from the 100,000 world-element gathered together in the Deer Park. Present at the gathering were 28 Yakkha generals who were listening to the Buddha's discourse, and one of them was Sātāgiri.

> A detailed account of the two Yakkha generals may be found in chapter 10. The account given there is based on the commentary on the Discourse concerning Hemavata (*Hemavata-sutta*, Snp 9). According to that exposition, while Sātāgiri was listening to the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, he remembered his friend Hemavata. He, therefore, was inattentive and failed to realize the paths and fruitions. Only when [1265] he returned with Hemavata to listen to the discourse, did both of them eventually become noble Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*).
>
> The story that is based on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) commentary begins from his attainment of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*). Thereafter, he went to fetch Hemavata and met him on the way in the sky above the house of Kāḷī of Kuraraghara, near Rājagaha, who was the daughter of a merchant. On meeting with Hemavata, he was asked by the latter about the physical conduct (*kaya-samācāra*), livelihood

> (*ājīva*) and mental practices (*mano-samācāra*) of the Buddha, and he answered each and every question. In this way, when the questions and answers on the Buddha's virtues and attributes contained in the Discourse concerning Hemavata came to an end, Hemavata reflected on his friend's pious words step by step and became established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). The difference of the two accounts is due to the different reciters (*bhāṇaka*).

Not seeing his friend Hemavata on the occasion of the Buddha's teaching of the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, Sātāgiri went to look for him and met him on the way, in the sky above Kāḷī's house. And the questions and answers on the Buddha's physical conduct (*kaya-samācāra*), livelihood (*ājīva*) and mental practices (*mano-samācāra*) took place.

While Sātāgiri was talking about the Dhamma in his explanation of the Buddha's conduct, Kāḷī overheard all and began to have faith in the Buddha without having personally seen him and became established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*), just as somebody who has enjoyed the meal prepared and meant for another person. She was the first noble Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) and female lay devotee among women and the eldest sister to them all.

Having become a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), Kāḷī gave birth to a son that very night. The son was given the name Soṇa. After living with her parents for as long as she wanted, Kāḷī returned to Kuraraghara. Since the son was one wearing earrings worth 10 million, he was also known as Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa.

Soṇa's Spiritual Urgency

At that time, Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana was staying in the hill known as Papāta,[279] depending upon Kuraraghara as his alms resort. The lay devotee, Kāḷī, was serving Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana who constantly visited her house. Her son, Soṇa, was also around Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana constantly and became friendly with him.

Whenever he had an opportunity, Soṇa would go to Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana to wait upon him. Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana also continuously taught him the

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[279] It is sometimes written as Pavatta or Upavatta.

Dhamma in return. The boy, therefore, felt a good deal of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) and became ardent in practising the Dhamma. At one time, he travelled with a caravan to Ujjenī for commercial purposes and while camping at night he became afraid to stay with the crowd. So, he went to another place and slept. The caravan moved on in the morning without him, as nobody remembered to wake him up before they proceeded.

When Soṇa awoke and didn't see anyone, he hurried to follow the caravan along the caravan road and reached a banyan tree. At the tree, he saw a male ghost (*peta*), who was disgusting, ugly and big-bodied, picking up and eating pieces of his own flesh that were falling off from his bones. So Soṇa asked him what he was and the ghost answered, giving his identity. Soṇa asked again why he was eating his own flesh, and he answered that he was doing so because of his past deeds (*kamma*). Soṇa then asked him to explain and his explanation was as follows: "Master, in the past, I was a wicked merchant of Bhārukaccha, earning my living by deceiving others. Besides, I abused monks who came for alms and said to them: 'Eat your own flesh!' As a result of these evil deeds, I am now undergoing the kinds of suffering you are now witnessing." On hearing the incident, Soṇa was shaken a great deal.

Thenceforth, he continued his journey and came across two ghost (*peta*) boys, from whose mouth black blood was trickling. So he asked about them, as he had done before. To Soṇa, the young ghosts then related their evil deed done in the past: As humans they traded in perfumes to earn their living as youngsters, and while doing so, their mother invited and offered meals to certain Arahats. On coming home, they abused and cursed her: "Mother, [1266] why did you give our things to the monks? May bubbles of black blood ooze from the mouths of those who consumed the food given by our mother!" On account of their evil deed, they suffered in hell and as a residual result of that very evil deed they were reborn in the world of ghosts (*peta*), suffering in that manner when they were encountered by Soṇa. On hearing their story too, Soṇa was very shaken. In fact, the effect was even greater than on the previous occasion.

The stories of his spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) are told in the Exalted Utterances (*Udāna*) commentary and the Vinaya sub-commentary the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*).

Soṇa arrived in Ujjenī and returned to Kuraraghara after going about his business. He then approached Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana and told him what he had seen. Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana gave Soṇa a religious talk on the disadvantages of birth in the cycles of Saṁsāra and its round of suffering, as well as on the advantages of not becoming, and the discontinuation of birth in these cycles of Saṁsāra and its round of suffering. Having paid his respects to Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana, Soṇa went home. He had his evening meal, and fell asleep for a while. Later, he woke up and began to reflect on the discourse given earlier by Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana. This reflection and his recollection of the states of the ghosts (*peta*) whom he had met made him feel a great fear of Saṁsāra and its suffering cycles. Thus, he was very much inclined to become a monastic.

At daybreak, he washed himself and went to Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana and reported to him what he thought: "Venerable sir, when I reflected in various ways on the discourse you gave, I found that it was not easy to undertake this noble threefold training, which resembles a newly polished conch shell, perfect and pure in the lay life." He went on: "I would like to shave my hair and beard, put on the dyed robe and leave the lay life, to enter the monastic life." Having thus spoken of his wish to become a monastic, he made a request: "Therefore, sir, I would like you to ordain me."

Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana then investigated mentally whether Soṇa's wisdom was ripe or not, and he came to know that it was not. Wishing to wait for the time when Soṇa's wisdom would ripen, Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana said: "It is difficult, Soṇa, to take up for life the noble practice of sleeping alone and eating alone. Therefore, Soṇa, what I would like to ask you to do is this: practise first occasionally, while still a layman, the noble practice of solitary sleeping and solitary eating, as on Observance Days (*Uposatha*), etc. which is taught by the exalted Buddha."

Then Soṇa's eagerness to become a monastic subsided as his faculties were not mature yet and his consciousness of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) was not serious enough. Though his eagerness had subsided, he was not careless, but remained in the presence of Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana and constantly approached him to listen to his Dhamma teaching. As time went by, he became inclined for a second time to become a monastic, so he renewed his request. This time also Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana gave him the same advice.

When Soṇa requested for a third time, Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana knew it was time to ordain him because of the maturity of his wisdom, but Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana could only ordain him as a novice (*sāmaṇera*). Though he wanted to ordain Soṇa as a monastic (*bhikkhu*), such ordination could not take place because only two or three monastics lived in Kuraraghara and at that time ten were needed for the higher ordination. Although there were many in the Middle Country, those monastics were living very far and separately, one in a village or two in a market town. From there, Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana brought two or three monastics for Soṇa, his co-resident pupil. But while he was away trying to bring more monastics, the previous ones would leave for another place to attend to other matters. After waiting for some time for their return, he went out to bring back those who had left but the others who remained there, departed on some other matters.

As he had to repeat his attempt to organise the ordination in this way, it took him more than three years to get a group of ten monks together, which was needed to perform a higher ordination (*upasampadā*). Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana was staying alone then. It was only after three long and troublesome years that Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana managed to get the required number of monks to give his pupil, Soṇa, higher ordination.[280]

Having received ordination, Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa learnt and took a meditation subject, and when he assiduously engaged in insight (*vipassanā*) meditation, he became an Arahat even during that Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) and he studied the collection of teachings known as the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*) under Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana. After [1267] performing the Invitation (*Pavāraṇā*) at the end of Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), he wanted to pay homage to the Buddha and he asked his preceptor, Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana, for permission to do so.

> His request in detail may be seen in the Story about Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa (*Soṇa-kuṭikaṇṇa-vatthu*, Vin Mv 5).

The preceptor Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana then said: “Soṇa, when you arrive there, the Buddha will let you stay in his Perfumed Chamber and ask you to give a discourse. Accordingly, you are bound to do that. Being pleased with your

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[280] This is reproduced from the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*).

discourse, the Buddha will give you a reward. Take such and such a reward. Please pay homage to the exalted Buddha in my name!" Saying thus, Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana gave his permission whole-heartedly.

Having obtained his preceptor's permission, Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa went to the residence of his mother, Kāḷī, the wife of a merchant, and told her of his plan. His mother consented and made a request: "Very well, dear son! When you go to meet the Buddha, please take this rug along as my donation, and spread it on the ground in the Perfumed Chamber!" With these words the mother handed him a rug.

Taking the rug with him, Ven. Soṇa packed his bedding and set out for Jetavana, Sāvatthī. The Buddha was then seated on the Dhamma throne, a seat meant for the Buddha. Ven. Soṇa stood at a suitable distance and paid his respects to the Buddha. Having exchanged words of greeting with Ven. Soṇa, the Buddha emphatically asked Ven. Ānanda: "Arrange lodging for this monastic, dear son Ānanda!"

> Herein, if the Buddha wished to stay with a visiting monastic in the same Perfumed Chamber, he would specially ask to provide lodging for him. But for a visitor with whom he has no reason for staying together, he would say nothing. For such a person, Ven. Ānanda or somebody else on duty would make an accommodation at another suitable place.

Knowing the wish of the Buddha, Ven. Ānanda provided accommodation for Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa in the Perfumed Chamber.

The Buddha spent time in absorption (*jhāna*) for several hours of the night and then he entered the Perfumed Chamber. Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa too spent a long time sitting in absorption during the night and then he too entered the Perfumed Chamber. Wishing to talk with Ven. Soṇa about engaging in absorption, the Buddha let the time pass by sitting and attaining all the absorptions that were common to disciples, in the open space. Having done so, he washed his feet and went into the dwelling. Sensing the wish of the master, Ven. Soṇa followed, after engaging in the absorption befitting the hours he had in the open space.

Having entered into the Perfumed Chamber, as permitted by the Buddha, he made a robe-screen and sat at the feet of the Buddha. In the last watch of the night, having lain down on the right side, which is lying like a lion (*sīha-seyya*),

with mindfulness, the Buddha rose when it was near daybreak. He then sat down and thinking that Soṇa's physical weariness must have subsided by this time, he asked him: "Dear son Soṇa, recite something for me!" Ven. Soṇa recited the sixteen discourses beginning with the Discourse about Sense Desires (*Kāma-sutta*, Snp 4.1), all of which formed the section known as the Section of the Eights (*Aṭṭhaka-vagga*) of the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*) in a very sweet voice without making any errors, not even in a single letter.

When the recitation had ended, the Buddha gave him a blessing and asked: "Dear son Soṇa, all sixteen discourses of the Section of the Eights you have learned wonderfully, you have got them well by heart! And as they contained correct articulation they have a pleasant sound. They are clean, flawless, full of words leading to understanding and meaning that is free from any impairment. Dear son Soṇa, how long have you been a monastic?" – "Just one Rains Retreat, exalted Buddha," answered Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa.

Again the Buddha asked: "Dear son Soṇa, why did your monastic life start so late?" – "Exalted Buddha," replied Ven. Soṇa, "I have long seen the disadvantages of sensual pleasures. But household life is so narrow, full of duties and things to attend to. Knowing that the mind of one who has seen the defects of sensual pleasures as they really are, I remained in the household life for a long time, but like drops of water falling from the [1268] lotus leaf, defiled thoughts finally slipped away from my heart." So the Buddha uttered a solemn utterance as follows (Ud 5.6):

> *Disvā ādīnavaṁ loke, ñatvā Dhammaṁ nirūpadhiṁ,*
> *ariyo na ramatī pāpe, pāpe na ramatī suci.*

Because he has clearly seen through the eye of insight (*vipassanā*) the defects of impermanence, suffering and changeability everywhere in the world of formations (*saṅkhāra*) and also because he has penetrated through the fourfold path wisdom, Nibbāna, which is the cessation of the fourfold substratum of existence (*upadhi*), the noble one, who is free from defilements, does not take pleasure in evil deeds.

Why? Because for such a swan-like individual whose deeds, physical, vocal and mental are pure, there is no precedent that such a person should find happiness in the aggregate of dirty, unwholesome things that resemble a place full of excrement.

Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa then thought: "The Fortunate One gave a joyous reply to me. Now is the time for me to transmit what my teacher has asked." So thinking, he adjusted his upper robe on his left shoulder and bowed his head at the feet of the master, saying: "Fortunate One, my preceptor, Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana makes obeisance to you with his head, and he asks as follows:

1. "Exalted Buddha, the southern region of the country of Avanti has few monastics. My disciple Soṇa acquired the monastic life only after having ten monastics gathered from various places with great difficulty, which took me three years. I wonder if you, exalted Buddha, would allow higher ordination performed by less than ten monastics in that region.

2. Exalted Buddha, in the southern region of Avanti, the uneven ground rising from its surface, resembles the black hoof-print of a cow, it is so rough. I wonder if you, exalted Buddha, would allow sandals with layers of sole in that region.

3. Exalted Buddha, the people in the southern region of Avanti are fond of bathing. They regard water as a cleansing factor. I wonder if you, exalted Buddha, would allow a daily bath.

4. Exalted Buddha, in the region of Avanti, sheep-skin, goat-skin and deer-skin are used as spreads. Just as, Fortunate One, in the Middle Country (*Majjhima-desa*), mats made of various kinds of grass used, so are sheep-skin, goat-skin and deer-skin used in Avanti. I wonder if you, exalted Buddha, would allow these skins for spreads.

5. Exalted Buddha, people nowadays entrust monastics outside the Hall of Discipline (*Sīmā*) with robes, saying: "This robe is given to such and such a monastic." The entrusted co-resident monastics goes to the monastic concerned and says: "Such and such a man, friend, gives a robe to you." But the monastic does not accept the robe as he thinks that his acceptance would require him to perform an act of forfeiture and is therefore against the Vinaya. Because of such doubt, there is no such acceptance. Perhaps the Buddha might tell the correct way of accepting the robe.

Because of what had been reported by Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa, the Buddha then gave a Dhamma talk to him and addressed the monks as follows: "Monks, monastics are rare in the southern region of Avanti. In such bordering areas, I allow the performance of ordination by a group of five monks, the fifth being an expert in the Vinaya."

> The phrase "bordering areas" in that injunction means the areas outside the Middle Country, to the east of which is the market town of Gajaṅgala, beyond which is a great Sāla tree; beyond that Sāla tree begins the bordering areas. [1269] It means the area lying outside the Middle Country and beyond the river Salalavatī in the south-east. It means the area lying outside the Middle Country and beyond the market town of Setakaṇṇika in the south. It means the area outside the Middle Country and beyond the Brahmin village of Thūna in the west. It means the area outside the Middle Country and beyond the mountain called Usīraddhaja in the north.

1. "Monks, in the bordering areas in such a situation I allow performance of ordination by a group of five monastics, the fifth one being an expert in the Vinaya.

2. Monks, in the southern region of Avanti, the uneven ground, swollen and full of black hoof-prints of cattle, is so rough. I allow you monks to wear sandals with layers of sole in all those bordering areas.

3. Monks, in the southern region of Avanti, people attach importance to bathing. They regard water as a cleansing factor. I allow monks a daily bath in all those bordering areas.

4. Monks, in the southern region of Avanti sheep-skins, goat-skins and deer-skins are used as spreads. As, monks, in the Middle Country, various mats made of grass are used, so are those animal skins used as spreads in that region of Avanti. I allow monks to use sheep-skin, goat-skin and deer-skin for spreads in all those bordering areas.

5. Monks, if people entrust monastics, who happen to be outside the Hall of Discipline (*Sīmā*), with a robe, saying: "This robe we give to such and such a monastic." As long as the robe does not go into the hand of the monk concerned, the robe cannot be reckoned as something recognized by the would-be recipient for use. I allow you monks to accept that robe.

Again, as had been asked by his mother, Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa paid respects, in her name, to the Buddha and said: "Exalted Buddha, your supporter, my mother Kāḷī, the female lay devotee, has offered this rug for use as a mat on the floor in your fragrant chamber." With these words, he handed the rug to the Buddha, and then he rose from his seat, made obeisance and returned to his monastery on Papāta Hill, near Kuraraghara town, in Avanti.

On returning to his preceptor, Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa reported all about the mission. Next day, he went to the house of his mother, Kāḷī, and stood at the entrance for alms food. Hearing that her son was at the door, she came out quickly, paid her respects, took the alms bowl from Ven. Soṇa's hand, prepared a seat and offered food, and then followed a conversation between his mother and Ven. Soṇa:

Mother: Son, have you seen the Fortunate One?

Ven. Soṇa: Yes, I have, mother.

Mother: Have you also paid respects to the Fortunate One in my name?

Ven. Soṇa: Yes, I have. The rug given by you to the Fortunate One, I personally spread it as a mat, as you had asked, in the Fragrant Chamber which he occupies.

Mother: How about your visit to the Fortunate One? Is it true that you spoke about the Dhamma? Is it true that the Fortunate One gave you blessings?

Ven. Soṇa: How did you come to know about these things?

Mother: The guardian spirit of this house, son, told me the day the Fortunate One gave blessings to you, Devas and Brahmas of the 10,000 world-spheres did the same. I want you to relate to me, son, the Dhamma in the same words as you have addressed the Fortunate One.

Ven. Soṇa accepted the mother's request by being silent. Knowing of Ven. Soṇa's acceptance, the mother had a great pavilion built at the house-gate and let Ven. Soṇa [1270] repeat exactly what he had said to the Buddha; the mother thereby held a grand Dhamma-meeting.

Foremost Title Achieved

At a later time, sitting in the midst of his noble disciples, the Buddha spoke in praise of Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa as follows:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ kalyāṇa-vākkaraṇaṁ yad-idaṁ Soṇo Kuṭikaṇṇo.

Monks, among my disciples who give pious talks in a sweet and pleasant voice, Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa is the foremost.

18. Ven. Sīvali

Aspiration in the Past

This man of good family, who would become Sīvali, also went to the monastery during the lifetime of Buddha Padumuttara like many other former would-be great disciples and stood at the edge of the audience, listening to the Buddha's discourse. While he was doing so, he saw the Buddha declare a certain monk the foremost (*etad-agga*) among those who received abundant gifts. Thinking that he too should become like that monk, he invited the Buddha to his house and offered a grand alms giving (*mahā-dāna*) for seven days, in the same manner as was done by the other future great disciples. Thereafter, he declared his aspiration, saying to the Buddha: "Exalted Buddha, as a result of this great act of merit, I do not want any other form of welfare but I want to be the foremost (*etad-agga*) among those who receive many material gains, in the Dispensation of a Future Buddha, like the monk who was declared so seven days ago."

Foreseeing that the man of good family's wish would be fulfilled without any hitch, the Buddha predicted: "Your wish will be fulfilled later in the Dispensation of Buddha Gotama," and then he returned to the monastery.

Life as a Countryman

Having performed meritorious deeds till his death, the future Sīvali took rebirth only in the realms of Devas and humans, without being reborn in the four suffering states. During the lifetime of the Buddha Vipassī, who appeared 91 aeons ago, he became a man of good family in a certain village not far away from the city of Bandhumatī. At that time, the citizens of Bandhumatī, in friendly competition with the king, discussed among themselves and gave a big alms giving to the Buddha.

One day, when they gave a collective alms giving, they inspected their offerings to see what was missing and discovered that there were no honey and milk curds.

So they agreed to bring them from any possible place by all means and placed a man to watch the road leading to the city from the countryside.

Then a villager came, the future Sīvali, carrying a pot of milk curds from his village and thinking that he would exchange them for something he needed. But, before he entered the city, he wished to wash his face and hands and was looking for water everywhere but saw a beehive which was as big as the head of a plough but without bees. Believing that the beehive appeared because of his past act of merit, he took it and entered the city.

When the townsman, who was assigned to the road, saw the villager, he asked: "For whom, friend, are you carrying this honey and these curds?" – "Sir, they are not for any particular person. In fact, I am carrying them to sell," the villager answered. "In that case, friend, take a coin from my hand and give me that honey and those curds," said the townsman. [1271]

Then the villager thought: "These things, which I have brought now, are not much valuable, yet this man is buying them from me at a high price, even in his first offering. I do not know why!" So he said: "I cannot sell them at this price, sir." When the townsman increased the price, saying: "If you cannot sell them for one coin, please take two coins and sell the honey and the curds to me." The villager replied: "I cannot give them to you for two coins either," in order to raise the price. In this way the price became higher and higher until it reached 1,000 pieces of money.

Realizing: "It is not fair to prolong the deal on my part. However, I shall ask him about his purpose," the villager said: "The honey and the curds are not so valuable, yet you unduly make such an immense payment. Why do you want to offer so much?" The townsman told him the purpose: "In this royal city of Bandhumatī, friend, the citizens, in competition with their king, gave a grand alms giving to Buddha Vipassī. While they were doing so, they did not have honey and curds among the items of their offering. So they are trying desperately to get them by any means. If they fail to get them, they will lose in their competition with the king. Therefore, I would like to have them by giving you 1,000 pieces of money." The villager then asked: "Sir, is such a charitable deed to be performed only by the people of the city and not by village folk?"

The townsman then answered: “No man’s gift, friend, is prohibited, everybody whether he belongs to town or village is entitled to give in generosity.” The villager then asked further: “Master, now that the citizens are performing deeds of giving, is there anyone who gives away 1,000 pieces of money in one day?” – “No, friend, there is none.” The villager put still another question firmly: “Master, you know that the honey and the curds that I have brought now are worth 1,000 pieces of money, do you not?” – “Yes, I do, friend.” – “Master,” said the villager, “in that case, go and tell the townsfolk that a rustic man is offering these two things: honey and milk curds, but not for money, instead he would like to make the offering with his own hands. Please also tell them that they should not be restless for wanting them and that they should now be happy as far as these two things are concerned. As for you, you should bear witness in person to the fact that in this magnificent alms giving, it is I who am the supporter of the most expensive item.”

Having said this, the villager bought five perfume ingredients with his money which were meant for his food. He made them into a powder. Then he squeezed the curds to extract water from them. Into that water, he put honey by squeezing the beehive and then seasoned the mixture of honey and curd-water with the perfumed powder. Finally, he put the mixed liquid food in a lotus leaf container. Having prepared the food properly, he brought it and sat down at a place that was not far from the Buddha, waiting for his turn to offer.

Amidst all the offerings that were brought by the citizens, the villager, knowing that it was his turn to make his offering, approached the Buddha and made a wish, saying: “Exalted Buddha, this offering is a gift from a poor man like me. Venerable sir, kindly accept this humble gift of mine.” Out of compassion for the villager, the Buddha received the offering with the marble bowl given by the Four Great Kings and resolved that the food should prove inexhaustible even after distributing it to 6,800,000 monastics.

When the Buddha had partaken of his food, the villager respectfully made obeisance to him and remaining at a suitable distance, said: “Exalted Buddha, all the people of the royal city of Bandhumatī saw and know that today I brought and made an offering to you. As a result of this act of merit, may I become, throughout Saṁsāra, a great recipient of gifts, possessing a large retinue and fame. After saying: may it be so, man of good family (*evaṁ hotu kula-putta*),”

the Buddha gave an appreciative talk to the villager and the citizens and then he returned to the monastery.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

The villager, having done meritorious deeds till his death, was reborn only in Deva and human worlds, and finally, during the lifetime of our Buddha, he took conception in the womb of a Koliyan Sakyan Princess named Suppavāsā. [1272] Since his conception, hundreds of gifts arrived continuously, day and night, to his mother, Princess Suppavāsā. The Princess became wealthier than before.[281]

Then one day, in order to investigate the fortunate past deeds of the princess, her royal relatives took the baskets of seeds touched by her hand. When these seeds were scattered, thousands of sprouts appeared from each seed. It was a plot of land, measuring two royal acres, yielding some 50 or 60 cartloads of paddy.

Also, at a time when the crop was put into the storehouse, they let the door of the storehouse be touched by the hand of the princess. When removing the crop, the place from where it was taken out became full as before. This was because of the glorious deeds done in the past by the princess. Besides, when ladling the cooked rice from the full pot and uttering: "This is the fortune of the princess," and distributing the food to all visitors, their supplies never ran short. While these strange events were happening the child remained in the mother's womb, and seven years passed by.

When the foetus became mature on the completion of seven years, the princess suffered severely from a fainting owing to her pregnancy (*gabbha-mūḷha-dukkha*). The princess forebore that serious agony with no moaning, but by reflecting on the attributes of the Buddha, the Saṅgha and Nibbāna as follows (Ud 2.8):

> *Sammā-sambuddho vata so Bhagavā,*
> *yo imassa evarūpassa dukkhassa pahānāya Dhammaṁ deseti.*
>
> He, that master of ours, the Fortunate One, taught us the abandoning of all kinds of suffering; that master of ours has been perfectly Self-

[281] According to the Sinhalese version, 500 gifts came by day and 500 by night.

Awakened indeed by attaining omniscience and knowing the truths and all that is to be known!

Suppaṭipanno vata tassa Bhagavato sāvaka-saṅgho,
yo imassa evarūpassa dukkhassa pahānāya paṭippanno.

The Saṅgha, who are the disciples of the Fortunate One, work hard for abandoning all kinds of such suffering, these disciples of the exalted Buddha underwent the threefold training very well indeed!

Susukhaṁ vata taṁ Nibbānaṁ,
yatthidaṁ evarūpaṁ dukkhaṁ na saṁvijjati.

That state in which the slightest tinge of suffering is absent, that Nibbāna is indeed extremely happy!

Through reflecting on the attributes of the three entities: The attributes of the Buddha, the Saṅgha, and the peaceful happiness of Nibbāna, the Princess bore the pains.

On the seventh day, the Koliyan Princess Suppavāsā called her husband the Koliyan prince and thinking she would like to give alms, she said: "Go my lord! Tell the Fortunate One about my happenings and give my invitation to the master. Please note carefully all that he has to say and report it to me!"

The prince went and told the Buddha what was happening to Princess Suppavāsā. The Buddha then uttered: "May the Koliyan Princess Suppavāsā be sound and healthy. Being healthy herself, may she give birth to a healthy son!" No sooner had the Buddha made the utterance than the princess gave birth to a healthy son, and without any pain.

The miserable mood of those who surrounded the princess changed into a happy one, and they went to the prince to give him the news about the baby. The prince, having listened to what the Buddha had said, paid respects to him and returned to the village. When he saw on the way the servants were jubilantly approaching him, he became certain, thinking: "The word of the Fortunate One seems to have come true."

He went to the princess and transmitted the Buddha's speech. The princess said: "My Lord, the life-saving [1273] alms food to which you have been invited, will be an auspicious meal. Go again! Request the Buddha to come and have a meal

for seven days." The prince did as he had been told. They offered a grand alms giving (*mahā-dāna*) to the Buddha and his monks for seven days.

The boy was born and the anxiety of all their kinsfolk was removed thereby. Accordingly, he was given the name Sīvali, which means auspicious. Since he had stayed in the mother's womb for seven years, from the time of his birth onwards, he was able to do all that was to be done by a seven year old. For instance, he purified the water by means of a filter (*dhama-karaṇa*) and gave it to the monks during the great alms giving (*mahā-dāna*) all week long.

On the seventh day, Ven. Sāriputta, the Captain of the Dhamma, had a conversation with the boy. While doing so Ven. Sāriputta asked: "Sīvali, is it not befitting for you to become a monk after suffering all that trouble in the womb?" – "Venerable sir, if only I can get permission from my parents, I would like to become a monk," the boy answered. Seeing her son conversing with Ven. Sāriputta, Sīvali's mother thought: "How is it? My son is speaking with Ven. Sāriputta who is the Captain of the Dhamma!" So she joyfully approached Ven. Sāriputta and asked him what they were talking about. Ven. Sāriputta said: "He spoke to me about the misery caused by his stay in his mother's womb and promised me that he would live an ascetic life provided he gets permission from his parents." The princess then gave her permission replying: "Very well, venerable sir, kindly make him a novice."

Ven. Sāriputta then took the boy Sīvali to the monastery and when he was making him a novice, after giving him the meditation subject of the fivefold material aggregate with the skin as the fifth (*taca-pañcaka*), he said: "You do not need any other exhortation to follow. Just remember the pains that you suffered for seven years." – "Giving ordination to me is your duty, venerable sir. Let the reflection on the Dhamma be mine. I shall meditate on whatever I can recollect."

The moment the shaving of hair for the first round was done, Sīvali was established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*), the moment the shaving for the second round of hair was done, he was established in Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmī-phala*), the moment the shaving for the third round was done, he was established in Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-phala*) and as soon as the shaving

was complete, he became an Arahat. The completion of the hair-shaving and the attainment of the Arahat fruition took place almost simultaneously.

Since the day Sīvali was ordained a novice, the four requisites: clothing, food, dwelling and medicine became increasingly available to the Saṅgha whenever needed. The story of such happenings to the novice Sīvali started in the town of Kuṇḍikā.

> Herein the present story of Ven. Sīvali may be taken from the Discourse concerning Suppavāsā (*Suppavāsā-sutta*, Ud 2-8). The story, in detail, of his evil deed that caused the seven years long misery of lying in his mother's womb (*gabbhāvāsa-dukkha*) and that of his mother's fainting (*gabbha-mūḷha*) may be taken from the commentary to the same discourse.
>
> What is to be noted in brief is: The mother and the son, in one of their past existences were the Chief Queen and the son respectively to the King of Bārāṇasī. Once, the King of Kosala attacked the King of Bārāṇasī and took his Chief Queen and placed her in a similar position. When the King of Bārāṇasī was defeated and died, his son, the Prince of Bārāṇasī, escaped through a drain. After organizing an army, he went back to the city of Bārāṇasī and gave an ultimatum asking the new king to return the city to him or he would wage a war.
>
> The mother, who was inside the city, advised her son to besiege the city lest there should occur trouble to many people. In accordance with the mother's advice, the prince did so by blocking the four main gates so that there could be no exit or entrance. Though he did so for seven years, the citizens went out from smaller gates to collect grass, wood, etc. The blockage proved useless. Hearing that, the mother gave her son further advice to block the smaller gates as well.
>
> When the prince did, following his mother's advice, the citizens found their movement badly limited. Seven days later they beheaded King Kosala and [1274] offered it to the prince. The prince entered the city and crowned himself king. As a result of these aforesaid evil deeds, the son and the mother had to face their respective miseries.

Self-Investigation of his Good Deeds

At a later time, when the Buddha arrived in Sāvatthī, Ven. Sīvali paid obeisance respectfully to him and sought permission, saying: "Exalted Buddha, I would

like to investigate my own good deeds (*kamma*). Kindly give me 500 monks as my companions." The Buddha permitted, saying: "Take them along, dear son Sīvali."

Ven. Sīvali headed for the Himavanta by following a forest route with 500 companions. Then he came across:

1. A great banyan tree on the way.
2. The Paṇḍava Hill.
3. The river Aciravatī.
4. The ocean known as Varasāgara.
5. The Himavanta.
6. The lake in the Chaddanta forest.
7. Mount Gandhamādana.
8. Ven. Revata's dwelling.

At all these places, Devas gave a great alms giving (*mahā-dāna*) to Ven. Sīvali for seven days. Particularly, when they arrived on Mount Gandhamādana, a Deva, named Nāgadatta, offered him milk rice and butter-rice alternately for seven days. Then the monks said among themselves: "Friends, we do not see cows being milked by Devas nor we see the milk-curds being stirred to make butter." So they asked the Deva for an explanation of what good deed he did to obtain so much milk rice and butter-rice. Nāgadatta answered: "Venerable sirs, I am able to give you milk rice and butter-rice without having milch cows because I performed meritorious gifts of milk-rice by lot during the lifetime of Buddha Kassapa."

Foremost Title Achieved

At a later time, when the Buddha visited Ven. Khadiravaniya Revata, as has been told in the story of that venerable, Devas provided supplies, day after day, which were mainly intended for Ven. Sīvali on the deserted and dangerous journey. With reference to that episode, the Buddha placed Ven. Sīvali as the foremost among those who received plenty of gifts. The Buddha spoke in praise of Ven. Sīvali by saying:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ lābhīnaṁ yad-idaṁ Sīvali.

Monks, among my monastic disciples who receive the four requisites in abundance, Sīvali is the foremost.

The doctrinal passages in connection with Ven. Sīvali may be extracted from the Traditions (*Apādāna*, Tha-ap 545), the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*, Thag 1.60), the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 414) and their respective commentaries, etc.

Similarly the Dhamma teachings involving later great disciples should be noted in like manner. In this Chronicles of the Buddhas, from now on only three points will be discussed: Each venerable's aspiration expressed in the past, his ascetic life in the final existence, and the foremost title achieved.

19. Ven. Vakkali

Aspiration in the Past

This Vakkali was a man of good family during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. Like all [1275] other great disciples, he went to the Buddha's monastery, sat at the edge of the audience and while listening to his discourse, he saw a monastic being honoured by him as the foremost (*etad-agga*) among the monastics who were devoted to him. He felt a keen desire to be honoured likewise by some Future Buddha. As with the other aspirants, he invited the Buddha to his home and made great offerings for seven days. Thereafter, he expressed his wish before the Buddha: "For this good deed, may I, venerable sir, be declared by some Future Buddha as the foremost among the monastics who are very devoted to the Buddha." The Buddha saw that the aspiration of the man of good family would be fulfilled and assured him of it, after which, he returned to the monastery.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

The worthy man devoted himself to deeds of merit till his death. When he passed away from that existence, he was reborn only in the fortunate destinations, and during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn in a Brahmin family in Sāvatthī. He was named by his parents Vakkali.

When he grew up, he was educated in the three Vedas. One day, he saw the Buddha, accompanied by many monastics, going on alms round in the city of Sāvatthī. He was captivated by the majesty of the Buddha's physical appearance, so much so that he followed the Buddha and entered the Buddha's monastery along with the line of monastics. There he kept gazing at the splendour of the Buddha. At the time the Buddha was delivering a discourse, he sat right in front of him.

Vakkali's devotion became so deep that he could not stay away from the Buddha for any length of time. He, therefore, decided that he would not remain in household life, because as a householder he would not be able to see the Buddha all day long, but as a monastic he could get that opportunity. So he went to the Buddha and pleaded with him that he be admitted into the Saṅgha. He was then admitted.

As a monastic, Ven. Vakkali never missed a chance of looking at the Buddha except at the meal time. He did nothing in the conduct of a monastic either in learning or in meditation, but spent all of his time gazing at the Buddha. The Buddha knew that the time for Ven. Vakkali's Awakening was not yet due and therefore did not say anything about the negligence of his duties.

When the right time arrived, the Buddha said to Ven. Vakkali: "Vakkali, what is the use of you gazing at this putrid body of mine? Vakkali, he who sees the Dhamma, indeed sees me; he who sees me, sees the Dhamma. Vakkali, one who looks at the Dhamma, actually looks at me. He that really wishes to see me must be one who looks at the Dhamma."

Although the Buddha exhorted Ven. Vakkali with these words, Ven. Vakkali could not tear himself away from the Buddha. The Buddha saw that the monastic needed to be emotionally awakened for Awakening. So, on the eve of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period, the Buddha went to Rājagaha and there he said to Ven. Vakkali on the day the Rains Retreat began: "Vakkali, go away! Leave my presence!"

It is impossible to disobey an order given by the Buddha. Ven. Vakkali had to obey for at least three months during the Rains Retreat period. There was nothing he could do about it. He felt desperate and forlorn. Thinking: "Better to

die than be denied the presence of the Buddha," he left for the Gijjhakūṭa mountain which had steep cliffs.

The Buddha saw in his mind the despondency that had overtaken Ven. Vakkali. "Without getting mental succour from me, Ven. Vakkali would have wasted his great merit which is now sufficient for him to gain Awakening," thought the Buddha. Accordingly, he emitted the Buddha radiance towards Ven. Vakkali so that he could see him again. That vision brought immediate relief to Ven. Vakkali's burning heart, as though the dart of sorrow that had pierced it had suddenly been removed. Then to fill Vakkali's heart with delightful satisfaction and gladness, the Buddha uttered the following verse (Dhp 381): [1276]

> *Pāmojja-bahulo bhikkhu, pasanno Buddha-sāsane,*
> *adhigacche padaṁ santaṁ, saṅkhārūpasamaṁ sukhaṁ.*
>
> Being overjoyed and full of confidence in the Buddha's teaching consisting of the threefold training, the monastic will attain the tranquil Nibbāna, the cessation of conditioning, the blissful.

According to the commentary of the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) the Buddha extended his hand to Ven. Vakkali and ordained him by summoning him with: "Come, monastic."

The commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) adds that after saying the above verse, the Buddha, extending his hand to Ven. Vakkali, and uttered these verses (DhpA XXV.11, PTS 4.119):

> *Ehi Vakkali mā bhāyi, olokehi Tathāgataṁ,*
> *ahaṁ taṁ uddharissāmi, paṅke sannaṁ va kuñjaraṁ.*
>
> Come, Vakkali, do not be afraid, look at the Realised One, I will lift you to Nibbāna from the depths of the beginningless Saṁsāra, just as one lifts a tusker from the mire.
>
> *Ehi Vakkali mā bhāyi, olokehi Tathāgataṁ,*
> *ahaṁ taṁ mocayissāmi, rāhuggahaṁ va sūriyaṁ.*
>
> Come, Vakkali, do not be afraid, look at the Realised One. I will free you from the captivity of the defilements, just as I would free the sun from the captivity of Rāhu.

Ehi Vakkali mā bhāyi, olokehi Tathāgataṁ,
ahaṁ taṁ mocayissāmi, rāhuggahaṁ va candimaṁ

Come, Vakkali, do not be afraid, look at the Realised One. I will free you from the captivity of the defilements, just as I would free the moon from the captivity of Rāhu.

Then Ven. Vakkali said to himself: "I am now seeing the Buddha in person, and he has extended his hand to me. Oh, how glad I am! Where should I go now?" And not being able to decide on which direction he should proceed, he moved up skyward in the direction of the Buddha, and just as his first foot was resting on the mountain, he reflected on the verses uttered by the Buddha, and overcoming delightful satisfaction through insight into the three characteristics of conditioned phenomena, he became an Arahat, together with analytical knowledge. Then he descended to the ground and stood worshipping the Buddha.

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, in the midst of a congregation, the Buddha declared:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakāmaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ
saddhādhimuttānaṁ yad-idaṁ Vakkali.

Monastics, among the male monastic disciples who are very devoted to the Buddha, Vakkali is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

In the case of other monastics, their devotion to the Buddha had to be bolstered up. With Vakkali, his conviction and devotion was too strong, so that the Buddha had to temper it by expelling him from his presence. Hence he was the foremost monastic in the degree of devotion to the Buddha. [1277]

20-21. Ven. Rāhula and Ven. Raṭṭhapāla

Aspiration in the Past

During the early part of the aeon of Buddha Padumuttara, the future Rāhula and the future Raṭṭhapāla were born into well-to-do families in Haṁsavatī, however their names and clans are not mentioned in the old commentaries.

When they came of age, they married and at the death of their fathers, they became heads of their respective households. In taking over the family

properties from the custodians of their family estates, they came to know the immense wealth they had inherited. They pondered: “Our forbears have amassed these vast fortunes but have not been able to take them along when they left the present existence. As for us, we would take them along into the hereafter in whatever way we can. So they started to practise generosity. They erected distribution stations at the four gates of the city, where all the needs of destitutes and travellers were provided liberally.

Of the two friends, one was in the habit of inquiring into the needs of the recipients who came to receive his generosity and would give according to their needs, and he was therefore known as Āgatapāka, “the discriminative giver.” The other never asked about the needs of the recipient but let them take however much they wanted, and hence he was known as Anaggapāka, “the liberal giver.”

One early morning, the two friends went out from their village to wash their faces. At that time, two recluses, using their supernormal powers, disappeared from the Himavanta mountains and reappeared at a place not far away from the two friends. They made themselves invisible and stood by the roadside and were visible only when they were heading to the village with their alms bowls and other vessels seeking for alms. The two friends went near and paid homage to the recluses, who asked them: “Men of great merit, when did you come here?” And the two friends replied: “Venerable sirs, we have just arrived.” Then they each invited a recluse to their respective homes, offered them alms food, after which they asked and received the promise from the recluses to receive their offerings every day thenceforth.

One of them, the recluse who had agreed to be the regular recipient to the future Rāhula was phlegmatic, and to cool his heated body, he used to spend the daytime in the abode of a Nāga, named Pathavindhara, which lay beneath the ocean. The recluse went there by making the ocean water cleft into a dry passage-way. On returning from his watery sojourn, where he had enjoyed the favourable weather, to the human abode, on the occasion, he gave an appreciative talk about the daily food offerings. After hearing the repeated reference to “the abode of the Nāga Pathavindhara,” the supporter became curious to know what the expression denoted. This recluse explained to him: “Ah, it is our wish that you be as great as the lord of Nāgas named

Pathavindhara," and told him the grandeur of the Nāga from under the seas. From that day onwards, the future Rāhula's mind was inclined to the Nāga existence, as he visualized it from the recluse's description.

The other recluse used to spend his daytime at a Deva mansion, named Serisaka, after the big celestial tree that stood in front of it in Tāvatiṁsa. And this recluse, who saw the palace of Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, mentioned it in his words of appreciation and felicitation about the daily food-offering he received at the future Raṭṭhapāla's house. When the future Raṭṭhapāla asked him to explain what he was referring to, he explained the greatness of Sakka and his wish that his supporter will be as great as Sakka. Thenceforward the future Raṭṭhapāla's mind was inclined to the celestial state of Sakka.

When the two rich friends passed away from their existence, future Rāhula, whose mind was inclined to the Nāga lord's existence, was reborn as the Nāga lord Pathavindhara and future Raṭṭhapāla, whose mind was inclined to Sakka's existence, was reborn as Sakka in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm.

Past Aspiration of the Future Rāhula

At the moment of his rebirth as a Nāga, Pathavindhara looked at his own body and felt sorry that he had indeed became a reptile. He thought of the limited vision of his benefactor, the recluse in his previous existence: "Ah, my teacher would seem to know no [1278] higher ideal for me than the reptilian existence." Just then he was attended on by a troupe of Nāga dancers and musicians, all in celestial garb, who were there to entertain him wherever he was. He himself then took on the appearance of a celestial youth, his reptilian form having been discarded.

A significant activity in his Nāga existence was that Pathavindhara had to attend, as part of his Nāga King Virūpakkha's entourage, the half monthly meetings presided over by Sakka, where the Four Great Kings paid their homage to the Lord of the Devas. Sakka saw his old friend, Pathavindhara, and even from a distance recognized him. He asked him: "Friend, in which realm were you reborn?"

"Lord, unfortunate is my destination. I was reborn as a reptile in the realm of the Nāgas. But you were fortunate to have a good teacher in the past, and have been reborn in the Deva realm."

“Do not be disappointed for your unfortunate destination. There has arisen in the world, Buddha Padumuttara. Go to him, perform great deeds of merit, and wish for the state of Sakka, so that we would live together in this Tāvatiṁsa Realm.” – “Very well my Lord,” said Pathavindhara, “I will follow your advice.”

Then he went to see Buddha Padumuttara, and invited him to his undersea realm. He made preparations for a great offering the whole night together with his followers.

Early in the next morning, at dawn, the Buddha said to his personal attendant: “Sumana, the Realised One is going to a far-off land to collect alms food. Let only Arahats who have memorised the Dhamma-Vinaya and have attained the fourfold analytical knowledge and the six supernormal powers, accompany me, and not the worldling monastics.” The attendant announced this order among the monastics.

Then the Buddha, accompanied by Arahats, who had memorised the Dhamma-Vinaya and had attained the fourfold analytical knowledge and the six supernormal powers, rose into the sky and went to the abode of Pathavindhara, the lord of the Nāgas. As Pathavindhara waited to welcome the Buddha, he saw him and his company of Arahats walking above the wavy waters of emerald green of the great ocean. There was a procession of majestic Arahats with the Buddha at the head and a young novice, named Uparevata, who was the son of the Buddha. Pathavindhara was particularly overawed by the young novice for having such supernormal powers just like the elder monastics. He felt thrilled with joy at the magnificent sight.

When the Buddha took the seat prepared for him and the Arahats took their respective seats according to seniority, the seat assigned for novice Uparevata was high in front of the Buddha. As the young novice was sitting there, Pathavindhara, while serving the food to the Buddha and the Saṅgha, looked keenly at the Buddha and the young novice in turn. He noticed that the novice had the 32 distinct marks of a great man just like those on the body of the Buddha. That was the reason for his keen inspection of the Buddha and the novice in turn.

Pathavindhara was wondering why the young novice resembled the Buddha so much and how both were related to each other. He asked one of the Arahats:

"Venerable sir, how is this young novice related to the Fortunate One?" The Arahat replied: "Lord of Nāgas, he is the son of the Fortunate One." Pathavindhara was deeply impressed by the novice. "What a superb status this novice occupies! The son of the greatest man in the whole world, unrivalled in personal glory! His body is partly like that of the Fortunate One himself. Oh, how I would like to be the son of a Buddha at some future time."

Having been moved by this aspiration, the lord of Nāgas invited the Buddha to his residence for seven days and made great offerings to him. Thereafter, he made his aspiration before the Buddha: "Venerable sir, for this great deed of merit, may I become the son of some Future Buddha, just like novice Uparevata." The Buddha saw that the Nāga lord's aspiration would be fulfilled and made the prediction: "You will become the son of Buddha Gotama in the future," then he departed. [1279]

Past Aspiration of the Future Raṭṭhapāla

At the next half-monthly Deva meeting to pay homage to Sakka as a member of the Nāga King Virūpakkha's retinue, Sakka asked his old-time friend Pathavindhara: "Well, friend, have you made your aspiration for the Tāvatiṁsa Realm?" Pathavindhara answered: "No, my lord." – "But why didn't you do that? What disadvantage do you see in Deva existence?" – "My lord, it is not for any disadvantage I see in Deva existence. The fact is I have seen the novice Uparevata, the son of the Buddha who was just wonderful. Since I had cast my eyes on him, I have no aspiration other than to become the son of a Future Buddha, exactly like this novice Uparevata. So I made my aspiration before the Buddha to become the son of some Future Buddha. My lord, I would ask you to make some aspiration before the Buddha. Let us live together in future existences in Saṁsāra."

Sakka accepted Pathavindhara's suggestion and as he was thinking about his ideal aspiration, he saw a monastic endowed with great powers. He reviewed the lineage of that monastic and saw that the monastic was the son of a noble family that had the ability to unite a country that had been divided, and that the monastic had to obtain parental consent to join the Saṅgha, only after starving himself in protest for seven days. He decided to emulate that monastic.

He asked the Buddha about the monastic, even though he knew it by his own divine powers. Then he made great offerings to the Buddha for seven days, at the end of which he expressed his great wish thus: "Venerable sir, for this great deed of merit may I be declared by some Future Buddha as the foremost monastic among those who took up the monastic life through their conviction just like that monastic whom the Fortunate One declared as such." The Buddha saw that Sakka's aspiration would be fulfilled and said: "Sakka, you will be declared as the foremost among monastics who joined the Saṅgha, through sheer conviction under Buddha Gotama in the future." After pronouncing that prediction the Buddha departed. And Sakka also returned to his celestial abode.

Raṭṭhapāla as Manager of Offerings

The future Raṭṭhapāla and the future Rāhula passed away from their existences as Sakka and Pathavindhara respectively, faring in the Deva realm and the human world for thousands of aeons. Ninety-two aeons prior to the present aeon was the time of Buddha Phussa. The father of Buddha Phussa was King Mahinda. The Buddha had three half-brothers from different mothers. The king monopolised the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha because he would not share the meritorious deed of attending to the needs of the Buddha with anyone.

One day, a rebellion broke out in a remote area of King Mahinda's country. The king said to his three sons: "Sons, there is a rebellion in a far-away region. Either I myself, or the three of you, must go and put the region in order. If I am to go, you must see that attendance on the Buddha be kept up in the usual manner." The three sons unanimously said: "Dear father, it is not for you to go. We will go and put that region in order." They made obeisance to their father and went to the disturbed area, quelled the rebels and returned in triumph.

On the way home, the three princes sought counsel of their trusted lieutenants: "Men, back in the capital, our father will bestow some boon on us. What sort of boon should we name?" The lieutenants said: "My lords, at the death of your royal father, nothing will be unattainable to you. The right to attend on your eldest brother, the Buddha, is indeed the boon you should ask for." – "Very well, my men, your advice is sound." And they went before their royal father.

The king was very pleased with them and said they would be rewarded with whatever they wished for. The princes asked for the privilege of attending on

the Buddha as their boon. “That, I cannot give, sons,” the king said, “name any other.” – “We want no other boon. That is the only thing we yearn for.” After some refusals by the king and affirmations on the part of the three princes, the king at last felt obliged to concede, lest he would be going back on his word. He warned his sons, though, in these words: “I will now comply with your request. But I wish to warn you, the Buddha is in the habit of staying in seclusion, just like the lion in his own den. So you have to be fully attentive in waiting on him. Do not ever be amiss about your duties.” [1280]

The three princes, on being permitted the task of waiting on the Buddha for three months, discussed among themselves: “Since we are going to wait on the Buddha, we ought to don robes and take up the monastic life as novices.” They decided to be absolutely free from the stench of demerit.

> “Free from the stench of demerit (*nirāma-gandha*)” according to the commentary. The sub-commentary elaborates on this term thus: Stench is to be interpreted as demerit, and also as defilement. Stench is inseparable from defilement: Whenever defilement arises, it produces a bad smell. Stench means a mind where defilements arise continuously. The metaphor stench is used to denote something obnoxious, impure as though polluted by excreta, frowned upon by the wise and virtuous, it is an agent that makes everything stink. This last quality of the defilements is also manifested by evil persons whose body literally stinks, whereas the dead body of a purified one has no bad smell.

Accordingly, they did so and took part in the daily offering of food to the Buddha and the Saṅgha but entrusted the job to a committee of three trusted men to supervise the task.

Among these three supervisors, one was in charge of procuring rice and cereals, the second in charge of issuing groceries to meet the daily needs of the meals, and the third in charge of cooking and other preparations for the offering. The three men were reborn during the time of Buddha Gotama as King Bimbisāra, Visākha the merchant, and Ven. Raṭṭhapāla, respectively.

Rāhula's Life as Prince Pathavindhara

The future Rāhula was reborn as the eldest son of King Kikī of the Kāsi country during the time of Buddha Vipassī. He was named by his parents as Prince Pathavindhara. He had seven sisters, namely:

1. Princess Samaṇī = the future Ven. Khemā.
2. Princess Samaṇaguttā = the future Ven. Uppalavaṇṇā.
3. Princess Bhikkhunī = the future Ven. Paṭācārā.
4. Princess Bhikkhadāyikā = the future Ven. Kuṇḍalakesī.
5. Princess Dhammā = the future Ven. Kisā Gotamī.
6. Princess Sudhammā = the future Ven. Dhammadinnā.
7. Princess Saṅghadāyikā = the future lay supporter Visākhā.

Prince Pathavindhara became the heir-apparent after his seven sisters had donated seven monastic complexes to Buddha Kassapa. The heir-apparent requested his sisters to let him donate the cost of one of the seven monastic complexes, but his seven sisters pointed out to their eldest brother that he had means to donate another monastic complex. So Prince Pathavindhara built 500 monastic complexes on an appropriate scale according to his status. He spent all his life in deeds of merit. On his death, he was reborn in the Deva realm.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

During the time of Buddha Gotama, Prince Pathavindhara was reborn as Prince Rāhula, son of Prince Siddhattha and his chief Princess Yasodharā. Rāhula's boyhood friend was Raṭṭhapāla, the son of Raṭṭhapāla, the wealthy merchant of the market town of Thullakoṭṭhika in the kingdom of Kuru.

> The admission of Rāhula into the Saṅgha, an interesting episode, can be read in chapter 18. Many discourses that are connected with Rāhula, such as the Long Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula (*Mahā-rāhulovāda-sutta*, MN 62) and others can be found in chapters 31 and 32b.

After the Buddha had admitted his son, he used to admonish the young novice every day as follows: "Rāhula, seek the company of a good friend. Dwell in the forest abode. Be [1281] moderate in eating. Do not be attached to any of the four

monastic requisites. Be flawless in regard to the observance of the monastic restraint. Guard the six faculties well. Be constantly mindful about mind-and-body so as to become thoroughly tired of sentient existence. Cultivate the mind to give up any idea of the attractiveness of the body; gain concentration of mind. Once the signs of permanence are given up, reflect on the falsity of an ego. If you train yourself thus, the three rounds of the vicious cycle of suffering existences will fall away."[282]

> The above sutta is entitled the Continual Advice to Rāhula (*Abhiṇha-rāhulovāda-sutta*, Snp 2.13).

It was the custom of the novice Rāhula to pick up a handful of sand early in the morning and say to himself: "May I get admonitions from the Fortunate One or from my preceptor in number comparable to the grains of sand in my hand." This habit of his gained him the reputation as a novice inclined to good advice as befitting the son of the Fortunate One and as such a worthy son of a worthy father.

This recognition of Rāhula's noble character trait became the topic of discussion among the monastics. The Buddha knew it, and thinking that that would very well make a ready subject for another discourse and would also highlight Ven. Rāhula's qualities even better, he taught a discourse at the audience hall. Having seated himself on the Dhamma throne of the Buddha, he asked the monastics what they had been talking about before he went in. The monastics replied: "Venerable sir, we were discussing the noble trait in the novice Rāhula's readiness to receive admonition." The Buddha then related a past existence of Rāhula where he had displayed the same noble trait, as mentioned in the Story about the Deer having Three Postures (*Tipallattha-miga-jātaka*, Ja 16).

The Buddha taught the young novice Rāhula at the tender age of seven to be truthful at all times, to refrain from untruth even by way of jesting. The discourse on this subject goes by the title of the Advice to Rāhula given in Ambalaṭṭhika Park (*Ambalaṭṭhika-rāhulovāda-sutta*, MN 61), see chapter 20a.

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[282] This is a free rendering of Myanmar rhymes by the author, as contained in chapter 18.

When Rāhula was eighteen, the Buddha taught him a discourse entitled the Long Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula (*Mahā-rāhulovāda-sutta*, MN 62), see chapter 31.

To give practical lessons in insight-meditation, 22 suttas were directed at Rāhula, compiled in the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*), forming the chapter entitled the Thematic Discourses connected with Rāhula (*Rāhula-saṁyutta*, SN 18); and there is also another discourse entitled the Discourse concerning Rāhula (*Rāhula-sutta*, AN 4.177).

As Rāhula became spiritually more mature, when he had just been admitted into the Saṅgha as a full-fledged monastic, the Buddha taught him another discourse entitled the Short Discourse giving Advice to Rāhula (*Cūḷa-rāhulovāda-sutta*, MN 147), see chapter 31.

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, in the congregation of monastics where the Buddha named outstanding monastics, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *Sikkhā-kāmānaṁ yad-idaṁ Rāhulo.*
>
> Monastics, among the monastics who welcome admonition concerning the threefold training, Rāhula is the foremost (*etad-agga*).
>
> Ven. Rāhula was designated as the foremost among those monastics who welcomed admonition concerning the threefold training because from the day he became a novice he always had a most keen desire to be instructed. Every morning, he awaited admonition and advice from the Buddha or from his preceptor. He wanted as many words of advice as they would give, even as many as the grains of sand he used to hold in his hand every morning.

Raṭṭhapāla's Monastic Life

In his tour of the kingdom of Kuru, the Buddha arrived at the market town of [1282] Thullakoṭṭhika, which means the town where all households have their granaries full of paddy. On hearing the Buddha's discourse, Raṭṭhapāla, the merchant's son, was overwhelmed by religious conviction and had an intense desire to renounce the world. After much persuasion and protestation with his

parents, he finally obtained their consent to become a monastic, as in the case of Ven. Sudinna which has been described earlier on, and he went to the Buddha. Under the Buddha's order, he was admitted into the Saṅgha.

Although they had permitted their son to leave household life, Raṭṭhapāla's parents were still unhappy about it. Whenever monastics arrived at their door on the alms round, the father would say to them: "What business do you have here? You have taken away my only son. What more do you want to do from us?"

The Buddha stayed at Thullakoṭṭhika for fifteen days only and returned to Sāvatthī. There, at Sāvatthī, Raṭṭhapāla meditated on insight and became an Arahat.

Ven. Raṭṭhapāla then asked permission from the Buddha to visit his parents. Hence, he went to Thullakoṭṭhika. While going for alms collection in the town, he stood at the door of his father, where, as in the case of Ven. Sudinna, he received stale cakes, but he ate them as if they were the food of Devas. His father felt guilty about the alms food he had offered and invited his monastic son to his house to take a wholesome meal but Ven. Raṭṭhapāla said that since he had finished the day's meal, he would come the next day.

On the following day, after finishing his meal at his father's house, he gave a discourse to the womenfolk of the household who were fully garbed, and enabled them to perceive loathsomeness of the body. Then all of a sudden, like an arrow, he flew up to the sky and descended in the royal gardens of King Korabya where he sat on a rock platform. He sent word to the king through the gardener about his presence there. King Korabya went to pay homage to him. Ven. Ratthapāla gave a discourse, in detail, on the four principles of loss or decay (*pārijuñña*). After which, he returned to Sāvatthī, travelling by stages, and arrived at the Buddha's monastery.

> This is a brief account of Ven. Raṭṭhapāla. Full details may be gleaned from the Discourse to Raṭṭhapāla (*Raṭṭhapāla-sutta*, MN 82).

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, in a monastic congregation where the Buddha named foremost monastics, he declared:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ saddhā-pabbajitānaṁ yad-idaṁ Raṭṭhapālo.

Monastics, among my monastic disciples who take up the monastic life through sheer religious conviction, Raṭṭhapāla is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

Ven. Raṭṭhapāla had to stay away from food for seven days as a token of his strong desire to renounce the household life. That was why he was declared the foremost monastic who took up the monastic life through faith.

22. Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna

Aspiration in the Past

The future Kuṇḍadhāna was born into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. Like all other future great disciples, he went to the Buddha's monastery to listen to his discourse. There he saw a monastic [1283] named by the Buddha as the foremost among those who were first to be selected for invitation to offerings of alms food by the supporters. The worthy man's heart was bent on receiving similar honours under some Future Buddha and so he made a great offering to the Buddha for seven days and on the seventh day, he expressed his aspiration for that honour in the future. Buddha Padumuttara saw that this aspiration of his would be fulfilled and made the prediction accordingly. After which, he returned to the monastery.

Evil Action committed in the Past

The future Kuṇḍadhāna passed away from the human existence in which he received the Buddha's prediction after spending a life performing meritorious deeds. He was reborn either in the Deva realm or the human realm for a great many aeons. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, he became a terrestrial Deva.

Buddha Kassapa appeared during the time when the human lifespan was 20,000 years, unlike Buddha Gotama's time when the human lifespan was 100 years and the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) was recited bi-monthly on the Observance Day (*Uposatha*), the Observance Day congregations to recite the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) took place only once in six months during the time of Buddha Kassapa.

Two monastic friends, living at different places, went to the Observance Day congregation where the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) were recited. The terrestrial Deva, who was the future Kuṇḍadhāna, knew the strong tie of friendship that existed between these two monastics. He wondered if anybody could ruin this friendship and waited for a chance to do so by following the two monastics for some distance.

Then one of the monastics, leaving his alms bowl and robes with the other, went off to a place where water was available, to answer the call of nature. After finishing the personal ablutions, he came out of the bush. The Deva, in the guise of a very beautiful woman, followed close to the monastics, tidying up her dishevelled hair and rearranging her skirt, and appearing to have come out of the same bush.

The monastic companion saw this strange scene from a distance where he was left waiting, and was very upset. He thought to himself: "I never knew him to be so vile. My affection for him that has lasted so long is now ended. If I had known him to be such a rogue, I would not have extended my friendship to him." As soon as the former monastic came back to him, he handed back to him his property, saying: "Here are your alms bowl and robes, I will never go the same way with you again."

> From now on we shall refer to the two monastics as the complainant or accuser (*codaka*) and the accused (*cuditaka*).

The accused, who was actually a well-disciplined monastic and had no fault whatsoever, was taken aback by his friend's harsh words which seemed to smite his heart as if someone were to deal a vicious thrust at it with a sharp spear. He said: "Friend, what do you mean? Never have I committed any breach of the monastic discipline, not even the trivial ones. Yet, you call me a knave. What have you seen me doing?" – "If I had seen anything else, I would have ignored it. But this is serious, you came out of the same bush, having spent the time together there with a very attractive woman dressed in fine clothes and decorations." – "No, no, my friend, that is not true! Nothing of that sort happened. I have never seen the woman you mention." But the complainant was quite sure of himself. The accused denied thrice any misdoing. But the complainant believed what he had seen. He parted company with the accused there and then. Each went his own way to the Buddha's monastery.

At the Assembly Hall for the Observance Day ceremony, the accused was seen inside and so [1284] the complainant said: "This Hall of Discipline (*Sīmā*) is profaned by the presence of a fallen monastic. I cannot join the Observance Day ceremony with that wicked monastic." And he went outside.

On seeing this, the terrestrial Deva was remorseful: "Oh me! I have made a grave mistake. I must atone for it." So he assumed the form of an elderly lay-disciple and, going near to the complainant, said: "Why, venerable sir, do you remain outside the Hall of Discipline?" The monastic replied: "This Hall of Discipline contains a vile monastic. I cannot join the Observance Day ceremony together with him. So I keep myself away." The Deva then said: "Do not think so, venerable sir. That monastic is of pure morality. The woman you saw was none other than myself. I wanted to test the strength of your mutual affection and to see whether you are moral or not. I accompanied the accused in a woman's guise for that purpose."

The monastic said: "Virtuous man, who are you?" – "I am a terrestrial Deva, venerable sir," and so saying, he prostrated at the monastic's feet. "Kindly excuse me, venerable sir. The accused knows nothing about what had happened. So, may the venerable one go ahead with the Observance Day ceremony with a clear conscience." Then he led the monastics into the Observance Day hall. The two monastics performed the Observance Day ceremony at the same place, but the complainant did not remain together with the accused in their previous cordial relationship.

The accused practised meditation for insight and gradually became an Arahat. The terrestrial Deva suffered the evil consequences of that evil deed during the whole of the interval (*Buddhantara*) between the arising of Buddha Kassapa and Buddha Gotama through a long period. He was reborn in the lower worlds (*apāya*) most of the time. When he regained human existence, he was subjected to blame for the misdeeds others had perpetuated.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

The terrestrial Deva, having paid dearly for his misdeed, was reborn as a Brahmin in Sāvatthī during the time of Buddha Gotama. His parents named him Dhāna. He learned the three Vedas as a youth but later in life, he became

devoted to the Buddha after listening to the Buddha's discourses and took up the monastic life.

From the very day Dhāna became a monastic, a fully adorned woman, an apparition of a woman created as the result of his past misdeed, always followed him wherever he went. Wherever he went, the woman went; when he stopped, she stopped. This woman, though not seen by him, was seen by everybody else. So dreadful is the work of evil-doing.

When Ven. Dhāna went on the daily alms round, his female lay supporters would say jestingly: "This spoonful is for you, sir, and this spoonful is for the female friend who accompanies you, sir. This made him miserable. Back at the monastery, too, he was an object of ridicule. Novices and young monastics would surround him and jeer at him, saying: "Ven. Dhāna is a lecher!" From such jeering, he came to be called Kuṇḍadhāna or "Dhāna the lecher."

As these jeerings became more and more frequent, Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna could not bear it any longer and retorted: "You only are lechers, not me; your preceptors are lechers, your teachers are lechers." Other monastics who heard him say these harsh words reported the matter to the Buddha, who sent for Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna and asked him whether the report was true or nor. "It is true, venerable sir," Kuṇḍadhāna admitted. "Why did you use such abusive language?"

"I could not bear their jeerings any longer, venerable sir," Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna explained and he related his story. "Monastic, your past evil deed still needs retribution. Do not use such harsh words in future." And on that occasion, the Buddha uttered the following two verses (Dhp 133-134):

> *Māvoca pharusaṁ kañci, vuttā paṭivadeyyu taṁ,*
> *dukkhā hi sārambha-kathā, paṭidaṇḍā phuseyyu taṁ.* *[1285]*

Monastic Dhāna, do not use harsh words to anyone; those who are thus spoken to will retort. Painful to hear is severe talk, and retribution will come to you from those co-residents to whom you have used harsh words, just as ashes thrown against the wind will fly back.

> *Sace neresi attānaṁ, kaṁso upahato yathā,*
> *esa pattosi Nibbānaṁ, sārambho te na vijjati.*

> Monastic Dhāna, if you can keep your calm and quiet like a gong whose rim has been broken you will have attained Nibbāna. Then there will be no vindictiveness in you.

By the end of the discourse many listeners attained various levels of the path-knowledge.

Investigation by King Pasenadi Kosala

The news of Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna's regular association with a woman was brought to the attention of King Pasenadi of Kosala by the monastics. The king ordered an investigation while he personally kept watch on Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna's monastery together with a small group of his men.

He saw Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna was stitching a robe and the reputed woman also was seen standing near him. The king was enthralled by this sight. He drew near her. Then that woman was seen going into the monastic dwelling. The king followed her into the dwelling and searched for her everywhere but he could find no one inside. Then he made the correct conclusion that the woman that he saw earlier was not a real human being but only an apparition that appeared due to some past deed that belonged to Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna.

When the king first entered the monastery, he did not pay respects to Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna. Only after discovering the truth of Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna's innocence did he make obeisance to him and say: "Venerable sir, are you well provided by way of daily alms food?" – "Not too bad, Great King," replied Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna. "Venerable sir, I know what you mean. Since you have are seen always accompanied by a woman, who would be kindly disposed towards you? But from now on, you need not go on alms round. I will be a lay supporter to you and see to the provision of the four requisites. May you uphold the religious practice diligently and well." From that time onwards, the king made an offering of daily alms food to Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna.

Being free of anxiety about livelihood, regularly enjoying the support of the king, Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna gained concentration and developed insight, and became an Arahat. From the time of attaining Awakening the apparition of the woman disappeared.

Foremost Title Achieved

Mahā Subhaddā, the daughter of Anāthapiṇḍika in the householder of Sāvatthī, was obliged to live in the house of a man, in the town of Ugga, who had no confidence in the Buddha. One day, intending that the Buddha show compassion on her, she took the Observance Day (*Uposatha*) precepts and kept her mind free from defilements. Standing at the upper storey of her mansion, she threw out eight handfuls of jasmine into the air and wished: "May these flowers go straight to the Fortunate One and form themselves into a canopy above him. May the Fortunate One, out of consideration for this floral tribute, come to my residence tomorrow to receive my offering of alms food." The flowers flew straight to the Buddha and formed themselves into a canopy above him even while he was delivering a discourse.

The Buddha, on seeing the flower canopy offered by Mahā Subhaddā, perceived her wish and decided to receive her food offering. Early the next morning, the Buddha called [1286] Ven. Ānanda and said: "Ānanda, we shall go to a distant place to receive alms food. Include only Arahats, and not worldlings in the list of invitees." Then Ven. Ānanda announced to the monastics: "Friends, the Fortunate One is going to a distant place to receive alms food today. Let no worldling monastic draw lots to be included as an invitee; only Arahats may do so."

Then Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna said: "Friend, bring me the lots," and stretched out his hand to make a draw. Ven. Ānanda thought Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna was still a worldling and informed the matter to the Buddha who said: "Ānanda, let him draw the lot if he wishes."

Then Ānanda thought: "If Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna were unfit to draw the lots, the Fortunate One would disallow the draw. Now that he has been allowed him there must be some reason. I should let him draw." And as he was retracing his steps to Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna, the latter entered into the fourth absorption (*jhāna*), the basic mental state for supernormal powers and stood in mid-air and then he said to Ven. Ānanda: "Friend Ānanda, bring me the lots. The Fortunate One knows me. The Fortunate One does not say anything against my drawing the lot first before other monastics."

When on another occasion, Cūḷa Subhaddā, the younger daughter of Anāthapiṇḍika, invited the Buddha to Sāketa to receive alms food offering too, Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna made the first draw among the 500 monastics.

Then again, when the Buddha went to a market town in the country of Sunāparanta, flying through the sky by using his psychic power, Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna was also the first to draw the lots for receiving alms food.

On another occasion, in the assembly of monastics, the Buddha spoke of Ven. Kuṇḍadhāna:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *paṭhamaṁ salākaṁ gaṇhantānaṁ yad-idaṁ Kuṇḍadhāno.*
>
> Monastics, among those of my monastic disciples who successfully draw lots ahead of all others for alms food offering, Kuṇḍadhāna is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

23. Ven. Vaṅgīsa

Aspiration in the Past

The future Vaṅgīsa was born into a wealthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. Like all other future great disciples, he went to the Buddha's monastery. In the course of listening to a discourse, he witnessed a monastic being named by the Buddha as the foremost among those monastics who were endowed with quick wit. The son, the future Vaṅgīsa, admired that monastic and after making a great offering to the Buddha, he expressed his aspiration to him: "May I, for this good deed, become the foremost monastic among those endowed with quick wit, at some time in the future." The Buddha saw that the aspiration of the supporter would be fulfilled and therefore, made the prediction before returning to the monastery.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

After a life of good deeds, the man passed away and was either reborn as a Deva or a human being. At the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn in a Brahmin family in Sāvatthī, by the name of Vaṅgīsa. When he came of age, he learnt the three Vedas. He served the teacher to the latter's satisfaction so that he also received a secret formula or chant called the skull (*chava-sīsa*) mantra, by

intoning which he could tell the destination of a departed one by gentle rapping on the skull of a dead person.

The Brahmins knew well how to capitalise on Vaṅgīsa's art. So they put him in an enclosed carriage, and would encamp at the gate to a town or village, and when a crowd had formed, [1287] they advertised Vaṅgīsa's greatness saying: "He who sees Vaṅgīsa comes upon wealth and fame and goes to the heavens at death." Many people were taken in by such sayings and they would go to the visiting Brahmins: "Sirs, what is master Vaṅgīsa's special knowledge?" Then the Brahmins would say: "Men, there is no wise one equal to master Vaṅgīsa because he can tell you the destination of a departed person. Just by rapping the skull of a dead person with his finger nails, he will tell you in what clan or in what realm he is reborn." And Vaṅgīsa was actually able to make good the claim of his men. He called upon the spirit of the dead person, make it possess someone near him, and tell from that person's mouth where the subject was, for instance where that dead person was reborn. For this miraculous feat, he reaped big sums of money from his clients.

Vaṅgīsa's Time for Liberation

After a tour of the land covering cities, towns and villages, Vaṅgīsa's men carried him to the city of Sāvatthī. Vaṅgīsa stopped near the Jetavana monastery and thought: "Ascetic Gotama is reputed to be wise. It would not be to my advantage just to carry on touring around Jambudīpa. I might as well go and see someone who is said to be wise." So he sent his men away saying: "You go ahead. I do not want company when visiting the Buddha, let me go alone." – "But sir," the attendants of Vaṅgīsa protested, "by using his trickery, ascetic Gotama has a way of winning over people over who go to see him." But, Vaṅgīsa paid no attention to those words. Going before the Buddha, and after saying courteous words of greeting, he sat at a suitable distance.

The Buddha asked Vaṅgīsa, the youth: "Vaṅgīsa, are you skilled in some art?" "Reverend Gotama," said Vaṅgīsa, "I know a certain mantra called the skull (*chava-sīsa*)." – "What use do you make of that mantra?" – "Venerable Gotama, while chanting that mantra, if I rap with my finger-nails the skull of a dead person who had died more than three years ago, I can tell in which existence he is now reborn."

Thereupon, the Buddha, by his powers, procured four human skulls: 1) One belonged to somebody in Niraya; 2) one belonged to somebody in the human realm; 3) one belonged to somebody in the Deva realm; 4) one belonged to an Arahat. Vaṅgīsa, rapping the first skull, said: "Reverend Gotama, the person, whose skull it once was, is now reborn in Niraya." – "Good, good, Vaṅgīsa," said the Buddha, "you see rightly." The Buddha, pointing to the second skull, asked: "Where is this person now whose skull it once was?" – "Reverend Gotama, that person is now reborn in the human realm." The Buddha made another test about the third skull, and Vaṅgīsa said: "Reverend Gotama, that person is now reborn in the Deva realm." All three revelations were correct.

When, however, the Buddha pointed out to the fourth skull and tested Vaṅgīsa's skill, the Brahmin youth was in a quandary. Although he repeatedly rapped the skull and reflected on it, he could make neither head nor tail of the present existence of the person whose skull it was.

The Buddha asked: "Vaṅgīsa, are you at your wit's end?" – "Wait on, Reverend Gotama," said Vaṅgīsa, "let me try again." He made further attempts, with more recitals of his famous mantra and more vain rappings on the skull. He found that the matter was clearly beyond his capability. Beads of sweat flowed down from his forehead. Looking a complete fool, the great Vaṅgīsa remained silent.

"Do you find it tiring, Vaṅgīsa?" asked the Buddha. "Verily, reverend Gotama, I find it most tiring. I cannot say the designation of the person whose skull it was. If your reverence knows it, kindly tell me." – "Vaṅgīsa," said the Buddha, "I know this being, and much more, too." Then the Buddha uttered the following two verses (Dhp 419-420):

Cutiṁ yo vedi sattānaṁ, upapattiṁ ca sabbaso,
asattaṁ Bhagavaṁ Buddhaṁ, tam-ahaṁ brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ.

Vaṅgīsa, he who knows clearly the death and rebirth of beings in all respects, who is free from attachment, who has walked the right path and realized Nibbāna, who knows the four noble truths, him I call a Brahmin. [1288]

Yassa gatiṁ na jānanti, devā Gandhabba-mānusā,
khīṇāsavaṁ Arahantaṁ, tam-ahaṁ brūmi Brāhmaṇaṁ.

Vaṅgīsa, he whose destination the Devas of the celestial abodes or the Gandhabbas of the terrestrial abodes, or men know, who has destroyed the four kinds of the pollutants, and is an Arahat, him I call a Brahmin.

In the present situation these verses, which are from the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*), were uttered for the benefit of Vaṅgīsa to let him know that the fourth skull belonged to an Arahat whose destination after death is not found in any of the five kinds of destinations.

Then Vaṅgīsa, the youth, said to the Buddha: "Reverend Gotama, there is no loss to him who exchanges a mantra for a mantra. I will give you my skull (*chava-sīsa*) mantra in exchange for your Buddha-mantra which you have just uttered." The Buddha replied: "Vaṅgīsa, we Buddhas do not make any exchange of mantras. We give it free, out of good will, to those who want it." – "Very well, Reverend Gotama," said Vaṅgīsa, "may the Reverend Gotama give the mantra to me," and he made an unmistakable gesture of reverence to the Buddha, with his two palms together which resembled a young tortoise.

Then the Buddha said: "Vaṅgīsa, in your Brahminic customs, is there a period of probation as a comprehensive way of fulfilling an obligation by someone who asks for and receives a favour?" – "There is, reverend Gotama." – "Vaṅgīsa, do you think there is no probationary period for one who wishes to learn a mantra in our teaching?" It was in the Brahmanic tradition not to be satisfied in learning mantras. Vaṅgīsa felt he must get the Buddha-mantra at any cost. So he said: "Reverend Gotama, I will abide by your rules." – "Vaṅgīsa, when we teach the Buddha-mantra we do so only to one who takes on the appearance like that of ourselves."

Vaṅgīsa had set his mind on learning the Buddha-mantra after fulfilling the condition required by the Buddha, so he said to his followers: "Now, do not take it amiss about my becoming a monastic. I must learn the Buddha-mantra. Having learnt it, I will become the greatest master in this Jambudīpa, and that will be a good thing for you too." After consoling his associates thus, Vaṅgīsa became a monastic for the purpose of learning the Buddha-mantra.

The preceptor who sponsored Vaṅgīsa in the formal ceremony of admission was Ven. Nigrodhakappa, an Arahat, who happened to be near the Buddha at that time. The Buddha said to Ven. Nigrodhakappa: "Nigrodhakappa, Vaṅgīsa wishes to become a monastic. See to his

admission into the Saṅgha." Ven. Nigrodhakappa taught the meditation practice on the five aspects of the loathsomeness of the body to Vaṅgīsa and led him into the monastic life.[283]

Then the Buddha said to Ven. Vaṅgīsa: "Vaṅgīsa, now observe the probationer's practice as a learner of the mantra," and taught him how to reflect on the 32 parts of the body. Vaṅgīsa, being a man of keen intellect, uttering the 32 parts and meditating on the arising and dissolution of physical phenomena comprising the 32 parts, gained insight into physical phenomena and became an Arahat.

After Vaṅgīsa had become an Arahat, his Brahmin friends visited him to find out how he was progressing. They said to him: "Vaṅgīsa, how now? Have you learnt the mantra from ascetic Gotama?" – "Ah, yes, I have," replied Ven. Vaṅgīsa. "Then let us go," they said. "You go yourselves. I have no more business to be in your company." On hearing this plain answer, the Brahmins said: "We had forewarned you that ascetic Gotama had a way of winning over his visitors by trickery. Now you have fallen under the spell of ascetic Gotama, What business is there for us with you?" Vituperating their erstwhile friend thus, [1289] they returned by the way they had come.

Ven. Vaṅgīsa was one of the most prominent of the monastic disciples of the Buddha. For his wonderful verses, refer to the Thematic Discourse concerning Vaṅgīsa (*Vaṅgīsa-saṁyutta*, SN 8).

Foremost Title Achieved

Ven. Vaṅgīsa was a born poet. Whenever he went before the Buddha, he always uttered verses in praise of the Buddha, comparing him in poetic similes to the moon, the sun, the sky, the great ocean, the noble tusker, the lion, etc. These verses which he sang extempore at the moment of casting his eyes on the Buddha, ran into thousands. Therefore, on an occasion when the Buddha mentioned the names of outstanding (*etad-agga*) monastics to the congregation, he declared:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ paṭibhānavantānaṁ yad-idaṁ Vaṅgīsa.

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[283] This is from the commentary to the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*).

Monastics, among my monastic disciples endowed with quick wit, Vaṅgīsa is the foremost (*etad-agga*)."

24. Ven. Upasena Vaṅgantaputta

Aspiration in the Past

In the past, Upasena Vaṅgantaputta was born into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When he came of age, he went to the Buddha's monastery, like all the great future venerables, to listen to the Buddha's discourse. There, he witnessed a monastic being declared by the Buddha as the foremost (*etad-agga*) among those who gained the esteem of a wide following. The worthy man admired that monastic and made his aspiration to that honour in some future existence. The Buddha saw that the aspiration of the man would be fulfilled and made the prediction as in the cases of other similar aspirants. Then he returned to the monastery.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

That worthy man, after leading a life filled with good deeds, passed away into the fortunate destinations. At the time of Buddha Gotama, he was born into a family in the Brahmin village of Nālaka, in the country of Magadha. His mother was Sārī, the wife of a rich Brahmin. He was named Upasena in his boyhood. He grew up and learned the three Vedas, but after hearing the Dhamma from the Buddha, he was deeply devoted to the Buddha and became his disciple.

Ven. Upasena, who had one Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in the monastic life, had a desire to increase the number of monastics. He admitted a man into the state of a novice and then raised him to full monastic life. Ven. Upasena, at the end of the Rains Retreat, after attending the usual congregation of monastics, went to see the Buddha together with his own close disciple who was then of one Rains Retreat as a monastic and, himself, as preceptor to that monastic, of two Rains Retreat as a monastic, thinking that the Buddha would be pleased with him for his well-intended act of admitting a newcomer into the Saṅgha.

As Ven. Upasena was sitting in a suitable place before the Buddha, the Buddha said to him: "Monastic, how many Rains Retreats have you spent as a monastic?" "Two Rains Retreats, venerable sir," Upasena replied. "How many Rains

Retreats has that monastic who accompanies you?" – "One Rains Retreat, venerable sir." – "How are you two related?" – "He is my close disciple, venerable sir." – "You vain man, you are bent on gaining the four requisites very quickly." The Buddha then denounced Ven. Upasena on many grounds.

Then the Buddha pronounced a rule thus: "Monastics, let no monastic, who has not completed ten Rains Retreats (*Vassa*) in the Saṅgha, admit a person into the monastic life. He who infringes this role incurs a minor breach of the [1290] discipline (*dukkaṭa*). Monastics, I allow a monastic with ten Rains Retreats (*Vassa*) or more to act as preceptor to a new monastic in the admission of that person into the monastic life." These two Vinaya rules came about concerning Ven. Upasena (Vin Mv 1, PTS 1.59).

Upasena, on being reprimanded by the Buddha, thought of receiving praise from the Buddha on account of the following. "I will make the words of praise, with reference to this very question of following, come out of the same mouth of the Fortunate One, which is splendid like the full moon," so he encouraged himself. On that same day, he went into seclusion, meditated with diligence, cultivated insight and in a few days became an Arahat.

Upasena was a monastic with a celebrated family background. With his reputation throughout the land as an able expounder of the doctrine, he earned the confidence and good will of many boys of worthy families who were his blood relations or friends. These young boys became novices under his guidance. But he made an understanding with them at the outset: "Boys, I am an avowed dweller in the forest. If you can live in the forest like me, you may become novices," and he told them the elements of the thirteen kinds of austere practice (*dhutaṅga*). Only those boys who could take up the austere practices were admitted as novices by him, but only to such an extent as their tender ages could take. When Ven. Upasena himself had completed ten Rains Retreats (*Vassa*) as a monastic he mastered the Vinaya and admitted the novices into full monastic life, acting as their preceptor. The number of those monastics under his preceptorship grew to as many as 500.

During those days, the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī. At one time, the Buddha said to the monastics: "Monastics, I wish to remain alone for half a month," and stayed in seclusion. Then the Saṅgha made

a mutual agreement amongst themselves that any monastic who went near the Buddha alone would have to make a formal confession of his guilt for doing so.

Ven. Upasena, accompanied by his disciples, went to the Jetavana monastery to pay homage to the Buddha, and after paying respects to the Buddha, they sat in a suitable place. Then the Buddha, intending to start a conversation, asked a young monastic who was a close disciple of Ven. Upasena: "Monastic, do you like wearing rag robes?" The young monastic made a preliminary statement: "I do not like it, venerable sir," but went on to explain that although he did not personally like it, out of his high regard for his preceptor, he observed the austere practice of wearing rag robes. The Buddha praised Upasena for that, and also said many words in praise of Upasena on various other counts.

> This is only a brief account of Upasena's earning the Buddha's approbation. For details refer to the Vinaya (Vin Pār, PTS 3.230). It may be noted that in that text, the Buddha is recorded to have said: "I wish to go into seclusion for three months," whereas the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) says the Buddha wished to have "half a month of seclusion." We would recommend the three months version of the text as more authoritative.

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, sitting in the congregation to declare outstanding monastics, the Buddha declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ samanta-pāsādikānaṁ yad-idaṁ Upaseno Vaṅgantaputto.*
>
> Monastics, among my monastic disciples who win the high esteem of their following, Upasena Vaṅgantaputta is the foremost (*etad-agga*). [1291]

Upasena's Tragic Demise

At one time Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Upasena were dwelling near Rājagaha at the Sappasoṇḍika Cave, the cave resembling a snake's hood, in the ebony forest. At that time, a poisonous snake fell onto the body of Ven. Upasena.

> Ven. Upasena was stitching a double robe near the entrance of the cave where a light breeze was blowing. At that moment, one of the two poisonous snakes that were mating on the roof of the cave fell down onto

> his shoulder. It was a highly poisonous snake whose venom was so potent that mere contact with it was lethal. So the body of Ven. Upasena burnt like a wick in a lamp, spreading its heat all over the body. He knew that his body would be burnt away in no time but he made a wish that his body should remain intact inside the cave, and thereby prolonged the decay.

Then Ven. Upasena called the monastics, saying: "Friends, come! Put this body of mine on the cot and carry it outside before this body disintegrates here like a ball of chaff."

Thereupon Ven. Sāriputta said to Ven. Upasena: "We do not see any change in the body and any change in the faculties of Ven. Upasena. Yet Ven. Upasena said: 'Friend, come! Put this body of mine on the cot and carry it outside before this body disintegrates like a ball of chaff.' "

> This was said by Ven. Sāriputta because there was no change in the bodily appearance and the facial expression of Ven. Upasena, as is usual with ordinary people at the hour of death.

Then Ven. Upasena said: "Friend Sāriputta, as a matter of fact, only in one who views through wrong view and craving, such as: 'I am the eye, the eye is mine,' or, 'I am the ear, the ear is mine; I am the nose, the nose is mine; I am the tongue, the tongue is mine; I am the body the body is mine; I am the mind, the mind is mine,' do changes in the body and changes in the faculties occur.

Friend Sāriputta, I do not have any view either through wrong view or through craving, such as: 'I am the eye, the eye is mine' or … 'I am the mind, the mind is mine.' Friend Sāriputta, how should there be any change in the body or any change in the faculties in me who does not hold such views?"

Ven. Sāriputta said: "It is indeed so, friend Upasena. Since you, friend Upasena, have long ago removed the wrong view of 'my self,' the craving to 'mine,' and the conceit 'I,' it is not possible for such views to arise, either through wrong view or through craving, such as: 'I am the eye, the eye is mine' or … 'I am the mind, the mind is mine.' "

Then the monastics put the body of Ven. Upasena on a cot and carried it outside. There and then Ven. Upasena's body disintegrated like a ball of chaff and he passed away realizing the exhaustion of rebirth.

This account is also on record in the Discourse on Upasena and the Snake (*Upasena-asivisa-sutta*, SN 35.69) and the commentary thereon.

25. Ven. Dabba

Aspiration in the Past

The future Dabba was born as a worthy man in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On coming of age, he visited the Buddha's monastery and while listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he witnessed a monastic being declared by him as the foremost among those monastics who prepared living places for the Saṅgha. He admired that monastic and after making great offerings to the Buddha, he expressed his aspiration for a similar distinguished recognition during the time of some [1292] Future Buddha. The Buddha saw that the supporter's aspiration would be fulfilled and made the prediction before returning to the monastery.

Meditating on Top of a Mountain

The future Ven. Dabba, having received the prediction from the Buddha, lived a full life filled with good deeds. On his death, he was reborn in the Deva realm and subsequently either in the Deva realm or the human realm. During the waning years of the teaching of Buddha Kassapa, he was reborn as a worthy man and took up the monastic life. He found six other monastics who shared the view that living amongst people was not the correct way for gaining Awakening and that a real monastic must live in seclusion, and so they went up a high steep mountain by means of a ladder. Once at the top, they discussed among themselves: "He who has self-confidence, let him push away the ladder. He who clings to his life, let him go down by the ladder before it has been pushed away." All seven monastics chose to remain on the mountain top until they attained Awakening and so they pushed away the ladder. "Now, friends, be diligent in your monastic practice," they exhorted one another before choosing a place of their own on the mountain to strive for path-knowledge, ignoring the danger of death.

Of these seven monastics, the eldest became an Arahat on the fifth day. He knew he had finished what was required of the noble practice and went to Uttarakuru, the northern island continent, by means of his powers, to collect alms food.

Having collected the alms food, he came back and offered it to his six monastic companions with these encouraging words: "Friends, have this meal. Let me be responsible for alms food collection. You devote yourselves to your meditation." Then the remaining six replied: "Friend, have we made an agreement among us that he who first realises the supermundane Dhamma would be responsible to feed those who still have to reach that same goal?" The Arahat said: "No, friends, there was no such agreement." Then the six monastics said: "Venerable sir, you have become an Arahat according to your past merit. We too would make an end of the suffering round of Saṁsāra if we could. May the venerable go wherever he pleases."

The eldest monastic, being unable to persuade the six monastics into accepting the alms food, took the meal at a suitable distance and left them. On the seventh day, the second eldest monastic attained the state of Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-phala*). He too went to the northern island-continent by means of his powers and offered the alms food to the remaining colleagues. Being refused by his friends, he ate his meal at some suitable place and left. After the death and dissolution of his body, he was reborn in the Pure Abodes of the Non-returning (*Anāgāmī*) Brahmas.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

The remaining five monastics did not achieve path-knowledge during that existence. After passing away from that existence, they were reborn in the Deva realm and the human realm throughout the long aeons in the interval period between Buddha Kassapa and Buddha Gotama. During the time of Buddha Gotama, they were reborn in various countries:

1. One was born in Gandhāra, in the city of Takkasilā, as a member of the royal family, and later became King Pukkusāti.

   [His story in the time of Buddha Gotama has been told above, in chapter 36.]

2. Another in Pabbateyya, also called the Majjhantika region, as the son of a female wandering ascetic, later he became Sabhiya, the wandering ascetic.

[His story is not told in these Chronicles, but see the Verses of the Elder Monks (Thera-gāthā, Thag 188), and its commentary.]

3. The third one, in a household in Bāhiya country, later became Ven. Bāhiya.

4. The fourth one, in a Rājagaha household was later known as Kumāra Kassapa.

5. The last in the Malla Country, in the city of Anupiya, in the royal family of a Malla Prince, later became Ven. Dabba.

The mother of the future great elder Dabba died when she was about to deliver the child. When her dead body was being cremated on a pyre, the womb burst open due to heat but, thanks to his past merit, he was shot up into the air and fell safely on a heap of *dabba* grass, and was thus named by his grandmother Dabba.

The term *dabba* has two meanings: "A kind of grass" and "a pile of faggots." In the Traditions (*Apādāna*) in verse 143, it is said: *Patito dabba-puñjamhi taro Dabbo ti vissuto*, "I fell on a pile of grass, therefore I became well-known as Dabba." In the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*), in the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*), and the commentary on the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*), he is [1293] said to have fallen on faggots. The present author prefers the meaning "grass" here.

When the young Dabba was seven years of age, the Buddha, in the company of many monastics, arrived in Anupiya during a tour of the Malla Country where he took up a temporary abode in the Anupiya Mango Grove. Young Dabba was enthralled at seeing the Buddha and asked his grandmother for permission to enter the Saṅgha. The grandmother consented and she took the boy to the Buddha and asked for the boy's admission into the Saṅgha.

The Buddha gave a monastic near him the task of admitting the boy into the Saṅgha, saying: "See to this boy's admission as a novice." The elder then taught him how to reflect on the loathsomeness of the body, which was represented by its five parts: hair, body hair, nails, teeth and skin.

As shaving the head in a first step in ordaining a boy into a novice, this reflection is a most appropriate thing, which the preceptor invariably

enjoins on the potential novice, asking him to say the five words out loud and reflect on their meaning.

Young Dabba reflected on them while his head was being shaved. Young Dabba had sufficing conditions for Awakening; moreover, he had aspired to a distinguished monastic life 100,000 aeons ago during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. Hence, as soon as the first circle of hair on his head was shaved, he attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*); by the time the second circle of hair was shaved, he attained Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmī-phala*); by the time the third circle of hair was shaved, he attained Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-phala*); and when the head was clean-shaven, he became an Arahat. In short, the completion of the shaving of his head and the attainment of his becoming an Arahat took place simultaneously.

After spending such time as was needed for bringing Awakening to those deserving release from Saṁsāra, the Buddha returned to Rājagaha to dwell at the Veḷuvana monastery. Novice Dabba, now an Arahat, also accompanied the Buddha there.

Once settled in Rājagaha, Ven. Dabba, going into seclusion, thought to himself: "I have nothing more to do to become an Arahat. It would be well if I served the Saṅgha by arranging for their living places and directing them to their respective supporters of alms food." He disclosed his idea to the Buddha. The Buddha lauded him for it and assigned him the double task: the preparation of living places for the members of the Saṅgha, for which the Saṅgha was to recognize him as such (*senāsana-paññāpaka*) and directing members of the Saṅgha to their respective supporters of alms food, for which the Saṅgha was to recognize him as such (*bhattuddesaka*).

The Buddha was pleased to see the seven-year-old Dabba having attained such eminence in his teaching as being endowed with the four analytical knowledges, the six supernormal powers and the three knowledges. Therefore, although very young, the Buddha raised the novice, Arahat Dabba, to the monastic life.

Incidentally, there were also other novice Arahats, such as novice Paṇḍita, novice Saṅkicca, novice Sopāka, novice Revata, the youngest brother of Ven. Sāriputta, who were raised to full monastic life although under 20 because they had become Arahats. Although young in age, these monastics

had attained the acme of the monastic life, and hence deserved to be called elders (*thera*).

From the time of becoming a full monastic, Ven. Dabba arranged living places and allocated alms food among the various supporters to the Saṅgha for all the monastics residing at Rājagaha. This, he did with competence, not allowing a slip in the alms distribution which had to be done by seniority.

The good name of the young Arahat monk, who came of the Malla royal family, who was very caring to monastics, who was very considerate in finding places where like-minded monastics could stay together, who was able to get living places at far-off locations for visiting monastics according to their instructions, helping disabled or sick monastics by his own supernormal power, spread to all directions.

Many visiting monastics would ask for normally impossible living places at odd hours, at far-off locations, such as the Mango Grove monastery of Jīvaka, the sanctuary at [1294] Maddakucchi monastery, etc., and to their astonishment, they got them through the supernormal powers of Ven. Dabba. Ven. Dabba, by his powers, created as many mind-made replicas of himself, as his tasks demanded. Then, by his psychic power, with his fingers emitting light in the darkness of night, and serving as bright lamps, he, or rather, a replica of himself, would lead his guests to the places of their choice, show them their living place and sleeping place.

This is a brief description. For details see the section giving the Training Rule about Anger (*Duṭṭha-dosa-sikkhāpada*, Vin Pār, PTS 3.158).

Foremost Title Achieved

In consideration of Ven. Dabba's noble services to the Saṅgha with experience and competence, the Buddha, on one occasion, declared to the congregation of monastics:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ senāsana-paññāpakānaṁ yad-idaṁ Dabbo Mallaputto.

Monastics, among my monastic disciples who make arrangements for living places for the Saṅgha, Dabba of the Malla royal family is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

Since the Buddha assigned Ven. Dabba the duties of seeing to the accommodation of monastics, Ven. Dabba kept all the eighteen big monastic compounds around Rājagaha clean, both inside the dwelling places and around them. He never missed cleaning a sitting place or a sleeping place or placing water for drinking and washing for the monastics.

Dabba as a Victim of Slander

Even though Ven. Dabba was a truly virtuous monastic, he was a victim of slander perpetrated by a group of evil monastics led by Ven. Mettiya and Ven. Bhummajaka who accused him of complicity with a nun named Ven. Mettiyā.

For details refer to the Vinaya (Vin Pār, PTS 3.158); and the Chapter on Settlements (*Samathakkhandhaka*, Vin Cv 4, PTS 2.74). This unhappy event was the consequence of his own past misdeed. Ninety-one aeons previously, during the time of Buddha Vipassī, he had slandered an Arahat, although knowing him to be pure.

Ven. Dabba's Parinibbāna

[Based on the Udāna and its commentary (*Udāna*, Ud 8.9-10).]

On the day Ven. Dabba was to pass away, he returned to the Veḷuvana monastery from his alms round, having taken his meal, and after paying respects to the Buddha, washed his feet to cool them; then he sat on the small mat at a secluded spot, and entered into the attainment of cessation for a specified period.

After rising from the absorption (*jhāna*) at the pre-determined time, he reviewed his life-faculty and knew that he was going to live just for only a few moments (*muhutta*) more. He thought it improper for him to pass away in seclusion without saying farewell to the Buddha and his co-residents. He felt obliged to say farewell to the Buddha and to display miracles before he died, in the future interest of those who had wrong opinions of him due to the slanderous attack of the monastics Mettiya and Bhummajaka, who would thereby be enabled to see his true worth. So he went before the Buddha, made obeisance, and sitting in a suitable place, said: "Fortunate One, my time to pass away has arrived."

The Buddha reviewed the life-faculty of Ven. Dabba, knew that he was just about to pass, and said: "Dabba, you know the time for your passing." Ven. Dabba then made obeisance to the Buddha, walked around him thrice, with him

on his right, and then he stood at a suitable distance and said: “Venerable sir, we had fared in the world together in various existences for a period of 100,000 aeons. My performance of good deeds had been aimed at becoming an Arahat. The goal is already achieved. This is the last time I am seeing the Fortunate One.” It was a touching moment. From among the monastics, those who were worldlings, Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*), or Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmī*), felt very miserable, while some others wept.

The Buddha knew what was in the mind of Ven. Dabba and said: “Dabba, that [1295] being so, display miracles for us and the Saṅgha to witness.” No sooner had the Buddha said these words than all members of the Saṅgha of monastics were present on the scene. Then Ven. Dabba displayed the miracles pertaining to the disciples of the Buddha, such as: “From one, he became many; from many, he became one; now he was visible, and now he was invisible, etc.” Then he made obeisance to the Buddha again.

Then Ven. Dabba rose in the air and created mind-made earth in mid-air, on which he sat cross-legged and meditated on the heat device (*tejo-kasiṇa*) as the preliminary step. After emerging from the absorption (*jhāna*), concentrating on the element of heat, he made his solemn wish that his body rise up in flames. Then he entered into the absorption of the element of heat (*tejo-dhātu*) which is the basis of attaining supernormal powers. On emerging from that absorption, the thought-process pertaining to supernormal power arose in him. At the first impulse thought-moment of that thought process, his body became ablaze and consumed his entire corporeality, comparable in power to the world-destroying fires, so that not a trace of the body, the conditioned physical phenomenon, remained. No ash whatsoever was to be seen. Then the blaze was completely extinguished as desired by Ven. Dabba. At the end of the supernormal thought-process, the mind reverted to life-continuum, which, in this moment, was identifiable with death. Thus ended the life of Ven. Dabba, who passed away and realized Nibbāna, making an end of suffering (*dukkha*).

26. Ven. Pilinda Vaccha

Aspiration in the Past

The future Ven. Pilinda Vaccha was born into a rich family in the city of Haṁsavatī during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. As with the other future great venerables, he went to the Buddha's monastery, where, in the course of a discourse, he witnessed a monastic being proclaimed by the Buddha as the foremost among the monastics who were adored by Devas. As such, he had a strong desire to become such a great monastic in the future and made his aspiration before the Buddha. The Buddha saw that his aspiration would be fulfilled in future and made the prediction to that effect.

Homage Paid to a Shrine and the Saṅgha

The future Ven. Pilinda Vaccha, after a life of good deeds, passed away and was reborn in the Deva realm and subsequently, either in the Deva realm or human realm. During the time of Buddha Sumedha, he was reborn as a human being. He made great offerings at the great shrine, which was erected in honour of the Buddha who had passed away. He also made great offerings to the Saṅgha.

During a certain period, before the advent of the Buddha, the future Ven. Pilinda Vaccha was also reborn as a Universal Monarch, who profitably used his great opportunity and power in establishing the people in the five moral precepts.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

> This is from the commentary to The Discourse about Pilindi Vaccha (*Udāna*, Ud 3.6).

When Buddha Gotama was about to appear, the future Ven. Pilinda Vaccha was reborn as a Brahmin in Sāvatthī. His name was Pilinda; his clan name being Vaccha, thus he was called Pilinda Vaccha. Since young Pilinda Vaccha had a natural disenchantment with the world, he became an ascetic and studied the magical art known as the Cūḷa Gandhāra, which consisted of some powerful mantras. Having gained mastery of these mantras, he became adept at reading the minds of other people and was able to travel in the air. He became the

greatest sage in Rājagaha, commanding a big following and amassing much wealth.

Then Buddha Gotama appeared in the world, and after a tour of the country, he reached Rājagaha. From the time the Buddha arrived in Rājagaha, the powers of Pilinda Vaccha were visibly impaired. However much he chanted his mantras, he could not travel in [1296] the air and he could not read other people's minds. He had heard that although a master in his own way, his art belonged to the lower grade, and that when someone who had mastered the art of a higher grade happened to come near him or within his range, he would meet with a waning of his own powers. He bethought himself: "That statement that I had heard from my teacher's teachers must be true, for since ascetic Gotama came to Rājagaha, my art has been visibly impaired. Ascetic Gotama certainly must be a master of the higher art. It would be well if I approached ascetic Gotama and learned his art." He then went to the Buddha and said: "Venerable sir, I wish to learn a certain art from you. May the venerable one agree."

The Buddha said: "If you wish to learn the art, you must become a monastic." Pilinda Vaccha thought that becoming a monastic was the preliminary step in learning the art that he had in mind, and he agreed to become a monastic. The Buddha gave Pilinda Vaccha the meditation subject which suited his temperament and he, being endowed with sufficing conditions for Awakening, gained insight and soon became an Arahat.

Ven. Pilinda Vaccha's use of Harsh Words

Ven. Pilinda Vaccha had a unique habit of calling other persons "outcaste" (*vasala-samudācara*), in such ways as: "Come, you outcaste," or "Go, you outcaste," or "Bring it, outcaste" or "Take it, outcaste," etc.

The monastics referred this strange habit of Ven. Pilinda Vaccha to the Buddha. They asked: "Venerable sir, do noble ones (*ariya*) use such harsh language?" And the Buddha said: "Monastics, noble ones (*ariya*) do not use harsh words in derision. Yet, due to ingrained habit that has been acquired in successive past existences, harsh words may come to be used inadvertently." The monastics said: "Venerable sir, Ven. Pilinda Vaccha, when speaking to other persons, whether with lay persons or monastics, always calls the other person an outcaste. What is the reason for this?"

"Monastics, Pilinda Vaccha, in his previous 500 successive existences was born a high class Brahmin who was used to calling every other person an "outcaste" (*vasala*). That habit became ingrained in him. He does not mean what he says in using the word "outcaste." He has no evil intent. His word, though harsh to hear, is harmless. A noble one (*ariya*), being without a trace of malice, incurs no blame for using such habituated harsh language." Further, the Buddha, on that occasion, spoke the following verse (Dhp 408):

> *Akakkasaṁ viññāpaniṁ, giraṁ saccam-udīraye,*
> *yāya nābhisaje kañci, tam-aham brūmi brāhmaṇaṁ.*
>
> He who speaks gently, informative and true words and who does not offend anyone by speech, him I call a Brahmin.

At the end of this verse by the Buddha, many hearers gained Awakening at various levels, such as Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*), and so on.

> It should be remembered that the word "outcaste" is harsh for someone to be used against him, but since Ven. Pilinda Vaccha had no malice in using it, it is not called a form of demeritorious speech.

Pepper to Rat's Droppings

One day, in the course of collecting alms food in Rājagaha, Ven. Pilinda Vaccha met a man entering the city with a bowl full of pepper, and asked him: "What is that in your bowl, you outcaste?" The man was offended. He thought: "How inauspicious, early in the morning to be called an outcaste. This monastic deserves rude language to match his rudeness." So thinking, he replied: "It is rat's droppings, venerable sir."

> Herein, Ven. Pilinda Vaccha used a harsh word without malice but in a friendly attitude, spoken out of sheer habit only; hence his word "outcaste" does not [1297] amount to the use of harsh language. However, the man's reply was full of anger and his intended harsh language used against an Arahat has dire consequences that took immediate effect.

Ven. Pilinda Vaccha said: "So be it, outcaste." When that man went out of sight of Ven. Pilinda Vaccha, he found to his astonishment that the bowl in which he had put the pepper, was now filled with rat's droppings! Since the pepper had a rough resemblance to rat's droppings, to make sure he placed a few of the contents in his hands and crushed it, and surely it proved to be rat's droppings

only. He felt very unhappy. He was carrying his merchandise of pepper in a cart. He wondered whether all the pepper in the cart had also turned into rat's droppings. He went back to the cart and found that the cartload of pepper had also turned into rat's droppings. His spirits sank. With his hand pressed against his pained heart, he reflected: "This is a mishap befallen on me after meeting that monastic. I am sure there must be some way to redeem this misfortune."

> Or, according to the Sinhalese reading, he thought: "That monastic certainly knows some magic. I should follow the monastic, find out about him, and see what it is all about."

Someone then noticed the pepper merchant in a deeply agitated state and said to him: "Hey, man, you look so cross. What's the matter with you?" The merchant related what had passed between him and Ven. Pilinda Vaccha. The man then said: "Friend, do not worry. You must have met our teacher Ven. Pilinda Vaccha. Go with your bowl of rat's droppings and stand in front of him. He will ask you: 'What is that in your bowl, you rascal?' Then you say to him: 'That's pepper, venerable sir.' Ven. Pilinda Vaccha will say: 'So be it, rascal,' and you will find your bowl full of pepper again, and so the whole cartload." The merchant did as instructed and all his pepper returned to its original state.

Foremost Title Achieved

Ven. Pilinda Vaccha, during the period before the Buddha appeared in the world, had been a Universal Monarch. He then established people in the five moral precepts, thereby leading them to the Deva Realms. Most of the Devas, in the six Deva realms pertaining to the sensual sphere, were indebted to him as the Universal Monarch who had brought them to those fortunate destinations. They paid homage to him day and night. That was why when the occasion arose for the Buddha to announce distinguished disciples, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *Devatānaṁ piya-manāpānaṁ yad-idaṁ Pilindavaccho.*

Monastics, among my monastic disciples who are adored by Devas, Pilinda Vaccha is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

27. Ven. Bāhiya Dārucīriya

The original name of this elder was Bāhiya which indicated the country he was born in. Later, he was known as Bāhiya Dārucīriya, "Bāhiya-clad-in-fibres," because he wore wood fibre as his garment, the circumstances for which will be related here.

Aspiration in the Past

The future Bāhiya Dārucīriya was born into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. As with other future great venerables, he visited the Buddha's monastery and while listening to a discourse, he witnessed a monastic being declared by the Buddha as the foremost among the monastics who attained Awakening quickly. He was wished to emulate that monastic. So after making a great offering, he expressed his aspiration before the Buddha to receive that distinction in the future. The Buddha saw that the aspiration would be fulfilled and made the prediction. [1298]

Meditating on Top of a Mountain

The future Bāhiya Dārucīriya spent all his life in doing deeds of merit and after his death, he was reborn in the Deva realm and subsequently, either in the human world or the Deva realm.

[The rest of this section is repeated from the story about Ven. Dabba above.]

During the waning years of the teaching of Buddha Kassapa, he was reborn as a worthy man and took up the monastic life. He found six other monastics who shared the view that living amongst people was not the correct way for gaining Awakening and that a real monastic must live in seclusion, and so they went up a high steep mountain by means of a ladder. Once at the top, they discussed among themselves: "He who has self-confidence, let him push away the ladder. He who clings to his life, let him go down by the ladder before it has been pushed away." All seven monastics chose to remain on the mountain top until they attained Awakening and so they pushed away the ladder. "Now, friends, be diligent in your monastic practice," they exhorted one another before choosing a place of their own on the mountain to strive for path-knowledge, ignoring the danger of death.

Of these seven monastics, the eldest became an Arahat on the fifth day. He knew he had finished what was required of the noble practice and went to Uttarakuru, the northern island continent, by means of his powers, to collect alms food. Having collected the alms food, he came back and offered it to his six monastic companions with these encouraging words: "Friends, have this meal. Let me be responsible for alms food collection. You devote yourselves to your meditation." Then the remaining six replied: "Friend, have we made an agreement among us that he who first realises the supermundane Dhamma would be responsible to feed those who still have to reach that same goal?" The Arahat said: "No, friends, there was no such agreement." Then the six monastics said: "Venerable sir, you have become an Arahat according to your past merit. We too would make an end of the suffering round of Saṁsāra if we could. May the venerable go wherever he pleases."

The eldest monastic, being unable to persuade the six monastics into accepting the alms food, took the meal at a suitable distance and left them. On the seventh day, the second eldest monastic attained the state of Non-returner (Anāgāmi-phala). He too went to the northern island-continent by means of his powers and offered the alms food to the remaining colleagues. Being refused by his friends, he ate his meal at some suitable place and left. After the death and dissolution of his body, he was reborn in the Pure Abodes of the Non-returning (Anāgāmī) Brahmas.

The remaining five monastics did not achieve path-knowledge during that existence. After passing away from that existence, they were reborn in the Deva realm and the human realm throughout the long aeons in the interval period between Buddha Kassapa and Buddha Gotama. During the time of Buddha Gotama, they were reborn in various countries:

1. One was born in Gandhāra, in the city of Takkasilā, as a member of the royal family, and later became King Pukkusāti.
2. Another in Pabbateyya, also called the Majjhantika region, as the son of a female wandering ascetic, later he became Sabhiya, the wandering ascetic.
3. The third one, in a household in Bāhiya country, later became Ven. Bāhiya.

4. The fourth one, in a Rājagaha household was later known as Kumāra Kassapa.

5. The last in the Malla Country, in the city of Anupiya, in the royal family of a Malla Prince, later became Ven. Dabba.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

During the interval between the two, Buddha Kassapa and Buddha Gotama, he remained in Deva existences. When Buddha Gotama was about to appear, he was reborn into a worthy family in the country of Bāhiya. When he grew up, he married and went on a sea voyage to Suvaṇṇabhūmi on a trading venture. The ship was wrecked on the high seas and all except Bāhiya perished and became the food of fishes and turtles.

As for him, being destined to fare in Saṁsāra till the last existence, he survived holding on to a piece of the wrecked ship for seven days. He was driven awash on the sands of Suppāraka, a seaport town. Before meeting anyone, he had to cover up his naked body. So he wrapped himself with a shroud of water plant from a reservoir. Then he picked a used old vessel for his alms bowl.

His austere appearance attracted the attention of the people. “If there is an Arahat in the world, this must be him!” so they said about him. They wondered whether the man, who was a holy man in their judgment, was observing an austere practice of the extreme type, and therefore was denying himself proper clothing. To verify their perception, they offered fine clothing to him. But Bāhiya thought to himself: “These people receive me because of my austere clothing only. It is well if I remain ill-clad so that their esteem for me will continue.” So he refused the fine clothes. As a result, the people had even greater respect for him and honoured him lavishly.

After having his meal, collected as alms from the people, Bāhiya retired to a traditional shrine. The people followed him there. They cleaned up the place for him to stay. Bāhiya then thought: “Just because of my external appearance these people show so much reverence to me. It behoves me to live up to their perception. I must remain an ascetic, well and true.” He collected fibres from wood and, stringing them up with twine, clothed himself after his own mode of

clothing, and from that time, he got the name "Bāhiya Dārucīriya," Bāhiya-in-wood-fibres.

Brahma's Admonition

Of the seven monastics who went to the top a mountain to meditate for insight during the later part of Buddha Kassapa's time, the second monastic attained Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-phala*) and was reborn in the Suddhāvāsa. As soon as he was reborn in that Brahma realm, he reviewed his previous life and saw that he was one of the seven monastics who had gone to the top of a steep mountain to meditate and that one had become an Arahat in that existence. Of the remaining five, he took an interest in their present existence and saw that all of them were reborn in the Deva Realms.

Now seeing that one of them had become a bogus Arahat at Suppāraka, living on the credulity of the people, he felt it was his duty to put his former friend on the right course. He felt sorry for Bāhiya Dārucīriya because, in his former life, this monastic was of a very high moral principle, even refusing the alms food collected by his colleague, the Arahat. He also wished to draw Bāhiya's attention to the appearance of Buddha Gotama in the world. He thought of causing spiritual urgency in his old friend and in that instant he descended from the Brahma realm and appeared before Bāhiya Dārucīriya in all his personal splendour.

Bāhiya Dārucīriya was suddenly attracted by the strange luminosity and came out of his dwelling. He saw the Brahma and, raising his joined palms together, asked: "Who are you, sir?" – "I am an old friend of yours. During the later part of Buddha Kassapa's time, I was one of the seven monastics, including yourself, who went up a steep mountain and practised [1299] meditation for insight. I attained Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-phala*), and have been reborn in the Brahma world. The eldest of us became an Arahat then and has passed away from existence. The remaining five of you, after passing away from that existence, were reborn in the Deva Realms. I have come to you to admonish you against making a living on the credulity of people.

O Bāhiya, you have not become an Arahat; you have not attained the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*); you have not even started training yourself to become an Arahat. You have not got an iota of the right practice to become an Arahat.

The Buddha has now appeared in the world, and is residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī. I urge you to go and see him." After admonishing him thus, the Brahma returned to his abode.

Attainment of Awakening

Bāhiya Dārucīriya was stirred with spiritual urgency by the words of the Brahma and decided to seek the path that leads to Nibbāna. He went straight to Sāvatthī. Covering the 120 league distance in just one night, he reached Sāvatthī in the morning.

The Buddha knew that Bāhiya Dārucīriya was coming to see him but seeing that his faculties, such as faith, were not ripe enough to receive the truth and in order to let them ripen, he delayed receiving Bāhiya Dārucīriya and went into the city to collect alms food, accompanied by many monastics.

After the Buddha had left the Jetavana monastery, Bāhiya Dārucīriya entered the monastery and found some monastics strolling in the open after having had their breakfast, so as to prevent drowsiness. He asked them where the Buddha had gone, and was told that he had gone on alms round in the city. The monastics inquired from him which place he had come from. "I come from Suppāraka port, venerable sirs." – "You have come from quite afar. Wash your feet, apply some oil to smooth your legs, and rest a while. The Fortunate One will not be long returning and you will see him."

Although the monastics very kindly extended their hospitality, Bāhiya Dārucīriya was impatient. He said: "Venerable sirs, I cannot know if I am to meet with some danger to my life. I have come post-haste, covering the 120 league distance in just one night, not allowing myself any rest on the way. I must see the Fortunate One before thinking of any rest." So saying, he proceeded into the city and got a full view of the Buddha who commanded an unrivalled personality. As he viewed the Buddha proceeding along the road, he reflected thus: "Ah, what a long time had passed before I have the opportunity of seeing a Fortunate One!" He stood rooted on the spot from where he was watching the Buddha, his heart filled with delightful satisfaction, his eyes never so much as winking, and riveted on the person of the Buddha. With his body bent down in salutation to the Buddha, and himself immersed in the glorious aura of the Buddha, he drew himself towards him, prostrating on the ground with the hands,

knees and forehead touching the ground and worshipping and caressing the Buddha's feet reverentially, kissed them enthusiastically.

He said: "Venerable sir, may the Fortunate One give me a discourse. The discourse of the Fortunate One will be of benefit to me for a long time." The Buddha said: "Bāhiya, this is not the time for giving a discourse. We are in the city on alms round."

> Herein it might be asked: "Has the Buddha any inappropriate time for seeing to the welfare of the sentient world?" The answer: "The inappropriate time," here refers not to the Buddha, but only to the recipient of the Buddha's message. It is beyond the ordinary person, even for an ordinary Arahat for that matter, to know the ripeness of a person's faculties to be able to receive the Buddha's message. Bāhiya's faculties were not yet ripe to receive it. But it would be futile to say so to him, for he would not make head or tail out of it. That was why the Buddha only gave the reason: "We are on alms round," for not giving a discourse and did not mention the faculties. The point is that although the Buddha is ever ready to give a discourse to a person who is ready to understand it. The Buddha knows [1300] when that person is ready and when he is not. He does not give a discourse until the hearer's faculties are ripe because by doing so, the discourse would not bring Awakening to him.

When this was said by the Buddha, Bāhiya Dārucīriya said for a second time: "Venerable sir, it is not possible for me to know if the Fortunate One were to meet with some danger to his life, or if I were to meet with some danger to my life. Therefore, may the Fortunate One give me a discourse. The discourse of the Fortunate One will be of benefit to me for a long time."

And for the second time the Buddha said: "Bāhiya, this is not the time for giving a discourse. We are in the city on the alms round."

> Herein, Bāhiya had such great concern for his safety because he was destined to live this life as his last existence and his past merit prompted him to mention the extreme urgency about his safety. The reason is that for one destined to live his last life in Saṁsāra, it is not possible that he dies without becoming an Arahat. The Buddha wanted to give a discourse to Bāhiya and yet had to refuse for a second time for these reasons: He knew that Bāhiya was overwhelmed by delightful satisfaction on seeing him which was not conducive to gaining insight and Bāhiya's mind needed

to be calmed down into a state of equanimity. Besides, Bāhiya's arduous journey of 120 leagues that was made in a single night had rendered him very weak physically. He needed some rest before being able to listen to the discourse profitably.

For a third time, Bāhiya Dārucīriya made his ardent request to the Buddha. And the Buddha, seeing:

1. That Bāhiya's mind had calmed into a state of equanimity.
2. That he had enjoyed some physical rest and had overcome his fatigue.
3. That his faculties had ripened.
4. That danger to his life was imminent.

So the Buddha decided that the time had arrived to give him a discourse. Accordingly, the Buddha made his discourse briefly as follows:

1. "That being so, Bāhiya, you should train yourself thus: in seeing visible objects, be aware of the seeing as just seeing; in hearing sounds, be aware of the hearing as just hearing; likewise in experiencing odours, tastes and tangible objects be aware of the experience of smelling, tasting, and touching, as just smelling, tasting and touching respectively; and in cognizing mind objects, i.e. thoughts and ideas, be aware of them just as cognizants.

2. Bāhiya, if you are able to remain aware of the seeing, the hearing, the experiencing, and the cognition of the four categories of sense objects, you will then be one who is not associated with attachment, hatred or delusion on account of the visible object that is seen, the sound that is heard, the palpable object that is experienced, or the mind-object that is cognized. In other words, certainly you will not be one who is attached, who hates, or who is bewildered.

3. Bāhiya, if on account of the visible object that is seen, the sound that is heard, the palpable object that is experienced, the mind-object that is cognized, you become not associated with attachment, hatred or delusion, i.e. if you should indeed have become one who is without attachment, hate, or delusion, then Bāhiya, you will indeed become one who is not subject to craving, conceit or wrong view on account of the sense object that is seen, heard, experienced, or cognized. You will then have no thought of: 'This is mine' due to craving, no

concept of 'I' due to conceit, or no lingering idea or concept of 'my self' due to wrong view.

4. Bāhiya, if you should indeed become one not subjected to craving, conceit or wrong view on account of the visible object that is seen, the sound that is heard, the palpable [1301] object that is experienced, the mind-object that is cognized, then Bāhiya, due to the absence of craving, conceit and wrong view, you will no more be reborn here in the human world, nor will you be reborn in the four remaining destinations: the Deva realm, the lower worlds, the world of animals and the world of Petas. Apart from the present existence in the human world and the four remaining destinations, there is no other destination for you. The non-arising of fresh mind-and-matter is the end of the defilements that are suffering (*dukkha*) and the resultant round of existences that are suffering."

The Buddha discoursed on the doctrine culminating in the ultimate cessation or Nibbāna where no substrata of existence remain. Herein, Bāhiya Dārucīriya was one who liked a brief exposition (*saṅkhitta-ruci-puggala*). Therefore, the Buddha in expounding the six sense objects did not go into all the six in detail, but combined odour, taste and tangible object as "palpable objects." Thus the sense objects are grouped here under four headings only: What is seen (*diṭṭha*), what is heard (*suta*), what is experienced (*muta*) and what is cognized (*viññāta*).

1. Regarding the four steps in the above exposition, in the Buddha's admonition to be just aware of the seeing as mere seeing, the hearing as mere hearing, the experiencing as mere experiencing, the cognition as mere cognition in respect of the four classes of respective sense objects which are conditioned phenomena, connotes that as eye-consciousness arises in seeing a visible object, as ear-consciousness arises in hearing a sound, as nose-consciousness arises in smelling an odour, as tongue-consciousness arises in tasting a flavour, or as mind-consciousness arises in cognizing a mind-object, there is just consciousness and there is no attachment, hatred or delusion there.

> The reader should acquaint himself with the nature of the five-door cognition process and the mind-door process. Eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness and body-consciousness, these five kinds of consciousness are called the five kinds of sense-consciousness.

The Buddha enjoined Bāhiya that he should strive diligently, not to let craving, hatred and delusion creep into the impulsion thought-moments that follow the five-door cognition process and the mind-door processes that arise at the instant of the arising of those five kinds of sense-consciousness, at which stage, there is no craving, hatred or delusion, but pure sense-cognition alone. For at the impulsion moment, the appreciation of these sense objects naturally tend to let in greed, hatred and delusion.

> The Buddha enjoined Bāhiya to strive diligently and not to allow greed, hatred and delusion to arise at the moment of impulsion in the thought-process because he wanted Bāhiya to understand that erroneous concepts, such as: "This is permanent," "This is happy," "This is beautiful," or "This is substantial," tend to creep into an unguarded mind, in respect of these four categories of sense objects. Only if one considers them as impermanent, miserable, ugly, and insubstantial, can there arise no erroneous impulsions to conceive them as permanent, happy, beautiful and substantial. Then only can insight arise, whereby great meritorious impulsions follow the neutral thought-process at the sense-cognition stage. The Buddha warned Bāhiya to guard against thinking wrongly about the conditioned phenomena which represent the four categories of sense objects as being permanent, happy, beautiful and substantial, and to view them, as they truly were, as being impermanent, miserable, ugly and insubstantial, and thus to cultivate insight so as to let the great meritorious impulsions follow the sense-cognition.
>
> By showing right view in regard to the four kinds of sense objects which are conditioned phenomena, as being impermanent, miserable, ugly and insubstantial, the Buddha teaches Bāhiya Dārucīriya the six lower stages of purity and the ten stages of insight. [1302]
>
> Where it is said: "Bāhiya, if you are able to remain aware of the seeing, the hearing, the experiencing, and the cognition of the four categories of sense objects, which are conditioned phenomena, through the ten stages of insight and attain the path-knowledge, then you will have eradicated greed, hatred and delusion; you will not be one who craves, who hates, or who is bewildered. In other words, you will be free from greed, hatred and delusion." This indicates the four paths.
>
> Where it is said: "Noble ones (*ariya*) on attaining the noble fruitions (*ariya-phala*) are totally uninfluenced by craving, conceit and wrong view,

> so that they never conceive any conditioned phenomena represented by the four categories of sense objects as 'I,' 'Mine' or 'Myself.' " This indicates the noble fruitions.
>
> Where it is said: "An Arahat, after the death-consciousness moment, ceases to be reborn either in this world of human beings or in any of the four other destinations; this is the total cessation of the aggregates of mind and matter, and is called Nibbāna, without leaving any trace of the aggregates." This step indicates this ultimate Nibbāna, the remainderless cessation.

Bāhiya Dārucīriya even while listening to the Buddha's discourse, had the four kinds of monastic morality purified, and had the mind purified through concentration and insight, having cultivated during that short moment, he gained the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) with the fourfold analytical knowledge (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*). He was able to destroy all the pollutants (*āsava*) because he was of a rare type of person who, through past merit, was destined to gain Awakening quickly, being endowed with inherent knowledge.

After becoming an Arahat, Bāhiya Dārucīriya, on reviewing himself with the reviewing knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*) of 19 factors, felt the necessity, as in the usual way of an Arahat, to become a monastic and requested the Buddha to admit him into the Saṅgha. The Buddha asked him: "Have you got the monastic alms bowl and robes?" – "Not yet, venerable sir," he replied. "In that case," said the Buddha, "go and find them first." After saying so the Buddha continued his alms round in the city of Sāvatthī.

> Bāhiya had been a monastic during the time of Buddha Kassapa's teaching. He remained a monastic and strove for Awakening for 20,000 years. During that time, whenever he received monastic requisites, he thought that the gains he made were due to his own past merit of alms giving and did not consider it necessary to share them with fellow monastics. For that lack of generosity in giving away robes or alms bowl to other monastics, he lacked the necessary merit to be summoned by the Buddha in the "Come, monastic" way.
>
> There are other teachers according to the commentary on the Discourse to Bāhiya (*Bāhiya-sutta*, Ud 1.10) who explain differently about why the Buddha did not summon Bāhiya with the words: "Come, monastic." According to them, Bāhiya was once reborn as a robber in a world-element where no Buddha had arisen. He robbed a Paccekabuddha of his robes and

alms bowl by killing him with a bow and arrow. The Buddha knew that on account of that evil deed, Bāhiya Dārucīriya could not enjoy the benefit of mind-made robes and bowl even if the Buddha summoned him, saying: "Come, monastic." However, the evil consequence of that evil deed is more relevant with the fact of Bāhiya's fate in having no proper clothing but only fibres of wood.

Bāhiya's Tragic Demise

Bāhiya left the Buddha and roamed the city looking for an alms bowl and pieces of rags for making robes, etc. While doing so, he was gored to death by a cow which had a suckling calf.

According to the commentary on the Discourse to Bāhiya in some past existences, four sons of rich men hired a prostitute and enjoyed themselves in a park. When the day was out, one of them suggested that they should rob the girl in the darkness, where nobody was around, of her possessions in the form of jewellery and 1,000 silver coins. The three friends agreed. They attacked her brutally. The girl had angry thoughts while being hit by them: "These wicked and shameless men have used me under passionate impulse and now try to kill me out of greed. I have done no wrong to them. I am helpless now. Let them kill me this time. May I become a Yakkhinī in my future lives and be able [1303] to kill these men many times over!" She died making this curse.

In a later existence, one of those four wicked men was reborn as Pukkusāti in a worthy family; another was reborn as Bāhiya Dārucīriya; another one was reborn as Tambadāṭhika, a robber; another one was reborn as a leper named Suppabuddha. The prostitute had been reborn as a Yakkhinī in hundreds of various forms of existences of the four murderers whom she gored to death assuming the form of a cow. Bāhiya thus met untimely death; he was killed on the spot.

When the Buddha had finished the alms round and left the city in the company of many monastics, he found the dead body of Bāhiya in a refuse dump, and he said to the monastics: "Go now, monastics, get a stretcher from some house and carry the body of Bāhiya, give him a proper funeral by cremation, and enshrine the relics." The monastics carried out the Buddha's instructions.

Back at the monastery, the monastics reported to the Buddha the completion of their tasks and asked the Buddha: "Venerable sir, what is the destination of

Bāhiya?" By this question they were inquiring whether Bāhiya died a worldling, or a noble one (*ariya*) who had not done away with rebirth, or an Arahat who had lived his last life, the Buddha explained: "Monastics, Bāhiya is wise. He trained himself in accordance with the gaining of the supermundane. He caused me no trouble on account of the doctrine. Monastics, Bāhiya has made an end of suffering (*dukkha*)."

> Herein the Buddha's instructions to the monastics to enshrine the relics of Bāhiya was a plain indication of the fact that Bāhiya died an Arahat. But some of the monastics failed to understand the implication of the instructions, or it is possible that they asked the Buddha in order to make the fact even clearer.

The Buddha's Verse on the Occasion

On hearing that Bāhiya Dārucīriya had died an Arahat, the monastics were full of wonder. They said to the Buddha: "When did Bāhiya Dārucīriya become an Arahat, venerable sir?" – "From the moment he heard my discourse," replied the Buddha. "When did the Fortunate One give him a discourse?" – "Today, on my alms round." – "But, venerable sir, then the discourse must have been rather insignificant. How could such a brief discourse make him Awaken?" – "Monastics, how can you judge the effect of my discourse whether long or short? A thousand verses of unprofitable words are not worth a single verse that is replete with benefit to the hearer." And the Buddha on that occasion uttered the following verse (Dhp 101):

> *Sahassam-api ce gāthā, anattha-pada-saṁhitā;*
> *ekaṁ gāthā padaṁ seyyo, yaṁ sutvā upasammati.*

> Monastics, better than 1,000 verses that are not conducive to knowledge is a single verse such as: "Mindfulness is the way to Deathlessness," by hearing which the hearer is calmed.

By the end of the discourse many beings gained the various levels of path-knowledge, such as Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, when the Buddha was amidst the congregation, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*

khippābhiññānaṁ yad-idaṁ Bāhiyo Dārucīriyo.

Monastics, among my monastic disciples who gain path-knowledge quickly, Bāhiya Dārucīriya who is now no more was the foremost (*etad-agga*). [1304]

28. Ven. Kumāra Kassapa

Aspiration in the Past

The future Kumāra Kassapa was born into a wealthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. As with future great disciples, he went to the Buddha and listened to his discourse, in the course of which he saw a monastic being declared by him as the foremost among the monastics who employ energy in expounding the doctrine. He was fired by a desire to become such a distinguished monastic, and after making a great offering, he made his aspiration known to the Buddha, that he would like to be honoured by some Future Buddha as the foremost monastic who employed energy in expounding the doctrine. The Buddha saw that his aspiration would be fulfilled, and made the prediction.

Meditating on Top of a Mountain

The future Kumāra Kassapa devoted himself to deeds of merit for the whole of his life and after that existence, he was reborn either in the Deva realm or the human world.

[The rest of this section is repeated from the story about Ven. Dabba above.]

During the waning years of the teaching of Buddha Kassapa, he was reborn as a worthy man and took up the monastic life. He found six other monastics who shared the view that living amongst people was not the correct way for gaining Awakening and that a real monastic must live in seclusion, and so they went up a high steep mountain by means of a ladder. Once at the top, they discussed among themselves: “He who has self-confidence, let him push away the ladder. He who clings to his life, let him go down by the ladder before it has been pushed away.” All seven monastics chose to remain on the mountain top until they attained Awakening and so they pushed away the ladder. “Now, friends, be diligent in your monastic practice,” they exhorted one another before choosing a

place of their own on the mountain to strive for path-knowledge, ignoring the danger of death.

Of these seven monastics, the eldest became an Arahat on the fifth day. He knew he had finished what was required of the noble practice and went to Uttarakuru, the northern island continent, by means of his powers, to collect alms food. Having collected the alms food, he came back and offered it to his six monastic companions with these encouraging words: "Friends, have this meal. Let me be responsible for alms food collection. You devote yourselves to your meditation." Then the remaining six replied: "Friend, have we made an agreement among us that he who first realises the supermundane Dhamma would be responsible to feed those who still have to reach that same goal?" The Arahat said: "No, friends, there was no such agreement." Then the six monastics said: "Venerable sir, you have become an Arahat according to your past merit. We too would make an end of the suffering round of Saṁsāra if we could. May the venerable go wherever he pleases."

The eldest monastic, being unable to persuade the six monastics into accepting the alms food, took the meal at a suitable distance and left them. On the seventh day, the second eldest monastic attained the state of Non-returner (Anāgāmi-phala). He too went to the northern island-continent by means of his powers and offered the alms food to the remaining colleagues. Being refused by his friends, he ate his meal at some suitable place and left. After the death and dissolution of his body, he was reborn in the Pure Abodes of the Non-returning (Anāgāmī) Brahmas.

The remaining five monastics did not achieve path-knowledge during that existence. After passing away from that existence, they were reborn in the Deva realm and the human realm throughout the long aeons in the interval period between Buddha Kassapa and Buddha Gotama. During the time of Buddha Gotama, they were reborn in various countries:

1. One was born in Gandhāra, in the city of Takkasilā, as a member of the royal family, and later became King Pukkusāti.
2. Another in Pabbateyya, also called the Majjhantika region, as the son of a female wandering ascetic, later he became Sabhiya, the wandering ascetic.

3. The third one, in a household in Bāhiya country, later became Ven. Bāhiya.
4. The fourth one, in a Rājagaha household was later known as Kumāra Kassapa.
5. The last in the Malla Country, in the city of Anupiya, in the royal family of a Malla Prince, later became Ven. Dabba.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

That worthy man, the future Kumāra Kassapa, was never reborn in the lower realms throughout the interval of an infinite aeon between the two Buddhas, but in the Deva Realms and human realm. About the time of the appearance of Buddha Gotama, he was conceived in the womb of the daughter of a merchant. This young woman had always been inclined on becoming a recluse but her parents gave her in marriage to a son of another wealthy man and she had to live in her husband's house. She became pregnant but did not know it. She pleaded with her husband to allow her to become a nun, and with her husband's consent she went to the nunnery of female monastics who were disciples of Ven. Devadatta.

When the pregnancy became visible, the female monastics reported the matter to Ven. Devadatta and sought his advice. Devadatta said: "She is no more a nun," and expelled her from his community. The young female monastic then went to stay in the nunnery of female monastics who were the disciples of the Buddha. There, the nuns reported her case to the Buddha who authorized Ven. Upāli to investigate and give a decision.

Ven. Upāli called up a group of respectable ladies of Sāvatthī, including Visākhā, and let them investigate into the case, to find out whether the pregnancy took place before or after becoming a nun. With sufficient evidence, the ladies reported to Ven. Upāli that the pregnancy took place during lay life. Ven. Upāli then gave the unequivocal ruling that since the pregnancy took place before entering the Saṅgha, she still stood as a pure nun. The Buddha praised Ven. Upāli for his competent judgment in the controversy.

This young nun gave birth to a bonny baby boy who looked like a golden statuette. King Pasenadi of Kosala took care of the child and brought him up in

his palace like a princeling. The boy was named Kassapa, and at the age of seven, he was dressed finely and sent to the Buddha's monastery for novitiation. For details of the story see the Birth Story about the Deer named Nigrodha (*Nigrodha-miga-jātaka*, Ja 12).

The Name Kumāra Kassapa

As the young boy entered the Saṅgha at the age of seven, he was referred to by the Buddha as Kumāra Kassapa: "Boy Kassapa," in distinction to other novices by the name of Kassapa. In another sense, "Kumāra" also means: "Prince." Since Kassapa was fostered by King Pasenadi, Kumāra Kassapa may also be taken to mean: "Prince Kassapa."

The Discourse about the Anthill

[The following is based on the Discourse about the Anthill (*Vammika-sutta*, MN 23) and its commentary.]

Kumāra Kassapa started insight-meditation since he was made a novice in the Saṅgha, and [1305] also learned the teaching of the Buddha. Thus, he diligently pursued both the learning and the practice of the doctrine. When the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī, Kumāra Kassapa was dwelling in the Andhavana forest which was not far from the Jetavana monastery. At that time, the Mahā Brahma of the Pure Lands, who had been a colleague in pursuit of knowledge, who went up a steep mountain to meditate, reviewed the lot of his erstwhile friends. And seeing Kumāra Kassapa striving for Awakening, he decided to give some practical guidance to him in his meditation for insight. Even before leaving his Brahma abode for the human world, he planned a fifteen-point puzzle. In the middle of the night, he appeared in all his splendour before Ven. Kumāra Kassapa in the Andhavana forest.

Ven. Kumāra Kassapa asked the Brahma: "Who has appeared here before me?" – "Venerable sir, I am a colleague of yours who previously during the time of Buddha Kassapa went into meditation in pursuit of knowledge, and have been reborn in the Pure Lands (*Suddhāvāsa*), after having attained Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-phala*)." – "What is your purpose of your coming to me?" The Brahma then made his purpose plain in the following words:

"Monastic, 1) this ant-hill 2) emits smoke by night; 3) by day it rises up in flames. 4) The Brahmin teacher says 5) to the wise pupil: 6) 'Get hold of the sword and 7) dig diligently.' The wise pupil does as is asked by the teacher and 8) discovers a door-bolt. And he reports to the teacher: 'Sir, this is a door-bolt.'

The Brahmin teacher then says to the pupil: 'Wise pupil, cast away the door-bolt. Get hold of the sword and dig on diligently.' The wise pupil does as asked by the teacher, and 9) discovers a toad. He reports to the teacher: 'Sir, this is a blown-up (*uddhum-āyika*) toad.'

The Brahmin teacher says again: 'Wise pupil, cast away the blown-up toad. Get hold of the sword and dig on diligently.' The wise pupil does as is asked by the teacher, and 10) discovers a forked road. He reports to the teacher: 'Sir, this is a forked road.'

The Brahmin teacher says again: 'Wise pupil, abandon the forked road. Take hold of the sword and dig on diligently.' The wise pupil does as is asked by the teacher, and 11) discovers a water-strainer for sifting off soapy sand. He reports to the teacher: 'Sir, this is a water strainer for sifting off soapy sand.'

The Brahmin teacher says again: 'Wise pupil, cast away the water strainer. Get hold of the sword and dig on diligently.' The wise pupil does as is asked by the teacher, and 12) discovers a tortoise. 'Sir, this is a tortoise,' he reports to the teacher.

The Brahmin teacher says again: 'Wise pupil, cast away the tortoise. Get hold of the sword and dig on diligently.' The wise pupil does as asked by the teacher, and 13) discovers a knife and a mincing-board. He reports to the teacher: 'Sir, these are a knife and a mincing-board.'

The Brahmin teacher says again: 'Wise pupil, cast away the knife and the mincing-board. Get hold of the sword and dig on diligently.' The wise pupil does as asked by the teacher and 14) discovers a lump of meat. He reports to the teacher: 'Sir, this is a lump of meat.'

The Brahmin teacher says again: 'Wise pupil, cast away the lump of meat. Get hold of the sword and dig on diligently.' The wise pupil does as asked and 15) discovers a Nāga. He reports to the teacher: 'Sir, this is a Nāga.' The Brahmin

teacher then says to the wise pupil: 'Let the Nāga remain. Do not intrude upon him. Worship him.'

Monastic, ask the Buddha for the answers to these questions. Note the answers as given by the Buddha. With the exception of the Buddha, his disciples, and someone who has heard the answers from me, I do not see anyone in the world of the various abodes with Devas, Māras and Brahmas, and the sentient world of [1306] recluses, Brahmins, kings and other human beings, who can answer them satisfactorily."

After saying so, the Brahma vanished. Early the next morning, Ven. Kumāra Kassapa went to the Buddha, made obeisance to him, and related the meeting with the Brahma the previous night. Then he asked:

1. Venerable sir, what is meant by the "ant-hill?"
2. What is meant by "emitting smoke by night?"
3. What is meant by "rising up in flames by day?"
4. What is meant by the "Brahmin teacher?"
5. What is meant by the "wise pupil?"
6. What is meant by the "sword?"
7. What is meant by "digging diligently?"
8. What is meant by the "door-bolt?"
9. What is meant by the "blown-up toad?"
10. What is meant by the "forked road?"
11. What is meant by the "water-strainer for sifting off soapy sand?"
12. What is meant by the "tortoise?"
13. What is meant by the "knife and the mincing-board?"
14. What is meant by the "lump of meat?"
15. What is meant by the "Nāga?"

To these fifteen questions that were puzzles to Ven. Kumāra Kassapa, the Buddha gave the answers as follows:

1. Monastic, ‘ant-hill’ is the name for this body.
2. Monastic, one ruminates at night what one has done in the day; this is ‘emitting smoke by night.’
3. Monastic, one does physically, verbal, mentally, deeds by day as one has thought out at night; this is the ‘rising of flames by day.’
4. Monastic, ‘Brahmin teacher’ is the name for the Realised One.
5. Monastic, the ‘wise pupil’ is a monastic who is still training himself for to become an Arahat according to the threefold training.
6. Monastic, ‘sword’ is the name for knowledge, both mundane (*lokiya*) and supermundane (*lokuttara*).
7. Monastic, ‘digging diligently’ means ‘persistent effort.’
8. Monastic, ‘door-bolt’ is the name for ignorance. ‘Cast away the door-bolt’ means ‘getting rid of ignorance.’ – ‘Wise pupil, take hold of the sword and dig diligently,’ means ‘strive well with knowledge to get rid of ignorance.’
9. Monastic, ‘blown-up toad’ is a name for wrath. ‘Cast away the blown-up toad’ means ‘get rid of deep anger.’ ‘Wise pupil, take hold of the sword and dig diligently,’ means ‘strive well with knowledge to overcome deep resentment.’
10. Monastic, ‘forked road’ is the name for uncertainty (*vicikicchā*). ‘Abandon the forked road’ means ‘strive well with knowledge to overcome uncertainty.’
11. Monastic, ‘water-strainer for sifting off soapy sand’ is the name for the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) that stand in the way of absorption (*jhāna*) and path-knowledge, namely: sensual desire (*kāmacchanda*), ill-will (*vyāpāda*), sloth and torpor (*thina-middha*), distractedness (*uddhacca-kukkucca*) and uncertainty (*vicikicchā*). ‘Cast away the water-strainer’ means ‘strive well with knowledge to overcome the five hindrances.’
12. Monastic, ‘tortoise’ is the name for the five objects of clinging (*upādāna*), namely: [1307] the aggregate of corporeality (*rūpakkhanda*) that is subject to change; the aggregate of sensation (*vedānakkhandha*)

that is capable of feeling; the aggregate of perception (*saññākkhanda*) that has the nature of perceiving; the aggregate of volitions (*saṅkhārakkhandha*) that help in the formation of all actions; the aggregate of consciousness (*viññāṇakkhandha*) that has the nature of knowing things. 'Cast away the tortoise' means 'strive well with knowledge to get rid of the five aggregates which are the objects of clinging.'

13. Monastic, 'knife and mincing-board' are the names for the five kinds of sense-pleasure that appear desirable, agreeable, attractive and lovely and that cause the arising of sensual attachment to them, namely: visual objects (*rūpārammaṇa*) cognizable by eye-consciousness (*cakkhu-viññāṇa*); sounds (*saddārammaṇa*) cognizable by ear consciousness (*sota-viññāṇa*); odours (*gandhārammaṇa*) cognizable by nose-consciousness (*ghāna-viññāṇa*); tastes (*rasārammaṇa*) cognizable by tongue consciousness (*jivhā-viññāṇa*); tangible objects (*phoṭṭhabbārammaṇa*) cognizable by body-consciousness (*kāya-viññāṇa*). 'Cast away the knife and the mincing-board' means 'strive well with knowledge to get rid of the five kinds of sense-pleasure.'

14. Monastic, 'lump of meat' is the name for sensual attachment or craving (*nandī-rāga-taṇhā*). 'Cast away the lump of meat' means 'strive well with knowledge to get rid of sensual attachment or craving.'

15. Monastic, 'Nāga' is the name for the Arahat. You are enjoined to let alone an Arahat without intruding upon him. You are also enjoined to revere the Arahat.

Some more elaboration:

1. The body is likened to an "ant-hill" because just as an ant-hill lets out snakes, mongoose, rodents, lizards and ants, the body discharges all kinds of loathsome matter through its nine holes.

> There are also other reasons that explain the simile. Refer to the commentary on the discourse.

2. "Emitting smoke by night," signifies the things thought out in the night for the next day's activities.

3. “Flames rising up by day,” signifies physical, verbal, and mental actions that are performed in the day as thought out in the night.

4, 5, 6 & 7: These similes do not need elaboration.

8. The “door-bolt” at the city gate stops the passage of people. So also ignorance stops the arising of knowledge that leads to Nibbāna.

9. The “blown-up toad” exemplifies wrath: A toad gets angry and puffs itself up whenever something strikes against it. It may get overblown with anger and lie flat on its back, unable to move about, and it then falls a prey to crows or other enemies. Likewise, when anger begins to arise, one becomes muddled. If one is careful, one may curb it by wise reflection. If not checked in this way, the resentment shows in one’s expression, and if left unchecked, it leads one to evil verbalisation: cursing or using harsh speech. If anger is allowed to grow, one starts thinking of some dreadful physical action. At that, one is apt to look around to see if there is anyone to join the other side. Then one picks a fight, and unless one restrains oneself, one is apt to find some weapons to strike the other party. If there is no effective checking of oneself, one is apt to commit assault. In extreme cases death may result, either of the adversary or of oneself, or both.

Just as the blown-up toad renders itself immobile, lying on its back, and becomes a ready victim of crows and other enemies, so also a person, under the influence of deep anger, cannot concentrate in meditation and knowledge is thus hampered. Lacking knowledge, he is liable to be the ready victim of all kinds of wickednesss (*māra*) and [1308] become the docile slave of baser instincts.

10. When a traveller, carrying valuable possessions, comes to a forked road and wastes much time there, being unable to choose which way he should proceed, he is inviting highway robbers who would cause him ruin. Similarly, if a monastic, who has taken instruction from his teacher on the basic method of meditation and has started practicing, entertains doubts about the truth of the Three Treasures, he is incapable of meditating. As he sits alone with a mind troubled by uncertainty, he succumbs to defilements and other wicked forces.

11. When a washer-man pours water into a water-strainer to sift soapy sand, the water flows down the strainer freely. Not a cupful of water that is poured into it,

be it 100 potfulls, remains in it; likewise, in the mind of a meditator which has the five hindrances, no merit can remain.

12. Just as a tortoise has five protrusions: the head and four limbs, so also all the conditioned phenomena, under the eye of knowledge, resolve into five aggregates which are objects of clinging.

13. Meat is minced with a knife on a mincing-board. Sensual enjoyment or the defilements seek the sense objects. The defilements are likened to the "knife" and sense objects to the "mincing-board."

14. A lump of meat is sought after by everyone, high or low, kings or commoners, birds and beasts also like it. All sorts of trouble originate from pursuit of a lump of meat. Similarly, sensual attachment or craving is the source of all woes. But this truth is shrouded by ignorance. Craving or sensual attachment lures all beings into the cycle of rebirth which runs on relentlessly. Taken in another sense, a lump of meat becomes attached to anywhere it is placed. So also, sensual attachment tends to bind beings to the cycle of rebirth which is cherished by them, not realizing its suffering nature.

15. An Arahat is called a "Nāga" because an Arahat is not led astray by the four misleading factors: fondness or liking, hatred, fear and bewilderment (*chandādīhi na gacchantī ti Nāga*). In another sense, an Arahat never reverts to those defilements that have been got rid of at the four levels of purification (*tena tena maggena pahīne kilese na āgacchantī ti Nāga*). Yet in another sense, an Arahat is incapable of committing any kind of evil (*nānappakārakaṁ āguṁ na karontī ti Nāga*).

In paying homage to the Buddha, the Nāga, the Arahat, who is free from the pollutants, the commentary recommends this mode of veneration:[284]

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[284] [This is a versification of words found in the discourses, and doesn't quote them literally, see the Short Discourse about Saccaka (*Cūḷa-saccaka-sutta*, MN 35): *Buddho so bhagavā bodhāya dhammaṁ deseti, danto so bhagavā damathāya dhammaṁ deseti, santo so bhagavā samathāya dhammaṁ deseti, tiṇṇo so bhagavā taraṇāya dhammaṁ deseti, parinibbuto so bhagavā parinibbānāya dhammaṁ deseti*.]

Buddho bodhāya deseti, danto yo damathāya ca,
samathāya santo Dhammaṁ, tiṇṇo va taraṇāya ca,
nibbuto Nibbānatthāya, taṁ loka-saraṇaṁ name.

The Buddha, the Awakened One, the refuge of the three worlds, the Arahat, having known the four noble truths by himself and wishing to enlighten others that deserve to be Awakened like himself; having tamed himself in respect of the six faculties and wishing to tame others that are fit to be tamed like himself; having attained peace himself and wishing others that are worthy to attain peace like himself; having crossed over to the other side of the ocean of Saṁsāra and wishing others that are worthy to cross over to the other shore like himself; having extinguished the fires of defilement at the four stages and wishing others who are worthy to extinguish the fires of defilement like himself; out of compassion, expounded the glorious Dhamma to Devas and humans for 45 years. To him, the Buddha, the Nāga, the refuge of the three worlds, I pay homage physically, verbally and mentally in all humility with joined palms raised. [1309]

Attainment of Awakening

The Ant-hill Discourse (*Vammika-sutta*, MN 23), the commentary notes, is the meditation lesson for Ven. Kumāra Kassapa. Ven. Kumāra Kassapa learnt the Buddha's answer to the fifteen point puzzle, retired into seclusion into the Andhavana forest, meditated with diligence and not long after he became an Arahat.

Foremost Title Achieved

From the time of his becoming a monastic, Ven. Kumāra Kassapa in his discourses to the four classes of disciples: male monastics, female monastics, male lay devotees and female lay devotees, used a variety of similes and allegories.

When Ven. Kumāra Kassapa discoursed to Pāyāsi, who held wrong views, by employing fifteen similes, the Buddha, referring to the Discourse to Pāyāsi (*Pāyāsi-sutta*, DN 23), declared:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ citta-kathikānaṁ yad-idaṁ Kumāra-kassapo.

Monastics, among my monastic disciples who employ imagery in their discourses, Kumāra Kassapa is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

29. Ven. Mahā Koṭṭhita

Aspiration in the Past

The future Koṭṭhita was born into a wealthy family in the royal city of Haṁsavatī during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While he was listening to the Buddha's discourse, he witnessed a monastic being named by the Buddha as the foremost monastic among those who attained the fourfold analytical knowledge. He was very enthusiastic to become such a great monastic in the future. As with all future great venerables, he made a great offering and, after which, he expressed his aspiration before the Buddha. The Buddha made the prediction that his aspiration would be fulfilled in the future, before leaving for his monastery.

The future Ven. Koṭṭhita lived a life filled with good deeds, passed away and was reborn in the Deva realm and subsequently, either in the human realm or the Deva realm.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

At the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn into a Brahmin family in Sāvatthī, and was named Koṭṭhita. When he came of age, he mastered the three Vedas. One day, on hearing the Buddha's discourse, he became so devoted to the Buddha that he joined the Saṅgha. Since then, he meditated for insight and became an Arahat and was endowed with the fourfold analytical knowledge (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*).

Foremost Title Achieved

After attainment of Awakening, Ven. Koṭṭhita, as an adept at the fourfold analytical knowledge, usually posed his question on these forms of knowledge. Thus, with reference to the Long Discourse giving an Elaboration (*Mahā-vedalla-sutta*, MN 43) the Buddha declared:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ paṭisambhidā-pattānaṁ yad-idaṁ Mahākoṭṭhito.

Monastics, among my monastic disciples who attained the fourfold analytical knowledge, Mahā Koṭṭhita is the foremost (*etad-agga*). [1310]

30. Ven. Ānanda

Aspiration in the Past

100,000 aeons ago, from the present aeon, there appeared in the world, Buddha Padumuttara, who was born in the city of Haṁsavatī as the son of King Ānanda and Queen Sujātā. The two chief disciples of the Buddha were Ven. Devala and Ven. Sujāta. His two female disciples were Ven. Amitā and Ven. Asamā. The personal attendant to the Buddha was Ven. Sumana. The Buddha had 100,000 monastic disciples and the privilege of attending to his needs was extended to his royal father. He and the Saṅgha stayed near the city, from which they collected their daily alms food.

Before renouncing the world, Buddha Padumuttara had a younger half-brother by the name of Prince Sumana, who was the future Ven. Ānanda. King Ānanda appointed Prince Sumana, lord of a district, which was 120 leagues from the capital. The prince visited his father and his elder brother Buddha Padumuttara occasionally.

Once, there broke out a rebellion in the border region. The prince reported the matter to the king, who said: "Were you not placed there to keep law and order?" The prince, on receiving the king's reply, took upon himself the quelling of the uprising and restored peace. The king was pleased and summoned his son to his presence.

Prince Sumana left for the capital accompanied by 1,000 officers. On the way, he discussed with them what reward he should ask, if his royal father were to grant him a boon. Some of the officers suggested elephants, horses, towns, gems, etc. but a few wise ones among them said: "Prince, you are the king's son. Material prizes are of no consequence to you. You may get them but you must leave them behind at death. You should ask for a boon that is meritorious. Your deed of merit alone will be your real possession when you leave this existence.

So, if the king were to grant you a boon, ask for the privilege of attending on the Buddha, your own elder brother, for one Rains Retreat (*Vassa*)."

The prince was pleased with the idea. "You are friends indeed to me. I had never thought about such a noble idea. I accept your advice." Once in the capital, he was received with great love and esteem by his royal father who embraced him, kissed him on the forehead, and said: "Dear son, name any boon and I will grant it." The son replied: "Great King, I wish to make my present life highly productive in the future, instead of going barren. To that end, I wish to attend on my elder brother, the Buddha, for one Rains Retreat. May my dear father grant this privilege to me!" The king replied: "Dear son, I cannot grant this wish. Name any other." – "Dear father," Prince Sumana said, "a sovereign's word is steadfast as a rock. I do not want any other thing. I stand by my wish."

The king then said: "Dear son, no one can know what the Buddha has in mind. If the Buddha does not accept your invitation what good is my concession to you?" – "In that case, dear father, I will go and ask the Buddha myself and find out what he thinks of my request," replied Prince Sumana. Having thus made the king committed to his obligation, Prince Sumana went to the Buddha's monastery.

When he arrived there, the Buddha had just gone into his Perfumed Chamber after having had his meal. Prince Sumana went to the Assembly Hall and met the monastics who asked him the purpose of his visit. "I have come, venerable sirs," he said, "to see the Fortunate One. Would anyone show me where the Buddha is now." – "Prince," the monastics said, "we have no right to see the Buddha as and when we want to see him." – "Who, then, has that right?" the Prince inquired. "Ven. Sumana has, prince," they said. "Where is Ven. Sumana now?" And having been directed to where the monastic was, the prince went to him, made obeisance, and said: "Venerable sir, I would like to see the Fortunate One. Would you present me to the Fortunate One?"

Ven. Sumana then entered upon the absorption of a water-object (*āpo-kasiṇa-jhāna*) in front of the prince, and making [1311] his wish that the earth turn into water, he dived into the mind-made water and appeared inside the Buddha's Perfumed Chamber. The Buddha asked the monastic his purpose. Ven. Sumana answered: "Venerable sir, Prince Sumana is here to see the Fortunate One." – "If

so, prepare a seat for me," said the Buddha. Ven. Sumana then disappeared into the water from the Buddha's Chamber and emerged from the water right in front of the prince, in the monastic compound, and prepared a seat for the Buddha. Prince Sumana was very much impressed by the supernormal powers of the monk.

Buddha Padumuttara came out of his Perfumed Chamber and sat on the seat prepared for him. Prince Sumana made obeisance to the Buddha and exchanged cordial greetings with him. "When did you come, prince?" asked the Buddha. "Venerable sir, I arrived here just when the Fortunate One retired into the Perfumed Chamber," replied the prince, "the monastics told me that they had no right to see the Fortunate One as and when they wished, and directed me to Ven. Sumana. As for Ven. Sumana, by saying just one word, he announced my presence to the Fortunate One and also arranged for my seeing the Fortunate One. I presume, venerable sir, that Ven. Sumana is close to the Fortunate One in this teaching."

"Prince, what you say is true. This Sumana is close with the Realised One in this teaching." – "Venerable sir, what kind of meritorious action leads one to become a close disciple to the Buddha?" – "Prince, by giving in generosity, by keeping morality and by observing the precepts, one may aspire to become a close disciple to the Buddha." Prince Sumana now had the right opportunity to invite the Buddha to his place to receive an offering. He said: "Venerable sir, I wish to become an intimate disciple to some Future Buddha, just like Ven. Sumana. May the Fortunate One accept my offering of food tomorrow." The Buddha signified the acceptance of the invitation by remaining silent. The prince returned to his temporary quarters in the city and made preparations for a great offering which lasted for seven days at his temporary quarters.

On the seventh day, Prince Sumana paid homage to the Buddha and said: "Venerable sir, I have obtained consent from my father, the king, to have the privilege of attending to the Fortunate One during the three-month Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period. May the Fortunate One accept my attendance on him for the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*)." The Buddha reviewed the benefit that would accrue to the prince if the request be allowed, and seeing that it was going to be beneficial for him, said: "Prince, the Fortunate One likes to stay in a quiet place."

"Exalted Buddha, I understand! Fortunate One, I understand!" said the prince. "I shall now build a monastery for the Fortunate One. When completed, I shall send messengers to the Fortunate One. Then may the Fortunate One and 100,000 monastics come to our monastery." The prince left after obtaining consent from the Buddha. He then went to see his royal father and said: "Dear father, the Buddha has agreed to come to my town. When I send messengers to inform the time for the Buddha to come, may you see to the escorting of the Buddha on the journey." He made obeisance to his father and left the city. Then he built a resting place for the Buddha and his company at intervals of one league along the 120 leagues stretch of the road from the city to his town. Back in his own town, he chose a suitable site to build a monastery for the Buddha. He bought the site, a garden owned by a rich householder Sobhana, for 100,000. And he spent another 100,000 for the building.

He built a Perfumed Chamber for the Buddha, sleeping places for 100,000 monastics, latrines, huts, small caves and sheds, some for use by day and others by night and an enclosure to the monastic compound with gates. When everything was completed, he sent messengers to the king to escort the Buddha at the start of the journey.

King Ānanda made food offerings to the Buddha and 100,000 monastics. Then he said to the Buddha: "My son, exalted Buddha, the venerable's younger brother has made all the necessary preparations to receive the Fortunate One, and is eagerly expecting your arrival." The Buddha then made the journey accompanied by 100,000 monastics, and resting for the nights at the rest houses put up along the route at intervals of one [1312] league. The 120 leagues distance was made without hardship.

Prince Sumana welcomed the Buddha from a league's distance along the way from his residence. Giving a ceremonial welcoming with flowers and scents, he escorted the Buddha and the company of monastics to the monastery. Then he offered the monastery to the Buddha, speaking this verse recorded in the Story about the Elder Ānanda (*Ānandatthera-vatthu*, AA, PTS 1.291):

> *Sata-sahassena me kītaṁ, sata-sahassena māpitaṁ,*
> *Sobhanaṁ nāma uyyānaṁ, paṭiggaṇha Mahā-muni.*

> Great Sage of Sages, I, Sumana, have bought the Sobhana Park for 100,000 pieces of money, and built this monastery at the cost of a further 100,000. May the Great Sage accept my gift of the monastery.

Prince Sumana donated the monastery on the day of the beginning of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*). After the offering was completed, he called his family and followers and said: "The Fortunate One has come from a distance of 120 leagues. Buddhas attach importance to the Dhamma and not to material gifts. That being so, I will stay in this monastery during these three months using only two sets of clothing and observe the ten precepts. You will attend to the Buddha and 100,000 monastics for the three months as you have done today." And so he spent the retreat at the monastery.

Prince Sumana ensured that the Buddha stayed not far away from his personal attendant, Ven. Sumana, who attended to all his needs. He admired the monastic and set his mind on becoming such a close monastic-disciple some time in the future. So, about a week before the end of the retreat, he gave a great offering to the Buddha and the Saṅgha. On the seventh day of this great offering, he placed a set of three robes before every one of the 100,000 monastics and paying respects, said to the Buddha: "All my meritorious deeds that began in the city of Haṁsavatī, at my temporary quarters, are not aimed at future worldly glory as Sakka or a Deva or a Māra. My aspiration in doing these deeds is to become the personal attendant to a Buddha of some future period."

The Buddha reviewed the matter and seeing that the Prince's aspiration would be fulfilled, made the prediction and then departed. On hearing the prediction of Buddha Padumuttara, the prince was so convinced of the certainty of the Buddha's pronouncement as if he were to become the personal attendant of Buddha Gotama immediately as predicted by Buddha Padumuttara, carrying the Buddha's alms bowl and robe.

Deeds of Merit in the Interim Period

Prince Sumana spent 100,000 years during the time of Buddha Padumuttara doing deeds of merit. At his death, he was reborn in the Deva realm. During Buddha Kassapa's time, he donated his cloak to a monastic who was on alms round, to be used as the base for the alms bowl to rest on.

Upon his death in that existence, he was reborn in the Deva realm. After his Deva existence, he was reborn in the human world as the king of Bārāṇasī. When he saw, from the upper storey of his palace, eight Paccekabuddhas travelling in the air coming from Mount Gandhamādana, he invited them to his palace and offered food. He also built eight monastic dwellings in the royal gardens as residences for these eight Paccekabuddhas. Moreover, he made eight bejewelled seats for them to be used on their visits to the palace as well as the same number of ruby stands for placing their alms bowls. He attended upon the eight Paccekabuddhas for 10,000 years. These are some outstanding deeds of merit during the intervening period of 100,000 aeons; many other meritorious deeds also were done by him in that period.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

After performing various good deeds and thereby sowing seeds of merit during the intervening period of 100,000 aeons, the future Ven. Ānanda was reborn in Tusita Realm along with the Bodhisatta Gotama. After passing away from that existence, he was reborn as the son of Prince Amitodana of Kapilavatthu. He was named Ānanda or Joy, signifying the pleasure he caused to the family by his birth.

On the first [1313] visit of Buddha Gotama to Kapilavatthu, a number of Sakyan princes headed by Prince Bhaddiya renounced worldly life and became monastics as the Buddha's disciples when the Buddha was sojourning at Anupiya Grove near the town of the same name.[285]

Ven. Ānanda Established in Stream-Entry

Not long after becoming a monastic, Ven. Ānanda listened to a discourse by Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa and attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). This is on record in the Discourse about Ānanda (*Ānanda-sutta*, SN 22.83). The gist of that discourse is as follows:

During the time when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī, Ven. Ānanda addressed the monastics: "Friend monastics," and the monastics responded, saying: "Friend." Ven. Ānanda then said: "Friends, Ven.

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[285] See chapters 16-27.

Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa was very helpful to us when we were new monastics. He admonished us with this instruction: 'Friend Ānanda, it is through having a cause that the conceit "I am" arises through craving and wrong view. The trio of craving, conceit and wrong view perpetuate the rounds of rebirth. They do not arise without a cause. Through what cause does the conceit "I am" arise? Because of corporeality (*rūpa*), the conceit "I am," along with its associates craving and wrong view arises; without such cause, the conceit "I am" does not arise. Because of sensation (*vedanā*) … perception (*saññā*) … volitions (*saṅkhāra*) … Because of consciousness (*viññāṇa*), the conceit "I am," along with its associates craving and wrong view arises; without such cause the conceit "I am" does not arise.

Friend Ānanda, let me give an example. If a young woman or man, who is fond of adorning herself or himself, looks at the image of their face in a clean and bright mirror or a bowl of clear water, they will see it depending on a cause: their own image and the reflecting surface of the mirror or the water, and not otherwise.

Friend Ānanda, even so, because of corporeality, the conceit (*mānā*), "I am," along with its associates craving (*taṇhā*) and wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) arises; without such cause, it does not arise. Because of sensation, perception, volitions and consciousness the conceit "I am," along with its associates, craving and wrong view, arises; without such cause, it does not arise.

Friend Ānanda, what do you think of what I am going to ask you: "Is corporeality permanent or impermanent?" – "Impermanent, friend." This dialogue continues as in the Discourse about the Characteristics of Non-Self (*Anatta-lakkhaṇa-sutta*, SN 22.59), there is nothing more to do for the realization of the path.

"Friends, Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa was very helpful to us when we were new monastics. He admonished us with the above instruction. By hearing the exposition of Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa, I gained knowledge of the four noble truths, and attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*)."

With reference to the above discourse, it is clear that Ven. Ānanda became Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) after listening to Ven. Mantāṇiputta Puṇṇa's discourse on the simile of the mirror.

Ven. Ānanda appointed Personal Attendant

There were no permanent personal attendants to the Buddha during his first 20 years after becoming a Buddha, called the first period after Awakening. During that period, a number of monastics acted as personal attendants, carrying the Buddha's alms bowl and robe; they were: Vens. Nāgasamāla, Nāgita, Upavāṇa, Sunakkhatta, who was formerly a Licchavī Prince, Cunda, a younger brother of Ven. Sāriputta, Sāgata, Rādha, and Meghiya.

On a certain occasion, the Buddha, attended by Ven. Nāgasamāla, was making a [1314] long journey when they reached a forked road. Ven. Nāgasamāla, departing from the main route, said to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, I am taking this road on the left of the forked road." The Buddha said: "Monastic, come, let us take the other road." Ven. Nāgasamāla then, saying impatiently: "Venerable sir, take that road, I am going this way," and he made a move to put the Buddha's alms bowl and robes on the ground. Thereupon, the Buddha said to him: "Monastic, bring them to me," and he had to carry them himself, and then went by the way he chose while Ven. Nāgasamāla took the other way, leaving the Buddha. When he had gone a short distance, Ven. Nāgasamāla was robbed by a gang of robbers who took away his alms bowl and robes and also hit him on the head. With blood streaming down from his head, he remembered the Buddha as his only refuge and went back to him. The Buddha asked him: "Monk, what has befallen you?" Ven. Nāgasamāla related his story to the Buddha and he said to him: "Monk, take heart. Foreseeing this danger, I had asked you not to take that road."

> This is one of the incidents that led to the appointment of a permanent personal attendant.

On another occasion during the 13th Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) when the Buddha was staying on the mountain abode at Cālikā hill, after the alms round in Jantu village, the Buddha, with the temporary attendant Ven. Meghiya, was going by the side of the river Kimikāḷā when, on seeing a Mango Grove, Ven. Meghiya said to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, take the alms bowl and the double robe yourself, I want to meditate in that Mango Grove." The Buddha tried to dissuade him three times not to do so, but he would not listen. Then, no sooner had Ven. Meghiya sat on a rocky platform to start meditating, than three demeritorious

thoughts oppressed him. He returned to the Buddha and related what had occurred in his mind when he tried to meditate. The Buddha solaced him saying: "Seeing that was going to to happen to you, I told you not to resort to that place."

> For details about this event, read chapter 32a. This is another instance that led to the appointment of a permanent attendant.

On account of such mishaps, the Buddha, on another occasion, sitting on the Buddha's seat at the Assembly Hall in the precincts of his Perfumed Chamber at the Jetavana monastery, said to the monastics: "Monastics, I have grown old now.[286] Some of the monastics attending upon me would take a different route from what I chose; some monastics would even think of putting down my alms bowl and robes on the ground. Now please think of a monastic who will attend upon me on a permanent basis." On hearing these words, many of the monastics became emotional.

Then Ven. Sāriputta rose from his seat, paid homage to the Buddha, and said: "Venerable sir, for one incalculable and 100,000 aeons, I have fulfilled the perfections simply to become a disciple of the Fortunate One. A person of great knowledge like myself must be deemed as one fit to be the permanent personal attendant to the Fortunate One. May I be allowed to attend on the Fortunate One." The Buddha said: "That will not do, Sāriputta, wherever you are, there is the doctrine. For you expound the doctrine in the same way as the Realised One does. You ought not to attend upon the Realised One." After the Buddha had extolled the virtues of Ven. Sāriputta, he repeated the offer to attend on him. Ven. Moggallāna offered himself for the post but was likewise rejected. Then the 80 great monastic disciples all offered themselves, all sharing the same result.

Ven. Ānanda's Eightfold Boon

Ven. Ānanda remained silent without offering himself for the post. The monastics then urged him: "Friend Ānanda, each member of the Saṅgha is offering himself for the privilege of attending on the Fortunate One, you should also offer yourself." Ven. Ānanda said to them: "Friends, a position relating to the Fortunate One is not something to be asked for. Does the Fortunate One not

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[286] He was at that time past 55.

notice me? If the Fortunate One so wishes, he will say: 'Ānanda, be my personal attendant.' "

Then the Buddha said to the monastics: "Monastics, Ānanda does not need anybody's advice to attend upon the Realised One. He will do so on his free will." Thereupon the monastics [1315] pleaded with Ven. Ānanda, saying: "Friend Ānanda, now rise up, and offer yourself to be the personal attendant." Then Ven. Ānanda rose from his seat and asked the Buddha to grant him these eight boons: "Venerable sir, if the Fortunate One would agree to these four refraining conditions, I will become personal attendant to the Fortunate One:

1. The Fortunate One should refrain from giving me the fine robes that he has received.
2. The Fortunate One should refrain from giving me fine food.
3. The Fortunate One should refrain from letting me stay in the same dwelling place reserved for him.
4. The Fortunate One should refrain from taking me to lay supporters' houses when they invite him.

The Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Ānanda, what disadvantages do you see in these four matters?" And Ven. Ānanda explained thus: "Venerable sir, if I were given the four requisites enjoyed by the Buddha, then there is bound to arise the criticism that Ānanda has the privilege of receiving the fine robes received by the Fortunate One, receiving the fine food received by the Fortunate One, getting to stay together in the Buddha's Perfumed Chamber, and having the privilege of accompanying the Buddha who visits to the houses of lay supporters. I see those criticisms as disadvantages."

Further, Ven. Ānanda requested from the Buddha these four special privileges: "Venerable sir, if the Fortunate One would grant me these four special privileges, I will become the personal attendant to the Fortunate One:

1. The Fortunate One should agree to go to the places I invite him to.
2. The Fortunate One should give audience to visitors immediately upon their arrival.

3. The Fortunate One should explain to me any points of the doctrine that need elucidation.

4. The Fortunate One should recount to me all the discourses he makes while not in my presence.

The Buddha asked Ven. Ānanda again: "Ānanda, what benefits do you see in these four favours?" Ven. Ānanda explained thus: "Venerable sir, in this teaching which has eight marvellous quantities, certain lay supporters, who have great devotion to the Buddha, do not have direct access to invite him personally to their houses. They would ask me, as the Buddha's personal attendant, to make their invitations and if I will accept their invitations on your behalf; those devotees, who come from afar to pay homage to the Fortunate One, should be allowed to see the Buddha without much waiting; whenever I am not satisfied with a certain saying of the Fortunate One I, as his personal attendant, ought to be allowed to ask the Fortunate One to have those unclear points of the doctrine elucidated.

Venerable sir, if the Fortunate One were not to comply with my requests to accept the invitations that are made by lay supporters through me; or not to comply with my request on behalf of pilgrims to give early audience; not to comply with my request to have the right to ask for elucidation on doctrinal problems, then people would say: 'What is the purpose of Ānanda's personal attendance to the Fortunate One, if he is devoid of even these things?' These are the reasons in my asking for the first three boons. As regards the fourth boon, if other monastics were to ask me: 'Friend Ānanda, where was this verse, or this discourse or this Birth-story given by the Fortunate One?' and if I should be unable to answer their query, they would say: 'Friend, you have been as close to the Fortunate One as his very shadow, and yet you do not know even this much.' Venerable sir, to avoid such criticism, I am asking the Fortunate One this fourth favour, to relate to me all the discourses made by the Fortunate One not in my presence. Venerable sir, these are the advantages I see in four boons I am asking."

The Buddha granted Ven. Ānanda all eight boons which comprised the four restaints and the four favours.

Thus Ven. Ānanda, after being granted the eight boons by the Buddha, became his permanent [1316] attendant. Hence he saw the realization of his aspiration, for which he had fulfilled the perfections over 100,000 aeons.

His daily routine consisted of getting cold and hot water for the Buddha, making ready the three sizes of woodbine tooth-brushes to suit the occasion, massaging the arms and legs of the Buddha, scrubbing the Buddha's back when he took a bath, cleaning up the precincts of the Buddha's Perfumed Chamber, etc. Moreover, he was always by the Buddha's side, seeing to the Buddha's needs at all times and charting out an appropriate activity to be performed by the Buddha.

Not only did he keep a close loving supervision on the Buddha's activities by day and at night, he also would keep himself awake by holding up a lamp and going round the precincts of the Buddha's Chamber. Every night, he made nine rounds with the lamp in hand, his intention being to be ever ready when called by the Buddha at any hour. These are the reasons that lay behind his being designated as a foremost monastic.

Foremost Titles Achieved

On one occasion, when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery, he extolled the virtues of Ven. Ānanda, the custodian of the doctrine, in many ways:

> *1. Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ bahu-sutānam yad-idaṁ Anando.*
>
> Monastics, among my monastic disciples who have wide learning, Ānanda is the foremost (*etad-agga*).
>
> *2. Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ satimantānaṁ yad-idaṁ Anando.*
>
> Monastics, among my monastic disciples who have mindfulness in retaining my discourses, Ānanda is the foremost.
>
> *3. Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ gatimantānaṁ yad-idaṁ Anando.*
>
> Monastics, among my monastic disciples who comprehend my teaching, Ānanda is the foremost.
>
> *4. Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ dhitimantānaṁ yad-idaṁ Anando.*

> Monastics, among my monastic disciples who are diligent in learning, remembering and reciting my teaching, Ānanda is the foremost.
>
> *5. Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ upaṭṭhākānaṁ yad-idaṁ Anando.*
>
> Monastics, among my monastic disciples who render personal service to me, Ānanda is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

Thus in Buddha Gotama's teaching, Ven. Ānanda was named by the Buddha as the foremost (*etad-agga*) monastic-disciple in five areas: wide learning, mindfulness in retaining the doctrine, comprehending the teaching, diligence in bearing the teaching, and in caring for the teacher, by giving personal service to the Buddha.

> [A section on the First Council which includes many details about Ven Ānanda has been removed from here and placed after the Buddha's Parinibbāna in chapter 41a.]

Ven. Ānanda's Parinibbāna

At the time of the First Council, in 483 BCE, Ven. Ānanda who was born on the same day as the Buddha was already 80 years of age. On the fortieth year after the First Council, when he was 120 years old, he reviewed his life-maintaining faculty and saw that he had only seven more days to live. He told this to his pupils.

When people learned this news, those living on one side of the river Rohiṇī, the bone of contention between the Sakyans and the Koliyans concerning the distribution of its waters that led to the Buddha's discourse known as the Discourse on the Great Assembly (*Mahā-samaya-sutta*, DN 20) said that Ven. Ānanda had benefited much from them and so he would pass away on their side of the river. And those living on the other side of the river also said so.

On hearing these words from both sides, Ven. Ānanda thought: "Both groups have done much to benefit me. None can dispute this fact. If I were to pass away on one side of the river, those living on the other side would fight for possession of my relics. Then I would become the cause of strife between them. If there be peace I will have to be the cause of peace. It now depends on how I handle the matter."

After reflecting thus, he said to both groups: “Male and female supporters, those of you who live on this side of the river have done me much benefit. Likewise, those of you who live on the other side of the river have done me much benefit. There is none among you who have not benefited me. Let those who live on this side gather together on this side, and let those who live on the other side gather together on that side.”

Then on the seventh day, he remained aloft in the sky at about seven palm trees’ height, sitting cross-legged above the middle of the river Rohinī and delivered a discourse to the people. At the end of the discourse, he willed that his body should split into two, with each portion falling onto each side of the river. He then entered into the absorption (*jhāna*) on the fire element (*tejo-dhātu*) which is the basis of attaining supernormal powers. On emerging from that absorption, the thought process pertaining to supernormal power arose in him. At the impulsion moment of that thought process, his body became ablaze and immediately after the end of that thought process, the death-consciousness arose and he passed away, realizing Nibbāna and making an end of all traces of existence.

His body split into two, as he had willed, one portion falling on one side of the river and the other portion falling on the other side. People on both sides wailed wildly. The outburst of their emotion sounded as if the earth itself were crumbling. The lamentation on this occasion would seem even more pitiable and desperate than it was on the death of the Buddha. They wailed for four whole months, muttering: “So long as we saw the Buddha’s personal assistant who went about holding the Buddha’s alms bowl and robes, we got some solace about the absence of the Buddha, but now that person himself is dead and no more, we have no means to solace ourselves. The Buddha’s passing away is now complete for us.”

Verses of Urgency

Hā saṁyogā viyogantā.

Dreadful indeed is grief, lamentation, etc. All forms of association between spouses, kinsmen, friends, teachers and pupils, end because there inevitably comes the parting between those dear ones either through death or through severance. [1326]

Hā aniccā va saṅkhatā.

Dreadful indeed is grief, lamentation, etc. All conditioned phenomena, mind, temperature and nutriment all end, due to their impermanence.

Hā uppannā ca bhaṅgantā.

Dreadful indeed is grief, lamentation, etc. All conditioned phenomena that have the nature of arising end because they are subject to decay and dissolution.

Hā hā saṅkhāra-dhammatā.

Dreadful indeed is it to be liable to sink in the turbulent ocean of woes is the unalterable course of mind and matter of conditioned phenomena, which all have the characteristics of impermanence, suffering and non-self.

31. Ven. Uruvelā Kassapa

Aspiration in the Past

The future Uruvelā Kassapa was born into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When he came of age, he listened to a discourse by the Buddha. While doing so, he witnessed a monastic being named by the Buddha as the foremost monastic in having a large following. He was inspired by that monastic to become someone similar in the future. He made great offerings to the Buddha and his Saṅgha for seven days, at the end of which, he made an offering of a set of three robes to the Buddha and each of the members of the Saṅgha and, thereafter, he expressed his aspiration to become a foremost monastic at some future time, having a big following. The Buddha reviewed his aspiration and saw that it would be fulfilled and thus made the prediction: “You will be named by Buddha Gotama as the foremost monastic in his teaching with a big following.” After making the august pronouncement Buddha Padumuttara returned to his monastery.

Life as Royal Brother to Buddha Phussa

In that existence of receiving Buddha Padumuttara’s prediction, the future Uruvelā Kassapa lived a meritorious life until he died and was reborn in the Deva realm and subsequently either in the human world or the Deva realm.

Then 92 aeons prior to the present aeon, when Buddha Phussa appeared in the world, the future Uruvelā Kassapa was reborn as the half brother of the Buddha. The Buddha had three younger half-brothers and this prince, the future Uruvelā Kassapa, was the eldest of the three.

> The three brothers attended upon the Buddha with the four monastic requisites for one Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), the details of which have been described in Ven. Raṭṭhapāla's story, section 20-21, above. Also refer to chapter 14 for more information on the Kassapa brothers.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

The three royal brothers gave a great offering of valuable articles to the Buddha and his Saṅgha at the end of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*). They also spent their whole lives in doing meritorious deeds, and were reborn in the fortunate destinations only. During the present aeon, before the advent of Buddha Gotama, they were reborn into a Brahmin family whose clan name was Kassapa. On coming of age, they become masters of the three Vedas and the eldest brother had 500 pupils; the second brother had 300 pupils; and the youngest brother had 200 pupils who became their disciples.

When they reviewed their learning they realised that the Vedas offered teachings for the present life but lacked knowledge that was of benefit in the hereafter. The eldest Kassapa brother, together with his 500 disciples, renounced the world and led the life of a recluse. They retired into the Uruvelā forest and he became known by the name of his [1327] place as Uruvelā Kassapa. The second brother and his 300 disciples likewise became recluses and lived at the river bend of the Ganges and he came to be known as Nadī Kassapa. The youngest brother also became a recluse together with his 200 disciples and they dwelled at a place called Gayāsīsa, and hence he became known as Gayā Kassapa.

The three Kassapa brothers became famous as teachers of their own religious sects. During the time when the three Kassapa brothers were giving guidance to their respective groups, the Buddha Gotama appeared in the world. The Buddha passed the first Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) at the Deer Park, also known as Isipatana, where he caused the Awakening of the Group-of-Five ascetics and the 55 youths

led by Yasa, son of a merchant, and these 60 disciples become the first Arahats in this world.

At the end of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), the Buddha enjoined the 60 Arahat monks to spread the good doctrine while he headed toward the Uruvelā forest alone. On his way, he met the 30 princes, all brothers, at Kappāsika forest, whom he summoned as monastics using the words: "Come, monastic," and caused their Awakening as noble ones (*ariya*) of various grades, training them for Awakening.

The Buddha then proceeded alone to the Uruvelā forest because he saw the ripeness of Uruvelā Kassapa for Awakening and also saw that all three Kassapa brothers and their followers would gain Awakening. When the Buddha met Uruvelā Kassapa, he had to display 3,500 miracles to convince him, the most remarkable of which was the taming of the powerful Nāga. Finally, Uruvelā Kassapa and his 500 disciples were summoned by the Buddha into the monastic life. On learning the news of the eldest brother becoming a follower of the Buddha, the younger brothers and their followers likewise became followers. All of them were summoned by the Buddha into the monastic life.[287]

The Buddha took the 1,000 newly admitted monastics to Gayāsīsa. He sat on the rock platform there and considered the appropriate discourse for them. He remembered that these recluses of Brahmin origin had all along been indulging in fire worship, and accordingly delivered them a discourse giving the simile of the fire that relentlessly burns through the three forms of existence: The sense, form and formless realms. The discourse entitled the Instruction about Burning (*Āditta-pariyāya*, SN 35.235) had the desired effect of turning all the monastics into Arahats.

Then the Buddha saw that the time was opportune for him to visit Rājagaha, where before his Awakening, as he had promised King Bimbisāra that he would visit his city after becoming a Buddha. He journeyed to Rājagaha accompanied by 1,000 Arahats and rested in the toddy palm grove. King Bimbisāra, on hearing about the arrival of the Buddha, went to meet him, in the company of 120,000 Brahmin householders. After paying respects to the Buddha, he sat in a

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[287] For details refer to chapter 14.

suitable place. On that occasion, the fame of Uruvelā Kassapa had become so well established that the Brahmin retinue of the king paid their homage to Uruvelā Kassapa. The Buddha knew that the audience were unable to decide which of the two, himself or Uruvelā Kassapa, was superior. He was also aware that the people, having doubts, could not pay attention to the Dhamma. So he said to Uruvelā Kassapa: "Kassapa, your followers are in a quandary. Clear up their mental confusion." Thus, the Buddha indicated to Ven. Uruvelā Kassapa to show his allegience.

Ven. Uruvelā Kassapa respectfully responded: Rising from his seat, he made obeisance to the Buddha with the hands, knees and forehead touching the ground, and rose up to the sky about a palm tree's height. There, remaining in mid-air, he took on various forms as he wished, and said to the Buddha: "The Fortunate One is my teacher; I am his pupil, his disciple. The Fortunate One is my teacher; I am his pupil, his disciple." Then he descended to the ground and paid homage to the Buddha at his feet. Then he rose up again to twice the height of a palm tree, created a variety of forms, came down and paid homage at the Buddha's feet. On the seventh time of repeating this miraculous feat, he rose to a height of seven palm trees, and after descending to the ground, and paying respects to the Buddha, he sat in a suitable place.

The big audience were now in no doubt about the supremacy of the Buddha and acclaimed him as the great ascetic. Then only the Buddha gave a discourse to them, at the [1328] end of which, King Bimbisāra and 110,000 Brahmin householders attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) and the remaining 10,000 Brahmins took the Three Treasures as their refuge; in that way they acknowledged the Buddha.

Foremost Title Achieved

The 1,000 pupils who had served Ven. Uruvelā Kassapa, after attaining Awakening, thought that since they had reached the peak of monastic practice, they did not need to go anywhere else for their religious advancement and so they remained in the company of their erstwhile leader.

On one occasion, the Buddha, in a monastic congregation at the Jetavana monastery, declared:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ
mahā-parisānaṁ yad-idaṁ Uruvela-kassapo.

Monastics, among my monastic disciples who have a big following, Uruvelā Kassapa is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

The Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) commentary, notes that Ven. Uruvelā Kassapa had the unique position of having a constant following of 1,000 monastics, taking into account the followers of his two younger brothers. If each of the 1,000 monastics were to act as preceptor and admit one monastic, Uruvelā Kassapa's following would become 2,000, and if the original 1,000 were to admit two new monastics each into the Saṅgha, his following could become 3,000. Hence he was in an unrivalled position in the number of following.

32. Ven. Kāḷudāyī

Aspiration in the Past

The future Kāḷudāyī was born into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While he was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he happened to witness the Buddha appoint a monastic as being the foremost disciple who could arouse devotion in the Buddha's kinsmen, even before they had met the Buddha. The worthy man, the future Kāḷudāyī, aspired to such an honour during the time of some Future Buddha. After making the great offerings, he expressed his aspiration before the Buddha. Later, the Buddha uttered words predicting the fulfilment of his aspiration.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

Future Kāḷudāyī devoted himself to meritorious deeds till the end of his life. He was reborn in the fortunate destinations only. Finally, he was conceived in the womb of the mother who was of a high official family in Kapilavatthu. This took place simultaneously with the conception of the Bodhisatta, Prince Siddhattha, as the two boys were born on the same day. His parents placed him on a white cloth and presented him to King Suddhodana to become an attendant to Prince Siddhattha.

The Name Kāḷudāyī

On the day of naming the boy, they named him Udāyī because he arose (*udaya*) on the same day the Bodhisatta was born, and the whole city was filled with joy and excitement because of that. Since the boy had a somewhat darker skin, the word *kāḷa* (dark), was prefixed to the original name of Udāyī and he was therefore called Kāḷudāyī. As a boy, Kāḷudāyī lived in the royal palace and he played games privately with Prince Siddhattha in the place of Kapilavatthu.

Later on, Prince Siddhattha renounced the world and spent six harrowing years in pursuit of the truth. He eventually attained Awakening and delivered his first discourse, the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*). He was then residing at Rājagaha which was his place for collecting alms food.

> This happened on the dark fortnight of the cold month of January (*Phussa*), in the year 528 BCE.

When King Suddhodana heard the good news that his son, the Buddha, was [1329] residing at the Veḷuvana monastery in Rājagaha, he sent a courtier with an entourage of 1,000 men, whose order was to request the Buddha to pay a visit to Kapilavatthu. The royal messenger made the 60 league journey to Rājagaha and entered the Veḷuvana monastery. At that time, the Buddha was teaching a discourse to the audience which consisted of the four types of listeners. The royal messenger sat at the edge of the audience and paid attention to the Buddha's discourse, thinking he would communicate the king's message to the Buddha after the discourse. But even while he was listening attentively to the discourse, he, as well as his entourage of 1,000 men, gained Awakening. Then the Buddha, extended his hand and said to them: "Come, monastics," and all the men instantly became monastics with the grave appearance of those with 60 years of monastic standing and fully equipped with the requisites, created magically (*iddhi-maya-parikkhāra*).

As it is in the nature of noble ones (*ariya*) to become indifferent to worldly matters, the thousand monastics did not impart King Suddhodana's message to the Buddha. They dwelt in the bliss of the attainment of Awakening. King Suddhodana felt annoyed to hear nothing from his messenger and sent another courtier with 1,000 men on the same mission.

This messenger also went before the Buddha, became absorbed in his discourse, and became an Arahat together with his 1,000 men. In this way, King Suddhodana sent a total of nine missions, one after another, each headed by a courtier with an entourage of 1,000 men to the Buddha and all the nine messengers and their 9,000 men neglected their mission because they became Arahats before they could extend the king's invitation to the Buddha.

Kāḷudāyī's Mission to Kapilavatthu

King Suddhodana then reflected on the situation: "The nine courtiers had no affection for me and so they said nothing to my son, the Buddha, about his visit to this city of Kapilavatthu of ours. Others would also fail to do so. But Kāḷudāyī, born on the same day as the Buddha, was his playmate in their childhood. This young man is affectionate to me." And so he summoned him and said to Kāḷudāyī, now an official at his court: "Son, go to the Buddha with 1,000 men, and invite him to Kapilavatthu."

Courtier Kāḷudāyī said to the King: "Great King, if you would give me permission to become a monastic, like the previous royal messengers, I will see to the Buddha's visit to Kapilavatthu." To which the king readily responded: "Son, do as you wish. Only see that my son, the Buddha, visits me."

"Very well, Great King," said Kāḷudāyī, "I shall do so," when the king gave his permission. He left the city accompanied by 1,000 men and eventually reached Rājagaha. Sitting at the edge of the audience, he listened to the Buddha who was teaching a discourse. After hearing it, he and his thousand men became Arahats and were called up by the Buddha into the monastic life.

But minister Kāḷudāyī did not forget his mission. He thought that the cold season was not suitable for the Buddha to make the long journey to Kapilavatthu, and that, when spring had appeared, and the forest flowers were blooming forth and the grass and foliage putting on fresh greenness, then only should the Buddha travel to Kapilavatthu. So he waited till the full moon of March (*Phagguṇa*) and then he sang 60 verses giving a picturesque portrayal of the pleasantness of the season, indicating to the Buddha that the time was right for him to visit Kapilavatthu.

[For more on this see chapter 17a above.]

The Buddha knew Ven. Kāḷudāyī's mind and decided that it was time that he visited Kapilavatthu. Then, accompanied by 20,000 Arahats, he took the journey of 60 leagues at a leisurely pace (*aturita-desa-cārikā*).

Ven. Kāḷudāyī, noting the Buddha's departure from Rājagaha, appeared at King Suddhodana's palace. The king was delighted on seeing him standing mid-air above the palace, and offered his throne for his seat. Then he filled the alms bowl of the [1330] venerable with cooked rice and dishes prepared for himself. Ven. Kāḷudāyī then moved as if to depart. The king said to him: "Son, take your meal here." To which the venerable said: "I shall take it when I get back to the Fortunate One." – "Where is the Buddha now?" asked the king. "The Buddha is now on his way, with 20,000 Arahats, to visit you." – "Then, son, take your meal here. Then carry the food prepared in my palace to the Buddha daily, till he arrives."

Henceforth, Ven. Kāḷudāyī took his meal at the palace and then received the alms food on behalf of the Buddha. In doing so, he gave a discourse to the king and the royal household on the noble qualities of the Buddha, thereby giving them a foretaste of the unparalleled pleasure they were to experience on meeting with the Buddha. Then, just as the people were watching him, he threw up into the air his alms bowl filled with food for the Buddha. He also rose into the air, took the alms bowl and offered it to the Buddha on the way. The Buddha received it in his hands and took his meal for the day.

Ven. Kāḷudāyī took upon himself the task of receiving alms food for the Buddha, and making the appropriate discourses to warm up the feelings of King Suddhodana and the royal household towards the Buddha, for the entire journey of his memorable journey to Kapilavatthu which was 60 leagues long, taken leisurely at the rate of one league a day.

> This remarkable routine that Ven. Kāḷudāyī set for himself, to bring food to the Buddha, was the basis of his receiving a special mention from the Buddha.

Foremost Title Achieved

On a later occasion, in a congregation of monastics, the Buddha reflected on the role that Ven. Kāludāyī had played in warming up the feelings of King Suddhodana and the kinsmen of the Buddha, declared:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ kulappasādakānaṁ yad-idaṁ Kāḷudāyī.

Monastics, among my monastic disciples who are able to kindle devotion to me in the hearts of my kinsmen, Kāḷudāyī is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

33. Ven. Bākula

Healing a Buddha

The future Bākula was born in a Brahmin family on the eve of the advent of Buddha Anomadassī, one incalculable period and 100,000 aeons before the present aeon. When he came of age, he learned the three Vedas and gained mastery in them. But he found that this learning lacked the essence of what he was looking for. "I will seek welfare in the hereafter," he decided, and so he renounced the world, became a recluse and resorted to a remote mountain. After due diligence, he gained the five kinds of super knowledges (*abhiññā*) and the eight absorption (*jhāna*) attainments. He spent his time in dwelling in the bliss of absorption.

Then the Buddha Anomadassī appeared in the world and went from place to place in the company of a big number of noble disciples. The recluse, who was to become Ven. Bākula aeons later, was thrilled by the news of the appearance in the world of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. He went to Buddha Anomadassī and on hearing his discourse, became established in the three refuges. He did not want to leave his mountain abode and remained a recluse, but often visited the Buddha to hear his Dhamma.

One day, the Buddha suffered from an attack of colic. On his visit to him, the recluse, the future Bākula, was told by the Buddha of his ailment. The recluse went back to his mountain gladly, grasping the opportunity of earning merit by collecting herbs to cure the Buddha. He delivered the medicine to the attendant monastic who then administered it to the Buddha. A single dose of the medicine completely cured the colic. [1331]

When the Buddha had recovered, the recluse approached him and made his solemn wish: "Venerable sir, I have brought the cure for the Fortunate One's disease. For this deed of merit, may I be free of disease at all times in my farings in Saṁsāra, and never subject to the slightest ailment even for the duration of

the milking of a cow." This was the remarkable merit done by the future Bākula in that past existence.

Aspiration in the Past

After passing away from that existence, the recluse was reborn in the Brahma world, and after this Brahma existence, he was reborn only in the Deva realm and the human world over the entire length of one immeasurable period (*asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*). During the time of Buddha Padumuttara, he was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī. On one occasion, he saw the Buddha name a monastic as the foremost monastic in perfect health or freedom from disease, and so he aspired to that honour at some future time. He made great offerings to the Buddha and the Saṅgha, as was usual with aspirants to such unique statuses, and later expressed his aspiration. The Buddha made the prediction that his aspiration would be realized.

Healing as a Recluse

The future Bākula spent the whole of his life doing deeds of merit and passed away to good destinations only. Then 91 aeons prior to the present aeon, he was born into a Brahmin family, in the city of Bandhumatī, on the eve of the appearance of Buddha Vipassī. As in his former existence during Buddha Anomadassī, he became a recluse and took up his dwelling at the foot of a mountain, enjoying the bliss of absorption.

Then Buddha Vipassī appeared in the world and went about in the company of 6,800,000 monastic Arahats, with Bandhumatī as the resort for collecting daily alms food, where he benefited his father, King Bandhuma, with discourses on the doctrine. Later he resided in the Deer Park known as Khemā, "the Sanctuary."

The recluse, the future Bākula, heard the news of the appearance of the Buddha in the world. He approached Buddha Vipassī, and on hearing his discourse, became a disciple of his. Although he took refuge in the three refuges, he did not want to leave his mountain abode and remained there as a recluse, but frequenting the monastery of the Buddha to attend on him.

One day, the Saṅgha, with the exception of the two chief disciples and the Buddha himself, developed headaches, which was due to contact with poisonous

pollen wafted in the air from a certain poisonous kind of plant growing in the Himavanta. When the recluse visited the Buddha and saw the infected monastics lying down with their heads covered, he inquired from a monastic about the cause of the ailment. On being told the cause, he thought that an opportunity presented itself for him to tend to the sick monastics and earn merit. He gathered the necessary herbs, prepared a medicine, and administered it to the sick monastics who were immediately cured.

Repairing an Old Monastery

After living the full lifespan as a recluse, he passed away and was reborn in the Brahma realm. After that existence, he was reborn only in the fortunate destinations for a period of 91 aeons (*kappa*) only, when Buddha Kassapa appeared. Then he was born a householder in Bārāṇasī.

One day, he went to a remote country together with a team of carpenters to fetch timber for repairing his house. On the way, he came across an old monastery in a state of disrepair. He considered that repairing his own house had no particular merit to his life hereafter, but by repairing the monastery he could earn much merit. Therefore he sent his team of carpenters to find timber from the countryside and had the old monastery fully renovated, adding a new kitchen, a new eating place, a new fire-house for the cold season, a new walkway, a new hot bathroom, a new larder, a new latrine, a new clinic, a store of medicines and medicinal requisites comprising drugs, ointments, snuffs, inhalants. All these he dedicated to the Saṅgha. [1332]

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

The worthy man, the future Bākula, devoted himself to good deeds till the end of his life. And for the whole of the interim period between the two Buddhas, lasting infinite aeons, he was reborn in the Deva realm and the human world only. During the era of Buddha Gotama, just before he attained Perfect Awakening, future Bākula was conceived in the womb of the wife of a merchant of Kosambī. His parents reached the height of fortune and fame from the time of his conception. His mother believed that her child was endowed with great past merit, and on the day she gave birth to him, she had the infant bathed in the River Yamunā for the sake of his health and long life. This was done with ceremony.

The reciters of the Collection of the Middle Length Discourses (*Majjhima-nikāya*) say that the infant was sent to bathe in the river on the fifth day after his birth.

The nurse, who took the baby to the Yamunā, amused herself by dipping the baby in and out of the water. As she was doing so, a big fish drew near it, mistaking the baby for food. The nurse was frightened and ran away, leaving the baby to be swallowed by the fish.

But, as the baby was endowed with great past merit, he suffered no pains in being swallowed by the fish, but felt quite comfortable in the stomach of the fish, as though he were lying in bed.

If it were any other child it would die instantly. But since this baby was destined to be an Arahat, the power of the path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*) which was dormant in him, saved his life. This is the kind of super-natural power (*iddhi*) called the super-natural spreading of knowledge (*ñāṇa-vipphāra-iddhi*). The fish suffered great pain due to the power of the supposed victim inside it. It felt as if it had swallowed an iron ball and swam downstream for 30 leagues where, at Bārāṇasī, it was caught in a fisherman's net.

Big fish usually do not die in the net but are beaten to death. In this case, due to the power of the baby inside it, it died on its own accord so that no beating was necessary. The usual practice of fishermen was to cut up such a big fish to pieces for sales. But, in this case, the child inside it had great power to prevent it from being cut. Therefore, the fisherman carried it on his shoulder by means of a yoke and went about calling for prospective buyers, declaring the price as 1,000 pieces of money. This was an unusually high price and the citizens of Bārāṇasī could not buy it.

In Bārāṇasī, there was a merchant, worth 800 million, who had no child born to his family. His household servants purchased the fish for 1,000 pieces of money. Normally, preparing of food such as cutting a fish was left to her servants by the merchant's wife. But, in this case, she went into the kitchen and cut open the big fish, not at the stomach as was usually done, but at the back. This too was due to the great power of the baby inside. She was pleasantly surprised to find a bonny baby inside the fish. She took the baby, who was golden-hued, and carrying him in her arms crying: "I've got a baby! I got him from inside the fish!" She showed

him gleefully to her husband, who had the strange find of the living baby announced with the beat of the drum in the city. Then he reported the matter to the king who said: "The baby, who has survived in the stomach of a fish, must surely be of a person of great past merit. Let it remain in your care."

The Name Bākula

The natural parents of the baby in Kosambī learnt the news of a living baby being found in a fish in Bārāṇasī and they went to Bārāṇasī to investigate. They found the baby richly adorned, playing in the house of the rich man in Bārāṇasī. "What a lovely child this is!" the mother remarked, and said that it was her child. The foster mother disagreed and said: "No, it is my child."

Natural mother: "Where did you get this child?"

Foster mother: "I got it from the stomach of a fish."

Natural mother: "If so, this is not your child. It is mine."

Foster mother: "Where did you get yours?"

Natural mother: "I conceived it and it was born out of my womb after ten months of pregnancy, I sent it to the River Yamunā to bathe and it was swallowed by a big fish." [1333]

Foster mother: "Maybe it was another fish that swallowed your child. It is however true that I got this child from inside a fish."

Thus the two mothers each claimed the child as their own. This matter was brought before the king for decision.

The King of Bārāṇasī gave his decision as follows: "The wife of the merchant of Kosambī is the natural mother whose claim to the child is unshakable. On the other hand, the wife of the merchant of Bārāṇasī is not groundless in her claim to the child. For, when one buys fish, it is customary that the entrails of the fish are not taken out by the seller so that the buyer gets the whole fish. The child she got from inside the fish is legally her property. The former has the right to the child as a natural mother. The latter has right to the child as a son by way of a gift. Each is entitled to claim the child, and he is entitled to inherit from both families." From that day onwards, both the families enjoyed unprecedented

fortune and fame. And the child was brought up in luxury by both families. His name was Bākula Kumāra, meaning the child of two families.

When Bākula came of age, his two pairs of parents built three mansions each; each for his seasonal residence at Kosambī and Bārāṇasī. He spent only four months at each of the two cities, attended by a big retinue of girls for entertainment. When he moved from one city to the other at the end of a four-month stay, he travelled in pomp in a grand barge with dancing girls. The entertaining girls at each city divided the transit period equally between them, so that the sending-off team served on the barge for two months after which they were relieved about half-way by the welcoming team. The merchant's son then spent four months in great ease and comfort at the each place. He completed 80 years of age living in that manner.

Bākula's Monastic Life and Awakening

When Bākula was 80 years old, Buddha Gotama had attained Perfect Awakening. After teaching his first discourse, the Dhamma Wheel, the Buddha toured the country and, travelling by stages, reached Kosambī.[288] On learning of the arrival of the Buddha, his previous meritorious deeds prompted Bākula to go and see the Buddha. Making offerings of flowers and perfumes to the Buddha, he listened to his discourse which heightened his devotion so much that he took up the monastic life. As a monastic, he remained a worldling for seven days only because, at the dawn of the eighth day, he became an Arahat with the fourfold analytical knowledge.

At that time, the former ladies who waited upon him had returned to their parents' homes in Bārāṇasī and Kosambī. They were devoted to Ven. Bākula and made robes for him. He wore their robes in turns; a half month using those offered from Kosambī, another half month on those from Bārāṇasī. Besides, the citizens of both the cities made special offerings to him of whatever fine food or articles which they had.

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[288] According to the reciters of the Collection of the Middle Length Discourses (*Majjhima-nikāya*), he reached Bārāṇasī.

Foremost Title Achieved

During the 80 years of household life, Bākula never experienced any ailment, even for a fleeting moment such as it takes to hold a piece of solid unguent and savour its smell. On the completion of his 80th year, he became a monastic with great satisfaction and as a monastic, he also enjoyed perfect health. Moreover, he was never in want of any of the four monastic requisites. Thus, on one occasion, when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī, in a monastic congregation, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ appābādhānaṁ yad-idaṁ Bākulo.*
>
> Monastics, among my monastic disciples who enjoy good health, and are free from disease, Bākula is the foremost (*etad-agga*). [1334]

Wonders of Bākula

Some marvellous facts concerning Ven. Bākula, as mentioned in the Discourse concerning Bākula (*Bākula-sutta*, MN 124), are reproduced here.

Once, Ven. Bākula was staying in Rājagaha in the Veḷuvana monastery, when the naked ascetic Kassapa, who had been his friend during his lay life, visited him. After the usual exchange of greetings, he sat in a suitable place and said to Ven. Bākula: "Friend Bākula, for how long have you been a monastic?" – "Friend, I have been a monastic for 80 years." – "Friend Bākula, during these 80 years, how many times have you had sexual intercourse?" This was a rude question. Then Ven. Bākula revealed some marvellous and extraordinary things about himself as follows:

1. "Friend Kassapa, you should not have put the question to me thus: 'Friend Bākula, during these 80 years, how many times have you had sexual intercourse?' Instead, friend Kassapa, you should have put the question to me in this way: 'Friend Bākula, during these 80 years, how many times has perception concerning sense-pleasures (*kāma-saññā*) arisen in you?' Friend Kassapa, I have

been a monastic for 80 years.[289] All through these 80 years, never has there arisen in me any perception concerning sense pleasures."

> That no consciousness concerning sense-pleasures had ever arisen in Ven. Bākula is one marvellous fact about him.

2-3. "Friend Kassapa, I have been a monastic for 80 years. All through these 80 years, there never has arisen in me any perception concerning ill-will (*vyāpāda-saññā*) or any perception concerning harmful thoughts (*vihiṁsa-saññā*) towards anyone."

> That no perception concerning ill-will had ever arisen in Ven. Bākula is also a marvellous fact and that no perception concerning harmful thought towards others had ever arisen in him is yet another marvellous fact concerning him.

4. "Friend Kassapa, I have been a monastic for 80 years. All through these 80 years, there never has arisen in me any sensual thought."

> The fact that no sensual thought had ever arisen in Ven. Bākula is a marvellous fact concerning him.

5-6. "Friend Kassapa, I have been a monastic for 80 years. All through these years, no thought of harming has ever arisen in me."

> The fact that no thought of harming had ever arisen in Ven. Bākula is a marvellous fact concerning him.

7. "Friend Kassapa, I have been a monastic for 80 years. All through these 80 years, I have never accepted any robe offered by lay supporters who are not related to me."

> That he had not accepted robes offered by non-relatives is a marvellous fact concerning Ven. Bākula.

8. "Friend Kassapa, I have been a monastic for 80 years. All through these 80 years, I have never cut robe-material with a knife."

> This non-cutting of robe-material is a marvellous fact concerning Ven. Bākula.

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[289] Ven. Bākula's age was 160 years by that time.

"Friend Kassapa, I have been a monastic for 80 years. All through these 80 years:

9. I have never sewn a robe with a needle.

10. I have never dyed a robe.

11. I have never sewn a Cloth (*Kaṭhina*).

12. I have never taken part in the making of robes of companion monastics.

13. I have never accepted an offering of alms food at any lay person's house.

14. I have never had any such thought as: 'It would be well if somebody were to invite me.'

15. I have never sat in a house.

16. I have never taken a meal in a village or a town.

17. I have never cast my eyes on a woman, noticing her feminine characteristics. [1335]

18. I have never given a discourse to any woman, even a verse of four lines.

> It is proper for a monastic to discourse to a woman in five or six words. If a doctrinal question be asked by a woman, a monastic may answer it in as many as 1,000 verses. Yet Ven. Bākula did not discourse to a woman. Discoursing to lay supporters is mostly the job of those monastics who have attachment to them.

19. I have never gone near a nunnery.

> It is proper for a monastic to visit a sick female monastic. And yet Ven. Bākula did not do so. In such a rule, where exceptions are allowed, he never bothered with those exceptions.

20. I have never given a discourse to a nun.

21. I have never given a discourse to a probationer female monastic.

22. I have never given a discourse to a female novice.

23. I have never initiated anyone into the Saṅgha as a novice.

24. I have never acted as a preceptor to a candidate for full monastic life.

25. I have never given any instruction to any monastics.

26. I have never allowed myself to be served by a novice.

27. I have never bathed in a bath-house.

28. I have never used bath-powder.

29. I have never allowed myself to be massaged by a companion monastic.

30. I have never been ill, even for the duration taken to draw a drop of milk.

31. I have never taken even a bit of herbal medicine.

32. I have never leaned against a support.

33. I have never lain on a bed.

> These are also marvellous facts about Ven. Bākula.

34. Friend Kassapa, I have been a monastic for 80 years. All through these 80 years, I have never taken up residence for the Rains Retreat period near a village.

> This mode of dwelling in the forest throughout the whole period of the monastic life is another marvellous fact about Ven. Bākula.

35. Friend Kassapa, I remained in a defiled state as a worldling only for the first seven days of the monastic life, eating the alms food from the people. On the eighth day, knowledge of the Arahat fruition arose in me.

> That Ven. Bākula became an Arahat on the eighth day of his monastic life is also a marvellous fact concerning him.
>
> After hearing the marvellous and extraordinary facts about Ven. Bākula, the naked ascetic Kassapa requested Ven. Bākula to admit him into the Saṅgha as a monastic under this teaching. Ven. Bākula did not act as preceptor to him, but he found a suitable monastic to be preceptor to Kassapa, who was admitted into the Saṅgha. Not long after, Ven. Kassapa, by diligently engaging in the noble practice, became an Arahat.

36. Then one day Ven. Bākula, holding his key, went from one monastery to another and announced thus: “Venerable ones, come forth! Venerable ones, come forth! Today I shall realize Parinibbāna!”

> The fact that Ven. Bākula was able to do so is also a marvellous thing concerning him.

37. When the Saṅgha was thus apprised and the companion monastics had gathered themselves, Ven. Bākula, reflecting that during his whole life he had never caused any monastics any inconvenience, and that at his death also he did not wish any monastic to bear the burden of his dead body, he wished that his body be consumed by fire. He sat in the midst of the gathering of monastics, entering into the absorption (*jhāna*) on the element of heat and passed away. As soon as he passed away his body was consumed by a flame which arose from the body and there was [1336] just a small collection of relics resembling Jasmine buds.

> This way of passing away in the midst of a gathering of monastics is also a marvellous thing concerning Ven. Bākula.

34. Ven. Sobhita

Aspiration in the Past

The future Ven. Sobhita was born into a worthy family, in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he saw a monastic being designated as the foremost among the male monastic disciples who could remember their past lives. He aspired to that honour in some future existence. After making extraordinary offerings to the Buddha, he expressed this wish. The Buddha predicted that his wish would be fulfilled.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

The future Sobhita spent his life in doing deeds of merit and passed away into good destinations only. During the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn in the Brahmin caste in Sāvatthī. He was named Sobhita.

Young Sobhita had occasions to listen to the Buddha's discourses. His devotion grew to such an extent that he became a monastic and engaged in the noble practice well and eventually became an Arahat. He was especially endowed with a keen power of remembering past existences (*pubbe-nivāsa-ñāṇa*).

Foremost Title Achieved

Five hundred aeons ago, from the present aeon, the future Sobhita, under the teaching of other faiths, had practised absorption (*jhāna*) on the form sphere

which is devoid of consciousness. While dwelling in the fourth absorption of that description, he passed away without relapsing from absorption and was reborn in the form realm where he lived for 500 aeons, which is the full lifespan in that existence.

After passing away from that existence, he was reborn in the human world as Sobhita, the Brahmin youth. As he was ripe for Awakening, he became a monastic in the teaching of Buddha Gotama. He strove diligently for Awakening and eventually attained it and was endowed with the three powers: the power of remembering past existences, the power of divine sight and the power of the destruction of the pollutants (*āsava*).

One day, as he exercised his power of remembering past existences, he could see his rebirth in the present existence and on going back he could see his death, or the death-conscious moment, at the existence in the second last existence. But he could not see the existence before that which was in the form realm, which is without consciousness.

> Power of remembering past existences is founded on the recalling of the death-consciousness moments and the rebirth-consciousness moments of past existences. This power pertains only to mental phenomena such as understanding the causal relation of mental processes by way of proximity. The form realm which is devoid of consciousness (*asaññā-satta*), does not lend itself to this scrutiny.[290]

Thus, his second last existence being devoid of mental phenomena and hence unknowable even by the power of remembering past existences, Ven. Sobhita used his intuition thus: "Any being who still fares in the round of rebirth has not a single moment when the aggregates (*khandha*) do not arise. A being, reborn in the form realm, is devoid of consciousness, has a lifespan of 500 aeons. Therefore, I must have been reborn in that sphere and remained alive without consciousness. That was surely my second to last existence." That was how Ven. Sobhita arrived at the knowledge of his past existence.

Recollecting past existence of one who is reborn in the form realm that is devoid [1337] of consciousness, is a matter falling within the province of the Buddhas

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[290] This is based on the Light on the Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-dīpanī*).

only. The conclusion drawn by Ven. Sobhita was an extraordinary mental faculty, which is like hitting a yak's hair with a dart of yak's hair, or like printing a foot track in the sky. Therefore, referring to this unparalleled power of Ven. Sobhita, the Buddha, on another occasion when naming foremost monastics, declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ pubbe-nivāsaṁ anussarantānaṁ yad-idaṁ Sobhito.*

Monastics, among my monastic disciples who have the power to recollect their past existences, Ven. Sobhita is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

> For more information on this extraordinary faculty of Ven. Sobhita, refer to the Vinaya (PTS 3.109), and the commentary and sub-commentary thereon.

35. Ven. Upāli

Aspiration in the Past

The future Upāli was born into a worthy family, in the city of Haṁsavati, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While he was listening to a discourse being delivered by the Buddha, he witnessed a monastic being designated as the foremost among the male monastic disciples who strictly lived by the Vinaya Rules. He wished to be honoured by the same title by some Bodhisatta. After making extraordinary offerings to the Buddha, he expressed his aspiration before him, and the Buddha predicted that the aspiration would be fulfilled.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

The future Upāli spent his whole life in meritorious actions and passed away to good destinations only. During the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn in the barber caste and was named Upāli. When he came of age, he served as barber to the six Sakyan princes: Bhaddiya, Anuruddha, Kimila, Bhagu, Ānanda and Devadatta. When the six Sakyan princes renounced the world and joined the Buddha at the Anupiya Mango grove in order to get admission into the Saṅgha, Upāli also became a monastic together with them.

> For details of the episode about the group of Sakyan princes taking up the monastic life, refer to chapter 19.

After becoming a monastic, Ven. Upāli listened to a discourse by the Buddha and said to him: "Venerable sir, may the Fortunate One allow me to dwell in the forest." To which the Buddha replied: "Son, if you live in the forest you will be pursuing insight-cultivation only. If you live by my side you will be pursuing insight-cultivation as well as pursuing learning." Ven. Upāli gladly agreed, and with due diligence he became an Arahat not long afterwards. Then the Buddha personally taught the Vinaya extensively to Ven. Upāli.

Ven. Upāli proved himself the greatest disciple in the Vinaya Rules by his decisions on three cases, namely: 1) The Story of Bhārukacchaka; 2) the Story of Ajjuka; and 3) The Story of Kumāra Kassapa.

Of these three, the story of Kumāra Kassapa appears in section 28 of this chapter. The remaining two stories are briefly given below.

The Story of a Venerable from Bhārukaccha

A monastic from Bhārukaccha, a seaport town, dreamt that he had sexual intercourse with his previous wife in his lay life. He had qualms of conscience, and considered himself no longer a monastic. He returned to his native seaport town, Bhārukaccha, intending to return to lay life. On his way, he met Ven. Upāli and related his experience to [1338] him. Ven. Upāli said: "Friend, what you committed in a dream does not amount to a breach of the Vinaya Rules." This episode is recorded in the Vinaya (Vin Ss1, PTS 3.39).

Ven. Upāli was giving judgment on a matter regarding which no decision had been pronounced by the Buddha because the Vinaya does not take dreams as acts of volition. But he knew that having a wet dream is not a fault and so he rightly decided that the monastic from Bhārukaccha was not at fault. When the Buddha learnt of that decision, he lauded Ven. Upāli, saying: "Monastics, Upāli has ruled on the matter correctly. He has done something like one who has made a foot-track in the sky."

The Story of Ven. Ajjuka

Once, in the city of Vesālī, a certain lay supporter of Ven. Ajjuka, who had a son and a nephew as his possible heirs, entrusted Ven. Ajjuka with a weighty personal affair. He said to Ven. Ajjuka: "Venerable sir, here is my son and here is my nephew. Of these two boys, may Ven. Ajjuka show where my property is

located to the one who has devotion to the Three Treasures." Having thus created a private trust, the lay supporter died.

Ven. Ajjuka found that the nephew of the deceased man was devoted to the Three Treasures and so he showed him where the property of the man was located. The boy made proper use of his inheritance by engaging in business, which resulted in the preservation of his uncle's wealth and enabled him to do deeds of generosity.

The son of the deceased man brought this question to Ven. Ānanda, asking: "Venerable sir, as between a son and a nephew, who is the rightful heir to a deceased person?"

"Lay supporter, the son is the rightful heir."

"Venerable sir, Ven. Ajjuka has shown the property which is rightfully mine to my brother-in-law, my father's nephew."

Ven. Ajjuka then said to Ven. Ānanda: "Friend Ānanda, give me your decision on the matter." Ven. Ānanda, without going into the details of this matter, said hastily: "In that case Ven. Ajjuka is no longer a monastic, he has fallen from the monastic life." But on this problem Ven. Upāli sided with Ven. Ajjuka.

> Herein, Ven. Upāli was not taking sides without a just cause. He was simply taking up the righteous cause of Ven. Ajjuka who was blameless under the Vinaya Rules. In other words, he was upholding the Vinaya.

Ven. Upāli put this question to Ven. Ānanda: "Friend Ānanda, where a certain monastic was told by someone: 'Show my property to such and such a person,' and the monastic did as he was told, what fault does he incur?"

"There is no fault whatsoever, venerable sir, not even a minor offence."

"Friend Ānanda, Ven. Ajjuka was under instructions by the owner of the property to show it to such and such person, and he showed it to the nephew. Therefore, friend Ānanda, Ven. Ajjuka incurs no wrong under the Vinaya."

The news of this bold decision reached the Buddha who said: "Monastics, Upāli has given a right decision," and lauded him.

There are many more remarkable events that revealed the greatness of Ven. Upāli which may be found in the Traditions about the Elder Monks (*Thera-apadāna*, Tha-ap 8).[291]

Foremost Title Achieved

The Buddha endorsed the three Vinaya rulings given by Ven. Upāli, lauding him each time. Based on these three instances, on another occasion, the Buddha, sitting in a congregation of monastics, declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *Vinaya-dharānaṁ yad-idaṁ Upāli.* *[1339]*

Monastics, among my monastic disciples who strictly uphold the Vinaya, Upāli is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

36. Ven. Nandaka

Aspiration in the Past

The future Nandaka was born into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he witnessed a monastic being honoured by the Buddha with the title of foremost monastic in giving admonition to female monastics. He had an ardent desire to be designated with the same title by some Future Buddha. He therefore made extraordinary offerings to the Buddha and later expressed his wish before him. The Buddha saw that his aspiration would be fulfilled and made the prediction accordingly.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

The future Nandaka devoted himself to meritorious deeds till his death and after passing away from that existence, he was reborn only in good destinations. During the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn into a worthy family in Sāvatthī. When he attained adulthood, he listened to the Buddha's discourse which aroused his devotion so much that he renounced lay life and took up the

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[291] The text and the interpretations are contained in the Covering of Faults (*Chidda-pidhānānī*) by the late Mahā-visuddhārāma Sayādaw.

monastic life. Soon after, striving strenuously in monastic practice, he became an Arahat. He had a special competence in exercising the power of remembering past existences. He also was a gifted orator who could draw the attention of the four types of devotees who gathered before the Buddha or the Saṅgha by his skill in exposition. Thus, he came to be popularly known as Ven. Nandaka, the Expounder of the Doctrine.

At one time, the Buddha had to intervene between the two warring groups of Sakyan princes: the Koliyan clan and the Kapilavatthu clan. They were living on each side of a small river called the Rohinī. They could not amicably decide on the distribution of the scanty water to each clan's cultivators. After pacifying both sides, the Buddha asked for 250 princes from each clan to take up the monastic life. These 500 Sakyan princes were young, and attached to their families, and did not find happiness as monastics. Hence, the Buddha took them to a far-away forest in the midst of which lay Lake Kuṇāla. There, he delivered the Birth Story about the King of the Cuckoos, Kuṇāla (*Kuṇāla-jātaka*, Ja 536) and aroused spiritual urgency in them. The Buddha knew about this and expounded the four noble truths to them which caused them to be established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). Then he taught them the Discourse on the Great Assembly (*Mahā-samaya-sutta*, DN 20) in the Great Wood, at the end of which, the 500 monastics became Arahats.[292]

The 500 wives of the monastics who had renounced their lay lives, did not see any reason to remain in their lofty mansions. So they all gathered around Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī, the Buddha's foster mother, to plead with the Buddha for admission into the Saṅgha.

They went to the Great Wood where, at the ardent request by Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī, the Buddha allowed them to become female monastics after laying down eight cardinal principles to be observed by them. Since there were no female monastics before them, their admission ceremony was performed by monks only.[293] The important thing relating to Ven. Nandaka is that all these

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[292] For details on this episode refer to chapter 22.

[293] Later, admission of female monastics required both a congregation of male monastics and that of female monastics.

500 female monastics were, in one of their former existences, queen consorts to Ven. Nandaka who was then a king.

Then the Buddha enjoined the monastics to admonish the female monastics. When it was Ven. Nandaka's turn to give admonition to the 500 female monastics, he did not go to them but deputed another monastic to carry out the task. This was because he knew, by his knowledge of recollecting past existences, that these 500 female monastics had been [1340] his consorts in his former existence. He was concerned that if some other monastic who was endowed with similar knowledge saw him surrounded by these female monastics, he might be misunderstood as being still attached to his former consorts.

The 500 female monastics were keen on receiving admonition from Ven. Nandaka. The Buddha then said to Ven. Nandaka: "Nandaka, admonish the female monastics personally, do not depute another monastic when it is your turn." Ven. Nandaka, in respectful compliance with the Buddha's words, went to the female monastics on the allotted day, the fourteenth day of the lunar month, which was an Observance (*Uposatha*) day. He admonished them on the subject of the six internal sense bases (*āyatana*) at the end of which, the 500 female monastics, former Sakyan princesses, attained the fruition of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

The female monastics were pleased and delighted with Ven. Nandaka's discourse. They approached the Buddha and expressed their appreciation of the supermundane path and the fruition which they had experienced. The Buddha then reviewed their case, and saw that the same discourse by Ven. Nandaka, if repeated, would lead them to becoming Arahats. So, on the following day the Buddha let them hear the same discourse from Ven. Nandaka. As the result of which, the 500 female monastics became Arahats.

On the day when the 500 female monastics approached the Buddha, he knew that the repeated discourse had benefited them and so he said to the monastics: "Monastics, the discourse by Ven. Nandaka yesterday is like the full moon that appears on the fourteenth day of the month whereas the discourse he made today is like the full moon that appears on the fifteenth day of the month." Thus the Buddha extolled the merit of Ven. Nandaka's discourse.

The full text of the discourse by Ven. Nandaka is found in the Discourse giving Nandaka's Advice (*Nandakovāda-sutta*, MN 146).

Foremost Title Achieved

With reference to the above episode, the Buddha, on another occasion, sitting in the monastic congregation, declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ bhikkhunovādakānaṁ yad-idaṁ Nandako.*
>
> Monastics, among the male monastic disciples who give instruction to female monastics, Nandaka is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

37. Ven. Nanda

Aspiration in the Past

The future Nanda was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When he came of age, he had the occasion to listen to a discourse by the Buddha. As he was listening to the discourse, he witnessed the Buddha name a certain monastic as foremost in guarding his sense-faculties. He aspired to that distinction in the teaching of some Future Buddha. After making extraordinary offerings to the Buddha, he expressed his aspiration. The Buddha predicted that the aspiration would be fulfilled.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

The future Nanda was reborn as the son of Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī, the foster-mother of the Buddha, in the city of Kapilavatthu.

He was born two or three days after the Bodhisatta, Prince Siddhattha, was born by Queen Māyā, who was the elder sister of Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī. On the third day of his first visit to Kapilavatthu, the Buddha admitted Prince Nanda into the Saṅgha. The details of Ven. Nanda's story have been given in chapter 20b.

Although Prince Nanda had taken up the monastic life, the pitiable words of Princess [1341] Janapadakalyāṇī were always ringing in his ears: "My Lord, came back to me soon!" Quite often he imagined his erstwhile beloved wife was standing by his side. Finding no comfort in the teaching, he tried to run away

from the Nigrodhārāma monastery. But he had not gone beyond a thicket when he thought the Buddha was standing in his way, and he was obliged to go back to the monastery with a mind crumpled like a burnt feather.

The Buddha knew the distress of Ven. Nanda, his utter negligence and his dissatisfaction in the monastic life. To give immediate relief to his boredom and despair, the Buddha said to him: "Come, Nanda, let us pay a visit to the celestial world." – "Venerable sir, the celestial world is accessible to powerful beings only. How would I be able to visit there?" asked Ven. Nanda. "Nanda, just make your wish to go there and you will get there and see the celestial realms."

> The above account is taken from the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*). The following account about Ven. Nanda will be based on the Discourse about (*Nanda-sutta*, Ud 3.2) and the commentary thereon.

The Buddha's objective was to allay the pangs of attachment in Nanda's mind by a strategy. Then, as if taking Nanda by the arm, the Buddha, by means of his supernormal powers took Ven. Nanda to the Tāvatiṁsa Realm. On the way, the Buddha let him see a decrepit old female monkey sitting desolately on the stump of a burnt tree in a burnt paddy field, with her nose, ears and tail burnt away after a big forest fire.

> In this matter, the Buddha took Nanda personally to the Tāvatiṁsa Realm to let him experience the stark contrast between the nature of human existence and Deva existence, how lowly in birth the former is when compared with the latter. Just by letting him see the Tāvatiṁsa Realm, the Buddha could have opened up the vista of the Deva realm while remaining at the Jetavana monastery, or else he could have sent Nanda alone by his Buddha-power to the Tāvatiṁsa Realm. The magnificence of the Deva realm was purposely impressed on Nanda so as to make him take up, as an object of his goal, the task of the threefold training of a monastic which he would consider enjoyable and worthwhile.

At the Tāvatiṁsa Realm, the Buddha showed him Devakaññā, or divine maidens, who had crimson feet like the colour of the feet of the pigeon, who were entertaining Sakka, the Lord of the Devas. Then followed a dialogue between the Buddha and Ven. Nanda:

Buddha: Nanda, do you see those 500 Devakaññā whose feet are crimson like the colour of pigeon's feet?

Nanda: I do, venerable sir!

Buddha: Now, answer my question honestly. What do you think of this: who is more beautiful, these Devakaññā or your one-time wife the Sakyan Princess Janapadakalyāṇī? Who is more attractive?

Nanda: Venerable sir, compared to these Devakaññā, Janapadakalyāṇī would seem to me just like the decrepit old female monkey we saw on our way here. She cannot stand beside these girls who are much too superior to her, who are much more lovely, much more attractive.

Buddha: Nanda, take up your monastic practice well. Make yourself happy in the teaching. I assure you that if you do so, you will have these 500 Devakaññā.

Nanda: Venerable sir, if the Fortunate One assures me of getting these lovely girls with crimson feet, I will make myself happy in the teaching and stay with the Fortunate One.

After that dialogue in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm, the Buddha brought along Ven. Nanda instantly to the Jetavana monastery as if taking him by the arm.

> The Buddha's strategy needs to be understood here. As a good physician would administer some purgative to purge out the toxic waste inside his patient, before administering milder medicine, so as to vomit out the remaining harmful matter [1342] that causes the disease, so also Ven. Nanda's sensual attachment for his ex-wife had first to be purged by means of his desire for the Devakaññā. After that, the Buddha would direct Ven. Nanda's efforts to the practice of the noble path whereby he could get rid of the remaining defilements.
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> Again, the reason for setting up some sexual object, such as divine maidens for Nanda, whom the Buddha wishes to get established in the noble practice marked by celibacy, needs to be understood. The Buddha is giving a temporary visual object of a much greater attractiveness so that Nanda could readily forget his erstwhile wife. By giving his assurance to Nanda to get that objective, the Buddha sets the mind of the youthful monastic at ease. Incidentally, the course of the Buddha's discourse, which usually

> progresses from attainment of celestial glory on the part of a supporter towards path and fruit, should also be understood likewise.

From the time he got back to the Jetavana monastery, Ven. Nanda arduously pursued monastic practice, with the object of getting Devakañña. Meanwhile, the Buddha had given instructions to the monastics to go about Ven. Nanda's meditation place and say: "A certain monastic is said to be striving hard in monastic practice to get Devakañña under the assurance of the Fortunate One." The monastics said: "Very well, venerable sir." And they went about within earshot of Ven. Nanda, saying: "Ven. Nanda is said to be striving hard in monastic practice to get Devakañña. The Fortunate One is said to have given him the assurance that 500 Devakañña with crimson feet like the colour of pigeon's feet will be his prize. What a mercenary monastic Ven. Nanda is! What an undignified trader Ven. Nanda is!"

When Ven. Nanda heard those stinging epithets, "mercenary" and "undignified trader," being applied to his name, he was greatly agitated, thinking: "Ah, how wrong I have been! How unbecoming for a monastic! Due to a lack of control of my sense-faculties, I have become the laughing stock of my companion monastics. I must guard my sense faculties well." From that moment, Ven. Nanda trained himself to be mindful with clear comprehension in all things that he looked at, whether looking east or west, south or north, upwards or downwards, across or at any intermediate point of the compass, not to allow any thought of greed, hatred, or any other demeritoriousness thought arise in him due to whatever he saw. By restraining himself with respect to his sense-faculties to a most exacting degree, his pursuit of monastic practice culminated in Awakening not long afterwards.

Then at about midnight, a Brahma went to the Buddha and gave the good news that Ven. Nanda had become an Arahat. The Buddha directed his mind to Ven. Nanda and confirmed that what the Brahma had said was true.

The Buddha's Freedom from Obligation

The thought that he was practising the noble path with the object of getting divine maidens, brought to his rude awakening by his companion monastics, made Ven. Nanda remorseful and the sense of spiritual urgency corrected his attitude and made him ever more ardent in the right practice culminating in

Awakening. Then he remembered how he had made the Buddha a guarantor to get him the Devakañña. He thought it necessary to relieve him of that undertaking. So the next morning he went to the Buddha, made obeisance, and sitting in a suitable place, said: "Venerable sir, the Fortunate One had undertaken to see that I get the 500 Devakañña with crimson feet like the colour of the feet of the pigeon. Venerable sir, I do not want the Fortunate One to be bound any more on that account."

The Buddha said: "Nanda, I know, in my own mind, by reading your mind, that you are now established in the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*). Moreover, a Brahma also brought this news to me. Nanda, from the moment of your freedom from the pollutants (*āsava*), from your attainment of Awakening, I have been released of that bond. This is a natural thing. You need not free me from it." The Buddha saw the unshakable nature of an Arahat, in the face of the vicissitudes of life rendered possible through the extinction from the pollutants, [1343] and feeling very delighted with the present status of Ven. Nanda, uttered this joyous verse (Ud 3.2):

> *Yassa nittiṇṇo paṅko, maddito kāma-kaṇṭako,*
> *mohakkhayaṁ anuppatto sukha-dukkhesu na vedhatī sa bhikkhu.*
>
> The Arahat has crossed over the mire of rebirth by means of the noble path which serves as a bridge. He has completely destroyed with the noble path as the weapon the darts of sensuality that torment Devas and humans alike. He has reached by progressing along the four stages of the path-knowledge the end of delusion, and attained Nibbāna. That enlightened monastic, unlike a worldling, does not flutter when faced with pain or pleasure.

Foremost Title Achieved

On another occasion, when the Buddha was in congregation with the monastics at the Jetavana monastery, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ*
> *indriyesu gutta-dvārānaṁ yad-idaṁ Nando.*
>
> Monastics, among the male monastic disciples who guard their sense-faculties well Nanda is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

Other monastic disciples also guarded their sense-faculties well. Ven. Nanda excelled all others in that whenever he looked in any of the ten directions to look at something, he did so only after making sure that he had the four kinds of clear comprehension: Clear and wise comprehension as to the pros and cons of an action beforehand (*sātthaka-sampajāñña*); clear and wise comprehension as to whether an action, even though beneficial, would be proper for oneself to do (*sappāya*); clear and wise comprehension so as not incur fault in one's going about various places (*gocara*); clear and wise comprehension so as to avoid any action influenced by delusion (*asammoha*).

He applied the rigorous self-discipline because he felt repentant about his lack of such control which lay at the root of his unhappiness in the monastic life. Moreover, he had an innate sense of shame to do evil and dread to do evil. And above all, there was also his past aspiration to attain this distinction which he expressed before Buddha Padumuttara 100,000 aeons previously, which was now fulfilled.

38. Ven. Mahā Kappina

Aspiration in the Past

The future Mahā Kappina was born into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While he was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he witnessed the honouring by the Buddha of a monastic as the foremost in admonishing other monastics. He aspired to that distinction at some future time. After making extraordinary offerings to the Buddha, he expressed his aspiration before the Buddha. The Buddha predicted that the aspiration would be fulfilled.

The following account of the future Mahā Kappina's meritorious actions is taken from the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 79). The commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) gives only a brief description of his meritorious action during the time of Buddha Kassapa, and then procedes to his last existence.

Life as a Chief Weaver

After passing away from the existence where he received the Buddha's prediction, the future Mahā Kappina was reborn only in the fortunate

destinations. In one such [1344] existence, he was the chief weaver in a big village, near the city of Bārāṇasī. During that time, there were 1,000 Paccekabuddhas who used to live at the Himālayas for four months of the cold season and four months of the hot season, but lived near the town in the countryside during the four rainy months.

On one occasion, the thousand Paccekabuddhas descended near Bārāṇasī and deputed eight among them to go and ask the King of Bārāṇasī to provide workmen for construction of monastic dwellings. It so happened that the time of this request was made when the king was preparing for the annual ritual of ploughing. As soon as the king heard the news of the arrival of the Paccekabuddhas, he went to meet them and asked about the purpose of their visit. Then he said: "Venerable sirs, there is hardly any time to start building monasteries immediately because tomorrow I shall be engaged in the annual ploughing ceremony. Therefore, may the venerables allow us to start on the third day from now." After saying so, the king returned to his palace without remembering to invite the Paccekabuddhas to receive food offerings on the next day.

The Paccekabuddhas left the palace, thinking of going elsewhere. At that time, the wife of the chief weaver happened to be in the city on business. When she saw the Paccekabuddhas, she made obeisance to them and asked them why they were in the city at that untimely hour. The Paccekabuddhas told her about their meeting with the king. The weaver's wife, being possessed of conviction in the Buddha and having innate wisdom, invited the Paccekabuddhas to accept her food offerings the next day. To which, they said: "Sister, we are rather too many." – "How many, venerable sir?" – "There are 1,000 of us." – "Venerable sir, there are 1,000 households in my village. Each household will offer food to each of the Paccekabuddhas. Just allow us to make the offerings. We shall also build monastic dwellings for your reverences, for which, I am going to take a lead." The Paccekabuddhas agreed to accept the invitation.

The wife of the chief weaver then went about in the village announcing to everyone: "Brothers! O sisters! I have met 1,000 Paccekabuddhas and invited them to receive our food offerings tomorrow. Please prepare rice gruel and cooked rice for them." The next morning she went to the Paccekabuddhas and led them to a big pavilion which was at the centre of the village. After having

seated them in their respective places, the offering of choice food and delicacies was made. At the end of the meal, she and the other ladies from the village made obeisance to the Paccekabuddhas and said to them: "Venerable sirs, may the revered ones agree to dwell at this village for the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period of three months." The Paccekabuddhas agreeing, the weaver's wife went about in the village, announcing: "Brothers! Sisters! Let us build a monastery for the Paccekabuddhas. Let every household lend a hand in this work. Let a man from every house bring axes, adzes and necessary tools. Let them go into the forest and gather timber. Let them join in this construction."

There was a very good response to her call for action, the whole village joined in the noble effort of putting up a humble monastic dwelling with thatched roofs for each of the thousand Paccekabuddhas, complete with living space for the night's shelter and for spending the day time. Every householder was eager to serve the Paccekabuddhas, with requests that their services be accepted. Thus they happily arranged for the three month period, tending to the needs of the thousand Paccekabuddhas.

At the close of the Rains Retreat period, the weaver's wife called upon the village: "Brothers! Sisters! Make ready the cloth for robes for each Paccekabuddha who had stayed at each of the monastic dwellings during the Rains Retreat period." Thus each household, which had built a dwelling for a Paccekabuddha, donated robes to its respective Paccekabuddha. Each robe was worth 1,000 pieces of money. After the offering of robes, the Paccekabuddhas delivered a discourse in appreciation of the donations, wished them well, and returned to their Himālayan abodes.

Life as a Chief Householder

All the residents of the weaver's village, after passing away from that existence, were reborn together in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm. After enjoying the full lifespan of a Deva, the whole group was reborn into families of rich householders in Bārāṇasī. The chief weaver was reborn into the family of the chief householder, and his wife of the former existence [1345] also was reborn into the family of a senior householder. When they were of marriageable age, the spouses in their previous existence in the weaver's village became spouses again.

One day, this community visited the monastery of Buddha Kassapa to listen to his discourse. As soon as they had stepped into the monastic compound, there came a deluge of rain. Then, those other people, who had members of the Saṅgha related to them, went into their premises for shelter from the rain. The thousand couples, who were householders, had nowhere to go for shelter but to remain in the monastic compound and were drenched thoroughly. Then the chief of these householders said to them: "Look, friends, how helpless we are. Considering our social standing, what we now find ourselves in is a total disgrace." – "What good work do we need to do?" This question was raised by the community. "We meet with this disgrace because we are total strangers to the Saṅgha in this monastery. So let us build a monastery by our joint efforts." – "Very well, chief," the men agreed.

Then the chief householder started a fund with his 1,000 pieces of money. The rest of the householders put in 500 each. The wives of the householders donated 250 each. With this initial outlay they started constructing a big pinnacled monastery for Buddha Kassapa. It was a big project and the funds fell short. So they each donated an additional amount, which was half of what they donated initially. And in this way they were able to complete the project. Then they held a grand inauguration ceremony for seven days to mark the transfer of the monastery to the Buddha and his Saṅgha. They also offered a robe each to the 20,000 Arahats.

The wife of the chief householder had innate wisdom. She showed greater devotion to the good work undertaken by the community of 1,000 rich householders. When robes were offered to the Buddha and the Saṅgha, she also offered golden-hued flowers of the Asoka tree to the Buddha besides the golden-hued robe, which was made especially for offering to the Buddha, and which was worth 1,000 pieces of money. When Buddha Kassapa delivered a discourse in appreciation of the donation of the Great Monastery, the wife of the chief householder, placing her specially made robe at the feet of the Buddha, made her aspiration thus: "Venerable sir, in all my future existences, may I have a complexion as golden-hued as these Asoka (*Anojā*) flowers, and may I also have the name of that flower, Anojā." And the Buddha replied: "May your wish be fulfilled."

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

This community of householders filled their lives with good deeds. After passing away from that existence they were reborn in the Deva realm. At the time of the appearance of Buddha Gotama, they passed away from the Deva existence, and the chief of them was reborn into the royal family in Kukkuṭavatī and was called Prince Mahā Kappina. When he came of age, he ascended the throne as King Mahā Kappina. The remaining householders were reborn into the noble families and became courtiers at the court of King Mahā Kappina. The wife of the chief householder was born into the royal family at Sāgala in Madda country. Princess Madda had a golden complexion and she was called Princess Anojā, the golden-complexioned, as she had aspired.

When Princess Anojā came of age, she became the Chief Queen of King Mahā Kappina. The wives of the householders in their previous existence were again united with their spouses of the past existence. The thousand ministers and their wives enjoyed the same glories of life as the king and the queen. When the king and queen rode on elephant-back, the thousand ministers and their wives rode on elephant-back too. When the king rode on horseback, they also rode on horseback, and when the king rode on a chariot, they also rode on chariots. This was because all of them had done meritorious deeds together in their past existences.

Looking for Wonderful News

King Mahā Kappina had five thoroughbred horses: Bala, Balavāhana, Puppha, [1346] Pupphavāhana and Supatta. The king used only Supatta and let his royal riders use the other four. It was the duty of his royal riders to gather daily information for him. They were properly fed in the morning, after which the king sent them out on their daily mission with the command: “Go ye, my good men, go to a distance of two to three leagues around this city of Kukkuṭavatī, each in his own direction to the four quarters, and see if there is news of the appearance of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha in the world. As soon as you hear the happy news, bring it to me with great haste.” The four riders would gallop away to the four quarters from the four city gates, went three leagues distance each day, and then returned to the palace, but without the good tidings the king eagerly awaited.

Then one day, as King Mahā Kappina visited the royal gardens riding his horse, Supatta, accompanied by his 1,000 ministers, he saw a caravan of 500 merchants, all looking tired, enter the city. The king thought: "These merchants had a weary journey. Probably they must have some fresh news to tell." He summoned them and addressed them: "Good men, where have you come from?" – "Great King, there is the city of Sāvatthī which is 120 leagues away from this city of Kukkuṭavatī. We have come from that Sāvatthī." – "Good men, tell me if there is some special news, current in Sāvatthī." – "Great King, there has appeared a Buddha at Sāvatthī."

On hearing the word "Buddha," the king was so overwhelmed by the five stages of delightful satisfaction that he was senseless for a short while. "What, what did you say?" – "Great King, the Buddha has appeared in the world." For three times, the news had the same stunning effect on the king. This was due to his intense delight. For the fourth time, the king asked again: "What did you say?" – "Great King, the Buddha has appeared in the world." – "Men, you have brought me the good news that the Buddha has appeared in the world. For bringing this precious news to me, I award you 100,000 pieces of money of silver."

Then King Mahā Kappina further asked: "Any other strange news?" – "Yes, Great King, the Dhamma has appeared in the world." On hearing the word "Dhamma," the king was so overwhelmed by intense delight that he was senseless for a short while. Three times he repeated his question and three times be seemed to have lost his senses for a while. On the fourth time, after being told: "Great King, the Dhamma has appeared in the world," the king said: "For bringing this precious news to me, I award you 100,000 pieces of money."

Then the king further asked: "Good men, have you any other strange news?" – "Yes, Great King," they said, "The Saṅgha has appeared in the world." On hearing the word "Saṅgha," the king was so overwhelmed by intense delight he became senseless for a while as before. This happened three times when he was told of the good news. On the fourth time, he said to the merchants: "Good men, for bringing this precious news to me, I award you 100,000 pieces of money."

Renunciation of King Mahā Kappina

Then the king looked at his 1,000 ministers and said: "My good men, what would you do now?" The ministers repeated the same question to the king:

"Great King, what would you do now?" – "Good men, now that we have been told that the Buddha has appeared, the Dhamma has appeared, the Saṅgha has appeared, we do not intend to return to our palace. We will go from here to the Buddha, and I will become a monastic as his disciple." The ministers said: "Great King, we too will become monastics together with you."

King Mahā Kappina had a gold plate etched with his order to disburse 300,000 pieces of money and handed it to the merchants. "Go, you good men," he said to them, "present this message to the queen at the palace, and she will disburse to you on my behalf 300,000 pieces of money. Also tell Queen Anojā, that the king has relinquished the throne and the country to her and that she may reign supreme in the land. If she asks: [1347] 'Where is the king?' you should tell her that the king has gone to the Buddha to become a monastic." The thousand ministers likewise sent messages of their renunciation to their wives. When the merchants went to the palace, the king rode his horse, Supatta, and, accompanied by his thousand ministers, went forth to become a monastic.

Mahā Kappina welcomed by the Buddha

The Buddha, on his daily reviewing of the sentient world, saw that King Mahā Kappina had learnt of the appearance of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha from the merchants, that he had honoured the Three Treasures by making an award of 300,000 pieces of money, and that he was renouncing the world and would be arriving the next day. The Buddha also saw that King Mahā Kappina and his 1,000 ministers would become Arahats together with the four analytical knowledges. "It would be well if I go and welcome King Mahā Kappina," reflected the Buddha. And like the Universal Monarch welcoming a vassal lord, the Buddha, taking his alms bowl and robes, left the monastery alone to welcome King Mahā Kappina on the way, at a distance of 120 leagues from Sāvatthī, where he sat underneath a Bodhi tree by the side of the River Candabhāgā, displaying the six Buddha-radiances.

King Mahā Kappina and his 1,000 ministers, mounted on horseback, went for renunciation when they came across a river. "What is this river?" he asked of his ministers.

"This is the river Aparacchā, Great King," they said.

"How big is it?"

"Great King, it is one mile deep and two miles wide."

"Is there any craft to cross?"

"There is none, Great King."

The king pondered thus: "While we are looking for some boats to cross this river, birth is leading us to ageing, and ageing is leading us to death. I have implicit faith in the Three Treasures and have gone forth from the world. By the power of the Three Treasures, may this expanse of water prove no obstacle to me." Then reflecting on the supreme attributes of the Buddha, such as: "The Buddha, the Arahat, the Perfectly Self-Awakened, the Fortunate One," he uttered the following verse (*Mahākappinatthera-apadāna*, Th-ap 530):

> *Bhava-sotaṁ sace Buddho, tiṇṇo lokantagū vidū,*
> *etena sacca-vajjena, gamanaṁ me samijjhatu.*
>
> The all-knowing Buddha indeed has crossed over the floods of the recurring existences in the three worlds. Having crossed over the floods, the Buddha has reached the end of the world and known all things analytically. By this asseveration of the truth, may my journey to the Buddha, on my renunciation be accomplished without any problems.

King Mahā Kappina, uttering this verse, crossed the river with his 1,000 ministers on horseback. The waters of the river which was two miles wide did not even wet the tips of the hoofs of their horses. As the king proceeded, he came across another river.

"What is this river?" he asked his ministers.

"This is the River Nīlavāhinī, Great King," they said.

"How big is it?"

"Great King, it is half a league deep and half a league wide."

> The king's further inquiry about boats and his pondering on the urgency of his journey should be read as before. Then reflecting on the supreme [1348] attributes of the Dhamma, such as: "The Dhamma is well propounded," etc., he uttered the following verse and crossed the river together with his 1,000 ministers:

Yadi santi-gamo maggo, mokkho caccantikaṁ sukhaṁ,
etena sacca-vajjena, gamanaṁ me samijjhatu.

The noble path (*ariya-magga*), the supermundane path, indeed leads to the peace of Nibbāna. The release attained through the noble path is absolute happiness. By this asseveration of the truth, may my journey to the Buddha on my renunciation be accomplished without any problems.

Uttering this verse, King Mahā Kappina crossed the river with his 1,000 ministers on horseback. The waters of the river which was half a league wide did not even wet the tips of the horses' hoofs.

Beyond that River Nīlavāhinī lay another river to be crossed. He asked his ministers, "What is this river?"

"This is the River Candabhāgā, Great King," they said.

"How big is it?"

"Great King, it is one league deep and one league wide."

As with the previous two rivers, the king pondered on the urgency of his journey. Then reflecting on the supreme attributes of the Saṅgha, such as: "The noble disciples of the Fortunate One are endowed with right practice," he uttered the following verse and crossed the river together with his 1,000 ministers:

Saṅgho ve tiṇṇa-kantāro, puññakkhetto anuttaro,
etena sacca-vajjena, gamanaṁ me samijjhatu.

The noble Saṅgha has indeed crossed the wilderness of Saṁsāra, and are the incomparable field for sowing seeds of merit. By this asseveration of the truth, may my journey to the Buddha on my renunciation be accomplished without any problems.

Uttering this verse, King Mahā Kappina crossed the river with his 1,000 ministers on horseback. The waters of the river which was one league wide did not even wet the tips of the horses' hoofs.

The three verses uttered by King Mahā Kappina are taken from the Traditions about the Elder Mahā Kappina (*Mahā Kappina-thera-āpadāna*, Tha-ap 533).

Adoption of the Ascetic Life

As the king had crossed over the River Candabhāgā he saw, to his great wonder, the six Buddha-radiances emanating from the Buddha, who was sitting at the foot of a Bodhi tree. The entire tree, the trunk, the boughs, branches and foliage was awash with the golden glow. The king rightly knew that: "This golden glow is not the sun's radiance nor the moon's, nor that of any Deva or Māra or Nāga or Garuḍa, but must be that of Buddha Gotama, for the Fortunate One has seen me coming and is welcoming me!"

At that instant, King Mahā Kappina dismounted and bowing himself, approached the Buddha, being drawn towards the Buddha-radiance. He felt as though he were immersed in a mass of cool liquid realgar as he walked through the Buddha-radiance. He and his 1,000 ministers made obeisance to the Buddha and sat in a suitable place. Then the Buddha gave them a discourse by gradual stages of exposition, through the merit in giving, the merit in morality, the merit leading to the Deva realm, and the gaining of path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*). By the end of the discourse, King Mahā Kappina and his 1,000 ministers attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). [1349]

Then they all rose up and asked the Buddha to be admitted into the Saṅgha as monastics. The Buddha reviewed their past to find out whether they were fit to receive robes and alms bowl created by his supernormal powers and he saw that their past merit of having donated robes to 1,000 Paccekabuddhas and that, during Buddha Kassapa's time, they had donated robes to 20,000 Arahats, were their merits, and that they could receive robes and alms bowls created by supernormal powers. Then the Buddha stretched out his right hand and said: "Come, monastics, receive the monastic life as you request. You have heard the doctrine. Now work out your release with diligence through the threefold training." At that very instant King Mahā Kappina and his 1,000 ministers were transformed from laymen into that of monastics of seemingly 60 years' standing, equipped with the monastic paraphernalia, such as alms bowls, which were created by the will of the Buddha. They rose into the air, then descended to the ground and, paying obeisance to the Buddha, sat at a suitable distance.

Queen Anojā

The merchants of Sāvatthī went to the court of Kukkuṭavatī and sought audience with Queen Anojā, informing her that they were seen by the king. Having obtained the queen's assent to see them, they entered the palace, saluted her, and sat at an appropriate place. Then a dialogue took place between the queen and them:

Queen: Men, what brought you to our court?

Merchants: Queen, we are being directed to you by the king to claim 300,000 pieces of money as reward.

Queen: Men, you are making a big claim. What good turn have you done for the king so as to be granted such a rich reward?

Merchants: Queen, we have not done any good turn for the king except to impart some strange news, which gladdened him.

Queen: Will you be able to tell me what that strange news was?

Merchants: Yes, we can, queen.

Queen: Then go ahead.

Merchants: Queen, a Buddha has appeared in the world.

On hearing that news, the queen, was overwhelmed with delight and remained senseless for a short while, just like the king. This happened three times. On the fourth time that she heard the news, she asked the merchants: "Men, how much did the king reward you for bringing to him the news about the Buddha?" – "The king rewarded us 100,000 pieces of money for that." – "The king's reward of 100,000 for bringing such extraordinary and wonderful news is improper and inadequate. For my part, I reward you, as poor subjects of mine, 300,000 pieces of money.

But what further news did you tell the king?" The merchants told her that they also apprised the king of the appearance of the Dhamma and the appearance of the Saṅgha, one by one. The queen, being overwhelmed by delight, was senseless for a short while, for three times, on hearing each of those wonderful tidings. On the fourth time of mentioning the news about the Dhamma, and about the Saṅgha, the queen rewarded them with 300,000 pieces of money for each piece

of wonderful news. Thus the merchants received 900,000 pieces of money as the queen's reward, in addition to the King's reward of 300,000, making a total of 1,200,000.

Then the queen asked the merchants where the king was, and they told her that the king had gone forth to become a monastic, as a disciple of the Buddha. The queen added: "What message did the king leave for me?" The merchants told her that the king was leaving the throne and the country to the queen who was to succeed him as sovereign. Then the queen inquired after the thousand ministers. The merchants told her that the ministers also had gone forth to become monastics. [1350]

The queen sent for the wives of the 1,000 ministers and a discussion took place as follows:

Queen: Dear sisters, your husbands have renounced the world and become monastics along with the king. What are you going to do now?

Wives: Great Queen, what was the message to us by our husbands?

Queen: Your husbands have bequeathed all their properties to you. You are lords of the household now.

Wives: Great Queen, what do you intend to do?

Queen: Sisters, my lord, King Mahā Kappina, was greatly delighted by the news of the appearance of the Three Treasures and rewarded 300,000 pieces of money to the conveyors of the news as token of honouring the Three Treasures, even while he was on his journey. Now he has renounced the world considering the glory of kingship as if it were saliva. As for me, the news of the appearance of the Three Treasures was equally welcome. I have rewarded 900,000 pieces of money to the merchants who brought me the news as token of honouring the Three Treasures. The glory of a sovereign is a source of suffering for me, as much as it is for the king. Now that the king has bequeathed sovereign power to me, if I were to accept it, it would be like receiving saliva with relish. I am not as foolish as that. I too will renounce the world and become a recluse, as a disciple of the Buddha.

Wives: Great Queen, we will also join you in going forth as recluses.

Queen: It is well and good, if you are capable of it.

Wives: Great Queen, we are capable of it.

Queen: Then let us go.

The queen mounted on a chariot, each of the wives of the ministers also mounted on their chariots and departed forthwith for Sāvatthī. On the way, they came across the first river. She inquired, as the king did before, about the possibility for crossing it. She asked her charioteer to look for the footprints of the king's horses but no trace could be found. She rightly surmised that since her husband had a deep devotion for the Three Treasures and for the sake of which he was renouncing the world, he must have made some asseveration in getting across the river. "I too have renounced the world for the sake of the Three Treasures. May the power of the Three Treasures overcome this stretch of water and let the water lose its property as water." And reflecting on the supreme attributes of the Three Treasures, she drove her chariot and accompanied by 1,000 other chariots, across the river. And lo! the water did not stay as water but hardened itself like a piece of rock so that not even the rims of the chariots were wet. At the two further rivers that lay across her path, she crossed them without difficulty, with the same devotion as the king.

> The above material is gleaned from the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*). From this point on, we shall be drawing on the commentary to the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*).

After she had crossed over the River Candabhāgā, the third obstacle, Queen Anojā saw the Buddha sitting beneath a Bodhi tree. The Buddha knew that if these women were to see their husbands, they would be torn by attachment to them which would render them unable to listen to the discourse which he taught, which would be great disadvantage for attaining the path-knowledge. So, he employed his supernormal powers whereby the women could not see their spouses who were with him. Then he taught them a discourse, at the end of which, all of them attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). At that moment, they were able see their spouses. The Buddha then willed that the elder nun Uppalavaṇṇā appeared where the women were sitting. The elder nun Uppalavaṇṇā admitted Queen Anojā and her companions into the Saṅgha of female monastics. After which, she took them to the nunnery. The Buddha took the 1,000 monastics to the Jetavana monastery by his psychic power. [1351]

Verse Spoken about Mahā Kappina

Then Ven. Mahā Kappina practised the noble path and became an Arahat. Knowing that he had finished his task as a monastic, Ven. Mahā Kappina dwelt most of the time in the Arahat fruition, and did not bother to discourse to his 1,000 followers, his erstwhile ministers. Resorting to seclusion, whether underneath a tree or elsewhere, he would utter words of ecstasy: "Blissful it is! Blissful it is!" When other monastics heard this they thought that Ven. Mahā Kappina was ruminating on his kingly pleasures and they reported to the Buddha what they had heard. The Buddha said to these monastics: "Monastics, Mahā Kappina is extolling the bliss of the paths and fruitions (*magga-phala*) only, and on that occasion he uttered this verse (Dhp 79):

> *Dhamma-pīti sukhaṁ seti, vippasannena cetasā,*
> *ariyappavedite Dhamme, sadā ramati paṇḍito.*

Monastics, he who drinks of the supermundane lives happily with a serene mind. The wise man always finds delight in the Dhamma, the 37 constituents of Awakening, expounded by the noble ones (*ariya*) such as the Buddha.

At the end of the discourse many listeners attained path-knowledge at various levels.

Ven. Mahā-Kappina's Instruction to his Pupils

Then one day, the Buddha called the 1,000 monastics who had been ministers and asked them whether Ven. Mahā Kappina had given them any instruction. The monastics said that their teacher, Ven. Mahā Kappina, never gave them any instruction, but dwelt in the attainment of the Arahat fruition most of the time, and that he did not even give an admonition to any of his pupils.

The Buddha then asked Ven. Mahā Kappina: "Kappina, is it true that you do not give an admonition even to your close pupils?" Ven. Mahā Kappina replied: "Venerable sir, that is correct." – "Kappina, do not remain like this. From now on, give discourses to your close pupils." – "Very well, venerable sir," replied Ven. Mahā Kappina. And, just by him giving a discourse, the 1,000 monastics became Arahats.

This is the achievement that entitled Ven. Mahā Kappina to be designated the foremost monastic.

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, when the Buddha held a congregation of monastics, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ bhikkovādakānaṁ yad-idaṁ Mahākappino.*
>
> Monastics, among my monastic disciples who gives instruction to monastics, Mahā Kappina is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

39. Ven. Sāgata

Aspiration in the Past

The future Sāgata was born into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On a certain occasion, while he was listening to the Buddha's discourse, he witnessed the Buddha honouring a monastic as the foremost among the monastics who were adept at the attainment of concentrating on the element of the heat meditation device (*tejo-kasiṇa-dhātu*). He aspired for that honour and expressed his aspiration to become the foremost monastic in the mastery of that concentration to the Buddha. The Buddha predicted that his aspiration would be fulfilled. [1352]

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

The future Sāgata devoted himself to works of merit throughout his life. After his death, he was reborn in the Deva realm and the human world only, and during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn into a Brahmin family in Sāvatthī. The young Brahmin, named Sāgata, had occasion to listen to a discourse by the Buddha which caused him to become steadfastly devoted to the Buddha and hence become a monastic. He mastered the eight mundane absorption attainments and became adept at the five mundane supernormal powers.

Taming of a Nāga

The following is an extract from the Training Rule about Strong Drink (*Surāpāna-sikkhāpada*, Vin Pāc 51, PTS 4.108).

Once, on his tour of the country, in the province of Cetiya, the Buddha arrived at Bhaddavatikā village, which was so named because of its strong fencing. Cow-herds, goat-herds, cultivators and passers-by saw the Buddha coming at a distance and warned him urgently that there lived a swift, vicious, poisonous serpent at the ferry-crossing, which was marked by the mango tree, and that they were concerned that the Buddha might face danger if he went that way. The Buddha did not say anything to them.

The vicious serpent at the mango tree ferry was, in its former life, a ferry man plying there. He quarrelled with some travellers and was killed in the fray. He swore vengeance on his attackers before his death and consequently he was reborn as a powerful serpent there.

Since the man held a grudge against the local populace, when he was reborn as a powerful serpent, he exercised his powers in such a way that he would cause draught in the rainy season and heavy rains to fall in the wrong season. Crops failed and people resorted to propitiating him every year. They also put up a shrine for him at the ferry point.[294]

The Buddha crossed the river at the mango tree ferry with his company of monastics, meaning to put up for the night at that place. Then the Buddha, going by stages, arrived at Bhaddavatikā village. Ven. Sāgata stayed at the shrine dedicated to the serpent at the mango tree ferry. He went into the den where the serpent lived, placed a grass mat on the ground, sat down with legs crossed, and with his body held erect, he entered into absorption (*jhāna*).

The serpent was very angry with the intruder and sent out hot fumes. Ven. Sāgata responded with fumes of even greater power. The serpent got furious and sent out flames. But Ven. Sāgata, who was entering into the absorption attainment of concentration on the element of heat, produced flames of greater intensity.

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[294] See the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) commentary.

Then the serpent realized that he was up against someone who was more powerful than himself. He said: "Venerable sir, I take refuge in your reverence." Ven. Sāgata said: "You need not take refuge in me. Take refuge in the Buddha." – "Very well, venerable sir," the serpent said. Hence, he became a disciple of the Buddha and was established in the three refuges, and became friendly to the local populace. Rains fell during the proper season and bumper crops were harvested. After Ven. Sāgata had tamed the serpent, he joined the Buddha at Bhaddavatikā village.

The Buddha's Visit to Kosambī

After bringing Awakening to many deserving persons, the Buddha proceeded to Kosambī. The citizens of Kosambī had learnt about the conquest of Ven. Sāgata over the serpent, after a great battle. When the Buddha entered Kosambī, he was welcomed by the citizens. They also visited Ven. Sāgata, made obeisance to him, and sitting in a suitable place, said to him: "Venerable sir, what sort of thing is a rare thing for your reverence? What sort of of thing would please your reverence? What sort of thing shall we prepare for your reverence?" Although Ven. Sāgata did not say anything, monastics of the Group-of-Six intervened and said: "Lay supporters, there is a red beverage with the [1353] colour of the pigeon's feet and which is clear. That alcoholic drink is a rare thing for monastics; it is delightful. So prepare that kind of beverage."

A Note on the Group-of-Six Monks

There were in Sāvatthī six friends who considered earning a living burdensome and preferred a life of ease as monastics. They were the pair Paṇḍuka and Lohitaka; the pair Mettiya and Bhūmajaka; and the pair Assaji and Punabbasuka. They sought elders of great authority: the two chief disciples, as their preceptors whom they could look to in case of trouble.

After five years' standing in the monastic life and having mastered the fundamental Rules for monastics (*Pātimokkha*), they agreed among themselves to split up into three sub-groups to be stationed at prosperous places. This was to ensure a regular livelihood for themselves.

The first sub-group with Paṇḍuka and Lohitaka as leaders was, by agreement among the Group-of-Six, assigned to Sāvatthī with these considerations:

Sāvatthī is a city of 5,700,000 houses resided in by worthy families. It has suzerainty over the provinces of Kāsi and Kosala with 80,000 villages, Paṇḍuka and Lohitaka were to set up monastic compounds at advantageous sites at Sāvatthī, where fruit trees of all sorts were to be cultivated and gardens, to attract lay supporters. These fruits and flowers would be presented regularly to lay supporters who, thus befriended, would send their boys to the monastery to become novices and then admitted into the Saṅgha. In this way, a big following of monastic pupils was to be raised by the two leaders.

Likewise, Mettiya and Bhūmajaka, the second subgroup was assigned to Rājagaha with these considerations: Rājagaha was a city where 130,000,000 people lived. It had suzerainty over the provinces of Aṅga and Magadha, which were 300 leagues wide, and had 80,000 villages. Similarly, Mettiya and Bhūmajaka were to set up monastic compounds at advantageous sites at Rājagaha, where fruit tree of all sorts were to be cultivated and gardens to attract lay supporters. By making gifts of fruits and flowers, the people would be befriended. And they would send their boys to the monastery to become novices and then be admitted into the Saṅgha. In this way, a big following of monastic pupils was to be raised by the two leaders.

Kīṭāgiri was a market town with a big area around it. Since it received rains during the rainy season as well as during the cold season, it produced three crops of paddy a year. There the third sub-group, headed by Assaji and Punabbasuka would settle down. They were given the same assignments and objectives as the previous leaders.

The six leaders carried out the above plan with some success. Each of the three sub-groups were able to raise 500 or more monastic pupils, making a total of over 1,500 monastic pupils in their fold, who were known as the sect of the Group-of-Six monastics.

Of the six leaders of the sect, Paṇḍuka and Lohitaka with their 500 pupils were of good morality. They used to accompany the Buddha on his tours. Although they might commit fresh infringements of the monastic precepts, they would do so because there was no specific ban on that particular action. If the precept clearly prohibited something, they did not infringe it. The other four leaders of the sect and their people did not care at all about the precepts.

The citizens of Kosambī were simple folk. They took the advice of the monastics of the Group-of-Six in all sincerity. They made a clear red brew, like the colour of the pigeon's feet, and hence called Kāpotikā. As Ven. Sāgata passed their door, each house offered a rare drink to him. At that time there was no Vinaya rule prohibiting monastics from [1354] taking liquor. Ven. Sāgata did not consider it improper to drink it. He obliged his supporters by drinking a little of the brew at each house. When he left the city, he collapsed at the city door.

As the Buddha was leaving the city in the company of monastics, he saw Ven. Sāgata lying on the ground. He had him carried to the monastery, where the other monastics laid him with his head turned towards the Buddha. But Ven. Sāgata, who was intoxicated with liquor, turned himself such that his feet were towards the Buddha. Then the Buddha addressed the monastics thus:

Buddha: "Monastics, Sāgata usually has respect and deference for me, does he not?"

Monastics: "He does, venerable sir."

Buddha: "Now, does Sāgata show any respect and deference for me?"

Monastics: "No, venerable sir."

Buddha: "Monastics, Sāgata had vanquished the serpent at the mango tree ferry, did he not?"

Monastics: "Yes, he did, venerable sir."

Buddha: "In his present state, would Sāgata be able to vanquish the serpent?"

Monastics: "No, venerable sir."

Buddha: "Monastics, by taking liquor one is rendered senseless through intoxication, would it be proper for one to take liquor?"

Monastics: "No, venerable sir."

The Buddha continued: "Monastics, taking alcoholic drinks is improper, wrong, unwarranted, unbecoming for a monastic, and yet Ven. Sāgata, possessed of the five supernormal powers, took it. Why did he do it? Monastics, this is an act which does not lend itself to reverence by those who do not already have

reverence for monastics." After denouncing the act, the Buddha declared that any monastic who takes alcoholic drink is liable to incur a confessible (*pācittiya*) offense against the precepts.

Attainment of Awakening

On the next day, Ven. Sāgata recovered his senses and repented his mistake. A sense of shame and dread overcame him. After admitting his fault to the Buddha and paying respects, he had a deep sense of spiritual urgency. And with diligence in the development of insight, he soon became an Arahat.

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, when the Buddha held a congregation of monastics at the Jetavana monastery, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ tejo-dhātu-kusalānaṁ yad-idaṁ Sāgato.*
>
> Monastics, among my monastic disciples who are adept at dwelling in the absorption on the element of heat, Sāgata is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

40. Ven. Rādha

Aspiration in the Past

> In describing the past aspiration of Ven. Rādha, we draw from the commentary on the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*, Thag 127) as it is more informative than the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*).

The future Ven. Rādha was born into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time [1355] of Buddha Padumuttara. When he came of age, he visited the Buddha's monastery and, after paying respects to the Buddha, sat in a suitable place. While sitting there, he witnessed the Buddha honour a monastic as the foremost in the field of illuminating the doctrine to his audience. As such, he had a great desire to be honoured with the same recognition by some Future Buddha. He made exceptional offerings to the Buddha and, thereafter, he aspired to that honour. The Buddha predicted that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

Life as a Clansman during Buddha Vipassī's Time

The future Rādha, after aspiring to the senior discipleship at the time of Buddha Padumuttara, and after many more existences of meritorious deeds, was reborn as a worthy man again during the time of Buddha Vipassī. When he came of age, he met Buddha Vipassī who was going on alms round. He had an intense devotion to the Buddha and offered him a mango of a very delicious type.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

Future Rādha was reborn in the Deva realm because of that meritorious deed. After the Deva existence, he was reborn only in the Deva realm and the human world, where he engaged himself in further deeds of merit. During the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn as a Brahmin youth by the name of Rādha, in the city of Rājagaha. He married and when he became old, he did not enjoy the usual care from his wife. Wishing to become a monastic, he went to the monastery but his requests for admission into the Saṅgha were refused by all the monastics because they were not interested in having an aged pupil who would not be able to serve them personally.

Rādha the Brahmin, already decrepit due to old age, looked even more aged because of his frustrations in being refused repeatedly to be admitted into the Saṅgha. He was a pitiful sight as he was being reduced to a mere skeleton, completely worn out, pale like a withered leaf with veins running over his whole body, like netting. One day, he went to the Buddha and after an exchange of courteous greetings, sat in a suitable place. The Buddha saw that the old Brahmin had sufficient merit to gain path-knowledge. And to start a dialogue, the Buddha asked: "Brahmin, are you being taken good care of by your wife and children?" The old Brahmin replied: "Gotama, I am far from being taken care of by my wife and children. In fact, they have been treating me as a total stranger because I am too old to be of any use to them." – "Brahmin, in that case, had you not better take up the monastic life!"

Ven. Sāriputta's Sense of Gratitude

"Gotama, who would admit me as a monastic? There is no monastic who is willing to be my preceptor due to old age." The Buddha then asked the monastics why the old Brahmin looked so haggard and wasted. The monastics

answered that he looked so desperate and forlorn because he could not find a preceptor. "Monastics, is there any monastic who, is in some way, obligated to this Brahmin?"

Thereupon, Ven. Sāriputta said: "Venerable sir, I remember a good turn done to me by this Brahmin." – "What was that?" asked the Buddha. "Venerable sir, when I went on alms round in Rājagaha, he offered me a spoonful of cooked rice. I remember that good turn done to me." – "Very good, Sāriputta, very good. Virtuous persons do not forget a good turn done to them, and they feel obliged to repay the debt of gratitude. In that case, Sāriputta, see that the Brahmin is made a novice and then admitted into the Saṅgha."

"Venerable sir, by which mode of admission may I admit him?" the Buddha gave a discourse concerning the question of Ven. Sāriputta and declared thus: "Monastics, from now on, the mode of admitting a person into full monastic life by getting him established in the three refuges is to be discontinued. Henceforth, a novice should be admitted by a Saṅgha, after a formal proposal three times and, if there be no objection, then the novice shall be admitted." This was the first instance of the new mode of admission called the admission following an announcement and three proposals (*ñatti-catuttha*). [1356]

> The Buddha[295] attained Perfect Self-Awakening on the full moon day in May (*Vesākha*), 528 BCE. He passed his first Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in the Isipatana Deer Park. At the end of that Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), he sent the first 60 of his monastic disciples, all Arahats, to the four corners of the land to propagate the Dhamma.
>
> He admitted into the Saṅgha new monastics, first as novices, and then as full monastics, sponsored by these 60 Arahats, by having them established in the three refuges. The Buddha himself adopted the same mode. Later, considering the great distances the new entrants had to travel to the Buddha's monastery, admissions by this mode were allowed by the Buddha by other members of the Saṅgha.

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[295] The following notes draw upon the commentary to the Vinaya Great Division (*Mahā-vagga*).

On the full moon day in January (*Phussa*) of the same year, the Buddha went to reside at Rājagaha. A fortnight later, the two chief disciples together with their pupils became monastics. On the seventh day of their monastic life, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna became an Arahat. On the fifteenth day in February (*Māgha*), Ven. Sāriputta became an Arahat. The Brahmin Rādha's admission into the Saṅgha took place during the month falling between the full moon day in February and the full moon day in March (*Phagguṇa*).

Ven. Sāriputta had known that when the Buddha lived in the Isipatana Deer Park, admission as novices and as full monastics was done by getting the incumbent established in the three refuges. And yet why did he ask about the mode of admission in this case?

The answer is: Ven. Sāriputta, as a constant companion to the Buddha, knew the Buddha's wishes, as was the usual competency of those companions. As a matter of fact, he was the most competent among those close companions. He had foresight that the Buddha was thinking of instituting a stricter mode of admission than the simple mode of getting the incumbent established in the three refuges. Since the Buddha's residence at Rājagaha, the number of Arahats had also grown to more than 20,000.

The remarkable acuteness of Ven. Sāriputta's understanding of the Buddha's mind was revealed on another occasion too. It was in connection with Rāhula, the Buddha's son. In 528 BCE, at the close of the year, the Buddha travelled to his native place, the city of Kapilavatthu. The journey took two months. On the seventh day, after arrival in that city, his son, Rāhula, who was aged seven, demanded his inheritance. The Buddha gave him the most worthy inheritance by requesting Ven. Sāriputta to admit Rāhula as a novice. On that occasion, Ven. Sāriputta, knowing well that being made a novice was done by making the incumbent established in the three refuges, asked the Buddha: "Venerable sir, by what mode shall I admit Prince Rāhula as a novice?"

The earlier practice adopted at the Deer Park was to give admission to novices as well as to full monastics by getting them established in the three refuges. But in the later case of Rādha, the admission into the monastic life was done by a congregation of the Saṅgha making formal proposal for admission by the preceptor thrice, and then if the Saṅgha agreed by remaining silent, admission was effected. But, in the case of making a

novice, Ven. Sāriputta fathomed the Buddha's intention that being made a novice should be done either by getting the incumbent established in the three refuges or by a formal Saṅgha. Otherwise, the Saṅgha might be under the impression that being made a novice would be valid only by congregation. Therefore, to get the express consent from the Buddha to perform making a novice by getting Rāhula established in the three refuges, Ven. Sāriputta put that question to the Buddha.

Ven. Rādha's Ascetic Life and Awakening

Ven. Sāriputta, respectfully complying with the orders of the Buddha, acted as preceptor in the formal congregation which admitted Brahmin Rādha into the Saṅgha. He knew that the Buddha had a high regard for the Brahmin and so after the admission, he looked after the personal welfare of the aged monastic. [1357]

He took Ven. Rādha to a forest abode. A monastic, who is junior in monastic standing, has little privileges in the matter of the four requisites. Ven. Sāriputta, who was a senior monastic, enjoyed priority in receiving these requisites but he shared them with Ven. Rādha, while he himself lived on the daily alms food. Thus, sharing monastic dwellings and food with his preceptor, Ven. Sāriputta, Ven. Rādha recovered physically into a healthy state. Then taking instructions in the practice of the noble path from his preceptor, he worked with diligence and soon became an Arahat.

Then Ven. Sāriputta took Ven. Rādha to pay homage to the Buddha. Although the Buddha knew how Ven. Rādha was doing, he asked Ven. Sāriputta: "Sāriputta, I had given Rādha to your care. How is Rādha doing? Is he happy in the monastic life?" Ven. Sāriputta replied: "Venerable sir, if one were to point to a monastic who finds full satisfaction in the teaching, one has only to point to a monastic of Rādha's type."

Then words of praise by Ven. Sāriputta became common among the monastics, who said: "Friends, Ven. Sāriputta has a strong sense of gratitude and is also apt to repay the debt of gratitude he owes to others." When the Buddha heard these words, he said to the monastics: "Monastics, it is not so great a wonder that Sāriputta, in his last existence, should remember his debt of gratitude and repay it. Even in the long past, when he was a mere animal, he had this sense of gratitude." The monastics then requested the Buddha to relate to them a past-life

story concerning Ven. Sāriputta. The Buddha related to them the Birth Story about Prince Alīnacitta (*Alīnacitta-jātaka*, JA 156).

The Story about Prince Alīnacitta

Monastics, in the past, there lived 500 carpenters who used to fell trees in the forest at the foot of a hill. They would cut them into suitable sizes and then float the lumber downstream in rafts. At one time, an elephant was wounded in the forest by a piece of heavy bough which it tore off from the tree. The pointed piece of wood pierced its foot and he was in great pain.

After two or three days, the wounded elephant noticed that there were a big group of men passing its way everyday, and hoped that they might be able to help it. It followed the men. When the men saw it following them, they were frightened and ran away. The elephant then did not continue to follow them but stopped. When the carpenters stopped running, the elephant drew near them again.

The head of the carpenters, being wise, pondered on the behaviour of the elephant: "This elephant comes to us as we do not move on, but stops when we run away from it. There must be some reason." Then the men went up the trees and observed the movements of the elephant. The elephant went near them and, after showing them the wound at its foot, lay down. The carpenters understood the elephant's behaviour then, it was badly wounded and was seeking help. They went to the elephant and inspected the wound. Then they cut the end of the big wooden spike piercing into the elephant's foot into a neat groove, tied a strong rope around the groove, and pulled the spike out. They washed the wound with herbs, applied medicinal preparations to the best of their ability and then dressed the wound. Soon the wound healed and the elephant was well.

Deeply grateful to its healers, the elephant thought about repaying the debt of gratitude. It went back to its den and brought back a young calf which was white all over. This was a most auspicious kind of white elephant one of the Gandha species. The carpenters were very glad to see the elephant returned with a calf. The elephant was not merely showing them the noble calf but it meant to make a gift of it to the benefactors. To make its intention clear, it left the place alone.

The calf followed it but the father elephant gave a signal to the calf to go back to the men. The calf obeyed. The men then said to the calf: "Dear boy, we have

no use with you. Just go back to your father." The calf went back but the father would not take him back. Three times the carpenters sent him back, only to be refused by the father. So they were obliged to keep it. The 500 carpenters each gave a handful of cooked [1358] rice to the calf which was sufficient nourishment for it. It would help them by piling up the cut-up logs, ready to be rafted.

> The commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) relates the story up to this point only, to show the sense of gratitude of Ven. Sāriputta when he was an elephant. We now continue the story as described in the Birth Story (Ja 156).

From that time on, the white elephant calf became part of the team of carpenters. Obeying their commands, he assisted them in all their tasks. The carpenters fed him with their share of cooked rice. At the close of the day's work, the men and the calf went into the river to bathe and play together.

> There is a noteworthy thing about noble elephants or noble horses or noble humans: they never defecate or urinate in the water, but go up to dry ground for the purpose.

One day, a great torrent came down from upstream to Bārāṇasī. In that current, there floated down a piece of dried dung excreted by the white calf, and was caught in a bush at the public washing place in Bārāṇasī. The tenders of the royal elephants brought to the river 500 elephants to be washed. These elephants sniffed around, got the smell of the dung of the white elephant and panicked. They dared not enter the water but tried to run away with raised tails. The elephant tenders reported the strange behaviour of the elephants to the physicians in charge of elephants. They knew that there must be something in the water that caused the panic of the king's elephants. A close search was made and they discovered the piece of dung in the bush. Thus, the reason for the fright of the 500 elephants was ascertained. A big jar was filled with water and in it the white elephant's dung was made to dissolve. The 500 elephants were then washed in that solution which had a pleasant odour. Then only the elephants would enter the water.

The elephant physicians reported their experience to the king and strongly suggested to him that the noble white elephant should be searched for. The king led the expedition in a big flotilla upstream until they reached the place where

the carpenters were working, at the foot of the hill. The white elephant calf was then bathing in the river. He heard the sound of the royal drums and ran to its masters, the carpenters, who welcomed the king. “Great King,” they said, “you do not need to come up personally to obtain timber. You could send someone for that.” The king answered: “Friends, we have not come here for timber. We have come to take this white elephant calf that is in your possession.” – “Then, king, take it by all means.”

The young calf, however, was not willing to leave its masters, and would not budge from where it was standing. The elephant physicians were consulted. They explained to the king that the young calf would like to see its masters fully compensated for its upkeep. The king then ordered that 100,000 pieces of money in silver be placed at each of the six parts of the body of the calf, at the four feet, at the trunk and at the tail. Still the calf would not budge. It wanted the king to give personal presents as well. When every man in the party of carpenters, and their wives were given a piece of clothing and playthings for their children, who were his playmates, it then agreed to go with the king. It cast long parting looks at the men, their wives and children as it went along with the king.

The calf was escorted to the city which it was made to go round clockwise thrice in pomp and ceremony, the whole of the city and the elephant-yard was decorated. He was then housed at the elephant-yard, fitted with the paraphernalia of a royal mount. Then it was anointed as the king’s personal associate, as well as the royal mount. It was assigned half of the royal estate, with every aspect of regal status. From the day of its arrival, Bārāṇasī acquired the dominance of the whole Jambudīpa.

After some time, the Bodhisatta was conceived in the womb of the Chief Queen of Bārāṇasī. When the gestation period was due the king died. The news of the king’s demise was not revealed to the white elephant for fear that it might suffer a broken-heart.

However, the news could not be kept secret for long. For when news of the king’s death became known to the neighbouring province of Kosala, the king of Kosala besieged Bārāṇasī. The citizens of Bārāṇasī sent an envoy to the Kosalan King with the message [1359] which purported to say: “Our queen is due to give birth to a child seven day’s hence, according to persons adept at reading people’s

appearance. If the queen gives birth to a son, we shall wage war. Meantime, would the Kosalan King hold his peace just for seven days?" The Kosalan King agreed.

The queen gave birth to a son on the seventh day. The birth of the child was marked by the citizens of Bārāṇasī being in cheerful spirits, hence the boy was named Prince Alīnacitta, meaning "the Prince who brings good cheer."

The war started, as mutually agreed, on the day of the birth of the prince. The warriors of Bārāṇasī, lacking a general on the field, fought bravely yet their morale was running low. The ministers confided with the queen that to avert defeat, the white elephant should be told of the death of the king, and the plight of the kingless city that was under siege by the Kosalan King. The queen agreed. Then fitting the royal infant in regalia, placing it on a piece of white cloth, she carried it to the elephant-yard accompanied by her ministers and put down the child near the foot of the white elephant. She said: "Great White Elephant, we have kept the news of the king's death from you because we feared you might suffer a broken heart. Here is the prince, the son of your deceased friend, the king. Now our city is under siege by the Kosalan King, your little child, the prince, is in danger. The people defending the city are in low spirits. You may now destroy the child, or save him and his throne from the invaders.

Thereupon the white elephant fondled the baby with his trunk, took it up, and placing it on his head, wailed bitterly. Then he put down the baby and placed it in the arms of the queen. It made a signal of his readiness for action, which meant: "I will capture the Kosalan King alive," then it went out of the elephant yard. The ministers fitted the white elephant with chainmail and, opening the city gate, led it out, surrounded by them. After coming out of the city, the white elephant gave out a shrill sound like that of the crane, and ran through the besieging forces, taking the Kosalan King by his hair knot, put him at the feet of the princeling Alīnacitta. Frightening off the enemy troops who threatened to harm the princeling, it seemed to say to the Kosalan King: "From now on, Kosalan King, be mindful. Do not take the princeling as someone to trifle with." The Kosalan King was thus properly subdued.

From that time on, the suzerainty of the entire Jambudīpa became secure in the hands of Prince Alīnacitta. No rival king dared challenge the authority of the

prince. When the prince, the Bodhisatta, was aged seven, he was anointed King Alīnacitta. He ruled righteously and at the end of his lifespan, he was reborn in the Deva realm.

> The Birth Story about Prince Alīnacitta (*Alīna-citta-jātaka*, Ja 156) was originally related by the Buddha in connection with a certain monastic who was faltering in the observance of the noble practice. At another time, in connection with the sense of gratitude shown by Ven. Sāriputta in the case of Ven. Rādha, this episode was partially related, up to the noble tusker giving up its white elephant calf to its benefactors.

After discoursing on the story that had taken place in the past, the Buddha, in the present context, uttered these two verses (Ja 156):

> *Alīna-cittaṁ nissāya, pahaṭṭhā mahatī camū,*
> *Kosalaṁ senāsantutthaṁ, jīvaggāhaṁ agāhayi.*
>
> Monastics, dependent on Prince Alīnacitta, the Bodhisatta, the big army of Bārāṇasī had captured alive, through the might of the royal white elephant, the Kosalan King who was unsatisfied with his own domain.
>
> *Evaṁ nissāya sampanno, bhikkhu āraddha-vīriyo,*
> *bhāvayam kusalaṁ Dhammaṁ, yogakkhemassa pattiyā,*
> *pāpuṇe anupubbena, sabba-saṁyojanakkhayaṁ.*
>
> Similarly, with the good fortune in having the virtuous ones, such as the Buddha and the noble ones, as friends, a monastic who puts forth earnest effort [1360] may cultivate the good doctrine, the 37 constituents of Awakening and become an Arahat which is characterized by the extinction of all fetters, and by gradual stages reach Nibbāna, the end of the four bonds.

After ending the discourse with the attainment of the deathless as its highest objective, the Buddha continued to show the four noble truths, at the end of which, the faltering monastic attained path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*). The Birth Story ended with the usual identification of the personalities involved: The Chief Queen, the Bodhisatta's mother, was Queen Māyā in the present existence; the King of Bārāṇasī, King Suddhodana; the royal white elephant, the faltering monastic; the noble tusker, the father of the white calf, Ven. Sāriputta; the Kosalan King, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna; Prince Alīnacitta, the Buddha.

The Buddha related the Birth Story (*Jātaka*) in connection with Ven. Sāriputta's sense of gratitude, how in the past existence he repaid his debt of gratitude. As regards Ven. Rādha, the Buddha had made 46 discourses in connection with him (*Rādha-saṁyutta*, SN 23).

Further, when Ven. Sāriputta took Ven. Rādha before the Buddha after Ven. Rādha's attainment of Awakening, both of them knelt before the Buddha, and the Buddha asked Ven. Sāriputta: "Sāriputta, does your close pupil Rādha take kindly to your admonition?" Ven. Sāriputta replied: "Venerable sir, Rādha is very amenable to admonition. Whenever a fault of his is pointed out, he does not show the slightest resentment." – "Sāriputta, how many amenable pupils like Rādha would you be prepared to accept?" – "Venerable sir, if I am to receive pupils as amenable as Ven. Rādha, I would accept as many as they might come to me."

Then, after relating the past story of Ven. Sāriputta, as described in the Birth Story about Prince Alīnacitta, how, even as an animal, Ven. Sāriputta had shown his sense of gratitude, which was the subject-matter of their fellow monastics' remarks, the Buddha extolled the virtues of Ven. Rādha thus: "Monastics, a monastic should be amenable to admonition like Ven. Rādha. When the teacher points out a fault of the pupil, the latter should not show resentment but should take it as if rich treasures had been revealed to him." In this connection, the Buddha uttered this verse (Dhp 76):

> *Nidhīnaṁ va pavattāraṁ, yam passe vajja-dassinaṁ,*
> *niggayha-vādiṁ medhāviṁ, tādisaṁ paṇḍitaṁ bhaje,*
> *tādisaṁ bhajamānassa, seyyo hoti na pāpiyo.*
>
> Monastics, if you should meet with a man of wisdom who points out faults and reproves you, you should associate with such a wise person as someone who reveals to you hidden treasures. It will be to the advantage, and not a disadvantage, of one who seeks the company of such a wise man.

By the end of the discourse, many hearers attained path-knowledge at various levels.

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, when the Buddha named foremost monastics, he declared:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ paṭibhāṇeyyakānaṁ yad-idaṁ Rādho.

Monastics, among my monastic disciples who inspire me to amplify my discourses, Ven. Rādha is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

Ven. Rādha's perspicacity and deep conviction in the doctrine was a source of inspiration to the Buddha to amplify his discourses. This fact may be [1361] gathered from the Thematic Discourses concerning Rādha (*Rādha-saṁyutta*, SN 23), particularly the six last discourses (SN 23:5-10) and the whole of the fourth chapter (SN 23:35-46).

The designated term has been defined as: *Paṭibhānaṁ janentī ti paṭibhāneyyakā*, "those disciples who arouse the Buddha's facility in giving discourses."

41. Ven. Mogharāja

The story of Ven. Mogharāja is gleaned from the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) and the commentary on the Way to the Beyond (*Pārāyaṇa-vagga*, Snp 5).

Aspiration in the Past

The future Mogharāja was born into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, while he was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he witnessed a monastic being declared by him as the foremost monastic among his disciples who wear robes that were inferior in three ways: of inferior rag material, of inferior thread, and of inferior dye. The future Mogharāja had a strong desire to be acknowledged likewise as a foremost monastic in some future time. He made extraordinary offerings to the Buddha and expressed this aspiration before him. The Buddha predicted that the aspiration would be fulfilled.

Life as Minister to King Kaṭṭhavāhana

The future Mogharāja spent a meritorious life and passed away into the realm of Devas and then in the realm of humans and Devas. Prior to the appearance of Buddha Kassapa he was reborn in the city of Kaṭṭhavāhana, into a noble family. When he was of certain age, he became a courtier at King Kaṭṭhavāhana's court and later was appointed as a minister.

We shall now relate the story of King Kaṭṭhavāhana, the details of which are found in the commentary on the Way to the Beyond (*Pārāyaṇa-vagga*, Snp 5).

Before the advent of Buddha Kassapa, there was an accomplished carpenter, a native of Bārāṇasī, whose carpentry skill was unrivalled. He had sixteen senior pupils, each of whom had 1,000 apprentices. Thus, together with this master carpenter, there were 16,017 carpenters, who made their living in Bārāṇasī. They would go to the forest and gather various kinds of timber to make various kinds of articles and high class furniture, which were fit for royalty and nobility in the city. They brought their wares to Bārāṇasī in a raft. When the king wanted to have palaces built, ranging from a single-tiered mansion to a seven-tiered mansion, they did it to the satisfaction and delight of the king. They also built other structures for other people.

Construction of a Flying Machine

The master craftsman conceived an idea one day: "It would be too hard for me to live on my carpenter's trade in my old age; I must do something." He ordered his pupils to gather species of light wood with which he built a flying machine resembling the Garuḷa bird. After assembling the machinery in it, he started the engine which made the contraption fly in the air like a bird. He flew in it to the forest where his men were working and descended there.

He said to his pupils: "Boys, let us build flying machines like this and with our superior power, we can rule Jambudīpa. Now, copy this flying machine. We must escape from the drudgery of our carpenters' existence." The pupils successfully built similar flying machines and reported it to the master. "Now, which city shall we conquer?" asked the master. "Let us conquer Bārāṇasī, master," they suggested. "That would not do, boys. We are known as carpenters in Bārāṇasī. Even if we were to conquer and rule it, everybody will know our origin as carpenters. Jambudīpa is a vast place, let us find our fortune elsewhere," thus advised the master, and the pupils agreed.

Ascension to the Throne as Kaṭṭhavāhana

The carpenter guild of 16,017 members had each of their families put aboard a flying machine, and wielding arms, flew in the direction of the Himālayas. They entered a city, [1362] grouped together in the royal palace and dethroned the

king. They then anointed the master craftsman as king. Because he was the inventor of the flying machine made of wood, he came to be known as King Kaṭṭhavāhana, "one who rode on a vehicle made of wood." Based on this personal name of the king, the city and the country also acquired the same name. An heir-apparent and a council of sixteen ministers were appointed. The king and all these top leaders of the country conducted themselves with righteousness. The king extended necessary assistance to the people according to the principle of the four means of help, with the result that the people were happy and prosperous and had few dangers and hazards. Everybody spoke in praise of the king and his staff who were loved, respected and relied upon.

Friendship with the King of Bārāṇasī

One day, a group of merchants from Bārāṇasī went to Kaṭṭhavāhana with their merchandise. When they were given audience by King Kaṭṭhavāhana, the king asked them where they lived. Being told that they lived in Bārāṇasī, the king said to them: "Men, I would like to be on cordial terms with the king of Bārāṇasī. Would you render your service to that end?" The merchants gladly undertook to help.

During their stay in Kaṭṭhavāhana, the king provided them with all their needs and at the time of their departure, they were again reminded courteously to help promote friendship between the two cities.

When the merchants arrived at Bārāṇasī, they conveyed to their king the message of the King of Kaṭṭhavāhana. The king was delighted. He made public announcement by the beat of the drum that the merchants of Kaṭṭhavāhana, who were selling their goods in Bārāṇasī, would be exempt from taxes. Thus, the two kings, who had never met, were already in the bonds of friendship. The King of Kaṭṭhavāhana reciprocated by proclaiming that merchants of Bārāṇasī, who were doing business in his city, would also be exempt from taxes. He also issued standing orders that merchants of Bārāṇasī would be provided with all their needs out of the king's coffers.

The King of Bārāṇasī then sent a message to the King of Kaṭṭhavāhana to the effect that if there should occur within the domains of Kaṭṭhavāhana something noteworthy, whether seen or heard, King Kaṭṭhavāhana see to it that that event

is also seen or heard by the King of Bārāṇasī. The King of Kaṭṭhavāhana also sent to the King of Bārāṇasī a similar message.

An Exchange of Gifts

One day the King of Kaṭṭhavāhana obtained a certain fabric of most rare quality which was not only extra-fine but had a sheen that dazzled like the rising sun. He remembered the message received from the King of Bārāṇasī and thought it fit to send this extraordinary fabric to Bārāṇasī. He had eight caskets of ivory carved out for him, and in each he put a piece of the fabric. Outside the ivory caskets, he had a lac ball cover each casket. The eight lac balls were placed in a wooden box which was wrapped in very fine fabric. On it was written the inscription: "To be presented to the King of Bārāṇasī." An accompanying message suggested that the King of Bārāṇasī open this gift himself on the palace grounds where all the ministers should be present.

The royal delegation from the court of Kaṭṭhavāhana presented the gift box and the message to the King of Bārāṇasī who caused a meeting of the ministers at the courtyard. He opened the box in their presence. On finding just eight balls of lac, he was disappointed, thinking that the King of Kaṭṭhavāhana had played a practical joke on him. He struck one of the lac balls hard against the throne which he was sitting on and to his amazement when the lac broke open and the ivory casket and its lid came apart. Inside, the king saw the fine fabric. The seven other lac balls yielded similar ivory caskets with the fabric inside. Each piece of fabric measured 16 by 8 cubits.

When these fabrics were unfolded, they presented a most spectacular scene as though the entire courtyard were glimmering in the sun. The onlookers snapped their fingers in amazement and some threw up their head-gear [1363] into the air in joy, saying: "King Kaṭṭhavāhana, the unseen friend of our king, has sent such a marvellous gift! Truly that king is a worthy friend of our king."

A Gift from Bārāṇasī

The King of Bārāṇasī sent for valuers and referred the fine fabrics to them for their appraisal. The valuers were at a loss to name a value for them. Then the king thought to himself: "My good friend, the King of Kaṭṭhavāhana has sent

me a priceless gift. A return gift should be somehow superior to the gift received. What should that gift be?"

It was the time when Buddha Kassapa had appeared in the three worlds and was residing at Bārāṇasī. The king considered that there is nothing as adorable as the Three Treasures. "I should send the news of the appearance of the Buddha to King Kaṭṭhavāhana. That would make the most appropriate return gift."

So he had the following verse consisting of six lines inscribed with vermilion on gold plate:

> *Buddho loke samuppanno, hitāya sabba-pāṇinaṁ.*
> *Dhammo loke samuppanno, sukhāya sabba-pāṇinaṁ.*
> *Saṅgho loke samuppanno, puññakkhettaṁ anuttaraṁ.*
>
> Friend Kaṭṭhavāhana, for the welfare of all living beings, the all-knowing Buddha has appeared in our world, like the rising of the sun at Mount Udaya in the east; for the happiness of all living beings, the Dhamma, comprising the four paths, four fruits, Nibbāna and the doctrine, has appeared in our world like the rising of the sun at Mount Udaya in the east; the Saṅgha, the incomparable fertile field for all to sow seeds of merit, has appeared in our world, like the rising of the sun at Mount Udaya in the east.

Besides these lines, the king had an inscription containing the practice of the Dhamma, beginning from getting established in morality for a monastic, progressively towards becoming an Arahat. The above gold plate was: 1) First put inside a casket wrought with the seven kinds of gems; 2) then the jewel casket was placed inside a casket of emerald; 3) then the emerald casket was placed inside a casket of cat's-eye gem; 4) the cat's-eye casket was then placed inside a casket of red ruby; 5) the red ruby casket was then placed inside a gold casket; 6) the gold casket was then placed inside a silver casket; 7) the silver casket was then placed inside an ivory casket; and 8) the ivory casket was then placed inside a casket of scented musk wood. This casket was put inside a box, wrapped with fine fabric and on it the royal seal was affixed.

This gift was sent to Kaṭṭhavāhana in state. A noble tusker in musk was fitted with golden ornaments, covered with gold lace, and a golden flag flew on his majestic body. On its back, they secured a raised platform, on which the gift box

was placed. A white umbrella was hoisted above it. It was sent off after performing deeds of honour with flowers and scents, dancing and music. The king himself headed the group of royal escorts in sending it off up to the border of Kāsi Country, the king's domain. Moreover, the King of Bārāṇasī sent presents with his messages to other rulers of neighbouring states on the route, requiring them to pay homage to the special return gift of his. All those rulers complied gladly till the carrier tusker reached the border of Kaṭṭhavāhana.

King Kaṭṭhavāhana went out to some distance to welcome the return gift; paying homage to it. The gift was opened in the courtyard before the people. After removing the thin cloth wrapper and opening the box, a scented hard-wood casket was found. Inside it, the eight caskets were opened, one after the other in turn till the gold plate informing of the appearance of the Three Treasures was revealed. "This is the rarest gift that one comes by, and only over an immense period of time. My good friend, the King of Bārāṇasī, has been very thoughtful in sending this news to me together with an outline on the practice of the Dhamma," reflected King Kaṭṭhavāhana joyfully. "The appearance of the Buddha, never heard of [1364] before, has taken place. It were well if I should go and see the Buddha and learn his doctrine," he reflected. He consulted about the idea with his ministers who advised him to stay awhile in the city during which they would go and inquire.

The Ministers' Mission

The sixteen ministers, together with 1,000 followers each, said to the king: "Great King, if the Buddha has actually appeared in the world, there is no likelihood of our seeing you again at your palace, as we are all going to become monastics. If the Buddha has not actually arisen, we shall come back to you."

Among the ministers was the king's own nephew, the son of his sister, who said: "I am going too." The king said to him: "Son, when you have found that the Buddha has appeared, come back to me and tell me the news." His nephew agreed: "Very well, king."

The sixteen ministers with their 16,000 followers went hastily, resting only once at a night camp on the way and reached Bārāṇasī. However, before they got there, Buddha Kassapa had passed away. The ministers entered the Buddha's monastery and asked: "Who is the Buddha? Where is the Buddha?" But they

found only the male monastic disciples who had been living together with the Buddha.

The monks told them: "The Buddha has passed away." The ministers then wailed, saying: "We have come from afar and we missed the chance to even see the Buddha!" They said to the monks: "Venerable sirs, are there some words of advice or admonition of the Buddha left for the world?" – "Yes, lay supporters. They are: 'Be established in the three refuges. Observe the five precepts all the time. Also keep the Observance Day (*Uposatha*) precepts of eight constituents. Give in generosity. If you are capable, take up the monastic life yourself.' " – "Thereupon, all the ministers, with the exception of the king's nephew, together with their followers, took up the monastic life.

King Kaṭṭhavāhana's Demise

King Kaṭṭhavāhana's nephew returned to Kaṭṭhavāhana after having obtained an article that had been used by the Buddha, as an object of veneration. It was a water strainer. In this connection, it may be noted that the articles that had been used by the Buddha include the Bodhi tree, alms bowl, robes, water-strainer, etc. The nephew also arranged for a monastic who had learnt by heart the Dhamma, the Vinaya and the Abhidhamma to accompany him to Kaṭṭhavāhana.

Travelling by stages, the nephew reached Kaṭṭhavāhana and reported to the King: "Uncle, the Buddha actually has appeared in the world, and it is also true that he had passed away." He related the Buddha's advice as he had learned from the Buddha's disciples. The king resorted to the monastic learned in the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*) and listened to his discourses. He built a monastery for the teacher, erected a relic shrine (*stūpa*) where the Buddha's water strainer was enshrined and planted a new Bodhi tree. He was established in the five precepts and kept the Observance Day precepts on the appropriate days. He gave freely in generosity; and after living till the end of his lifespan, he passed away and was reborn in the Deva realm. The sixteen ministers, who had become monastics together with their 16,000 followers, also practised the noble teaching, died as worldlings, and were reborn in the Deva realm as followers to the Deva who had been King Kaṭṭhavāhana. Among the sixteen followers of the Deva King there was the future Ven. Mogharāja.

Ascetic Life in his Final Existence

During the aeon that intervened between the two Buddhas, the master craftsman and all his followers had existence in the Deva Realms. Then on the eve of the advent of Buddha Gotama, they were reborn in the human world. Their leader was born as a son of the king's Brahmin chaplain at the court of King Mahā Kosala, father of Pasenadi Kosala, and he was named Bāvarī, and was endowed with three distinguishing marks of a great man. Being a master of the three Vedas, he succeeded to the office of Brahmin chaplain at the death of his father. The remaining 16,000 men were reborn in Sāvatthī in the Brahmin clan. Among them [1365] were:

Ajito Tissa-metteyyo, Puṇṇako atha Mettagū,
Dhotako Upasīvo ca, Nando ca atha Hemako.
Todeyya-kappā dubhayo, Jatukkaṇṇī ca paṇḍito,
Bhadrāvudho Udayo ca, Posālo cāpi brāhmaṇo.
Mogharājā ca medhāvī, Piṅgiyo ca mahā isi.

1) Ajita, 2) Tissa Metteyya, 3) Puṇṇaka, 4) Mettagū, 5) Dhotaka, 6) Upasīva, 7) Nanda, 8) Hemaka, 9) Todeyya, 10) Kappa, 11) Jatukaṇṇī, 12) Bhadrāvudha, 13) Udaya, 14) Posala, 15) Mogharāja, 16) Piṅgiya.

These sixteen Brahmins learned the three Vedas from master Bāvarī. The 1,000 followers under each of them, in turn, learned from them. Thus, Bāvarī and his company of followers making a total of 16,017 Brahmins became united again in their last existence.

Renunciation by Bāvarī and his Followers

At the death of King Mahā Kosala, his son, Pasenadi Kosala, was anointed king. The king's Brahmin chaplain Bāvarī retained his office under the new king, who granted fresh privileges to him in addition to those given by his father.

> The new king, as a prince, had been a pupil under Bāvarī so that his relationship with the old Brahmin chaplain was not only official but also personal.

One day, Bāvarī, remaining in seclusion, took a cool assessment of the learning that he possessed. He saw that the Vedas were not of any value to him in good stead in the hereafter. He decided to renounce the world as a recluse. When he

revealed this plan to King Pasenadi Kosala, the king said: “Master, your presence at our court gives me the assurance of elderly counsel which makes me feel I am still under the eyes of my own father. Please don’t leave me.”

But, since past merit had begun to ripen into fruition, old Bāvarī could not be persuaded against his plan, and insisted that he was going. The king then said: “Master, in that case, I would request you to stay as a recluse in the royal gardens so that I might be able to see you by day or by night.” Bāvarī acceded to this request and he and his company of sixteen senior pupils together with the 16,000 followers resided in the royal gardens as recluses. The king provided them with four requisites and paid his master regular visits, in the morning and evening.

After some time, the pupils said to their master: “Master, living near the city makes a recluse’s life unsatisfactory because of the many troubles. The proper place for a recluse is somewhere remote from the town. Let us move away from here.” The master had only to agree. He told this to the king but the king would not let him leave him alone. Three times Bāvarī made persistent requests to the king, and at last the king had to yield to his wishes. He sent along two of his ministers with 200,000 pieces of money to accompany Bāvarī and his followers to find a suitable site for their hermitage, on which all monastic dwellings for them were to be built.

The recluse Bāvarī, together with 16,016 pupils, under the care of the two ministers, left in the southerly direction from Sāvatthī. Then they went to south Jambudīpa to a place which lay between the two kingdoms of Assaka and Aḷaka, which was a big island where the two streams of the river Godhāvarī parted, a three-league wide forest of edible fruits, Bāvarī said to his pupils: “This is the spot where ancient recluses have lived. It is suitable for us.” As a matter of fact, it was the forest where famous recluses, such as Sarabhaṅga, had made their dwellings.

The king’s ministers paid 100,000 pieces of money of silver each to King Assaka and [1366] King Aḷaka for possession and use of the land. The two rulers gladly ceded the property and also added the two-league wide land adjoining the forest, thereby granting a total area of five leagues. The ministers from the court of Sāvatthī caused a dwelling to be built there. They also brought some necessary

materials from Sāvatthī and set up a big village for the recluses to gather daily alms food. When their task was completed, they returned to Sāvatthī.

> The above account is what is stated in the commentary on the Way to the Beyond (*Pārāyaṇa-vagga*, Snp 5). The commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) tells us of further incidents concerning recluse Bāvarī which are described now.

On the day, after the two ministers had returned to Sāvatthī, a man appeared at the dwelling and sought permission from the recluses to build a house for his dwelling on the estate. He was allowed to do so. Soon other families followed suit and there were 100 houses on the estate. And so, with the kindness of Bāvarī, the community of lay householders flourished, providing a source of daily alms food for the recluses, who also got daily sustenance from the fruit trees.

Yearly Charity worth a Hundred Thousand

The village at the hermitage had become prosperous. Revenues from agriculture and other activities amounted to 100,000 every year which the villagers paid to King Assaka. But King Assaka said to them that the revenue should be paid to recluse Bāvarī. When they took the money to Bāvarī, the recluse said: "Why have you brought this money?" The householders said: "Reverend sir, we pay this sum as a token of our gratitude for the right of occupancy of your land." Bāvarī replied: "If I cared for money, I would not have become a recluse. Take back your money." – "But, sir," the householders said, "we cannot take back what has been given to you. We shall be paying you the sum of 100,000 every year. We may humbly suggest that you accept our annual tribute and make your own donations with the money as you please." Bāvarī was obliged to agree. And so every year there took place a big alms giving by the good recluse for the benefit of destitutes, peasants, travellers, beggars and mendicants. The news of this noble act spread to the whole of the Jambudīpa.

A Bogus Brahmin's Threat

After one such annual occasion, in a certain year, while Bāvarī was exulting in the good deed at his dwelling, he was roused up from his short slumber by a hoarse cry of a man demanding: "Brahmin Bāvarī, give something in generosity. Give something in generosity." It was the voice of a bogus Brahmin who was a descendant of Brahmin Jūjaka of The Birth Story about the Great King

Vessantara (*Vessantara-jātaka*, Ja 547), who came from Dunniviṭṭha Brahmin village in the kingdom of Kaliṅga. He had come at the behest of his nagging wife who said to him: "Don't you know that Brahmin Bāvarī is giving away freely in generosity? Go and get gold and silver from him." The bogus Brahmin was a hen-pecked husband. He could not help but do her bidding.

Bāvarī said to him: "Brahmin, you are late. I have distributed everything to those who came for help. I have not a penny left now." – "Bāvarī, I do not want a big amount of money. For you, who are giving away such big sums, it is not possible to be penniless as you say. Give me just 500." – "I don't have 500. You will get it at the next round." – "Do I have to wait till the next time you chose to give?" he was clearly angry in saying those words for he started to utter a curse with some elaboration. He fetched some cowdung, red flowers, coarse grass into the dwelling, and hastily smeared the floor at the entrance to the residence of Bāvarī with cowdung, strewed it with red flowers, and spread the coarse grass all over. Then he washed his left foot with water from his water pot, made seven steps on the floor and, stroking his left foot with his hand, uttered the following curse as when a holy man would chant a mantra (Snp 989):

> *Sace me yācamānassa, bhavaṁ nānupadassati,*
> *sattame divase tuyhaṁ, muddhā phalatu sattadhā.*
>
> If you refuse to give me the money I asked for, may your head splinter into seven pieces on the seventh day from now.

Bāvarī was deeply disturbed. "Perhaps his curse might take effect," he pondered as he lay [1367] on his bed, unable to sleep. Then Bāvarī's mother in the immediately previous existence, who was now the guardian goddess of the hermitage, seeing her former son in distress, said:

> *Na so muddhaṁ pajānāti, kuhako so dhanatthiko,*
> *muddhani muddha-pāte vā, ñāṇaṁ tassa na vijjati.*
>
> Son, that Brahmin does not know what is called "the head." He is merely a bogus Brahmin who is out to get your money. Neither does he understand the meaning of "the head" (*muddha*) nor the factor that can cause "the head" to split asunder (*muddhādhipāta*).

Then Bāvarī said: "Mother, if you know what is meant by 'the head' and the factor that can cause 'the head' to split asunder, may I know them."

The goddess said: "Son, I do not know these things." – "Who in this world knows them? Please direct me to that person." – "There is the all-knowing Buddha, Lord of the Three Worlds." When the word "Buddha" was heard, Bāvarī was extremely delighted and all worries left him. "Where is the Buddha now?" – "The Buddha is residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī."

Early next morning, Bāvarī called his sixteen pupils and said: "Men, the Buddha is said to have appeared in the world. Go and verify the fact and let me know. I mean to go to the Buddha myself but at my advanced age, I am expecting death at any moment. Go and see the Buddha and put these seven questions to him." The questions arranged in verse known as the head-breaker (*muddha-phālana*), which is also known as the destruction of the head (*muddhādhipāta*) were then taught them in detail.

> Note that it was on the eighth year of Bāvarī's settling down by the banks of river Godhāvarī, that the Buddha appeared in the world.[296]

Then Bāvarī pondered thus: "All of my sixteen pupils are wise persons. If they have attained the ultimate goal of the monastic life, Awakening, they might or might not come back to me." And so he said to Piṅgiya, his nephew: "Nephew Piṅgiya, you ought to come back to me without fail. Do tell me the benefit of the supermundane when you have attained it."

Then the 16,000 followers of Bāvarī under the leadership of Ajita, one of the sixteen pupils, together with their sixteen teachers, made obeisance to Bāvarī and left their dwelling in the northerly direction.

The Journey to the Buddha

They proceeded on their journey through the royal city of Aḷaka Mahissati, Ujjenī, Gonaddha, Vedisa, Pavana, Kosambī, Sāketa, Sāvatthī, Setabya, Kapilavatthu, Kusinārā, Pāvā, Bhoga, Vesālī and Rājagaha, which was in Magadha country. It was a long journey covering many leagues.

As they passed a city, the people asked them where they were going and when they said that they were going to see the Buddha to clarify certain problems,

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[296] See the commentary on the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*).

many people joined them. By the time they passed Kosambī and reached Sāketa, the line of pilgrims was six leagues long already.

The Buddha knew of the coming of the recluses, the pupils of Bāvarī, and that they were being joined by many people along the way. But as the faculties of the recluses were not ripe yet, the Buddha did not stay in Sāvatthī to receive them, as the proper place for their Awakening was the Pāsāṇaka Shrine in Magadha. By having to pass through more cities to that particular place, the number of pilgrims would have grown larger and that all of them would benefit from his discourse there, and gain knowledge of the four noble truths. Taking into consideration this great advantage to the pilgrims, the Buddha left Sāvatthī and went in the direction of Rājagaha ahead of the arrival of the pilgrims there.

When the big crowd reached Sāvatthī, they entered the Buddha's monastery and inquired where the Buddha was. At the entrance to the private quarters of the Buddha, the scented chamber, they noticed the footprint of the Buddha, which was left there by the Buddha's [1368] will to remain intact till they came there. They were adept at reading the footprints of all types of persons (SnpA PTS 2.544):

> *Rattassa hi ukkutikaṁ padaṁ bhave,*
> *duṭṭhassa hoti avakaḍḍhitaṁ padaṁ,*
> *mūḷhassa hoti sahasānupīḷitaṁ*
> *vivaṭacchadassa idam-īdisaṁ padaṁ.*

> A person who is lustful has his or her footprint with a hollow at the middle. A person who is full of hatred has his or her footprint inclined backwards. A person who has much bewilderment has his or her print very markedly impressed at the toes and at the heel. The present footprint is surely that of the all-knowing Buddha who has destroyed all the defilements.

By their own learning, the recluses were sure that they had come across the footprint of the Buddha.

The Buddha travelled by stages through Setabya, Kapilavatthu, and so on and reached the Pāsāṇaka Shrine near Rājagaha, letting a big number of persons follow him. The recluses then left Sāvatthī as soon as they had ascertained for

themselves the footprint of the Buddha, and travelling by stages through Setabya and Kapilavatthu, and so on reached the Pāsāṇaka Shrine near Rājagaha.

> The Pāsāṇaka Shrine was a pre-Buddhist shrine. It was built on a vast rock in honour of a local deity. When the Buddha appeared, the people built a new temple and donated it for the use by Buddhist devotees. The old name however was retained.

Sakka had prepared sufficient room to have the huge crowd accommodated at the Pāsāṇaka temple. In the meanwhile, the recluses tried their best to catch up with the Buddha, travelling in the cool hours of the mornings and evenings. When they saw the Pāsāṇaka Shrine, the destination where the Buddha was understood to be residing, they were extremely happy like a thirsty man seeing water, or like a merchant who has realized a good fortune, or like a weary traveller seeing a cool shade. They rushed into the shrine in all haste.

Questioning the Buddha

They saw the Buddha delivering a discourse in the midst of many monastics with a voice that reminded them of a lion roaring. Ajita, the leader of the Brahmins, was greatly delighted on seeing the Buddha emitting the six Buddha-radiances while expounding the Dhamma, and was further encouraged by the Buddha's amiable words of greetings, such as: "How did you find the weather? Was it tolerable?" and so on.

Sitting in a suitable place, he put the first question to the Buddha without speaking it aloud but directing his mind to the verse taught by his master Bāvarī, thus (Snp 1024):

> *Ādissa jammanaṁ brūhi, gottaṁ brūhi salakkhaṇaṁ;*
> *mantesu paramiṁ brūhi, kati vāceti Brāhmaṇo.*
>
> May I be told: How old is our master Bāvarī? What distinguishing bodily marks is our master endowed with? What is his lineage? How accomplished is he in the three Vedas? How many pupils are learning the Vedas under him?

Bāvarī had instructed Ajita to put those questions mentally. And he did as he was told. The Buddha, as expected by Bāvarī, knew Ajita's questions and gave the following answers without hesitation in two verses (Snp 1025-6):

Vīsaṁ vassa-sataṁ āyu, so ca gottena Bāvarī;
tīṇissa lakkhaṇā gatte, tiṇṇaṁ vedāna' pāragū.

Ajita, your teacher's age is 120 years, he belongs to the clan of Bāvarī, he has three distinguishing marks of a great man, he has mastered the three Vedas.

Lakkhaṇe itihāse ca, sanighaṇḍusa-keṭubhe; [1369]
pañca-satāni vāceti, sadhamme paramiṁ gato.

He has mastered the glossaries (*nighaṇḍu*), the liturgy (*ketubha*), the characteristics of the great man (*lakkhaṇa*), the Ancient Histories (*Itihāsa*), he is teaching the three Vedas to 500 pupils who are lazy and dull.

Ajita wanted to know what three characteristics are possessed by his master, with reference to the third answer above, and put the following question mentally (Snp 1027):

Lakkhanānaṁ pavicayaṁ, Bāvarissa naruttama,
kaṅkhacchida pakāsehi, mā no kaṅkhāyitaṁ ahu.

O supreme man endowed with the faculty of dispelling doubts of all beings, please specify in detail what are the three distinguishing marks of Bāvarī. Do not let us have any scepticism.

The Buddha made the following reply (Snp 1028):

Mukhaṁ jivhāya chādeti, uṇṇassa bhamu-kantare,
kosohitaṁ vattha-guyhaṁ, evaṁ jānāhi mānava.

Ajita, your teacher Bāvarī can cover his face with his tongue, there is the spiral auspicious hair between his eyebrows, his genital organ is sheathed like that of the Chaddanta elephant. Ajita, note these three distinguishing marks on him.

This the Buddha answered in precise terms. Then the audience, which covered an area of twelve leagues, were amazed, for they heard no one asking questions except the Buddha's prompt and detail answers. Raising their joint palms above their heads, they wondered aloud: "Who is the questioner? Is he a Deva or a Brahma, or Sakka the beloved husband of Sujā?" Having heard the answers to his five questions, Ajita asked two more questions mentally (Snp 1031):

Muddhaṁ muddhādhipātañ-ca, Bāvarī paripucchati,
taṁ vyākarohi Bhagavā, kaṅkhaṁ Vinaya no ise.

O virtuous one, our teacher wishes to ask two questions: First, what is meant by "the head" (*muddha*)? Secondly, what is the factor that can destroy "the head" (*muddhāhipāta*)? Kindly answer these two questions and dispel our doubts.

To Ajita's mental question the Buddha answered aloud thus (Snp 1032):

Avijjā muddhā ti jānāhi, vijjā muddhādhipātini,
saddhā-sati-samādhīhi, chanda-viriyena saṁyutā.

Ajita, ignorance (*avijjā*) of the four noble truths is the head (*muddha*) of repeated rebirths. Understanding (*vijjā*) of the noble path (*muddhādhipātini*) that is associated with confidence (*saddhā*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*), strong will (*chanda*) and endeavour (*viriya*), is the factor that destroys the head. Thus you should know.

On hearing the exact answers, Ajita was overjoyed. And, placing the antelope's skin on his left shoulder, touched the Buddha's feet with his head. Then he said aloud (Snp 1034):

Bāvarī brāhmaṇo bhoto, saha sissehi mārisa,
udagga-citto sumano, pade vandati Cakkhuma. *[1370]*

The venerable one who has made an end of suffering (*dukkha*), endowed with the eye of knowledge, Brahmin Bāvarī, together with his pupils numbering 16,000, being in high spirits, worships at your feet!

The other pupils of Bāvarī joined Ajita in these words of praise and made obeisance to the Buddha. The Buddha had compassion on Ajita and wished him well in these terms (Snp 1035):

Sukhito Bāvarī hotu, saha sissehi brāhmano,
tvañ-cāpi sukhito hohi, ciraṁ jīvāhi māṇava.

May Bāvarī and his pupils be happy and well! Young Brahmin, may you also be happy and well. May you live long!

Then the Buddha continued (Snp 1036):

> *Bāvarissa ca tuyhaṁ vā, sabbesaṁ sabba-saṁsayaṁ,*
> *katāvakāsā pucchavho, yaṁ kiñci manasicchatha.*
>
> If Bāvarī or yourself, Ajita, or anyone of you would like to clear up any problem that may arise in your mind, I allow you to ask.

When this opportunity was extended to them, all the Brahmins sat down, made obeisance to the Buddha, and took turns to ask. Ajita was the first to do so. The Buddha answered his questions and those answers gradually culminated in the realization of Awakening. Ajita and his 1,000 pupils became Arahats at the end of the discourse; 1,000s of others also attained the paths and fruitions at various levels.

As soon as Ajita and his pupils became Arahats, they were called up by the Buddha into the monastic life. They instantly assumed the form of elders of 60 years' standing, complete with monastic equipment which appeared by the supernormal power of the Buddha. They all sat before the Buddha in postures of worship.

> The rest of Bāvarī's pupils asked their own questions to the Buddha, the details about which may be found in the Way to the Beyond (*Pārāyaṇa-vagga*, Snp 5). Here we shall continue only with what is concerned with Ven. Mogharāja and Bāvarī.

Bāvarī's pupils, mentioned above, asked questions in turn to which the Buddha gave answers and which ended in the attainment of Awakening by the questioner and his 1,000 pupils. All of them, becoming monastics, were called up by the Buddha.

Mogharāja was a very conceited person who considered himself as the most learned among the sixteen close pupils of Bāvarī. He thought it fit to ask his questions only after Ajita because Ajita was the eldest among the close pupils. So after Ajita had finished, he stood up to take his turn. However, the Buddha knew that Mogharāja was conceited and was not yet ripe for Awakening, and that he needed chastisement. So the Buddha said to him: "Mogharāja, wait till others have asked their questions." Mogharāja reflected thus: "I have all along been thinking of myself as the wisest person. But the Buddha knows best. He must have judged that my turn to ask questions has not become due." He sat down silently.

Then after the eight pupils of Bāvarī, viz., Ajita, Tissametteyya, Puṇṇaka, Mettagū, Dhotaka, Upasīva, Nanda and Hemaka, had finished their turns, he became impatient and stood up to take his turn. Again, the Buddha saw him still not ripe yet for Awakening and asked him to wait. Mogharāja took it silently. But when the remaining six pupils of Bāvarī, Todeyya, Kappa, Jatukaṇṇi, Bhadrāvudha, Udaya, and Posala, had finished their turns, Mogharāja was concerned about the prospect of his becoming the most junior monastic among Bāvarī's disciples and took the fifteenth turn. And now that Mogharāja's faculties had ripened, the Buddha allowed him. Mogharāja began thus (Snp 1122-1125):

Dvāhaṁ sakkaṁ apucchissaṁ, na me vyākāsi cakkhumā,
yāva-tatiyañ-ca devīsi, vyākarotī ti me sutaṁ. *[1370]*

Twice have I put my questions to the Buddha of Sakyan descent, but the possessor of the five eyes, has not replied to me. I have heard it said that the Buddha answers, out of compassion, at the third time.

Ayaṁ loko paro loko, Brahma-loko sadevako,
diṭṭhiṁ te nābhijānāti, Gotamassa yasassino.

Neither this human world nor the world of Devas and Brahmas understand the view held by Buddha Gotama of great fame and following.

Evaṁ abhikkanta-dassāviṁ, aṭṭhi pañhena āgamaṁ,
kathaṁ lokaṁ avekkhantaṁ, Maccu-rājā na passati.

To the one who sees the excellent Dhamma, the knower of the inner tendencies (*āsaya*), supreme release (*adhimutti*), destinies (*gati*) and Nibbāna, of the sentient world, we have come to ask a question: How should one perceive the world so that Māra cannot see him any more?

He asks by what manner of perceiving the conditioned world does one become an Arahat which is liberation from death?

To the question contained in the second half of Mogarāja's three verses above, the Buddha replied:

Suññato lokaṁ avekkhassu, Mogharāja sadā sato,
attānudiṭṭhiṁ ūhacca, evaṁ maccu-taro siyā,
evaṁ lokaṁ avekkhantaṁ Maccu-rājā na passati.

> Mogharāja, be mindful all the time, and abandoning the wrong view concerning the five aggregates, the delusion of self, perceive the world animate or inanimate as naught, as empty; by perceiving it in this way, one will be liberated from Death. One who perceives the world thus cannot be seen by Death.
>
> > The wrong view of a personal identity as "oneself" which is the mistaken concept of the present body (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), must be discarded and all conditioned phenomena should be viewed as insubstantial and not-self (*anatta*), and in truth and reality, a mere nothingness. When this right perception has struck root, death is conquered. When the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) is realised, the Arahat passes beyond the domain of Death. "Passing beyond Death's domain," is a metaphor which means attainment of Awakening. This verse has as its main object the attainment of Awakening.

After hearing this verse which culminated in the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*), Mogharāja and his 1,000 followers became Arahats, as did the previous pupils of Bāvārī. They became monastics who were summoned. Thousands among the audience gained the paths and fruitions at various levels, too. [1372]

Foremost Title Achieved

Since he became a monastic by being summoned by the Buddha, Ven. Mogharāja had the habit of wearing only inferior or poor robes that were stitched out of coarse rags, dyed poorly just enough to meet the Discipline, and stitched with inferior thread. Therefore, on one occasion, when the Buddha was holding a congregation of monastics at the Jetavana monastery, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ bhikkhūnaṁ lūkha-cīvara-dharānaṁ yad-idaṁ Mogharājā.*
>
> Monastics, among my monastic disciples who always wear coarse robes of poor material, poor dye and poor thread, Ven. Mogharāja is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

Bāvarī the Brahmin Teacher

Of the sixteen close pupils of recluse Bāvarī, the first fifteen, up to Mogharāja, after putting forwards their questions to the Buddha and receiving the answers, became Arahats along with their respective pupils of 1,000 each. All were

monastics summoned by the Buddha. Piṅgiya, the sixteenth close pupil and a nephew of Bāvarī, who was then 120 years of age, asked the Buddha this question (Snp 1126):

Jiṇṇoham-asmi abalo vīta-vaṇṇo,
nettā na suddhā savanaṁ na phāsu,
māhaṁ nassaṁ momuho antarāva,
ācikkha Dhammaṁ yam-ahaṁ vijaññaṁ,
jāti-jarāya idha vippahānaṁ.

Venerable sir, I am worn out with age, weak and wan. My eyes and ears are failing me. I do not wish to die in ignorance before having the benefit of your teaching. So please show me, here in your very presence, the supermundane Dhamma that can abandon rebirth and ageing.

Piṅgiya was very much concerned about his physical deterioration as he had attachment to his body. To gain a detached view of the body, the Buddha taught him thus (Snp 1127):

Disvāna rūpesu vihaññamāne,
ruppanti rūpesu janā pamattā,
tasmā tuvaṁ Piṅgiya appamatto,
jahassu rūpaṁ apunabbhavāya.

Piṅgiya, the heedless multitudes are brought to ruin on account of corporeality. Having seen for yourself how corporeality is the cause of the suffering of those heedless persons, be heedful and mindful and abandon attachment to corporeality so that fresh existence may not arise.

The Buddha expounded the necessary practice (*paṭipatti*) that leads one to Awakening by the expression: "So that fresh existence (*apunabbhava*) may not arise."

The hearer, Piṅgiya, however was old and getting mentally slow. So he did not gain Awakening at once. He put a further question in the following verse, extolling the immense wisdom of the Buddha (Snp 1128):

Disā catasso vidisā catasso,
uddhaṁ adho dasa disā imāyo,
na tuyhaṁ adiṭṭham asutaṁmutaṁ,
atho aviññātaṁ kiñcanam-atthi loke,

ācikkha Dhammaṁ yam-ahaṁ vijaññaṁ, [1373]
jāti-jarāya idha vippahānaṁ.

Venerable sir, in all the four cardinal directions, in all the four intermediate directions, above, and below, in all the ten directions, there is nothing whatsoever in the world that the Fortunate One does not see, hear, know, or understand. Do show me, here in your very presence, the supermundane Dhamma that can abandon rebirth and ageing.

The Buddha again pointed to the necessary practice leading to Nibbāna thus (Snp 1129):

Taṇhādhipanne manuje pekkhamāno,
santāpajāte jarasā parete,
tasmā tuvaṁ Piṅgiya appamatto,
jahassu taṇhaṁ apunabbhavāya.

Piṅgiya, the multitudes are afflicted by craving. Having seen yourself how they are worn out and ruined by the relentless process of ageing, be heedful and mindful and abandon craving for sense pleasures, for continued existence, and for non-existence so that fresh existence may not arise.

At the end of the discourse, which was directed towards the Arahat fruition, Piṅgiya became a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-magga*), having path-knowledge at the third level. While listening to the discourse, Piṅgiya's mind was wandering: he felt sorry that his uncle, Bāvarī, had missed the opportunity to hear such a profound exposition, and hence his failure to become an Arahat. However, his 1,000 pupils became Arahats. All of them, Piṅgiya as a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*) and his pupils as Arahats, were summoned as monastics by the Buddha.

The question posed by each of the sixteen pupils of Bāvarī and the Buddha's answers to them were compiled as distinct discourses by the reciters at the Council, such as the Questions of the Young Man Ajita (*Ajita-māṇava-pucchā*), etc. The background story and the sixteen discourses have been given the title of the Way to the Beyond because they lead to the yonder shore of Saṁsāra, to Nibbāna.

By the end of the Way to the Beyond 16,016 recluses became Arahats, i.e. all but Piṅgiya became Arahats. 140 million hearers also attained path and fruit at various levels of path-knowledge, having understood the four noble truths.

The huge audience, on the occasion of the Way to the Beyond, who came from different places, found themselves back at home at the end of the discourse due to the Buddha's powers. The Buddha returned to Sāvatthī accompanied by thousands of Arahat disciples, with the exception of Ven. Piṅgiya.

Piṅgiya's Discourses to Bāvarī

Ven. Piṅgiya did not accompany the Buddha to Sāvatthī because he had undertaken to report back his experience to his uncle. Buddha granted him permission to return to his dwelling. He appeared at the bank of river Godhāvarī by his psychic power, and thence went to his dwelling on foot.

As Bāvarī awaited the return of his nephew, sitting and watching the road, he saw Ven. Piṅgiya, in the guise of a monastic, instead of his former appearance as a recluse with the usual equipment. He rightly conjectured that the Buddha indeed had appeared in the world. When Ven. Piṅgiya got into his presence, he asked him: "How is it? Has the Buddha appeared?" – "It is true, Brahmin, the Buddha has appeared in the world. He gave us a discourse while residing at the Pāsāṇaka Shrine. I shall pass on the teaching to you." On hearing this, Bāvarī and his 500 pupils prepared a special seat for Ven. Piṅgiya, showing him great respect. Then Ven. Piṅgiya took his seat and delivered a discourse consisting of 15 verses to Bāvarī, which is known as the Verses on the Recital of the Way to the Beyond (*Pārāyaṇānugīti*, Snp 1130-45).[297] [1374]

> 1. "I will recite the Buddha's Discourse on the Way Beyond (*Pārāyaṇa*): The Buddha who is an Arahat, untainted by the filth of delusion, endowed with vast knowledge which is comparable to the earth, released from sensuousness, barren of the forests of defilements, expounded the Dhamma as he has understood it. Why should the Buddha say something which is untrue?

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[297] Refer to the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*). A prose rendering follows.

2. Come, now, I will sing in praise of the Buddha, the one purified of the dirt of delusion (*moha*), the one purged of conceit (*māna*) and ingratitude (*makkha*).

3. Brahmin, the Buddha has dispelled the darkness of the defilements. He is endowed with the all-seeing eye. He has reached the end of the world. He has passed beyond all forms of existence. He is free of the pollutants. He has exhausted all suffering (*dukkha*). He has earned the name of 'the Awakened One.' This man, Brahmin, is the man I have resorted to.

4. Brahmin, like a bird that leaves the lowly bushes of scanty fruit and resorts to a fruitful grove, so also I have left the company of lesser minds, and like a golden swan, have reached a great lake of immense wisdom.

5. Brahmin, before the time of Buddha Gotama's teaching, religious teachers proclaimed their views to me saying: 'This is how it has always been, and this is how it will always be.' They were mere hearsay knowledge, gaining ground as oral tradition. They only serve as sources of unwholesome speculation bearing on sensuality, and so on.

6. Brahmin, that Buddha Gotama whom I have followed is unrivalled. He is committed to dispelling darkness. He has a halo around his person and sheds the light of knowledge everywhere. My teacher, Buddha Gotama, has awe-inspiring wisdom. His intelligence is infinite like the earth.

7. Brahmin, the Buddha expounded to me the Dhamma which can be personally apperceived, which is not delayed in its result, which leads to the end of craving, and to the security of Nibbāna. That Buddha, my teacher, is beyond comparison."

8-9. Thereupon Bāvarī asked Piṅgiya thus: "Piṅgiya, whereas the Buddha expounded to you the Dhamma which is personally appreciable, which is not delayed in its result, which leads to the end of craving, and to security against all defilements and, whereas the Buddha is beyond comparison; has awe-inspiring wisdom, and infinite intelligence like the earth, yet why do you ever stay away from him?"

Bāvarī scolded his nephew for not staying close to such a great man as the Buddha.

10-11. "Brahmin, that Buddha, my Teacher, expounded to me the Dhamma which can be personally apperceived, which is not delayed in its result, which leads to the end of craving, and to security against all defilements. He has awe-inspiring wisdom, and infinite intelligence like the earth. In fact, I do not stay away from him even for a moment.

12. Brahmin, with mindfulness, I am seeing the Buddha in my mind as clearly as with my eyes, I am seeing him by day or by night. By night I remember his greatness with reverence. That is why I never consider myself away from the Buddha, even for a moment.

13. Brahmin, my conviction, my delightful satisfaction, and my mindfulness, never leave the Buddha Gotama's teaching. Wherever the Buddha, endowed with infinite wisdom, goes, I bow in my mind in that direction in homage.

14. Brahmin, it is due to my old age that I am not physically able to go to the Buddha. But I always go to him in my thoughts. My mind is always connected with his presence.

15. Brahmin, I was laying in the mire of sensuousness, agitated all the time, while drifting from one island to another, while taking refuge in one teacher now, and then another teacher next. Now I have met the teacher, at the Pāsāṇaka Shrine who is free of the pollutants, who has crossed over the floods of Saṁsāra." [1375]

Ven. Piṅgiya having become a noble one (*ariya*), could address his uncle only as "Brahmin," and not "uncle." On the part of Bāvarī, he was used to calling his nephew, "Piṅgiya" and did not mean to be disrespectful to the monastic in calling him by his name.

Buddha's Delivery of a Discourse

At the end of the fifteenth verse above, the Buddha knew that Ven. Piṅgiya and his uncle, Bāvarī, had become fit enough to receive higher knowledge, their five faculties of confidence (*saddhā*), energy (*viriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*) had matured, and he sent his Buddha-radiance to them while remaining at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī. The golden-hued radiance appeared before them. Just as Ven. Piṅgiya was describing the noble qualities of the Buddha to his uncle, he saw the golden shaft

of radiance and, paying attention to it carefully, he saw the presence of the Buddha as if the Buddha was standing in front of him. “Look! The Buddha has come!” he exclaimed in wonderment.

Bāvarī then stood up and paid homage to the Buddha with palms joined and raised to his forehead. The Buddha then intensified the radiance and let his person be seen by Bāvarī. Then he made a discourse suited to both Bāvarī and his nephew, but addressed it to Ven. Piṅgiya (Snp 1152):

> *Yathā ahū Vakkali mutta-saddho,*
> *Bhadrāvudho Āḷavī Gotamo ca.*
>
> Piṅgiya, there have been monastics who became Arahats through sheer force of confidence in the Three Treasures such as Vakkali, Bhadrāvudha, who was one of the sixteen close pupils of Bāvarī, and Gotama of Āḷavī.
>
> *Evam-eva tvam-pi pamuñcassu saddhaṁ,*
> *gamissasi tvaṁ Piṅgiya Maccu-dheyyassa pāraṁ.*
>
> Likewise, you should place your confidence in the Three Treasures and by directing that confidence towards Nibbāna, cross over from the other shore of Saṁsāra, which is the domain of Death.

At the end of the discourse, Ven. Piṅgiya became an Arahat. Bāvarī became a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-phala*) and his 500 pupils attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). Ven. Piṅgiya responded to the above admonition of the Buddha thus (Snp 1153-5):

> *Esa bhiyyo pasīdāmi, sutvāna munino vaco,*
> *vivaṭṭacchado Sambuddho, akhilo paṭibhanavā.*
>
> Venerable sir, the words of the Great Recluse (*Mahā-muni*), the Buddha, makes me deeply satisfied. My confidence in the Three Treasures is strengthened. The Buddha has removed the roof of Saṁsāra. He is free from the darts of the defilements. He is endowed with elaborate and analytical knowledge.
>
> *Adhideve abhiññāya, sabbaṁ vedi varo-varaṁ.*
> *pañhānantakaro Satthā, kaṅkhīnaṁ paṭijānataṁ.*
>
> The Perfectly Awakened One, who resolves all problems and who is the teacher of those that falsely claim to be free from doubt, knows the pure

ones who are superior to the greatest of Devas and humans, having understood through his extraordinary wisdom all factors that lead to purity.

Asaṁhīraṁ asaṅkuppaṁ,
yassa natthi upamā kvaci, [1376]
addhā gamissāmi na mettha kaṅkhā,
evaṁ maṁ dhārehi adhimutta-cittaṁ.

Great Recluse, unperturbable, immutable, and beyond any standards of comparison is Nibbāna with no trace of existence remaining. And I have no doubt that I am bound for that Nibbāna. May the Fortunate One recognize me as one who has directed his confidence to Nibbāna, whose mind is free from defilements. [1377]

44: The Life Stories of the Nuns

1. Ven. Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī

Aspiration in the Past

The future Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī was born into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, she was listening to a discourse by the Buddha when she happened to see a nun being named by the Buddha as the foremost among the female monastics who were Awakened earliest.

She aspired to the same distinction in a future existence. So, she made extraordinary offerings to the Buddha and expressed that wish before him. The Buddha predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

> *Rattaññū-puggala*: one who was Awakened earliest. This is a technical term which means the monastic who is the senior-most in the Saṅgha. It also means the monastic who understands the four noble truths earliest. It also may mean the monastic who attains the Arahat fruition earliest.

The Head of Water-Carriers

The future Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī led a life of generosity and observed the moral precepts and at the end of her life she was reborn in the Deva realm. When she passed away from the Deva existence during the interval between the two Buddhas, she was reborn into the slave class in Bārāṇasī, as the head of water carriers.

Then, when the Rains Retreat period was drawing near, five Paccekabuddhas who lived in Nandamūla Cave, descended at the Deer Park near Bārāṇasī, from the sky and went into the city to gather alms food. They stayed at the Isipatana Deer Park after the alms round and discussed among themselves about seeking help in making dwelling places for use during the Rains Retreat.

> A monastic, who vows to remain at a chosen place during the Rains Retreat period, is required by the Vinaya Rules to live in a dwelling with some roof, maybe made of slate, or baked tile, or cement tile, or grass or leaves, and with a door. This rule has no exception even for those monastics who have vowed to observe such austere practices as the Nālaka or Moneyya practice. If a dwelling for the purpose is not offered to them

ready-made, they have to seek assistance in getting one built. This dwelling is the place where they determine to live during the three-month Rains Retreat period, and is essential for making the determination.

The five Paccekabuddhas, who had to fulfil the need for a dwelling for use during the Rains Retreat, arranged their robes in the evening and entered the city of Bārāṇasī to seek assistance. Their going into the city was noted by the chief of the water carriers. The Paccekabuddhas stood at the door of the rich man of Bārāṇasī but when they told him about their need, the rich man said: "We were not prepared to help; may the reverend ones go elsewhere."

The chief of the water carriers met the Paccekabuddhas as they came out of the city at the gate and putting down the water pot, she made obeisance. Then she asked the purpose of the reverend ones in going into the city and coming out so soon from it. The Paccekabuddhas told her that they were seeking assistance to have a small dwelling built for use during the Rains Retreat period. And also on further inquiry, she learnt that the need was still unfulfilled. She asked them: "Is this dwelling to be the gift of only well-to-do supporters? Or is it proper for a slave like me to donate one?"

"Anybody may do so, lay supporter," they replied. [1378]

"Very well, venerable sirs, we shall donate the dwellings tomorrow. Meantime, may the venerables accept my offering of food tomorrow."

After making the invitation, she picked up her water pot and, instead of returning to the city, she went back to the water-hole and gathered her company of water carriers there. Then she said to them: "Now girls, do you want to be slaves to others all the time? Or do you want freedom from servitude?"

They answered in unison: "We want freedom from servitude!"

She said: "If so, I have invited five Paccekabuddhas to an alms giving tomorrow. They are in need of dwellings. Let your husbands give helping hands for one day tomorrow."

"Very well," they all said. They told this to their husbands in the evening after the latter had come home from the forest where they worked. The men all agreed to help and made an appointment at the door of the chief of the male slaves. When they had assembled there, the head of the water carriers urged

them to lend a hand in building dwellings for the five Paccekabuddhas during the Rains Retreat period, and thus extolling the great benefits of such a contribution. A few of the men, who did not agree to help at first, were admonished by her and persuaded into the task.

The next morning, the head of the water carriers offered food to the five Paccekabuddhas. After that, she signalled the 500 male slaves to start work. They promptly went to the forest, cut down trees, and each group of 100 men built a modest dwelling unit for one Paccekabuddha, complete with an adjacent walkway near to it. They filled the water pots and saw to the bare essentials in five dwellings for the five Paccekabuddhas. They then offered them to the Paccekabuddhas, requesting them to dwell there during the Rains Retreat period. Having received the consent of the revered ones, they also took turns to offer food to them daily.

If there was some poor water carrier who was unable to prepare a meal for the five Paccekabuddhas on her appointed day, the head of the water carriers would give her the necessary provisions. The three months of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) thus passed. Near the end of the Rains Retreat, the head of the water carriers asked the 500 slave girls each to weave a piece of rough cloth. The 500 pieces collected from them were exchanged for five sets of fine robes which were offered, one set to each of the five Paccekabuddhas. The Paccekabuddhas, after receiving the robes, rose to the sky in the presence of their supporters and went away in the direction of Mount Gandhamādana.

Past Existence as a Chief Weaver

These water carrier slave girls spent the rest of their life in doing meritorious deeds. On their death, they were reborn in the Deva realm. The head of the Deva girls, on her passing away, was reborn into the family of the chief weaver, in a weaver's village, near Bārāṇasī. One day, the 500 sons of Queen Padumā, all Paccekabuddhas, went to the door of the royal palace at Bārāṇasī on invitation. But there was no one to attend to them, to offer seats or to offer food. They had to return to their abode. As they left the city and were at the weaver's village, the chief weaver, who had much devotion for them and after paying obeisance to them, offered food. The Paccekabuddhas accepted her offering of food and, after finishing the meal, left for the Mount Gandhamādana. The chief weaver

spent the rest of her life in deeds of merit. After passing away from that existence, she was reborn in the Deva realm or the human realm in turns.

Ascetic Life in her Final Existence

On the eve of the appearance of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into the Sakyan royal family as the younger daughter of King Mahā Suppabuddha in Devadaha. She was named Gotamī and was the younger sister of Princess Mahā Māyā. Court astrologers, learned in the Vedas and adept at reading human forms, marks and palmistry, after scrutinizing the distinctive bodily features of the two sisters predicted that the sons born of the two sisters would become Universal Monarchs.

When the two sisters came of age, they were betrothed to King Suddhodana and they were taken to Kapilavatthu where Princess Mahā Māyā was made the Chief Queen. Later, [1379] the Bodhisatta passed away from the Tusita Realm and was conceived in the womb of Queen Mahā Māyā. Seven days after the Queen had given birth to her son on the full moon of May (*Vesākha*) in 563 BCE, she passed away and was reborn in Tusita Realm with the name of Santusita. On the death of Queen Mahā Māyā, King Suddhodana made her younger sister, Gotamī, the Chief Queen.

After Queen Mahā Māyā had given birth to Prince Siddhattha, two or three days later, Queen Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī, the step mother of Prince Siddhattha, gave birth to Prince Nanda. So, at the time Queen Mahā Māyā died, Prince Siddhattha was only seven days old while Prince Nanda was only four or five days old. Queen Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī nursed her nephew, Prince Siddhattha, from her own breast, while leaving her own son, Prince Nanda, to be nurtured by nurses. She devoted her whole attention to the bringing up of her little nephew, the Bodhisatta. Later, the Bodhisatta renounced the world and attained Supreme Awakening.

While he was on his mission to bring welfare to the world, the Buddha made his first visit to Kapilavatthu. On the next day, after his arrival, he went into the city to collect alms food. His father, King Suddhodana, had the opportunity to listen to the Buddha's discourse while he was still on his alms round which resulted in him attaining Stream-entry knowledge. Then on the second day,

Prince Nanda was admitted into the Saṅgha. On the seventh day, the Buddha's son, Rāhula, was admitted as a novice.[298]

The Buddha spent his fifth Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) in Kūṭāgāra monastery in the Great Wood, near Vesālī. During that time King Suddhodana became an Arahat under the regal white umbrella at the court of Kapilavatthu and passed away the same day.

Then Queen Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī renounced the world and become a nun. Later, the 500 Queen consorts of the 500 Sakyan princes, who became monastics on the occasion of the expounding of the Discourse about the Great Assembly (*Mahā-samaya-sutta*, DN 20), unanimously decided to become female monastics. They made Queen Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī their spokeswoman to request the Buddha for admission into the Saṅgha. The first attempt by the Queen, the Buddha's step-mother, failed. Then she and the 500 Sakyan princesses shaved their heads, donned dyed robes, and marched on foot from Kapilavatthu to Vesālī. They sought Ven. Ānanda's support in pleading for their admission. Finally, the Buddha admitted them into the Saṅgha as female monastics or nuns.

Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī was admitted by administering the eight principal vows (*garu-dhamma*). The 500 Sakyan princesses were admitted by an assembly of monastics only.

> Later under normal procedure, a nun had to be admitted by an assembly of female monastics also. The details about this may be found in chapter 32.

The Buddha's step-mother, Ven. Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī, became an Arahat after hearing the Discourse: 'In Brief' (*Saṅkhitta-sutta*, AN 8.553). The 500 female monastics later attained Awakening at various levels after hearing the Discourse giving Nandaka's Advice (*Nandakovāda-sutta*, MN 146).

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery and naming the foremost female monastics, he declared:

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[298] [See chapter 17 above.]

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ bhikkhunīnaṁ rattaññūnaṁ yad-idaṁ Mahā-pajāpati-gotamī.

Monastics, among my female monastic disciples who are of long standing in the Saṅgha, Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

Herein, the name "Gotamī" represents the Gotama clan. "Mahā Pajāpatī" is the epithet which means: "Mother of great offspring." This epithet was based on the prediction of physiognomists and palmists that, from the special features observed on her person, she was to be the mother of a Universal Monarch if she gave birth to a son, or the mother of the wife of a Universal Monarch if she gave birth to a daughter.[299] [1380]

The Passing of Ven. Gotamī

When Ven. Gotamī was 120 years of age, she was residing at a nunnery which was in the city of Vesālī.[300] The Buddha was then staying at the Great Wood monastery near Vesālī. One morning, after collecting alms food in the city and finishing her meal, Ven. Gotamī entered into the attainment of the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) for a predetermined period. After rising from the absorption (*jhāna*) attainment, she remembered the long series of acquisitions of merits in her past existences and felt very delighted. Then she reviewed her lifespan. She saw that it had come to an end. She thought it proper to inform the Buddha at Great Wood about her approaching death, as well as bidding leave of her passing away to her colleagues who had been a source of her inspiration such as the two chief disciples and co-resident noble ones (*ariya*). Then only she would return to her nunnery and pass away. The same idea also arose in the minds of the 500 female monastics of Sakyan origin.

The touching events concerning the passing away of Ven. Gotamī will now be told based on: 1) The Covering of Faults (*Chidda-pidhānānī*, 1:12) by Mahā Visuddhārāma Sayādaw, and the Traditions (*Apadāna*, Thi-ap 17). Only the gist of those texts is given here.

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[299] The commentary to the Collection of the Middle Length Discourses (*Majjhima-nikāya*).

[300] As a rule, nunneries were set up inside the town or village.

The Buddha's step-mother, Ven. Gotamī thought: "I am not going to live to see the passing away of my son, the Buddha, nor that of the two chief disciples, nor that of my grandson Rāhula, nor that of my nephew Ānanda. I am going to predecease them. I shall seek permission to pass away from my son, the Buddha now." The same thoughts also occurred in the minds of the 500 nuns of Sakyan origin.

At that moment, the earth quaked violently. Unseasonable rains thundered in the sky. The guardian spirits of the nunneries wailed. The 500 nuns went to Ven. Gotamī and told her about the wailing of the guardian spirits and Ven. Gotamī told them of her plan to pass away. The 500 nuns also told her their plan likewise. They all asked the guardian spirits of the monastery to pardon them if they had offended them in any way. Then, casting her last glance at the nunnery, Ven. Gotamī uttered this verse:

> I shall now proceed to the unconditioned Nibbāna where there is no aging or death, no association with beings or things one dislikes, no separation from beings or things one holds dear.

Among those who heard these words, those who had not rid themselves of attachment, Devas and humans alike, wailed miserably.

> The touching scene of their lamentation is vividly described in the Traditions (*Apadāna*).

When the nuns came out of their nunnery, along the main street, devotees came out of their homes, and kneeling themselves before Ven. Gotamī, wailed, expressing their deep distress. The Buddha's step-mother, Ven. Gotamī, spoke words that help quell their sorrow.

> Her words, rich with the doctrine, may be gleaned from the Traditions (*Apadāna*). This remark also applies to other stanzas that she was to utter later on.

She uttered nine and a half verses to allay the lamentation of the citizens of Vesālī. When she arrived before the Buddha, she informed him of her impending death and asked the Buddha's approval to release her life-maintaining thought process, in verse, sixteen in all, beginning with the words: *Ahaṁ Bhagavā te mātā tvañ-ca Vīra pitā mama*, "Happy One, I am your mother,

Hero, you are my father." (Thi-ap 17, 33-49). The Buddha gave his approval in a verse. After that, she recited five verses in praise of the Buddha.

Then she asked permission of the Saṅgha, Ven. Rāhula, Ven. Ānanda and Ven. Nanda, to approve of her passing away in two verses, beginning with the words: *Āsī-visālaya-same*, "like a serpent's den," (Thi-ap 17, 58-59), describing the banefulness of sentient existence. Ven. Nanda and Ven. Rāhula who were then Arahats took the words of the great elder as inspiring spiritual urgency; but as for Ven. Ānanda, who was still training for Awakening, they caused much sorrow and lamentation. He expressed his grief in a verse beginning with: *Hā santiṁ Gotamī yā ti*, "Gotamī is going, peaceful," and the great elder solaced her nephew with words of wisdom.

Thereafter, the Buddha asked Ven. Gotamī, in the following verse, to display her [1381] supernormal powers:

> Gotamī, for the sake of those who have doubts about female devotees attaining Awakening in my teaching, to enable them to shed those doubts, display your supernormal powers.

The 120 year old nun complied by showing her supernormal powers as described in the text, such as from being one becoming many; from being many becoming one; becoming visible and becoming invisible; passing through a wall or a mountain, etc. Then she walked in mid-air holding Mount Meru as the prop on which the great earth rested as an umbrella, and turned upside down this miraculous umbrella. She created an atmosphere of intense heat as when six suns arise simultaneously, etc. Having complied with the Buddha's request, she came down and paying respects to him, sat in a suitable place. She said: "Venerable son I am 120 years of age. I have grown old, I have lived long enough. May I be allowed to pass away."

The audience, stunned by the miraculous powers displayed by Ven. Gotamī, asked her: "Ven. Gotamī, what was the extent of the merit you performed to be endowed with such power and capability?" Then Ven. Gotamī related the successive deeds of merit she had performed since the days of Buddha Padumuttara to her last existence to them. Those events ran into a number of verses.

Then the 500 nuns rose up into the sky as a cluster of stars, captivating the eye of the audience, displayed their supernormal powers, and having obtained the Buddha's approval to end their miraculous feats, they made obeisance to him and sat in a suitable place. They recounted to the Buddha in verses how much they owed to Ven. Gotamī. Then they asked the Buddha's permission to pass away.

The Buddha said: "Nuns! You know the time to pass away." Thus having obtained the Buddha's approval, they made obeisance to him and returned to their nunnery. The Buddha, accompanied by a large company of devotees, saw Ven. Gotamī off up to the entrance to his forest abode. There, the great elder and her 500 nun disciples made their last obeisance to the Buddha together. Then the 500 nuns entered the city and sat cross-legged in their respective dwellings in the nunnery.

At that time, many male and female lay disciples of the Buddha, seeing the time had come to see the noble ones, gathered around to pay their last respects, beating their chests in great sorrow. They threw themselves down on the ground like a tree uprooted. Ven. Gotamī caressed the head of the eldest of the female devotees and uttered this verse:

> Daughters, lamentation leads only to Māra's domain and is therefore in vain. All conditioned things are impermanent; they end up in separation, they cause endless agitation.

Then she told them to go back to their homes. When alone, she entered into the first absorption (*jhāna*) of the form realm and then, stage by stage, till the absorption of neither-consciousness-nor-nonconsciousness, and then back, stage by stage, to the first absorption of the form realm. Thus, back and forth, she dwelt in the eight mundane absorption attainments. Then she dwelt in absorption attainment beginning from the first absorption up to the fourth absorption.[301] Arising from that absorption she realized the complete cessation of the aggregates, just as a lamp goes out when the oil and the wick become exhausted. The remaining 500 female monastic disciples also realized complete cessation.

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[301] All of this prefigures the stages before the Buddha's passing.

At that moment, the great earth quaked violently and meteors fell from the sky. The skies rumbled with thunder. The celestial beings wailed. Celestial flowers rained from the sky. Mount Meru tottered like a dancer swaying. The great ocean roared, as if deeply troubled. Nāgas, Asuras, Devas and Brahmas expressed their spiritual urgency in such terms as: "Impermanent are all conditioned things; they have the nature of dissolution."

Devas and Brahmas reported the death of Ven. Gotamī and the 500 nuns [1382] to the Buddha. The Buddha sent Ven. Ānanda to inform the matter to the monastics. Then, accompanied by many monastics, the Buddha joined the funeral procession which took this order: 1) Devas, humans, Nāgas, Asuras and Brahmas marched at the head, followed by; 2) the 500 golden hearses of the 500 nuns with multi-tiered roofs created by Deva Vissakamma wherein were placed the remains of the nuns on their cots, and these hearses were borne by Devas; 3) then followed the hearse of Ven. Gotamī, the Buddha's step-mother, which was borne by the Four Great Kings; 4) then followed the Saṅgha and the Buddha.

The whole route from the nunnery to the funeral ground was canopied and all along the route were placed streams, pennants, while all the ground was strewn with flowers. Celestial lotus flowers came down, thick and fast, as though they were hanging loosely in the sky. All sorts of flowers and perfumes wafted in the air. All sorts of music, singing and dancing took place in honour of the departed noble Arahats.

During the progress of the funeral procession, both the sun and the moon were visible to the people. Stars were shining in the sky. Even at noon, the sun's radiance was cool like that of the moon. In fact, the occasion of Ven. Gotamī's funeral was surrounded by even more wonderful happenings than on the occasion of the funeral of the Buddha himself. On the occasion of the Buddha's funeral the Buddha and Ven. Sāriputta and certain other elders were not there to supervise the funeral proceedings, whereas on the occasion of the funeral of Ven. Gotamī, the Buddha and the elders, such as Ven. Sāriputta, were there to supervise the proceedings.

At the charnel-ground, after the remains of Ven. Gotamī were incinerated, Ven. Ānanda picked up the relics and uttered this verse (Thi-ap 17, 79):

> Gone now is Gotamī. Her remains have been burnt up. And soon the passing away of the Buddha, a most anxiously awaited event, will take place.

Ven. Ānanda collected the relics in the alms bowl used by Ven. Gotamī and presented them to the Buddha. Thereupon, the Buddha held up the relics of his step-mother for the audience to view and spoke to the assembly of humans, Devas and Brahmas thus (Thi-ap 17, 82):

> Just as a big tree full of hard core, standing firmly, has a great trunk and that great trunk, being of impermanent nature, falls down, so also Gotamī who had been like a big tree trunk to the female Saṅgha is calmed now, and has entered Nibbāna.

The Buddha uttered altogether ten verses for the benefit of the audience on that memorable occasion. These ten verses with text and word-for-word meanings may be gleaned by the reader in the Covering of Faults (*Chidda-pidhānānī*).

2. Ven. Khemā

The story of Ven. Khemā is treated briefly in the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*), the commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nuns (*Therī-gāthā*) and the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*). In the Traditions (*Apādāna*), however, it is related in detail by the great elder herself. What follows is mainly based on the Traditions with selections from the other three commentaries.

Aspiration in the Past

The future Khemā was born into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara, 100,000 aeons ago. One day, she listened to the Buddha's discourse and became a devotee of the Buddha, being established in the three refuges.

Then she had her parents' approval to offer an extraordinary feast to the Buddha and his Saṅgha. At the end of seven days of the great offering, she saw the elder nun Sujātā whom the Buddha named as the foremost female monastic in knowledge. She was inspired by that. She gave an extraordinary offering

again before expressing her wish to become such a foremost female monastic herself later. Buddha Padumuttara predicted that 100,000 aeons hence she would become the foremost female monastic with regards to knowledge in the time of Buddha Gotama. [1383]

Various Existences

The future elder nun Khemā, on passing away from that existence, was reborn in five Deva realms: Tāvatiṁsa, Yāma, Tusita, Nimmānarati, and Paranimmitavasavatī successively, as Queen of the Devas. When she passed away from there, she was reborn as the Queen of a Universal Monarch or as the queen of a Great King. Wherever she was reborn, she was born as queen. She enjoyed the most glorious states in the Deva realm and the human world for many aeons.

After being reborn in the fortunate existences only, during the time of Buddha Vipassī, 91 aeons previous to the present aeon, she was reborn into a worthy family. She had the opportunity of hearing the Buddha's Dhamma which made her solely devoted to the pure life and she became a nun who was learned in the doctrine, skilful in the knowledge of conditional origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), a bold exponent of the four noble truths, and a persuasive teacher besides being diligent in the practice of the Dhamma. Thus she was a model to those who took up the threefold training in the Buddha's teaching. She spent this life of purity during her lifespan of 10,000 years.

Passing away from there, she was reborn in the Tusita Realm. After that, wherever she was reborn, the great merit which she acquired in her existence during the time of Buddha Vipassī endowed her with the best that that particular existence could offer, such as making her talented, pure in morality, rich in resources, attended by a wise following, well provided with ease and comfort. Further, the religious practices observed in that existence led her to a superior social status such as making her a queen, whether in a Deva existence or a human existence and being loved and respected by her king.

During the time of Buddha Koṇāgamaṇa, in the present aeon, she was reborn into a rich family in Bārāṇasī. Together with two other rich ladies by the name

of Dhanañjānī and Sumedha,[302] they built a monastic complex for the Saṅgha as a whole. At their death, they were reborn in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm, and after that existence, they were reborn in the human world and the Deva realm, enjoying superior social status every time.

The Eldest of the Seven Daughters of King Kikī

During the time of Buddha Kassapa, in the present aeon, King Kikī of Bārāṇasī, in the province of Kāsi, was an ardent supporter of the Buddha. He had seven daughters by the names of: 1) Princess Samaṇī, 2) Princess Samaṇaguttā, 3) Princess Bhikkhunī, 4) Princess Bhikkhadāyikā, 5) Princess Dhammā, 6) Princess Sudhammā and 7) Princess Saṅghadāsī. Later, during the time of Buddha Gotama, they became respectively 1) Ven. Khemā, 2) Ven. Uppalavaṇṇā, 3) Ven. Paṭācārā, 4) Ven. Kuṇḍalakesī, 5) Ven. Kisā Gotamī, 6) Ven. Dhammadinnā and 7) Visākhā, the donor of the Eastern monastery in Sāvatthī.

The future Ven. Khemā, Princess Samaṇī, on hearing a discourse by Buddha Kassapa, was very keen to become a nun but her father would not give her permission to do so. So, as the eldest, together with her six younger sisters, they made a common resolve not to marry and remained spinsters throughout their lives which lasted 20,000 years. They supported Buddha Kassapa with the four monastic requisites for life.

On one occasion, the Buddha made a marvellous discourse entitled the Long Discourse on Causation (*Mahā-nidāna-sutta*, DN 15), Princess Samaṇī was so absorbed in hearing it that she learnt it by heart, and recited it often. As the result of these good deeds, on her death, she became Sakka's Chief Queen in Tāvatiṁsa.

Ascetic Life in her Final Existence

During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn in her last existence as the daughter [1384] of King Maddarāja of Sāgala. Since her birth brought peace to the land, she was named "Khemā," which means peace. When she came of age, she became the queen of King Bimbisāra and was adored by her husband. But she became conceited about her beauty.

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[302] Her own name is unknown so she may be referred to as Khemā.

The Buddha was then residing at the Veḷuvana monastery in Rājagaha. Queen Khemā had heard people saying that the Buddha always made discourses pointing out the faults of physical beauty, so she never went to see him for fear that her beauty might well come under his censure.

King Bimbisāra thought: "While I am the most important lay supporter to the Buddha, it is inconceivable that my queen has never visited the Buddha." He contrived a plan by having a song composed by an able poet, in praise of the Veḷuvana monastery, which he ordered songsters to sing within earshot of the queen.

Eulogy about the Veḷuvana Monastery

1. Anyone who is not fortunate enough to see the Veḷuvana monastery, the Bamboo grove residence of the Buddha, we consider them as one who has never seen the Nandana Park of the celestial realm.

2. He or she who has seen the Veḷuvana Grove, which is so much cherished by King Bimbisāra of Rājagaha, the people's favourite ruler, the cynosure of the whole world, has truly seen the Nandana Park, the favourite resort of Sakka, the Lord of the Devas.

3. Many of the Tāvatiṁsa Devas, having abandoned the Nandana Park and descended to Jambudīpa and cast their eyes on the Veḷuvana Grove, are astonished and all their cares are forgotten, they are never satisfied with seeing it.

4. That Veḷuvana Grove has appeared due to the king's past merit and is adorned by the Buddha's majesty. What poet could adequately describe its endless merits?

When Queen Khemā heard that song, although she had been to the Veḷuvana Grove on a pleasure visit with the king, her interest in the grove was aroused afresh. She was very keen to visit it again. She asked the king's permission to go there and went there with a big retinue. She chose the hour of the day that she presumed the Buddha was surely not there, during the morning, when the Buddha usually went to the city for collecting alms food. She roamed about the Veḷuvana which was full of all kinds of flowering trees and fruit trees, where bumble bees busied themselves collecting honey, and where the cuckoos sang and the peacocks preened their feathers in the quiet seclusion of the park. She

also visited the monastic dwellings of the religiously inclined men, their meeting halls, rest houses and walks.

She came across a youthful monastic sitting in meditation at the foot of a tree and thought that young man should be enjoying the pleasures of life at present and take up the religious life only in his old age. Feeling sure that the Buddha was not in his private chamber, she went near it. Instead, the Buddha knew that she would come and he had remained in his private chamber. He had created, by his powers, a young maiden whose beauty surpassed that of Queen Khemā and who was fanning him.

When Queen Khemā saw that lovely maiden, she abandoned attachment to her own good looks but become fascinated and enamoured of the strange beauty in front of her. But even as she was gazing at the girl, due to the Buddha's powers, the beauty of the girl diminished perceptibly and within a few moments, she turned old and decrepit with wrinkled skin, gray hair, broken teeth, black spots all over the skin, floppy breasts, bony joints protruding, veins twining about the body, bent double, and soon the old woman was trembling and breathing hard struggling for life and finally she gasped and collapsed. She was dead.

This vivid sight caused spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) in Queen Khemā. She realized thus: "Oh, this body is impure. It is indeed loathsome. Foolish women relish this [1385] impure, loathsome body."

Then the Buddha spoke to Queen Khemā in these verses:

1. "Khemā, look at the body that is afflicted with pain, impure, putrid, discharging impurities upwards and downwards, which foolish persons take so much delight in.

2. Cultivate the mind to get it fixed on an object of meditation, so as to be able to perceive the loathsomeness of the body. Be mindful of the 32 constituent parts of the body; let there be weariness about them.

3. Khemā, just as the body of this woman by my side breaks up, so too will your body break up. Just as your body seems attractive for a while before death, so too the body of this woman by my side looked attractive before she died; therefore give up attachment to the body, both internally and externally.

4. Cultivate a perception of unsubstantiality and note closely the rising and falling of phenomena. Give up the notion of a self, by doing so, you will quell the eleven fires burning in you and reach Nibbāna.

5. Just as the spider follows the web of its own making, so also sentient beings, who have attachment, follow the stream of defilements that are of their own making. The wise do not have any desire or regard for sense pleasures, but cut off the stream of defilements and go forth to Nibbāna."

The Buddha knew that after listening to the discourse, the mind of Queen Khemā was delighted and receptive, so he continued with another discourse entitled the Long Discourse on Causation (*Mahā-nidāna-sutta*, DN 15) which was the very discourse Queen Khemā had heard and learnt by heart from Buddha Kassapa in her previous existence as Princess Samaṇī. Queen Khemā remembered this discourse and she attained Stream-entry knowledge immediately.

After becoming a noble one (*ariya*) as a Stream-enterer, she wanted to make amends for her mistaken conceit about her beauty. She prostrated before the Buddha and submitted her apology in these five verses:

1. "All-knowing one, I pay homage to you. The embodiment of compassion, I pay homage to you. The Buddha who has crossed the flood of Saṁsāra, I pay homage to you. Giver of the deathless, I pay homage to you!

2. I had been befuddled and led astray by attachment to sensuality, thus springing forward into the thicket of wrong view. By means of an appropriate device, you, the Fortunate One, have tamed me and made me happy in being so tamed.

3. Lacking an opportunity of meeting such a great one like yourself, who is endowed with morality, concentration, etc., sentient beings experience enormous suffering (*dukkha*) in the ocean of Saṁsāra.

4. Even though the pure one, who has reached the purity of Nibbāna, had been staying at the Veḷuvana monastery, I had failed to come and pay homage to the Lord of the Three Worlds. That failure, on my part, I now admit to the Fortunate One as a fault.

5. I had a mistaken idea about the great benefactor to the three worlds, the bestower of the ultimate boon of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna as one who is unprofitably censorious because I was too fond of my beauty. My fault in having entertained such foolish thoughts and my failure to come and pay homage to you earlier, I now admit to the Fortunate One as a fault."

The Myanmar renderings are by the late Mahā Visuddhārāma Sayādaw in his Covering of Faults (*Chidda-pidhānānī*).

Upon admission by Queen Khemā of her previous fault, the Buddha said: "Let it be, Khemā," which cooled her heart as though ambrosial water were poured onto her person. Then Queen Khemā made obeisance to the Buddha and respectfully left him. Back at the royal palace, she saw King Bimbisāra and addressed him thus: [1386]

1. Great conqueror with golden complexion, you had employed a most apt strategy to persuade me to visit the Veḷuvana monastery. Marvellous indeed was your idea! I had become keenly desirous of seeing the Veḷuvana, with the consequence that I have seen with both my physical eye and the eye of wisdom the Buddha, the great sage.

2. King! If you would agree, I would become a nun in the teaching which is replete with the eight marvels of the Buddha of unrivalled wisdom, of the embodiment of the highest virtues. Thanks to the wise words of the Buddha, I have gained insight into the tiresome nature of my body.

On hearing the two verses spoken by Queen Khemā, King Bimbisāra, who had recognised even from her mien that she was a noble one (*ariya*), one who had attained path-knowledge, raised his joined palms to his forehead and said to his queen: "My dear queen, I allow you to become a nun. May your renouncing of the world come to its fulfilment, may you become an Arahat." Thereupon the king put Queen Khemā on a golden palanquin and sent her to the nunnery in great state.

Ven. Khemā gains Awakening

On the fifteenth day of her monastic life, Ven. Khemā, during the Observance Day (*Uposatha*), contemplated on the lamp in front of her, how the flame arose and how it went out. A keen spiritual urgency took place in her mind. Applying

the insight into the nature of the rise and fall of the flame to all conditioned phenomena, such as the mind-body complex that constituted her present existence, she gained Awakening together with the four discriminations and the six supernormal powers.

> This account of the elder nun Khemā attainment of Awakening is as described in the Traditions about the Elder Nun Khemā (*Khemā-therī-apādāna*, Thi-ap 18). The commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) and the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) tell this event in a somewhat different manner.

Ven. Khemā was devoted both to the learning and to the practice of the doctrine and so she was most proficient in the seven stages of purity, and was unrivalled in the exposition of the ten subjects of discussion (*kathā-vatthu*), most erudite in the application of the Abhidhamma method, outstanding both in learning and practice. The veracity of these statements may be gauged from the Discourse about Khemā (*Khemā-sutta*, SN 44.1).

Ven. Khemā gives a Discourse to the King

At one time, when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī, Ven. Khemā was making a tour of the Kosalan country, and was sojourning at Toraṇa, which lay between Sāvatthī and Sāketa. At that time, King Pasenadi of Kosala was camping for the night at Toraṇa. Then the king said to a courtier: "Make inquires in this place which ascetic or Brahmin is fit for my spiritual guidance today." The courtier made thorough inquires in Toraṇa but could find no ascetic or Brahmin whom the king should go to for spiritual guidance. He only saw Ven. Khemā who happened to be sojourning there.

He went back to the king and said: "There is no ascetic or Brahmin in this place. But there is a nun named Khemā, a disciple of the Buddha. She is reported to be wise, skilful, learned, an expounder of the doctrine in a fascinating way, endowed with a remarkable perspicacity. I would humbly suggest that your majesty go to her for advice and guidance." The king accepted the advice and went to Ven. Khemā. He made obeisance to her and sitting in a suitable place, addressed Ven. Khemā thus:

"Ven. Khemā, does a sentient being exist after death?"

"Great King," replied Ven. Khemā, "the Buddha does not say that a sentient being exists after death." [1387]

"If so, Ven. Khemā, does a sentient being not exist after death?"

"Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being does not exist after death."

"Ven. Khemā, does a sentient being both exist as well as does not exist after death?"

"Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being both exists as well as does not exist after death."

"If so, Ven. Khemā, does a sentient being neither exist nor does not exist after death?"

"Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death."

The king was at his wit's end. He further put questions which were replied to as follows: "Ven. Khemā, when I asked: 'Does a sentient being exist after death?' you replied: 'Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being exists after death!' When I asked: 'If so, Ven. Khemā, does a sentient being not exist after death?' you replied: 'Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being does not exist after death.' When I asked: 'Ven. Khemā, does a sentient being exist as well as not exist after death?' you replied: 'Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death.' When I asked: 'If so, Ven. Khemā, does a sentient being neither exist nor not exist after death?' you replied: 'Great King, the Buddha does not say that a sentient being neither exists nor not exist after death.' Now, Ven. Khemā, why does the Buddha not say anything regarding these four questions? What is the reason for the Buddha's refusal to answer these four questions?"

Ven. Khemā then said: "Great King, in that case, let me put a question to you. You may answer it as you wish. What do you think of what I am going to say now? Do you have within your dominion any man who can practically count things or an arithmetician who can say: 'There are such and such number of grains of sand in the river Ganges?' Or who can say: 'There are so many

hundreds, so many thousands, so many 100,000s of grains of sand in the river Ganges?' "

"No, Ven. Khemā, there is none."

"Great King, do you have any man who can practically count things or an arithmetician who can say: 'There are so many vessels or bowls of water in the great ocean.' Or who can say: 'There are so many hundred, so many thousands, so many 100,000s of bowls of water in the great ocean?' "

"No, Ven. Khemā. This is because the great ocean is too deep, beyond measure, incomprehensible."

"Even so, Great King, the Buddha has given up corporeality which may be referred to as a sentient being; he has eradicated it completely. He has made it like an uprooted palm tree, has rendered it incapable of coming into being again, and has made it impossible to arise in the future.

The Buddha, who is liberated from being called an aggregate of corporeality or the phenomenon of materiality, is endowed with attributes and dispositions or intentions which are as great as the great ocean, beyond measure, incomprehensible. As for the Buddha, the statement: 'A sentient being exists after death,' is an irrelevant statement; the statement: 'A sentient being does not exist after death,' is equally irrelevant; the statement: 'A sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death,' is equally irrelevant; the statement: 'A sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death,' is equally irrelevant."

> It is not proper for the Buddha to say that a sentient being exists after death; or, a sentient being does not exist after death; or, that a sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death; or, that a sentient being neither exists nor [1388] does not exist after death. This is a very profound matter.

"The Buddha has given up sensation … perception … volitions … consciousness, which may be referred to as a sentient being; has eradicated it completely, has made it like a palm tree stump, has rendered it incapable of coming into being again, and has made it impossible to arise in the future.

The Buddha who is liberated from being called the aggregate of consciousness or the phenomenon of consciousness is endowed with attributes and dispositions

or intentions which are as great as the great ocean, beyond measure, incomprehensible. As for the Buddha the statement: 'A sentient being exists after death,' is an irrelevant statement; the statement: 'A sentient being does not exist after death,' is equally irrelevant; the statement: 'A sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death,' is equally irrelevant; the statement: 'A sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death,' is equally irrelevant."

> That was the discussion that took place between the Kosalan King and Ven. Khemā for the second round. Explanations regarding this will be given later.

King Pasenadi of Kosala was delighted with the words of Ven. Khemā. He made obeisance to her and respectfully departed. Later on, the king visited the Buddha and put the same questions as he did to Ven. Khemā. The Buddha answered them just as Ven. Khemā did.

When the king found that the Buddha's answers and those of Ven. Khemā were exactly the same, down to the letter, he was greatly astonished and exclaimed: "Marvellous it is, venerable sir! Astounding it is! The Buddha's exposition is exactly the same as that of his disciple, both in meaning and in words. They are in full agreement without any discrepancy. Venerable sir, I had once put these questions to Ven. Khemā and she had answered me in exactly the same way, both in essence and in words. Marvellous it is, venerable sir! Astounding it is! The Buddha's exposition is exactly the same with that of his disciple, both in meaning and in words. They are in full agreement without any discrepancy." Then he begged leave of the Buddha. He was greatly delighted with the Buddha's answers. He rose, made obeisance to the Buddha and respectfully departed.

Explanation of the Discourse

Why did the Buddha not give any reply to the questions which are so framed: "That a sentient being exists after death;" "That a sentient being does not exist after death;" "That a sentient being exists as well as does not exist after death;" "That a sentient being neither exists nor does not exist after death"?

1. There is, in truth and reality, nothing in the sentient world other than the five aggregates. There is nothing, in the ultimate sense a sentient being. Therefore, whether a "sentient being" exists or does not is not for the Buddha to say, see the

First Discourse concerning Sāriputta and Koṭṭhita (*Paṭhama-sāriputta-koṭṭhika-suttaṁ*, SN 44.3).

2. Only to one, who does not understand the nature of the five aggregates according to the four noble truths does there arise the problem of a sentient being and its existence or non-existence, in the said four questions, which occur to him due to wrong view. To one who understands the four noble truths there is no wrong view that gives rise to these four questions. Since the Buddha has the most complete understanding of the four noble truths there do not arise in him these four questions. That is why he does not say anything about them, see the Second Discourse concerning Sāriputta and Koṭṭhita (*Dutiya-sāriputta-koṭṭhika-suttaṁ*, SN 44.4).

3. Such a question, based on wrong views, arises only in one who has not got rid of attachment, or craving for the five aggregates. To one who has no craving for the five aggregates, they do not occur. The Buddha, who has rid of craving for the five aggregates together with any trace of acquired habit, does not have these wrong concepts. Therefore, he remained silent when these questions were asked, see the Third Discourse concerning Sāriputta and Koṭṭhita (*Tatiya-sāriputta-koṭṭhika-suttaṁ*, SN 44.5). [1389]

> In the sixth discourse of the same Thematic Discourses, the Fourth Discourse concerning Sāriputta and Koṭṭhita (*Catuttha-sāriputta-koṭṭhika-suttaṁ*, SN 44.6), the four questions are dealt with adequately.

In the Discourse about Khemā (*Khemā-sutta*, SN 44.1), Ven. Khemā's answer was somewhat different; it had the undercurrent of reference to the Buddha. This was because she knew that the questioner, the Kosalan King, had the Buddha in mind when asking the four questions. So, Ven. Khemā's answer in essence was: The Buddha, by getting rid of the cause of the five aggregates, got rid of the five aggregates so that what was usually called a "sentient being" was not coming into being after his death. He was freed from a future set of five aggregates, therefore, there was nothing that might be referred to as a being or a person. Since the Buddha knew this, a sentient being after death was irrelevant for him to speak of. Therefore, he remained silent about the four questions.

One might argue thus: Since the Buddha would not acquire a fresh set of the five aggregates, it is understandable that he refused to answer the first question:

"Does a sentient being exist after death?" But why did he refuse to answer the second question: "Does a sentient being not exist after death?" Shouldn't he say: "No, it does not"? He refused to answer this question too because a "sentient being" is not a real thing in the ultimate sense.[303] The Discourse about Khemā (*Khemā-sutta*, SN 44.1) is one of the most profound in the Dhamma. It is a matter for further inquiry for the virtuous.

Foremost Title Achieved

The discourse to the Kosalan King at Toraṇa was the immediate cause of Ven. Khemā's being designated by the Buddha as the foremost female monastic in possession of profound knowledge. On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery, in a monastic congregation, while naming outstanding nuns as foremost in their own areas of proficiency, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ bhikkhunīnaṁ*
> *mahā-paññānaṁ yad-idaṁ Khemā.*
>
> Monastics, among my female monastic disciples who have profound knowledge, Khemā is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

This declaration accorded her by the Buddha also had been happily recorded by Ven. Khemā herself in the following verses, in her own life history (Thi-ap 18, 89-91):

> 1. After I became a nun, I explained to King Pasenadi of Kosala in accordance with the doctrine on the profound questions he put to me at a place called Toraṇa.
>
> 2. Later the king approached and put these same questions to the Buddha, and he answered these profound questions exactly as I had answered.
>
> 3. The conqueror of the five deaths (*māra*), the supreme one among all men, being satisfied with my excellence in expounding the Dhamma, has designated me as the foremost female monastic among the eminently wise.

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[303] This is the explanation given in the sub-commentary.

3. Ven. Uppalavaṇṇā

Aspiration in the Past

The future Uppalavaṇṇā was born into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, she listened to a discourse by the Buddha in the midst of a big audience, where she saw the Buddha name a nun as the foremost among those endowed with supernormal powers. She aspired to become such a great nun in the future. She made an extraordinary offering to the Buddha and his Saṅgha for seven days. At the end of seven days, she placed seven bunches of lotus flowers at the feet of the Buddha as her tribute and expressed her aspiration to be the foremost female monastic among those endowed with supernormal powers. Buddha Padumuttara predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled. [1390]

Various Existences

After passing away from that existence in which she made a lifelong dedication to the Buddha and the Saṅgha, she was reborn in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm. Next, she was reborn in the human world where she offered lotus flowers and alms food to a Paccekabuddha.

Ninety-one aeons ago, there appeared Buddha Vipassī during which period the future Ven. Uppalavaṇṇā was born into a rich man's family in Bārāṇasī. She invited the Buddha and the Saṅgha to her residence and made an extraordinary offering of food. Making a gift of lotus flowers to Buddha Vipassī, she mentally wished for personal charm in her future existences.

Various Existences

After passing away from that existence, and as a result of her meritorious deeds, the rich man's daughter was reborn as a Deva, and subsequently in the Deva or human existence. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, in the present aeon, she was the second of the seven daughters of King Kikī of Bārāṇasī and was named Princess Samaṇaguttā. In that existence she, like her eldest sister, the future Ven. Khemā, remained a spinster for life, which lasted 20,000 years. They donated a monastic complex to the Saṅgha. At her death, she was reborn in the Deva realm again.

After passing away from the Deva realm, she was reborn into a worthy family in the human world. During that existence, she donated a gold coloured piece of cloth to an Arahat, who was a disciple of Buddha Kassapa.

She passed away from that existence to be reborn as Ummādantī, the exquisitely beautiful daughter of a rich Brahmin named Tiriṭivaccha in Ariṭṭhapura, in the Province of Sivi.

> For details refer to the Birth Story about the Wealthy Man's Daughter Ummādantī (*Ummādantī-jātaka*, Ja 527).

Her next existence was as the daughter of a farmer in a small village. Early one morning, as she went to the farm house, she found in a pond, on her way, a freshly blooming lotus flower. She went into the pond and plucked it. In the farm house she gathered some ears of rice and roasted them into popcorn. She put the popcorn in a lotus leaf which was gathered from the pond.

At that moment, a Paccekabuddha, after rising from the attainment of cessation in his dwelling, came by way of the air and stood not far away from the farmer's daughter. She saw him and went to the farm house to get the popcorn and the lotus flowers, and she then put the popcorn into the Paccekabuddha's alms bowl, covered it with a lotus flower, and offered it to him.

After the Paccekabuddha had gone on awhile, she thought: "A Paccekabuddha has no use for a flower, perhaps I should get it back and wear it." Hence, she followed after the Paccekabuddha and then asked for the lotus flower back. But then she pondered: "Well, if the Paccekabuddha did not want my gift of the flower, he would have refused to accept it at the beginning. Now that he allowed me to put it on his alms bowl, he must have liked it as a gift." So thinking, she placed the flower back into the alms bowl.

> For this wavering act, her future existences, as we shall see, were marked by mixed fortunes.

Having thus returned the gift of the lotus flower, and admitting her fault for taking it back earlier, she expressed her wish: "Venerable sir, for offering this popcorn may I be blessed with 500 sons in my future existence. This is equal to the number of popcorn flowers that make up my gift. Furthermore, for my gift of the lotus flower, may lotus flowers rise up from the earth to receive every step I make in my future existences!"

According to the life history of Uppalavaṇā, while the farmer's daughter was [1391] making her offerings to the Paccekabuddha, 500 farm workers, who were watching the field, offered some honey to the Paccekabuddha and made their wish that in a future existence they be reborn as the sons of the young lady.

The Paccekabuddha then rose into the sky even while the girl was watching him and returned to Mount Gandhamādana where he placed the lotus flowers at the entrance to Nandamūla Cave, for use by all Paccekabuddhas as a doormat at the foot of the flight of steps.

Queen Padumā Devī

As the result of that good deed, when future Ven. Uppalavaṇṇā passed away from that existence, she was reborn in an instantaneous full-grown birth as a Deva. There, in her own existence, a lotus flower arose from the earth at her foot at every step she made. When she passed away from that Deva existence, she was reborn in the human world from a lotus flower in a big lake of lotus flowers at the foot of a mountain. A recluse living nearby, early one morning, went to the lake to wash his face and saw a lotus flower in bud which was already bigger than the other buds. While the other buds had opened up their petals into full bloom, this bud remained closed. He thought it strange and so he went into the lake and plucked it.

While in his hand, the big bud opened its petals and inside he saw a female child lying. He felt a strong sense of paternal love for the child. He took her to the hermitage along with the lotus flower and put her on a small cot. Thanks to the past merits of the baby girl, milk oozed out from the big thumb of the recluse with which he nursed her. When the first lotus flower that she lay on became withered, a new lotus flower was placed underneath her.

When the young girl could walk and romp about, lotus flowers appeared from the earth under her feet wherever she went. She had a saffron-coloured complexion. Her personal charm was superhuman and would nearly equal that of a Devakaññā. Since she was born from the lotus, her foster father, the good recluse, named her Padumavatī, "Endowed with Lotuses." Whenever the recluse went out in search of fruit, she was left alone at the hermitage.

When Padumavatī came of age, one day, when the recluse was out gathering fruit, a hunter who happened to come to the hermitage saw her and thought:

"There is no human being on earth as beautiful as this girl. I must find out what she is." And so he waited for the return of the recluse. When the recluse was seen returning, the girl went out to meet him, took the yoke laden with fruits and the water pot from him, had her foster father seated and attended on him lovingly.

The hunter was now sure that the girl was, in fact, a human being, and after paying homage to the recluse, he sat nearby. The recluse gave him fruits and water, and then asked him: "Are you going to stay in the forest or, are you going back to your home?"

The hunter said: "I have no business in the future, sir, I am going back to my home."

"Could you keep the experience of your meeting with the girl to yourself without letting anyone know about it?"

"If you would rather not let others know about this, sir, why should I tell others?" But he said this merely to please his kind host.

On his way home, after paying respects to the recluse, he carefully marked the trees and arranged some branches along the way from the hermitage so that he could easily recognize the path back.

Back at the city, he went to see the king who asked the purpose of his visit. He said: "Great King, I am your humble servant, a hunter. I come to report to you the presence of a most remarkable woman in the forest at the foot of the mountain, who would surely be an asset for your majesty." He explained the circumstance of his discovery to the king. The [1392] king was deeply interested. He marched to the foot of the mountain without losing time. Having encamped at a place not far away from the hermitage, he waited till the recluse had finished his meal and went to see the recluse, accompanied by a few courtiers. The recluse was then sitting in his hermitage where the king greeted him, exchanged courteous words and sat in a suitable place.

The king made offering to the recluse, of articles used by recluses. And then he said: "Venerable sir, what is the use of living here? Let us go to the city." – "I am not going, Great King," said the recluse. "You may go." To which the king said: "Very well, venerable sir, but I am given to understand that there is a woman in

your company. It is not proper for a woman to be living in the company of a recluse. I would request that the woman be allowed to go with me."

To this direct request made by the king the recluse replied: "It is not easy for one to please many people. How could my daughter fit in with the court life with its many queens and ladies in waiting?" The king allayed the fear of the recluse, saying: "Venerable sir, if I am allowed to marry her and have given my love to her, I will make her my Chief Queen."

Thereupon the recluse called his daughter, as he usually addressed her since childhood: "Padumavatī, my little girl!" Young Padumavatī promptly responded; she came out of the hermitage and, saluting her father, stood before him, who said: "Dear girl, you have come of age. From the moment the king has cast his eyes on you, you should not stay here any longer. Go along with the king, my girl." – "Very well, dear father," she said, weeping, and still standing.

The King of Bārāṇasī, wishing to prove his sincerity, showered Padumavatī with gold, silver and jewellery and anointed her as his Chief Queen immediately.

At the court of Bārāṇasī, the king's heart was captivated by the Chief Queen so much so that since her arrival, all the other queens and ladies-in-waiting were totally neglected by the king. The womenfolk felt bitter about this and they tried to undermine the king's affection for the Chief Queen, saying: "Great King, Padumavatī is not a human being. Where on earth have you ever seen a human being whose every step is received by a lotus flower arising from the earth? She is a demon, for sure. She is dangerous. She ought to be banished forthwith!" But the king did not say anything.

At another time, when the king was called away by duty to suppress a rising in a remote part of the kingdom, he had to leave behind Padumavatī at the palace, knowing that she was pregnant. The womenfolk at court seized this opportunity to strike. They bribed Padumavatī's attendant into a wicked plot. She was instructed to remove the infant when the Chief Queen gave birth to her child and replace it with a piece of wood smeared with blood.

When Padumavatī delivered the child, Prince Mahā Paduma was the real offspring whom she gave birth to, as he was the only child conceived in her womb. The other sons, 499 of them, arose from the drops of her blood splattered about at child birth. The attendant duly carried out the instruction and informed

the news of the Chief Queen's delivery to the other queens. The 500 womenfolk at the court stole one child each while their mother was still resting after her labour. Then they ordered 500 wooden caskets, made by turners, to put each child in one. They placed them inside the caskets, and put seals on each.

When Queen Padumāvatī woke up and asked her assistant about her child, the latter frowned and retorted: "When did you ever give birth to a child? This is what you have delivered," and produced the piece of wood smeared with blood. The queen was very unhappy and asked her to put it away quickly. The woman quickly complied as if eager to safeguard the queen's honour by splitting up the piece of wood and throwing it into the fireplace in the kitchen.

The king returned from his expedition and was camping outside the city waiting for an [1393] auspicious time, according to the astrological calculations. The women-folk went to greet the king there and pressed their case for banishing Queen Padumāvatī. "Great King, you did not believe our word about the Chief Queen. But now ask the assistant of Queen Padumāvatī who has given birth to a block of wood!" The king, without investigating the matter, believed that Padumavatī was a demon and ordered her banishment.

As she was banished from the palace, no lotus flowers appeared underneath her feet. Her good looks left her. She roamed about in the road, feeling forlorn. When an old woman saw her, she had an instinctive affection for her and said: "Where are you going, my daughter?" Padumavatī replied: "Mother, I am looking for some place for shelter." The old woman said: "In that case, my daughter, come with me to my house," and taking her home, fed her and put her up there.

When Padumavatī was staying at the old woman's house, the women-folk at the court said to the king in one voice: "Great King, when you were on your military expedition, we invoked the guardian spirit of the river Ganges for your success and promised to make him offerings on your victorious return. So let the king and all of us go to the river Ganges and make offerings to the river spirit and have fun bathing in the river." The king gladly consented and they all went to the river.

The 500 women of the court secretly carried the caskets with babies in them and went into the water with their garments on, underneath which were the hidden

caskets. Once in the river, they released the caskets which floated downstream in the river. The 500 caskets grouped together in the current, floated down together, and were caught in a fishermen's net downstream. After the king had finished bathing in the river, the fishermen also raised their net from the water and to their great surprise, found the 500 caskets, which they presented to the king. The king asked them: "What do the caskets contain?" And they answered: "We do not know what is inside them, Great King, we only believed it to be something strange." When the 500 caskets were opened under the king's orders, the first one to be opened happened to contain Prince Mahā Paduma.

The past merit of the 500 princelings was such that from the day of their confinement in the caskets, milk flowed from their thumbs to nourish them. Sakka also cleared the doubts in the king's mind by inscribing inside the caskets the message: "These babies are born of Queen Padumāvatī and are the sons of the King of Bārāṇasī. They have been put inside the caskets by the 500 queens and their accomplices, who bore a grudge against the Chief Queen, and have them thrown into the river. Let the King of Bārāṇasī know these facts."

The king, being thus enlightened, took up Prince Mahā Paduma, and ordered: "Men, harness the chariots and dress up the horses quickly! I shall now go into the city and show my love to some womenfolk." So saying, he rode hastily into the city, entered his palace, and ordered the royal elephant fitted, for a tour of the land with a velvet bag of 1,000 pieces of money tied at the neck of the elephant, and ordered the proclamation read aloud to all the people, announcing that whoever has seen Queen Padumāvatī may take the king's reward of 1,000 pieces of money.

Padumavatī, on hearing the proclamation, said to the old women: "Mother, take that 1,000 from the neck of the royal elephant!" The old women said: "Daughter, I dare not do it." Padumavatī urged her thrice to do so. Then the old lady said: "Daughter, what should I say in taking the reward?" Just say, mother: "I have seen Queen Padumāvatī!" The old lady then made herself bold to claim the reward.

The king's men asked her: "Have you actually seen Queen Padumāvatī?" – "I have not seen her myself," she said, "but my daughter has."

"Where is your daughter now?" the men asked. And they were let to her house by the old lady. They recognized their queen and prostrated themselves before her. The old lady, [1394] seeing only now the real identity of the young woman, affectionately chided her: "This noble lady has been so reckless. Notwithstanding her eminent position as the Chief Queen, she had chosen to live unattended in such a lowly place."

The king's men then made an enclosure of white cloth around the humble house which Padumavatī was staying, posted guards around it, and reported their discovery to the king. The king sent a golden palanquin to her.

Padumavatī, however, insisted that she deserved more ceremony on returning to the palace. She had a canopied walk decorated with gold stars set up all along the way to the palace with exquisite carpets. She also demanded that her regal paraphernalia be sent to her. "I am walking there," she said, "let my greatness be seen by all the citizens." The king ordered that every wish of the Chief Queen must be complied with. Then Queen Padumāvatī, outfitted with full regalia, announced: "I am now going to the palace." Thereupon every step she made, a lotus flower arose from the earth through the exquisite carpets. Thus letting all the people witness her greatness as she entered the palace. After that, she gave the rich carpets to the old lady as a token of the gratitude she owed to her.

The king summoned the 500 women-folk to court and said to Queen Padumāvatī: "My Queen, I give these 500 women as slaves to you." The queen said: "King, let the whole city know about this giving of the 500 ladies to me." The king had the fact of this assignment of the 500 women to Queen Padumāvatī proclaimed throughout the city by the beat of the gong. Having been satisfied with the public knowledge of the assignment, Queen Padumāvatī said to the king: "Great King, do I have the authority of emancipating my own slaves?" To which the king replied: "Queen, you have the right to do whatever you wish with them." – "In that case, king," she said, "let those men, who had made the proclamation of the assignment, make another round of proclamation to the effect that all the 500 slaves assigned to Queen Padumāvatī are hereby granted their freedom by the queen." Then the queen entrusted the 499 princelings to the care of the emancipated women while she took charge of looking after Prince Mahā Paduma.

When the 500 princelings were of playing age, the king provided all sort of things in the royal gardens for the boys to play with. When they were sixteen years of age, one day, while they were playing in the royal lakes, where the lotuses (*paduma*) were growing in profusion, they observed the blossoming of the lotus flowers as well as the withering away and dropping off of old flowers which, thanks to their acquisition of sufficient merit, struck their young hearts as a phenomenon worth reflecting on. And this was how they reflected: "Even these lotus flowers, dependent only on temperature and nutrient, are subject to ageing; how could our bodies, dependent on four factors: productive deeds (*kamma*), mind, temperature and nutrient, escape the same fate? We are likewise subject to ageing and death."

They reflected deeply on that phenomena of the impermanence of conditioned existence, gained insight into the nature of mind-and-matter, and attained Awakening on their own, without being taught by anyone. This is called the knowledge of Independent Awakening (*Pacceka-bodhi-ñāṇa*), which leads to the four noble path-knowledges. In other words, they became Paccekabuddhas. Then rising from their respective seats, they each sat cross-legged on a lotus flower by means of their supernormal powers.

Late in the evening, the attendants of the princelings reminded them: "Lords, it is time to go home." The 500 Paccekabuddhas did not say anything. So the attendants went to the palace and reported the matter to the king about how the princes remained silent, all of them sitting on the lotus flowers. The king merely said: "Let my sons remain as they wish."

The 500 Paccekabuddhas were placed under guard during the whole night as [1395] they remained sitting on the flowers. At dawn, the attendants went near them and said to them: "Princes, it is time to go home." Then the princes, who were Paccekabuddhas, said: "We are no more princes; we are Paccekabuddhas." The men were sceptical and said: "You say that in an irresponsible way. Paccekabuddhas are not like you, they have only two finger-breaths of hair and moustache or beard, they have recluse's paraphernalia on them. But you have your princely garb on, with long hair and moustaches, and with regal

paraphernalia on you. How could you say you are Paccekabuddhas?"[304] Thereupon the princes passed their hands on their heads, and lo! their appearance turned into Paccekabuddhas, and they were fully equipped with the eight requisites of a Paccekabuddha. And while the people were looking at them, they rose into the air and went in the direction of Mount Gandhamādana.

Queen Padumāvatī, after enjoying deep satisfaction on regaining her 500 sons, was now shocked by the sudden loss of them again, and she did not survive the shock.

Existence as a Farm Hand

After passing away from that existence, she was reborn, as a woman, into a family of labourers, in a village near a city gate in Rājagaha. She married, and went to live with her husband's family. One day, while she was carrying some gruel for her husband, who was working in the field, she saw eight of the 500 Paccekabuddhas travelling through the air. She went quickly to her husband and said: "Lord, look at those Paccekabuddhas! Let us invite them to an offering of aims food." But the husband, who was a simpleton, did not know what a Paccekabuddha was. He said to her: "Dear wife, they are called monastic-birds. They are also found in other places too, and at other times are also seen flying about. They are not Paccekabuddhas, they are just strange birds."

As the couple were still discussing this, the eight Paccekabuddhas descended to the ground not far away from them. The wife offered her share of meal for the day to the eight Paccekabuddhas and invited them for the next day's offerings. The Paccekabuddhas said: "Very well, supporter, let your offerings be for eight recipients only. And let your accommodation be for eight invitees only. When you see many other Paccekabuddhas besides ourselves, your devotion will grow even greater." Then the woman who in her previous existence had been the mother of the Paccekabuddhas, prepared eight seats and offerings for eight Paccekabuddhas.

The eight invitees said to the remaining Paccekabuddhas: "Do not go elsewhere today for alms food, but bestow welfare to your mother in your previous

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[304] The attendants were describing the Paccekabuddha as they knew him to be.

existence." Those other Paccekabuddhas agreed, and all the 500 of them went through the sky to their former mother's residence. The mother in her past existence who had wished to see all the 500 sons, now Paccekabuddhas, did not have any worry about the insufficiency of her offerings. She invited all 500 into her house and offered eight seats. When the eight had taken their seats the ninth Paccekabuddha created another eight seats through his supernormal powers and sat there; and so on until the last of the 500 was seated and her house was expanded through their supernormal powers.

The farm labourer, the mother in the previous existence, who had prepared alms food for eight Paccekabuddhas went on serving it to all 500, and as much as needed by them. Then she brought eight stalks of lotus flowers, and placing them before the original eight invitees, offered them, saying: "Venerable sirs, for this act of merit, may I be born with a complexion like the colour of the inside of the pollen chamber of this brown lotus." The 500 Paccekabuddhas said complimentary words for her good deed, and went back to Mount Gandhamādana through the sky.

Ascetic Life in her Final Existence

The farm hand, who was the future Ven. Uppalavaṇṇā, lived a life full of meritorious deeds and at the end of her lifespan was reborn in the Deva realm. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into the family of a rich man in Sāvatthī. She was born with a complexion like the inner side of the pollen chamber of the brown lotus and hence was [1396] named Uppalavaṇṇā. When she came of age, all the worthy families, rich men and princes of the whole of Jambudīpa, asked her father to give Uppalavaṇṇā in marriage to their sons.

Her father was in a quandary, he did not know how to reply to so many proposals from the worthy men. Not wishing to disappoint them, as a final resolve, he asked his daughter: "Dear daughter, would you become a nun?" Now Uppalavaṇṇā, being the bearer of the last burden of sentient existence, was extremely delighted to hear these words, as though rarefied scented oil, refined 100 times over, were poured upon her head. "Yes, father, I would like to become a nun," she replied gladly.

As such, he sent his daughter Uppalavaṇṇā to the nunnery, after paying great honour to her. Uppalavaṇṇā became a nun. Not long after, she was assigned to tidy up and light up the outside of the Hall of Discipline (*Sīmā*). There she observed the flame arising in a lamp which she used as her subject of meditation. She concentrated on the element of heat in that flame, and achieved absorption (*jhāna*). Basing that concentration as object of insight meditation, through contemplating the three characteristics of physical and mental phenomena, she gained insight into conditioned phenomena and soon became an Arahat. As the result of her past aspiration to be outstanding in supernormal powers, she became endowed with facility in absorption practice, which is the essential asset in bringing into effect her supernormal powers.

Foremost Title Achieved

The day Ven. Uppalavaṇṇā displayed her miraculous powers was during the Buddha's seventh year after his Awakening. Before doing so, she first asked the Buddha: "Venerable sir, may the Fortunate One allow me to display my miraculous powers." Referring to this, the Buddha, on another occasion when outstanding nuns were named at a congregation, declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ bhikkhunīnaṁ iddhimantīnaṁ yad-idaṁ Uppalavaṇṇā.*
>
> Monastics, among my female monastic disciples endowed with supernormal powers, Uppalavaṇṇā is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

4. Ven. Paṭācārā

Aspiration in the Past

The future Paṭācārā was reborn into a rich man's family in the city of Haṁsavatī during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, while she was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, she saw a nun being named as the foremost among those who were most learned in the Vinaya Rules. She aspired to that honour. And after making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, she expressed her desire for the honour of being declared as the foremost female monastic in Vinaya learning. Buddha Padumuttara predicted that her wish would be fulfilled.

One of the Seven Daughters of King Kikī

After filling her whole life with meritorious deeds, the future Ven. Paṭācārā passed away and was reborn in the Deva realm and subsequently the human world or the Deva realm in turn. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, she was reborn as the third of the seven illustrious daughters of King Kikī of Bārāṇasī. Her name was Bhikkhunī. She and the six sisters remained spinsters, living a life of chastity for their whole lifespan of 20,000 years. Together with her sisters, they donated a big monastic complex.

Ascetic Life in her Final Existence

The king's daughter, the future Ven. Paṭācārā, after passing away from that existence, was reborn in the Deva realm. For the innumerable years of the intervening period between the two Buddhas she enjoyed celestial pleasures. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of a rich man of Sāvatthī.

When she came of age, she fell in love with a servant of her father's household. When [1397] her parents arranged for her betrothal to the son of another rich man, she warned her lover on the day before the betrothal, that unless he was prepared to elope with her, their love affair would be ended. The man was true to her. He eloped with her, taking whatever little savings he had set aside. The two lovers ran away stealthily and took shelter in a small village three or four leagues away from Sāvatthī.

Soon the rich man's daughter became pregnant and she said to her husband: "My lord, this is a desolate place for us to give birth to my child. Let us go back to my father's house." Her husband was a timid man. He dared not face the consequences of returning to his master's house and he therefore procrastinated. The wife then decided that her husband was not going to accompany her back to her father's house and she chose, during the absence of her husband, to return alone.

When the husband returned from his short trip and learnt that his wife had gone back to her parents' house, he felt pity for her. "She has to suffer because of me," he repented and went after her without delay. He caught up with her on the way but by then she had given birth. Then they agreed that since the purpose of her

returning to her parents was for the safe birth of her child, and since she had given birth safely, there was no point in going there. So they went back to their small village.

When she was pregnant again, she asked her husband to take her to her parents' place. Her husband procrastinated as before, and getting impatient, she went alone. On the way, she gave birth to her second child safely before her husband could catch up with her. At that time, there were heavy rains everywhere. The wife asked her husband to put up some shelter from the rains for the night. He made a rickety shelter from whatever faggots he could find. He then went in search of some tufts of grass to build an embankment around the little hut. He started carelessly pulling out grass from a mound.

A cobra, which lay inside the mound, was annoyed and bit the husband who fell dead on the spot. The wife, who was waiting in the rickety hut, after waiting the whole night, thought that her husband had deserted her. She went to look for him and found him dead near the mound. "Oh, me! My husband met his death all on account of me!" She wailed. And holding the bigger child by the hand and putting the infant on her waist, she took the road to Sāvatthī.

On the way, she had to cross a shallow stream which seemed to be deep. She thought she might not be able to cross it with both the children together. So she left her elder boy on this side of the stream and after crossing it, placed the infant on the other side, wrapped up snugly. She waded the stream back for the elder son, but just as she was half-way through the stream, a hawk swooped down on the infant baby taking it for its prey. The mother became excited and tried to frighten away the hawk, but her throwing up her hands in the air was mistaken as beckoning by the elder son who ran into the stream. He slipped and was carried away by the swift current. Before the mother could reach her infant child, the hawk had flewn away with it. She wailed her fate in half a verse thus:

> "Both my two sons are dead and gone! And my husband too had died on the way!"

Wailing in these desperate words, she proceeded along her way to Sāvatthī. When she arrived in Sāvatthī, she was unable to find her parents' home. This was partly due to her intense grief but there was a substantial reason for her failure to recognize her own childhood home. For, as she asked the people

where the rich man's house which used to be somewhere there, they answered: "What use is there if you find the house? It has been destroyed by last night's gale. All the inmates of the house died inside the house when it collapsed. They were cremated on a single pyre, and that is the place of their burial," the people showed her the thin smoke from the burnt pyre.

"What, what did you say?" Those were the only words she could say and she fainted. When she recovered, she was not in her own mind. She could not care about decency: With no clothes on, her hands raised in the air wildly, she went towards the burnt-up pyre and wailed: [1398]

> "Both my two sons are dead and gone! And my husband too has died on the way! My mother, father and brother have been cremated on a single pyre."

The rich man's daughter went about the city naked. When other people tried to cover up her body, she would tear off the clothes. Thus, wherever she went, she was surrounded by astonished crowds. Hence, she came to be referred to as the naked woman (*Paṭācārī*); or in another sense of the word, the shameless woman. As she went about dazed and confused wailing the tragic verse, people would say: "Go away, mad woman!" Some would throw dirt and refuse on her head, and others would throw stones at her.

Meeting with the Buddha

The Buddha saw Paṭācārā roaming about aimlessly while he was making a discourse to an audience at the Jetavana monastery. Seeing that her faculties had now ripened, the Buddha willed that Paṭācārā come to him at the monastery. People tried to prevent her going into the monastery but the Buddha said to them: "Don't try to stop her." When she went nearer, the Buddha said to her: "Paṭācārā, be mindful."

As soon as she heard the Buddha's words, Paṭācārā regained her senses. Aware of her nakedness, she sat down on her closed knees and remained with her body bent, and trying her best to cover up her naked body with her hands. Someone then threw to her a garment which she picked up, clothed herself, and drew near the Buddha.

In worshipping posture, she related the tragic story thus: "Venerable sir, may you be my refuge! My husband died on the way; my younger son was taken away by a hawk; my elder son drowned in the current of a stream; my parents and my brothers were killed in their house which collapsed and they were cremated on a single pyre."

The Buddha said to her: "Paṭācārā do not vacillate. You have now come to one in whom you can take refuge. Just as you have shed tears for the loss of your husband, sons, mother, father and brother, so also had you shed much tears, even greater than the waters of the four great oceans, throughout the beginningless round of existences." The Buddha also spoke in verse as follows:

> "Paṭācārā, the waters of the four great oceans are little when compared to the amount of tears shed by one person on account of the grief suffered for loss of his or her beloved ones. Now, my daughter, why are you so negligent? Be mindful."

On hearing the Buddha's discourse containing a perspective on Saṁsāra, grief abated in the mind of Paṭācārā. The Buddha, knowing that Paṭācārā had been able to control her sorrow, discoursed further thus: "Paṭācārā, neither son nor husband can protect one on the journey through the afterlife, nor are they one's refuge; that being so, even though sons or husband may be living, they are as good as non-existent for a wayfarer in Saṁsāra. Therefore a wise person should purify morality and be established in the noble practice leading to Nibbāna." Then the Buddha spoke in verse as follows (Dhp 288-299):

> "Paṭācārā, when one falls victim to death, neither one's sons nor parents nor close relations can protect one; one's kith and kin have no power to give protection.
>
> Knowing this lack of protection against Death, the wise person restrained by morality, should make haste to clear the noble path that leads to Nibbāna." [1399]

At the end of the discourse, Paṭācārā burnt up the infinite defilements and was established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*).

After becoming a Stream-enterer, Paṭācārā requested the Buddha that she be admitted into the Saṅgha of female monastics. The Buddha caused her to be taken to a nunnery and be admitted as a nun.

How Paṭācārā became an Arahat

One day, Ven. Paṭācārā was washing her feet. As she poured down the water on her feet, the water flowed to a short distance and then stopped there. When a second cup was poured, the water flowed to a place slightly farther away than the first stream and then stopped. When a third cup was poured, the water flowed to a place slightly farther away than the second stream.

Ven. Paṭācārā, already a Stream-enterer, meditated on this phenomenon of the three streams of water, and applied it to the three periods of life thus: "Just as the first stream of water stopped after a short place, sentient beings are liable to die during their first period of life; just as the second stream flowed slightly farther than the first stream and then stopped, so also sentient beings are liable to die during their middle age; and just as the third stream flowed farther than the second stream and stopped, so also sentient beings are liable to die in their last period of life."

She reflected further that just as all the three streams must end and disappear, so also living beings must give up their tenure of life and perish. Thus, the impermanence of things gave her insight into all conditioned phenomena. From that insight into impermanence, the characteristic of the suffering (*dukkha*) of all conditioned phenomena dawned on her conditioned mind and hence the non-self, the emptiness of conditioned phenomena was also perceived.

Pondering deeply on the three characteristics, she went into her monastic dwelling for a suitable change in temperature. There she placed the lighted lamp at its usual place and, wishing to extinguish it, she pulled down the wick into the oil with a pointed needle.

Just at that moment, the Buddha, while sitting in his private chamber, sent the Buddha-radiance to Paṭācārā making himself visible to her and said: "Paṭācārā, you are thinking rightly: all sentient beings are subject to death. Therefore, it is in vain to be living for 100 years without the right perception of the five aggregates, of their arising and dissolution, whereas it is really worthwhile to

live even for a day with a full understanding of the five aggregates." The Buddha put this point in verse as follows (Dhp 113):

> "Paṭācārā, even if one were to live 100 years without perceiving with insight the arising and perishing of mind and body, yet more worthwhile indeed is a single day's life of one who perceives the arising and perishing of mind and body."

At the end of the discourse, Paṭācārā became an Arahat together with the four discriminative knowledges.

Foremost Title Achieved

After attaining Awakening, Paṭācārā learnt the Vinaya from the Buddha extensively and made wise judgments on matters concerning the Vinaya. Therefore, on one occasion when the Buddha named distinguished nuns in a congregation at the Jetavana monastery, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ bhikkhunīnaṁ*
> *Vinaya-dharānaṁ yad-idaṁ Paṭācārā.*
>
> "Monastics, among my female monastic disciples who are wise and adept in the Vinaya, Paṭācārā is the foremost (*etad-agga*)." [1400]

5. Ven. Dhammadinnā

Aspiration in the Past

The future Dhammadinnā was born into a poor working class family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She was wise and virtuous. One day, when Ven. Sujāta, the chief disciple of Buddha Padumuttara, went on his alms round, she met him in the course of carrying water and personally offered him a share of her cake for the day. Ven. Sujāta, as a mark of appreciation for her devotion, and intending to bestow welfare on her due to her meritorious deed, sat down and ate the cake immediately. Ven. Sujāta had just arisen from dwelling in the attainment of cessation, a condition which is conducive to immediate fruition of the merit made.

The devotion in the slave girl grew by leaps and bounds so much that she cut her hair and sold it for whatever little price it could fetch. With that meagre but

well-earned money, she bought a meal and offered it to Ven. Sujāta at her house. When the master of the slave girl heard this news, he was so pleased with her noble conduct that he gave his son in marriage to her and she became the rich man's daughter-in-law.

One day she visited the Buddha's monastery together with her mother-in-law. When listening to the Buddha's discourse, she saw the Buddha naming a nun as the foremost in expounding the doctrine. She had a great desire to be honoured with the same title in some future time. So, she made an extraordinary offering to the Buddha and his Saṅgha and aspired to that position. Buddha Padumuttara predicted that her wish would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha Gotama.

Her Existence as Royal Treasurer

The future elder nun Dhammadinnā lived a meritorious life and after her lifespan had ended, she passed away and was reborn in the Deva realm. Thereafter, she was reborn only in the human world or the Deva realm. Ninety-two aeons ago, she was reborn as the wife of a rich man, who was the official royal treasurer to three princes who were half brothers of the Buddha. She had a very generous mind so that when someone asked for one she would give two.[305]

One of the Seven Daughters of King Kikī

The rich man's wife had a life full of meritorious deeds. When she passed away, she was reborn in the Deva realm. During Buddha Kassapa's time, she was reborn as Princess Sudhammā, the sixth of the seven daughters of King Kikī of Bārāṇasī. Along with the other sisters, she remained unmarried, leading a noble chaste life for the whole lifespan of 20,000 years, and was a joint supporter, with her sisters, of a great monastic complex to the Saṅgha.

Ascetic Life in her Final Existence

Princess Sudhammā spent the whole of her life doing meritorious deeds and at her death she was reborn in the Deva realm. Subsequently, for innumerable years, she was reborn either in the Deva realm or the human world. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into the family of a rich man in

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[305] Regarding the story of the treasurer and his wife see chapter 15.

Rājagaha. When she was of marriageable age, she married a rich man named Visākha and she was called Dhammadinnā, the rich man's wife.

Visākha and Dhammadinnā, 92 aeons ago, were also a rich couple, as the royal treasurer and wife during Buddha Phussa's time, and were noted for their liberality. Visākha, the rich man, was one of the 101 disciples of the Buddha, who gained Stream-entry knowledge on the day the Buddha arrived in Rājagaha, on the full moon in the month of January (*Phussa*) in the year 528 BCE. He was a close friend of King Bimbisāra.

After having become a noble one (*ariya*) as a Stream-enterer, Visākha, on a later occasion, listened to [1401] the Buddha's discourse and gained Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmī-phala*) and then on a later day Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-phala*). Once he became a Non-Returner, his outlook and behaviour changed visibly. For whereas he would go home with expectancy to see his wife, his face full of smiles, he was now looking staid, his mien composed and mind tranquil.

His wife Dhammadinnā was, as usual, looking through the window with a long motif carved at the sill, awaiting his return. When she saw the sedate attitude of her husband coming home, it struck her as strange. "What has gone wrong?" she thought. She went down the stairs and stretched out her hand to him at the landing. Although it was his custom to take hold of his wife's welcoming hand and go up the stairs and speak amiably together, on that day, he withdrew his hand instead of holding hers. "Perhaps I shall find out about this at the table," she thought to herself. But at the morning meal, he did not sit at table together with his wife as usual, but took his meal alone in silence, like an elderly monastic engaged in meditation. "Perhaps I shall find out about this in the evening," she thought to herself.

But when evening came, Visākha did not go into their inner chamber, instead, he had a separate room prepared for himself with a wooden cot on which he slept alone. His wife now started worrying. "Is my husband in love with another woman? Or has someone tried to cause some misunderstanding between us? Or has he seen some fault in me?" These wild unfounded speculations gnawed at her innocent heart. After two or three days she could not bear it any further, so silently and standing by his side meekly, her joined palms raised in salutation to her husband, she waited to learn how he would respond. Then he said:

"Why do you come near me at this untimely hour?"

"Untimely, yes, my lord, but you have changed now. What's the matter with you? Is there another woman beside me?"

"No, Dhammadinnā, there is none."

"Then, has someone put a wedge between us?"

"No, there is nothing of the sort."

"In that case, do you see any fault in me?"

"No, Dhammadinnā, you have no fault whatever."

"If so, why do you stay aloof from me as though we were total strangers and not husband and wife? You have not spoken to me much these few days."

When confronted thus by his wife, Visākhā pondered: "The supermundane Dhamma is a profound thing, not easy to explain like mundane matters. If possible, it is better kept to oneself. But now, if I did not talk about it Dhammadinnā would certainly take it amiss and will be broken hearted."

Thinking in this way, Visākhā said to her: "Dhammadinnā, after I listened to the Buddha's discourses, I have comprehended the supermundane Dhamma. One who comprehends the supermundane finds mundane affairs incompatible with him. If you would agree, there are 400 million worth of treasures that your parents have endowed us with, and another 400 million worth of treasures that my parents have endowed us with, these 800 million worth of treasures, I would bequeath to you as sole owner, just be as a mother or an elder sister to me. I shall be content with whatever manner you might look after me. Or, if you so choose, you may take all this wealth with you and go back to your parents' house. If you have no other man to give your heart to, I shall look after you as my younger sister or as my daughter."

On hearing these momentous and frank words from her husband, Dhammadinnā was deeply satisfied. She thought to herself: "It is no ordinary man to say such things. My husband surely must have comprehended the supermundane Dhamma. But is the supermundane solely for men? Is it possible for a woman to understand it?" Pondering thus, she said to her husband: "My lord, is the

supermundane Dhamma solely for men? Are women also capable of understanding it?" [1402]

"Why, Dhammadinnā, anyone, male or female, who practices the Dhamma according to the doctrine, with due diligence can become heirs to the Buddha, in the matter of the Dhamma. If one has sufficing conditions, an accumulation of past merit for attaining path-knowledge, the supermundane is realisable." answered Visākha.

"If so, my lord, please give me permission to become a nun."

"Very well, my dear, I am glad you aspire for the supermundane. I have not suggested it to you only because I did not know your aptitude."

Visākha then immediately went to see King Bimbisāra who asked him: "Rich man, what is your purpose in seeing me at this untimely hour?"

"Great King," Visākha said, "Dhammadinnā wishes to become a nun."

"What shall I provide Dhammadinnā with?"

"Great King, I want just two things: the golden palanquin and the tidying up of the city." The king complied with these two requests.

Dhammadinnā becomes a Nun

Visākha had Dhammadinnā bathed in scented water, fitted out gorgeously, and seated her in the palanquin. Then, surrounded by all her relatives, and the husband's relatives, she was carried to the nunnery through the city whose environment was rich with the fragrance of incense and flowers. At the nunnery, Visākha requested the female elders to admit his wife Dhammadinnā into the Saṅgha of female monastics. "Rich man," they said, thinking that Visākhā was forsaking his wife, "forbear if she has been at fault once or twice."

"Venerable," Visākha replied, "my wife has no fault whatsoever, she is taking up the monastic life of her own accord."

Thereupon, a nun who was adept at the Vinaya gave Dhammadinnā instructions to reflect on the loathsomeness of the body, beginning with reflecting on the group of five constituent parts: head hair, body hair, nails, teeth, and skin. Then she shaved Dhammadinnā's hair, and donned her with robes. Visākha then made obeisance to Ven. Dhammadinnā and said: "Venerable, be happy in the monastic

life in the teaching of the Buddha. The Buddha has taught us the doctrine which is superb in the beginning, in the middle, and in the end." Then he went home.

From the day Ven. Dhammadinnā became a nun, she received much respect and many gifts from the people. In seeing so many visitors, she had little time left to meditate alone.

> This much of the account of Dhammadinnā, is taken from the commentary on the Short Discourse giving an Elaboration (*Cūḷa-vedalla-sutta*, MN 44).

Ven. Dhammadinnā considered thus: "Visākhā has made an end of suffering (*dukkha*) even while remaining in the household life. I as a nun, must make an end of suffering." She went to her preceptor and said: "Venerable, I am tired of living in this place which is full of the five kinds of sense pleasures. I would like to go and live in a nunnery in a small village." The preceptors knew well that Ven. Dhammadinnā's wish could not be ignored as she came of a high class family, and so they took her to a nunnery at a small village.

Due to her meditative exercises in her many past existences in seeing through the nature of conditioned phenomena Ven. Dhammadinnā did not take long to gain insight and became an Arahat together with the four analytic knowledges. Then knowing her own attainment, she considered which place would suit her to help others attain Awakening. There was nothing much she could do in the small village whereas in Rājagaha she could help her own kith and kin. So she decided to return to Rājagaha and, requesting her preceptors to accompany her, she returned to Rājagaha.

Visākhā's Questions on the Doctrine

When Visākhā learnt that Ven. Dhammadinnā had returned to Rājagaha, he was eager to [1403] know why, after having gone to live in a small village, she returned so soon. He would go to her and find out but he did not wish to ask a plain question whether she was quite at home with monastic life. Rather, he would pose profound questions relating to the five aggregates that are the objects of clinging (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*), and judge her mind from the way she answered. So after paying homage to her, he sat in a suitable place and asked doctrinal questions concerning the five aggregates that are the objects of clinging.

[See the Short Discourse giving an Elaboration (*Cūḷa-vedalla-sutta*, MN 44.)]

Ven. Dhammadinnā answered all the questions put to her by Visākhā as promptly as a racing horse gallops away, and so precisely as though lotus stems were cut down by a sharp blade. Visākha realized the high intellect of Dhammadinnā and proceeded from matters relating to the three lower path-knowledges which was the limit of his knowledge. He then proceeded to matters relating to the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*) which he had not attained himself but about which he had hearsay knowledge.

Ven. Dhammadinnā knew that Visākha could properly ask about matters pertaining to the Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-phala*), and that he had exceeded his limitation of knowledge when he asked: "Venerable, what is the counterpart of Nibbāna?" She answered: "Friend Visākha, your question has gone too far. It is not possible for you to reach the limit of such a question.[306] Indeed, friend Visākhā, the noble practice of purity consisting of three kinds of training tends to Nibbāna, has its ultimate goal in Nibbāna, and ends in Nibbāna. Friend Visākha, if you so desire, go to the Fortunate One and ask him to explain this matter. And bear in mind the explanation of the Fortunate One."

Then Visākha approached the Buddha and related to the Buddha all that had been said between him and Ven. Dhammadinnā. When the Buddha heard the details of the questions and answers that took place between them, he said: "Dhammadinnā is free of all forms of craving for the aggregates (*khandha*), either of the past, or the future, or the present." Then the Buddha spoke in verse thus (Dhp 421):

> "Visākha, he who does not cling to the aggregates that are past, future, or present, who is free from the pollutants and attachment, him I call a Brahmin."

By the end of the discourse, many in the audience attained Awakening at the various levels.

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[306] Nibbāna is unique and has no counterpart.

Then the Buddha praised Ven. Dhammadinnā: "Visākha, layman devotee, the nun Dhammadinnā is wise. Visākha, she is of great knowledge. Visākha, had you asked me the answers to those questions I, too, would have answered them in the same way Dhammadinnā answered. These are the answers to the questions. Bear in mind the answers given by Dhammadinnā."

This event was an immediate cause of Dhammadinnā being designated as the foremost female monastic in expounding the doctrine. Herein, it should be remembered that the discourse given by Ven. Dhammadinnā, when endorsed by the Buddha in those clear terms, becomes a discourse of the Buddha himself. It is like in the case of a message written by a writer properly endorsed and sealed by the king's seal, becomes the king's message. Other discourses by other disciples that have the Buddha's endorsement also became the Buddha's discourses.

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī, and naming distinguished nuns, he declared:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ bhikkhunīnaṁ
Dhamma-kathikānaṁ yad-idaṁ Dhammadinnā.

Monastics, among my female monastic disciples who are skilled in expounding the Dhamma, Dhammadinnā is the foremost (*etad-agga*). [1404]

6. Ven. Nandā

Nandā's full name was Janapadakalyāṇī Rūpanandā. Her story has been told in detail in chapter 34 on the Discourse about Victory (*Vijaya-sutta*, Snp 1.11). In the present chapter, only a short account will be given, as described in the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*).

Aspiration in the Past

The future Nandā was reborn into a rich man's family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On a certain occasion when she was attending a discourse by the Buddha, she witnessed the Buddha naming a nun as the foremost among nuns who enjoyed abiding in absorption (*jhāna*). She

aspired to that distinction and after making an extraordinary offering she wished that she would be designated as the foremost nun in absorption herself, some time in the future. The Buddha predicted that her wish would be fulfilled.

Ascetic Life in her Final Existence

After passing away from that memorable existence, she was reborn in the fortunate existences for 100,000 aeons. In her last existence, she was reborn as a Sakyan Princess who later was intended to be betrothed to Prince Nanda. She was named Princess Abhirūpanandā, and her extreme attractiveness also earned her the endearing name of Princess Janapadakalyāṇī. She was born of Queen Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī.

Prince Nanda, Prince Rāhula and some of the closest kith and kin of the Buddha were admitted into the Saṅgha during the Buddha's visit to Kapilavatthu. Later, after the death of King Suddhodana, her own mother, Queen Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī and Queen Yasodharā, her sister, mother of Prince Rāhula, also joined the female Saṅgha. As Princess Janapadakalyāṇī saw no point in her remaining at the royal palace, she joined her mother, Ven. Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī, as a nun.

After becoming a nun, she did not go to see the Buddha on the days scheduled for her to receive the Buddha's admonition, as other nuns did. This was because the Buddha was reputed to be derogatory of personal beauty. So, she would send some other nuns to receive the Buddha's admonition on her behalf. The Buddha knew that she was conceited about her personal beauty and ordered that nuns must go personally to him to receive admonition and not depute another. Ven. Rūpanandā had to abide by the rule and reluctantly she went to see the Buddha.

The Buddha had, by his powers, created a most attractive girl by his side, respectfully fanning him with a palm-leaf fan. When Ven. Rūpanandā saw her, her vanity about her own personal beauty vanished. "Why," she thought to herself, "I have been so conceited about my beauty! Shame on me! Here is a girl whose beauty I could not match, for I have not even 256th part of her beauty. How foolish of me it was to stay away from the Fortunate One." She stood there awestruck by the beauty of the mind-made girl near the Buddha.

Ven. Rūpanandā had sufficing conditions because of accumulated merit in the past. She heard one verse on the loathsomeness of the body (Dhp 150):

Aṭṭhīnaṁ nagaraṁ kataṁ, maṁsa-lohita-lepanaṁ,
yattha jarā ca maccu ca, māno makkho ca ohito.

This fortress is made out of bones, plastered over with flesh and blood, but hidden within lie old age, death, also conceit and anger.

And she also heard the Discourse about Victory (*Vijaya-sutta*, Snp 1.11) beginning with: *Caraṁ vā yadi vā tiṭṭhaṁ*, "while walking, standing, sitting, or lying down …" describing the constitution of the body which is basically no different from a corpse, she meditated diligently on the emptiness of this sentient existence and in two or three days, she became an Arahat.

Foremost Title Achieved

From the time of attaining Awakening Ven. Rūpanandā was unequalled by any other female monastic in abiding in absorption (*jhāna*). Accordingly, when on the occasion of naming foremost nuns during his residence at the Jetavana monastery, the Buddha declared: [1405]

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ bhikkhunīnaṁ
jhāyīnaṁ yad-idaṁ Nandā.

Monastics, among my female monastic disciples who derive pleasure from absorption, Nandā is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

7. Ven. Soṇā Bahuputtika

Aspiration in the Past

The future Bahuputtika Soṇā was reborn into a rich man's family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She had occasion to listen to a discourse by the Buddha when she saw a nun being named as the foremost female monastic in earnest endeavour. She then had a strong desire to become such a foremost nun in the future. So she made an extraordinary offering and later, aspired to the title. Buddha Padumuttara predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

Ascetic Life in her Final Existence

The future Bahuputtika Soṇā was reborn, for 100,000 aeons, in the fortunate destinations. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into the family

of a rich man in Sāvatthī. She was married to the son of a rich man and went to live in her husband's house. She bore ten children and was known as Bahuputtika Soṇā (Soṇā with many children).

When her husband took up the monastic life, she arranged for the marriage of her ten children and bequeathed all her property to them, leaving nothing for herself. The children were all ungrateful to her. None of them was willing to let her stay at their houses for more than two or three days, after which, they treated her unkindly.

The old lady became an unwanted, helpless mother, neglected by her own children. Realizing her dire position, she decided that she must renounce the world and became a nun. After she had become a nun, her seniors in the Saṅgha would scold her for any slight mistake or shortcoming in her community obligations. She was often required to serve out punitive measures by her seniors. When her unkind children saw her undergoing such punishment, instead of taking pity on their old mother, they made a laughing stock of her saying: "This old woman has still not learnt the monastic discipline!"

This ridicule by her own children caused great spiritual urgency in her. "I do not have long to live. I must safeguard myself against the unfortunate destinies." So reflecting, she let no time pass, whether sitting or walking, or standing or lying down, without uttering and contemplating on the 32 constituent parts of the body. Then, during all the free moments left to her, after discharging the communal duties to her co-residents, she went into meditation throughout the night. For she rightly realized that at her late age as a nun, she could not afford to let a moment pass without being mindful. When she sat meditating at night, she held onto a post on the ground floor of her nunnery, without losing hold of it. When she walked, meditating at night, she held a tree with her hand, never letting it go for fear that she might otherwise bump her head against something in the darkness.[307]

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[307] This is according to the commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nuns (*Therī-gāthā*, Thī 45).

When she first became a nun, she was called Ven. Bahuputtika Soṇā. But later, her earnest endeavour in taking up the three kinds of training earned her the epithet "one with earnest endeavour" and she was known as Āraddhaviriya Soṇā.

Attainment of Awakening

One day, when the nuns went to the Jetavana monastery to receive the Buddha's admonition, they told Āraddhaviriya Soṇā to boil some water for the community. But before attending to that task, the old nun walked up and down the kitchen and contemplated on the 32 aspects of the body, uttering each item. The Buddha saw her, while sitting in his private-chamber at the Jetavana monastery and sent forth the [1406] Buddha-radiance to her, making his person visible to her, and uttered this verse (Dhp 115):

> Even though one should live 100 years without seeing the sublime Dhamma,[308] yet more worthwhile indeed is a single day's life of one who perceives the sublime Dhamma.

After thus hearing the Buddha's discourse made through the Buddha-radiance, which also enabled her to see the Buddha in person, Ven. Āraddhaviriya Soṇā became an Arahat. She now thought: "I have become an Arahat. Those who do not know this, on their return from the Jetavana monastery, will treat me with disrespect as usual which will result in them doing great demerit. I must let them know about my attainment of Awakening so as to forewarn them. She placed the pot of water for boiling on the fireplace but did not make the fire.

When the co-resident nuns returned from the Buddha's monastery, they saw no fire at the fireplace and murmured: "We told the old woman to boil some water for the community but she has not even made the fire." Then Ven. Soṇa said to them: "Friends, what use with the fire? Let anyone who needs warm water take it from that pot on the unlit fireplace." The co-residents were surprised by these strange words and they realized that there must be some reason for the old nun to say so. They went to the pot and felt the water inside. It was quite warm. They took an empty pot to the fireplace and poured out the warm water into it. Whenever they took out the water from that pot, the pot filled up again.

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[308] I.e. the supermundane Dhamma comprising nine factors.

Then only the nuns realized that Ven. Soṇa had become an Arahat. Those nuns who were junior in monastic standing to Ven. Soṇa made obeisance to her with with the hands, knees and forehead touching the ground, and said: "Ven. Soṇa, we have been foolish in being disrespectful to you and bullying you. For all these transgressions, we beg your pardon." Those nuns, who were senior in female monastic standing, sat squatting before Ven. Soṇa, and said: "Ven. Soṇa, pardon us for our misbehaviour."

Foremost Title Achieved

Ven. Soṇa became an example of how an elderly person could become an Arahat by dint of earnest effort. On one occasion, when the Buddha sat in congregation at the Jetavana monastery naming foremost nuns, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ bhikkhunīnaṁ*
> *āraddha-viriyānaṁ yad-idaṁ Soṇa.*
>
> Monastics, among my female monastic disciples who have diligence and make earnest effort, Soṇa is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

8. Ven. Sakulā

> Ven. Sakulā is mentioned by the name of Bakulā in the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) in the recorded version of the Sixth Council, whereas in the Sri Laṅkā version, the name is mentioned as Sakulā. In the commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nuns (*Therī-gāthā*) of the Sixth Council version, the name also appeared as Sakulā. Hence we have opted for the name Sakulā, and based our narration on the commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nuns which gives a more extensive coverage of her history.

Aspiration in the Past

The future Sakulā was reborn into the family of King Ānanda of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She was the half sister of Buddha Padumuttara and was named Princess Nandā. When she had come of age, she attended the Buddha's discourse. She saw a nun being named by the Buddha as the foremost female monastic in the endowment of the supernormal power of the divine eye, which is characterized by knowledge of past existences. She then had a strong desire to become one like that nun with supernormal power of the

divine eye and accordingly she made an extraordinary offering and made her aspiration before Buddha Padumuttara. Buddha Padumuttara predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha Gotama.

> For details of this part of the story, read [1407] the Traditions about the Elder Nun Sakulā (*Sakulā-therī-apādāna*, Thi-ap 24).

Past Existence as a Female Wandering Ascetic

Princess Nandā engaged herself in doing many great deeds of merit throughout her life, and, after passing away from that existence, she was reborn in the Deva realm. Subsequently, she was reborn in the human or Deva realm only. During Buddha Kassapa's time, she was reborn into a Brahmin family. She became a recluse and led a life of a secluded ascetic. After the passing away of Buddha Kassapa, his relics were enshrined in a great relic shrine (*stūpa*). The ascetic, who was the future Sakulā, one day obtained some oil on her round for alms oil. With that amount of oil she made an offering of lights throughout the night at the shrine where Buddha Kassapa's relics were enshrined.

Ascetic Life in her Final Existence

The wandering ascetic passed away and was reborn in Tāvatiṁsa Realm, as a Deva endowed with the special Deva faculty of vision. For the whole period of the interval between the two Buddhas, she fared on in the Deva realm only. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn into a Brahmin family in Sāvatthī, by the name of Sakulā. When she came of age, she attended a ceremony which celebrated the donations of the Jetavana monastery by Anāthapiṇḍika to the Buddha where she listened to the Buddha's discourse and she became a lay disciple. Later, she received a discourse from an Arahat which kindled her spiritual urgency and resulted in her becoming a nun. She strove diligently in the noble practice of purity and soon became an Arahat.

Foremost Title Achieved

After becoming an Arahat, Ven. Sakulā, as the result of her past aspiration, was especially devoted to the exercise of the supernormal power of the divine eye (*Deva-cakkhu*), and was adept at it. On one occasion, when the Buddha was naming outstanding nuns at the Jetavana monastery, he declared:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ bhikkhunīnaṁ dibba-cakkhukānaṁ yad-idaṁ Sakulā.

Monastics, among my female monastic disciples who are proficient in the supernormal power of the divine eye, Sakulā is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

9. Ven. Bhaddā Kuṇḍalakesā

Aspiration in the Past

The future Kuṇḍalakesā was reborn into the family of a rich man in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She was listening to the Buddha's discourse, when she saw the elder nun Subhā being named as the foremost monastic in attaining Awakening with the quickest insight. She wanted most strongly to be named such a foremost nun in future time. After making a great offering, she made known her aspiration in front of Buddha Padumuttara, who then made the prediction that her aspiration would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha Gotama.

A Daughter of the King of Bārāṇasī

After faring for 100,000 aeons, either in the Deva or human realms, the future Kuṇḍalakesā was reborn as the fourth daughter, named Bhikkhadāyikā, of the seven daughters of King Kikī of Bārāṇasī, during the time of Buddha Kassapa. In that existence, she, like her other sisters, led a life of chastity for her entire lifespan of 20,000 years, observing the ten precepts. She was also a joint supporter, together with her sisters, of a great monastic complex for the Saṅgha.

Ascetic Life in her Final Existence

Princess Bhikkhadāyikā was reborn either in the Deva realm or the human realm for the whole aeon during the interim period between the two Buddhas. During the time of [1408] Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as a rich man's daughter in Rājagaha, by the name of Bhaddā. On the same day as she was born, a son was also born to the king's counsellor in Rājagaha. At the moment of the birth of the chief counsellor's son, all weapons throughout the city, beginning those at the king's palace, dazzled mysteriously.

The king's counsellor went to see the king early in the next morning and asked the king: "Great King, did you sleep well?" To which the king replied: "Master,

how could I sleep well? All the weapons in the palace dazzled mysteriously the whole night making me nervous." – "Great King," the counsellor said, "do not be afraid. Dazzling of weapons took place last night not only in the palace but throughout the city." – "Why, master, did that happen?"

"Great King, last night a son was born to my family, whose time of birth coincided with the dominance of certain planets in the zodiac, and whose influence will determine the character of the new-born child. Due to that planetary influence, my son will grow into an incorrigible thief, an enemy to the whole city. But your majesty, if you so desire, I shall eliminate him." – "If there is no personal danger to me, there is no reason to eliminate the child."

The counsellor named his son, Sattuka, meaning Vile Enemy, as signifying the innate quality of the child which was acquired through the stellar influence at birth. As the future Kuṇḍalakesā grew to age, so also did young Sattuka. Even as a young boy of two or three years old, wherever he went, he would snatch anything that he could lay his hands on and take them home. His father admonished him not to do so but he would not listen.

Sattuka the Bane of Rājagaha

When Sattuka attained adolescence, his father, seeing that his son was truly beyond his correction, abandoned him. Giving the youth two pieces of dark cloth to use in nocturnal exploits, a tool for breaking open walls and fences and a sweep of twine ladders to his son, he mournfully said to him: "Take these, you useless boy, make your living by robbery. And be off!"

The young waif proved himself a formidable robber. Making use of the housebreaking tool and the rope ladder, he would execute housebreaking neatly and rob all the houses of the well-to-do. Before long every house in the city suffered from his exploits, showing gaping holes in the walls.

When the king made a chariot ride around the city, these holes were a curious sight for the king, who then asked the charioteer the reason for them. Being told by the charioteer that all of them were the work of Sattuka, the housebreaker, the king sent for the mayor and asked him why the robber was not apprehended. The mayor explained that nobody had ever caught the robber red-handed and hence he was not apprehended. The king ordered him: "Catch the robber today, or else your life is forfeit."

His very life being at stake, the mayor posted undercover men throughout the city and was successful in catching the robber red-handed. Sattuka was apprehended and brought before the king who ordered: "Take Sattuka out of the city by the south gate and execute him.[309] The mayor acknowledged the king's sentence. He took Sattuka to every crossroads in the city where 1,000 lashes were administered to him at each crossroads. And thus he was taken towards the south gate, his hands bound at the back.

The Affection of Bhaddā

At that time, the tumult caused by the people watching the thief being punished aroused the curiosity of Bhaddā, the future Kuṇḍalakesā. She looked out through the window which was carved with a lion motif at the sill. When she saw Sattuka in bondage being savagely whipped owing to the mutual love and affection that had existed in their past existences, Bhaddā felt great pity for the robber, and she felt very unhappy. She went to her bedroom with her hands pressed on her bosom to check the mental pain and lay on her bed face downwards. As the only child, Bhaddā was the focus of the family. The [1409] slightest scowl on her forehead caused much concern on the part of the parents.

Her mother went to her and asked the reason for her despair. The daughter did not hide her emotions but opened her heart to the mother that she had such love and affection for Sattuka that she could not live unless she was married the man. The parents and the relations tried their best to make her see sense but to no avail. Finally they had to yield to her wishes coming to the conclusion: "At least giving the daughter to the culprit is better than her death."

Her father approached the mayor with a bribe of 1,000 pieces of money to let the prisoner escape the death penalty, explaining that his daughter was hopelessly enamoured of the robber, and the mayor co-operated. He procrastinated, and put off the execution by all sorts of explanations until it was sundown. Then he substituted another prisoner with Sattuka, who was stealthily escorted to the rich man's house. The substituted prisoner was taken out of the city by the south gate and executed in lieu of Sattuka.

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[309] This event took place during King Ajātasattu's reign.

When the rich man secretly received Sattuka from the mayor's men, he decided to make his daughter happy by pampering the criminal. He had Sattuka bathed in scented water, dressed up finely, and sent to his daughter's mansion. Bhaddā was very happy for having obtained her prize. She made herself as lovely as possible with much adornment and attended on Sattuka fondly.

Sattuka's Wicked Plan

Sattuka's evilness was such that he coveted Bhaddā's personal adornments. He thought out a wicked plan and after two or three days, he said to Bhaddā: "I have to say something to you." – "Say it, my dear," said Bhaddā, anticipating some good words.

"You might think that you saved my life," Sattuka said. "As a matter of fact, I owe my life to the guardian spirit of Mount Corapapāta. I promised him an offering, if I came out of my captivity alive. Now I am bound by my word to make the spirit an offering. Make the necessary preparations."

Bhaddā, being innocent and loving, readily agreed to comply with the wish of her husband. She prepared offerings, adorned herself fully, and rode in a carriage with Sattuka. At the foot of Mount Corapapāta, she alighted from the carriage and made ready to go up the mountain, accompanied by her attendants. Sattuka, concealing his evil motive, persuaded Bhaddā to go up to the mountain alone because she must have no friend by her side. She carried the offering on her head and went up to the mountain with Sattuka.

Once they were alone together on the ascent to the mountain, Sattuka's tone suddenly changed in his conversation with Bhaddā. His oily tongue now gave way to harsh usage. Bhaddā was intelligent enough to fathom the evil motive of her robber-husband. When they got to the top of the mountain, Sattuka commanded in his natural harshness: "Now Bhaddā, take off all your personal ornaments and wrap them up in your upper garment." Bhaddā, pretending not to know the evil motive of Sattuka, sweetly replied: "What wrong have I done against you, my lord?" – "Foolish girl, do you think I came here to make offerings to the mountain spirit? Fie! I dare open the heart of the mountain spirit. I have brought you here alone to rob you of your ornaments."

Bhaddā's Wisdom

Now that Sattuka's true colours had been revealed, Bhaddā employed her wit to save herself. Politely she asked: "But, my Lord, whose ornaments are all these? Whom do I belong to?" – "Look here, I do not understand what you mean. I only know that your property belongs [1410] to you and you alone, and has nothing to do with me."

"Very well, my lord, my only request is that I be allowed to show my love before I take off my ornaments and make myself less beautiful to you. Allow me to embrace you from the front, from the sides, and at the rear," she begged him in a concerning voice. "Very well," said Sattuka unsuspectingly.

Bhaddā now quickly embraced Sattuka from the front, and then going to his rear, pretended to embrace him, she shoved him violently over the mountain top. He fell headlong into a deep crevice, his body torn up into parts all along the way down.

> Here is a subtle point in analysing Bhaddā's mind in her act of self defence. At the moment of her actually pushing the villain off the mountain top, her mind is rooted in hatred and dominated by the mental concomitant of killing. However, the thoughts immediately preceding that killing impulsion and those which immediately follow it are meritorious thoughts called great types of moral consciousness, or sublime consciousness dominated by skill (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*) in strategy to ward off the danger to her life.

The mountain spirit who witnessed the astounding wit and courage of Bhaddā, sang two verses in praise of her astute wisdom thus:

> A wise person may not always be a man. A woman, with discerning wit in a given situation, may also prove herself to be a wise person.
>
> A wise person may not always be a man. A woman, who can quickly find a solution to a problem, can very well be a wise person.

After what had happened to her, Bhaddā had no desire to return home. She left the mountain, not knowing where she was going. Her only thought was to become a recluse. She happened to arrive at a place of some female ascetics, and asked them to let her join their Saṅgha. They asked her: "Which mode of admission would you prefer? The inferior mode, or the superior mode?" Being a

person endowed with the destiny of winding up her existence, she replied: "Let me be admitted into your Saṅgha by the most valued mode of admission."

Kuṇḍalakesā as a Doctrinaire Ascetic

"Very well," the leading female ascetic said, and they pulled out Bhaddā's hair one by one with the shell of the palmyra fruit. No doubt, shaving the head in this manner is most painful but it was the belief of those ascetics that shaving the head with a blade or a pair of scissors was an inferior mode of admitting one into their Saṅgha, and that plucking the hairs one by one was the superior mode. When fresh hair grew again they formed small clusters of rings that resembled earrings. Hence Bhaddā came to be called by her new name of Kuṇḍalakesā, "one with earring-like coils of hair."

Kuṇḍalakesā learned all that her ascetic teachers could teach her and, being a person of innate wisdom, decided that there was no superior kind of learning that she could get from them. So she left them and roamed the country in search of further knowledge, learning from various teachers. In time, she became learned in various doctrines which were acquired at various places and was also unequalled in expounding doctrines. She would go from place to place to find her match in the exposition of doctrines. As a mark of open challenge, she would set up a heap of sand at the entrance to the town or village she visited, on the top of which she would plant a twig of rose-apple. She would tell the children nearby to let everybody know that anyone who could outwit her in the exposition of doctrines might signal his or her challenge by destroying the rose-apple twig. If after seven days there appeared no challenger, she would pluck up the rose-apple twig in triumph and go on to another place. [1411]

Ven. Sāriputta tames Kuṇḍalakesā

By that time, Buddha Gotama had appeared in the world and was residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī. The wandering ascetic Kuṇḍalakesā, who wore only a single garment, after touring cities, towns and villages, arrived at Sāvatthī. At the entrance of the city, she set up her symbol of challenge, a heap of sand with a twig of rose-apple planted atop it. After giving word to the children nearby about the meaning of the twig of rose-apple being used, she entered the city.

At that time, Ven. Sāriputta, the Captain of the Doctrine, had entered the city for collection of alms food, after the other monastics had already entered the city. This was because he had been discharging the tasks set him of overseeing the tidiness of the entire Jetavana monastery such as putting monastics' beddings and articles of use in order, filling water pots, sweeping the grounds, tending to the sick monastics, etc. When he saw the rose-apple twig planted on a heap of sand he inquired from the children nearby what that meant. The children explained to him about Kuṇḍalakesā's message. Thereupon Ven. Sāriputta told them to destroy the rose-apple twig. Some children were reluctant to do so but a few daring ones trampled the rose-apple twig to pieces.

When Kuṇḍalakesā returned from the city after finishing her meal, she saw her rose-apple twig destroyed and asked the boys who was responsible for it. They told her that they did it, as asked by Ven. Sāriputta. Kuṇḍalakesā pondered thus: "Someone who does not know my ability would not dare to challenge me. This Ven. Sāriputta must be someone who has great wisdom and virtue. Now I will announce to all the people that I am going to engage in a test of wits with Ven. Sāriputta, the Captain of the Doctrine, and thus build up a following of my own before meeting him." She spread the news to the people and within a short time the whole city of 80,000 houses were informed of the event among themselves.

Ven. Sāriputta, after having finished his meal, sat underneath a tree, and waited for Kuṇḍalakesā. Then she arrived with a large crowd behind her. After exchanging cordial greetings with Ven. Sāriputta, she sat in a suitable place and said: "Venerable sir, did you ask the children to destroy rose-apple twig set up by me?"

"Yes, I did," replied Ven. Sāriputta.

"Venerable sir, if that is so, shall we enter into a debate?"

"So be it, female ascetic."

"Who should start putting the questions, sir?"

"It is my privilege to put questions. However, you can begin by asking me about what you know."

When she had the permission to ask, Kuṇḍalakesā asked Ven. Sāriputta all the doctrines that she knew. He answered them all. Then he said: "Bhaddā, I have answered all your questions. Now I shall ask you a question."

"Please do venerable sir."

"What is the one factor that needs to be fully understood (*ekaṁ nāma kiṁ*)?"

"Venerable sir, I do not know it."

"Young female ascetic, you do not know even what a young novice knows in our teaching, what else would you know?"

Thereupon Kuṇḍalakesā, being a person of no mean past merit, knew the worth of her opponent. She said: "May your reverence be my refuge!"

"Kuṇḍalakesā," said Ven. Sāriputta, "you should not take refuge in me. There is the Buddha, the supreme one among the three worlds, now residing at the Jetavana monastery, in his private chamber. Go and take refuge in the Buddha."

"Very well, venerable sir, I will take your advice," she said. [1412]

In that evening she went to the Jetavana monastery where she found the Buddha delivering a discourse. She made obeisance to the Buddha with the hands, knees and forehead touching the ground and sat in a suitable place. The Buddha, knowing her ripeness for Awakening spoke this verse (Dhp 101):

> Better than 1,000 verses that deal with trash, not tending to edification, is a single verse, by hearing which one is calmed.

At the end of the verse, Kuṇḍalakesā became an Arahat and was endowed with the four analytic knowledges. She requested the Buddha to admit her into the Saṅgha of female monastics. The Buddha agreed. So, she went to a nunnery and was admitted as a nun.

Foremost Title Achieved

When the Buddha sat amidst the four kinds of assemblies, there was the lively topic among the audience about the marvellous facility of Ven. Kuṇḍalakesā in attaining Awakening after hearing just a verse comprising four lines. The Buddha, with reference to that topic, declared:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ bhikkhunīnaṁ khippābhiññānaṁ yad-idaṁ Bhaddā Kuṇḍalakesā.

Monastics, among my female monastic disciples who attain path-knowledge quickly Bhaddā Kuṇḍalakesā is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

10. Ven. Bhaddā Kāpilānī

The story of Bhaddā Kāpilānī is connected with that of Ven. Mahā Kassapa an elaborate account of which has been given above. For that reason the commentary gives only a brief account of this elder nun. For a more complete account, the reader is advised to refer back to chapter 43.4.

Aspiration in the Past

The future Bhaddā Kāpilānī was born as the wife of Vedeha, a rich man of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Padumuttara Buddha. When she was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, she saw a nun being named as the foremost female monastic having the supernormal power of remembering past existences. She aspired to be such a nun and, after making an extraordinary offering, mentioned that aspiration before the Buddha, who confirmed it.

The Wife of a Householder

After passing away from her existence as a rich man's wife, she was reborn in the Deva realm and subsequently either in the human world or the Deva realm, for 100,000 aeons. Eventually, she was reborn as the wife of a householder in Bārāṇasī. At one time, while she was having a quarrel with the sister of her husband, a Paccekabuddha arrived for alms food. The householder's sister offered alms food to the Paccekabuddha and said her wish which chafed his wife, the future Bhaddā Kāpilānī, who became furious and took the alms bowl from the Paccekabuddha, and threw away the alms food in it. Further, she put mud in it, and offered it back to the Paccekabuddha. Only when the astonished onlookers reminded her of her fault did she recover her proper senses. She threw out the mud from the Paccekabuddha's alms bowl, cleansed it thoroughly, applied scented powder to it and then put in the four sweet foods (*catu-madhu*). In addition, she added ghee that had been made pure white, like the inside of the pollen chamber of the lotus, with the result that the food she offered glistened in the alms bowl. In returning the alms bowl to the Paccekabuddha, she wished

aloud that just as the food she offered glistened, so would she possesses a glistening complexion.[310]

Ascetic Life in her Final Existence

It is noteworthy that both husband and wife renounced the world together. The husband, [1413] Mahā Kassapa, at a forked road took the right turn while his wife, Bhaddā Kāpilānī, the left turn. The former, met the Buddha sitting under the great Bodhi tree, known as Bahuputtaka. At that time, women were not yet admitted into the Saṅgha, so Bhaddā Kāpilānī had to spend five years as a wandering ascetic.

> This fact was recounted by herself in her life story: *Pañca vassāni nivasiṁ paribbājavate ahaṁ*, "for five years I lived as a wanderer" (Tha-ap 413, 60).

Foremost Title Acheived

Thanks to her past aspiration, Ven. Bhaddā Kāpilānī, after attaining Awakening, was exceptionally competent in remembering past existences. Therefore, on one occasion when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery and naming distinguished nuns, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ bhikkhunīnaṁ pubbe-nivāsaṁ yad-idaṁ Bhaddā Kāpilānī.*
>
> Monastics, among my female monastic disciples who can recall past existences, Bhaddā, who is now called Kāpilānī,[311] is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

11. Ven. Bhaddā Kaccānā

> As the Myanmar saying goes: "Masses of water follow the tide," so it is also with the story of Bhaddā Kaccānā, who was also known as Yasodharā, whose story is inseparably linked with that of the Buddha. The commentary therefore treats her story only in a brief manner. We do likewise in this book.

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[310] All these happenings may be gleaned from chapter 43 on Ven. Mahā Kassapa.

[311] Kāpilānī was the family name of Bhaddā's husband Pippali (later Mahā Kassapa).

Aspiration in the Past

The future Bhaddā Kaccānā, was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When she was attending a discourse by the Buddha, she saw a nun being named by the Buddha as the foremost nun in attaining great supernormal power. She aspired to that attainment. After making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, she made her aspiration in front of him, and received confirmation.

Ascetic Life in her Final Existence

The future Bhaddā Kaccānā was reborn only in the Deva realm or the human realm for 100,000 aeons. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of the Sakyan Prince Suppabuddha, who was an uncle of the Buddha. She was named Bhaddā Kaccānā.

When she came of age, she was married to Prince Siddhattha and became his Chief Queen. She gave birth to Prince Rāhula. On the night she gave birth to Rāhula, Prince Siddhattha renounced the home life. After attaining Perfect Awakening at the foot of the Bodhi tree, the Buddha concerned himself with the spiritual welfare of the sentient world. He made a journey to Kapilavatthu where he caused the Awakening of his kith and kin.

During the Buddha's fifth year after Awakening, his father became an Arahat while reigning as a king and passed away the same day. Then, Queen Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī and the five Sakyan princesses, whose husbands had become monastics as a result of listening to the Discourse about the Great Assembly (*Mahā-samaya-sutta*, DN 20), became nuns in the Buddha's teaching. At that time, Princess Yasodharā, as a nun was referred to as Bhaddā Kaccānā. Bhaddā Kaccānā and Princess Janapadakalyāṇī or Nandā, became nuns with Mahā Pajāpati Gotamī as their preceptress. She strove to gain insight and in due time became an Arahat.

Foremost Title Achieved

Ven. Bhaddā Kaccānā, after attaining Awakening, was most proficient in the exercise of supernormal powers. At one sitting, in a single adverting of her mind (*āvajjana*), she could recall all her previous existences over one incalculable

period and 100,000 aeons. This extraordinary feat of hers became the talk of the monastic world.

With [1414] reference to that wide reputation, the Buddha, in naming distinguished nuns in a congregation in Jetavana monastery, declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ bhikkhunīnaṁ mahābhiññappattānaṁ yad-idaṁ Bhaddākaccānā.*
>
> Monastics, among my female monastic disciples who are endowed with great supernormal powers, Bhaddā Kaccānā is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

Note that there are only four outstanding disciples of the Buddha who are endowed with such great supernormal powers. They have exceptional powers to recall past lives over one incalculable period and 100,000 aeons whereas other disciples can recall their past lives over 100,000 aeons only. The four such exceptional disciples were Ven. Sāriputta, Ven Mahā Moggallāna, Ven. Bākula and Ven. Bhaddā Kaccānā. The original name of the nun was Bhaddā Kaccānā but on account of her golden complexion she was also known as Bhaddā Kañcānā.

12. Ven. Kisā Gotamī

Aspiration in the Past

The future Kisā Gotamī was reborn into an unknown family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When she was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, she saw a nun being named as the foremost female monastic in wearing coarse, inferior robes. She aspired to be like that nun. After making an extraordinary offering, she expressed that wish before the Buddha. The Buddha predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha Gotama.

A Daughter of King Kikī

The future Kisā Gotamī was reborn in the fortunate destinations, and never into lower worlds, for a period of 100,000 aeons. During the time of Buddha Kassapa in the present aeon which was graced by five Buddhas, she was reborn as the fifth daughter of King Kikī of Bārāṇasī. She was named Dhammā. For the whole of her lifespan of 20,000 years, she led a life of purity, observing the ten precepts.

Ascetic Life in her Final Existence

Princess Dhammā was reborn in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm. In her last existence, she was born into a rich man's family, whose fortunes had dwindled and was in a state of poverty. Her original name was Gotamī but due to her lean and emaciated body she was called Kisā Gotamī, "Gotamī the lean one."

> How Kisā Gotamī became the daughter-in-law of a rich man will now be narrated, as told in the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 114).

Kisā Gotamī, the One with Great Past Merit

The Buddha said this in the Discourse on the Amount of Savings (*Nidhi-kaṇḍa-sutta*, Khp 8.5):

> *Yadā puññakkhayo hoti, sabbam-etaṁ vinassati.*
>
> When merit is exhausted everything is lost.

There was a rich man in Sāvatthī whose property were all strangely turned into charcoal due to the exhaustion of his merit. The man was in a despondent state. He lost his appetite and lay on a couch. A friend came to his house and gave him encouragement. He also gave a practical way out of the stark poverty of the once rich man.

His instruction was as follows: "Friend, spread out a mat in front of your house as a bazaar seller would, for you are going to sell the heaps of charcoal that are now your only property. Passers-by will say: 'Oh, other people sell oil, honey, molasses, etc. but you, rich man, are selling charcoal.' Then you just say to them: 'One sells what one owns. What's wrong with it?' These people are the ordinary people with no great past merit. [1415] Someone will come and say to you: 'Ah, other people sell oil, honey molasses, etc. but you, rich man, are selling gold and silver!' To that person you should say: 'Where are the gold and silver?' Then that person will point to your heaps of charcoal and say: 'There they are.'

Then you should say: 'Bring them to me,' and receive with your hands what that person has brought from your heaps of charcoal to you in his or her hands. Since that person is one endowed with great past merit, all he or she touches and delivers into your hands will be turned into gold and silver, as they originally had been.

I must mention the stipulation. It is this: If the person who mentions your gold and silver and turns them back to gold and silver is a young woman, you must marry your son to her, entrust all your property with 400 million to her and let her, as your daughter-in-law, manage your household. If that person is a young man, you must marry your daughter to him, entrust all your property worth 400 million to him, as your son-in-law, and let him manage your household."

The ruined rich man took his friend's advice. He sat as a bazaar in front of his house where every passer-by could see him sitting there selling his charcoal. People said to him: "Ah, other people sell oil, honey, molasses, etc., but you are selling charcoal." To them he simply said: "One sells what one owns. What's wrong with it?"

One day, Kisā Gotamī herself, the daughter of another ruined rich man, happened to come along to the charcoal vendor. She said: "Father, other people sell oil, honey, molasses etc., but you are selling gold and silver!" The ruined rich man said to her: "Where are the gold and silver?"

"Well, are you not dealing in them here?"

"Bring those gold and silver to me, daughter!"

Kisā Gotamī took a handful of the vendor's goods and handed it to him and to his amazement, all of them turned into gold and silver as they originally had been!

The rich man asked Kisā Gotamī: "What is your family name?" – "I am known as Kisā Gotamī," she replied. The rich man then knew her to be unmarried. He collected his riches from that place, took Kisā Gotamī to his house and married his son to her. Then every one of his former gold and silver items assumed its original form.

Kisā Gotamī's Loss

In due course, Kisā Gotamī gave birth to a son. From that time onwards, she began to be treated with love and respect by her father-in-law's family – at first she had been looked down by them as the daughter of a poor man. Just when her son could romp about, he died. Kisā Gotamī, who had never suffered the loss of a child, was overwhelmed with grief. She valued her son as the condition for her improved status and well-being. Her fortunes had improved with his birth. She

could not think of her dead child being thrown away in the cemetery. So she held the dead child fondly in her arms, and muttering continuously: "Let me have the medicine to bring back life to my son!" she roamed about from house to house.

As she behaved in that senseless though pitiable manner, people had no sympathy with her. They said jeeringly, flipping their fingers: "Where have you ever seen a medicine that restores life to the dead?" These unkind but truthful words failed to bring her to her senses. A wise man then considered: "This young woman has lost her senses due to the death of her son. The right medicine for her can only be dispensed by the Buddha."

He said to her: "Little daughter, the medicine that can bring back life to your son is known only to the Buddha and to no one else. Indeed, there is the Buddha, the greatest person among Devas [1416] and humans, residing at the Jetavana monastery. Go and ask him."

Quelling Kisā Gotamī's Sorrow

Kisā Gotamī had hope. She went straight to the Buddha's monastery, holding her dead child in her arms. The Buddha was seated on his throne amidst an audience and was about to give his discourse when Kisā Gotamī shouted to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, give me the medicine that will bring back life to my child!" The Buddha saw the sufficiency of her past merit for attaining Awakening and said to her: "Gotamī, you have done the right thing in coming here to ask for the medicine to restore life to your dead child. Now you must go to the houses in Sāvatthī and ask for a small quantity of mustard oil from a house where no death has occurred, and bring it to me."

> Herein, the Buddha's strategy is to be noted carefully. The Buddha merely says to Kisā Gotamī to bring him a small quantity of mustard oil from a house where no death had occurred. He did not say that he would restore the dead child to life when she has got the oil. The Buddha's objective is to let the demented mother realize the point that loss is not a unique experience but that everybody has suffered the same sorrow of the loss of a loved one.

Kisā Gotamī thought that if she obtained the mustard oil, her son would be restored to life. She went to the first house and said: "The Buddha asks me to get

a small quantity of mustard oil for making a medicine to restore life to my dead son. Kindly give me some mustard oil."

"Here it is," the householder said and gave some mustard oil.

"But, sir," she said, "I must know one thing: has nobody died in this family?"

"What a question! Who can remember the number of people that have died in this family?"

"In that case, I am not taking the oil," she said and went to another house. She heard the same reply there. At the third house she also heard the same reply. Now truth dawned into her mind. "There can be no family in this city where death has never occurred. Of course, the Buddha, the benefactor of the world, knew it." A spiritual urgency arose in her. She went to the country and left her dead child there, saying: "Dear son, as a mother, I had thought quite wrongly that death came to you alone. But death is common to everybody."

Then, muttering this soliloquy, the meaning of which will be given later, she went to see the Buddha (Thi-ap 22, 27):

Na gāma-dhammo no nigamassa dhammo,
na cāpiyaṁ eka-kulassa dhammo.
Sabbassa lokassa sadevakassa,
eseva Dhammo yad-idaṁ aniccatā.

She approached the Buddha who asked her: "Have you got the mustard oil?"

"I have no need for mustard oil, venerable sir, only give me firm ground to stand upon, let me gain a foothold!"

The Buddha, spoke this verse to her (Dhp 287):

> Gotamī, one who is intoxicated with children and wealth and is attached to possessions, old and new, is carried away by Death, just as a sleeping village is swept away by a huge flood.

At the end of the discourse, Kisā Gotamī was established in the fruition of Stream-entry knowledge.[312]

In the life story of Kisā Gotamī, when she came back from her search for the mustard oil, [1417] the Buddha spoke to her in two verses (Thi-ap 22:26-27, PTS 2.566):

> Gotamī, even if one were to live 100 years without perceiving with insight the arising and perishing of mind and body, yet more worthwhile indeed is a single day's life of one who perceives the arising and perishing of mind and body.
>
> Gotamī, the impermanence of all conditioned things is not a peculiar phenomenon confined to any village, town, or family, but an inescapable fact that concerns all sentient beings including humans, Devas and Brahmas.

After hearing these two verses, Kisā Gotamī attained Stream-entry. Having been established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*), Kisā Gotamī requested the Buddha to be allowed to become a nun. The Buddha consented. Kisā Gotamī left the Buddha after going three rounds around him with him on her right. She went to the nunnery, and was admitted into the Saṅgha of female monastics. Then, she was known as Ven. Kisā Gotamī.

Attainment of Awakening

Ven. Kisā Gotamī worked diligently to gain insight. One day, it was her turn to look after lighting in and around the Assembly Hall. While watching a flame in a lamp, she had the perception of the flame as a series of rising and vanishings. Then she saw that all living beings are coming and going, that is, they are born only to die and that only those who attain Nibbāna do not come under this process of arising and falling.

The thoughts that were occurring in Kisā Gotamī's mind came to the notice of the Buddha who was sitting in his private chamber at the Jetavana monastery, and he sent his Buddha-radiance to her, making her see him sitting in front of

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[312] This is according to the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*).

her and said: "Gotamī, your thinking is right. All living beings rise and fall, just as the series of flames do. Only those who attain Nibbāna do not come under this process of arising and falling. It is a living in vain for those who may live 100 years without realizing Nibbāna through path-knowledge and its fruition." He made this point further in the following verse (Dhp 113):

> Gotamī, even if one were to live 100 years without perceiving through path-knowledge the deathless Nibbāna, yet more worthwhile indeed is a single day's life of one who perceives through path-knowledge, the deathless Nibbāna.

At the end of the discourse, Ven. Kisā Gotamī became an Arahat, having extinguished all mental intoxicants.

Foremost Title Achieved

As aspired to in her previous existence, Ven. Kisā Gotamī devoted her entire monastic life to being content with inferior robes, robes made of inferior cloth, sewn in inferior thread, and dyed in an inferior colour. Therefore, on one occasion, when the Buddha was naming outstanding nuns during his residence at the Jetavana monastery, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ bhikkhunīnaṁ lūkha-cīvara-dharānaṁ yad-idaṁ Kisā-gotamī.*
>
> Monastics, among my female monastic disciples who make do with inferior robes, Kisā Gotamī is the foremost (*etad-agga*).

13. Ven. Siṅgālakamātu

> What follows is a synthesis of the account of Siṅgālakamātu in the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) and her life story in the Traditions (*Apādāna*, Thi-ap 34). [1418]

Aspiration in the Past

The future Siṅgālakamātu was born as the daughter of a court official, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. She went to the Buddha's monastery and after listening to his doctrine she became a nun and flawlessly observed the morality consisting in the four kinds of purification. She had an exceptional devotion to

the Three Treasures, was very keen to listen to the doctrine, and had an ardent desire to see the Buddha just like Ven. Vakkali had.

One day, she saw a nun being named by the Buddha as the foremost female monastic in faith (*saddhā*). She aspired to be like that foremost nun and redoubled her effort in the practice of the threefold training. The Buddha gave a discourse to her in three verses beginning with: *Yassa saddhā Tathāgate*, which in essence says (Thi-ap 34, 7-9, PTS 2.603):

> One who has faith in the Three Treasures, morality and right view is not called a poor person, and so a wise person should cultivate devotion to the Buddha, morality, faith in the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, and perception or insight that enables one to see the Dhamma.

On hearing the discourse, the young nun was greatly encouraged and asked the Buddha if her aspiration would come true. Buddha Padumuttara predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled during the time of Buddha Gotama. She was elated by the prediction and served the Buddha respectfully by living up to the Buddha's teaching.

> It should be noted that putting effort into the right practice of the Dhamma with devotion or loving thoughts about the Buddha itself amounts to serving or attending on the Buddha.

Ascetic Life in her Final Existence

The future Siṅgālakamātu was reborn in the fortunate destinations for 100,000 aeons. Then, during the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of a rich man in Rājagaha. When she came of age she was married to a son of another rich man of the same clan and went to live in her husband's residence. She gave birth to a child named Siṅgālaka, and so she acquired the name Siṅgālakamātu, Siṅgālaka's mother.

Her son, Siṅgālaka had a wrong view. He worshipped the eight directions daily. One day, as the Buddha was entering the city for alms food, he saw the young Siṅgālaka turning to the eight directions in the act of worshipping. The Buddha stood on the wayside and gave a discourse to the young boy (*Siṅgāla-sutta*, DN 31).

On that occasion, two billion listeners, both men and woman, realized the four truths. Siṅgālakamātu attained Stream-entry knowledge and joined the Saṅgha of female monastics. Since then, she came to be called Ven. Siṅgālakamātu. Due to her past aspiration, since she became a nun, her faculty of faith was exceptionally strong. Wherever she visited the Buddha's monastery to listen to the sermons, she could not turn her gaze away from the glorious person of the Buddha. The Buddha, knowing her intense devotion to him, gave discourses to her that tended to enhance her conviction. With faith as her stepping stone or springboard, she meditated on insight and became an Arahat, and became an Arahat who attains Awakening with conviction as the dominant factor.

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery and naming distinguished nuns according to their merits, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ bhikkhunīnaṁ saddhādhimuttānaṁ yad-idaṁ Siṅgālaka-mātu.*
>
> Monastics, among my female monastic disciples who have strong conviction, Siṅgālakamātu is the foremost (*etad-agga*). [1419]

45a: The Life Stories of the Male Lay Disciples

1. Tapussa and Bhallika

Aspiration in the Past

I shall describe the story of the brothers, Tapussa and Bhallika, based on the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) and the commentary on the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*).

The future Tapussa and Bhallika were reborn into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When they were listening to a discourse by the Buddha, they saw two disciples being named as the foremost in being the first of the Buddha's disciples who were established in the refuges. The two brothers aspired to that distinction and after making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, they wished for that goal.

Other Past Existences

The two brothers lived a life full of meritorious deeds and, after passing away from that memorable existence, they were never reborn into the lower worlds (*apāya*) but, instead, in the Deva realm or the human world only.

The future Bhallika was reborn, 31 aeons ago in a period which was devoid of any Buddhas, as a man who offered all kinds of fruits to a Paccekabuddha named Sumana. For that good deed, he was reborn only in the good destinations.

During the time of Buddha Sikhī, he was reborn into a Brahmin family in the city of Arunavatī. He heard the news that two merchant brothers, Ujita and Ojita, had the opportunity of offering the first alms food to Buddha Sikhī who had appeared from the seventh seven-day abiding in the attainment in cessation and who was about to begin his eighth seven-day abiding in the attainment of cessation. He went to visit Buddha Sikhī together with his friend, the future Tapussa, and after paying homage to the Buddha, requested him to accept their alms food offering the next day. On the next day, they made an extraordinary offering to the Buddha and said: "Venerable sir, for this good deed, let both of us have the opportunity of making the first alms food to a Buddha in the future."

The two friends were reborn in various existences, during which they performed meritorious deeds together, resulting in rebirth at the fortunate destinations. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, they were born into the family of a cattle merchant. For a long period of life, lasting many years, they offered milk rice to the Saṅgha.[313]

Discipleship in their Last Existence

The two friends were reborn into the fortunate destinations for the infinite years which constituted the interim period between the two Buddhas. During the time of Buddha Gotama, before the Buddha attained Perfect Awakening, they were reborn as two sons to a travelling merchant who carried his goods, using a big caravan, from place to place. Their native town was called Asitañcana.[314] The elder brother was named Tapussa, and the younger, Bhallika.

They became householders and carried on the trading together, using a caravan of 500 bullock carts. At that time, Buddha Gotama had attained Perfect Awakening and had passed seven times the seven days of abiding in the attainment of cessation, and was about to enter into the eighth seven-day period of abiding in the attainment of cessation at the foot of a Rājāyatana tree.[315]

The caravan of the two merchant brothers was then not far from that tree. At that [1420] moment, a Deva who had been the mother to the merchant brothers in the immediately previous existence, saw the dire need of the Buddha for sustenance, who, after having last taken Sujātā's milk rice in 49 morsels over 49 days, must eat that day for his survival. She thought that her two sons should be able to provide the food just in time. So, using her psychic powers, she made the bullocks unable to move.

The two brothers inspected the bullocks, the carts, and all relevant conditions which made the carts immobile. They were at their wit's ends to find the reason.

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[313] These events are described in the commentary on the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*, Thag 7).

[314] The commentary on the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*) refers to it as Pokkharavatī.

[315] *Buchanania latifolia*.

Their Deva mother, seeing them disheartened, possessed a man in the caravan and said to them: "Dear sons, you are not harassed by any Bhūta or Peta or Nāga but it is me, a Deva of the terrestrial realm, who was your mother in your last existence, who is doing this. The Buddha, who is endowed with the Ten Powers, is staying at the foot of a Rājāyatana tree. Go and offer alms food to the Buddha which will be the first food he takes after becoming a Buddha."

The two brothers were delighted by the Deva's word. And thinking that if they were to cook alms food it would take too much time, they took some of their choicest preserved food, put them on a gold salver, and approaching the Buddha, said: "Venerable sir, may you, out of compassion, accept this food." The Buddha reviewed the situation and considered what action the previous Buddhas did in such a case. The Four Great Kings then visited the Buddha and each offered an alms bowl, which was made of granite and having the colour of green gram. The Buddha considered the great benefit that would accrue to the four Devas, and so accepted all the four bowls, and placing them one atop the other, willed that the four bowls became one, and accordingly, the four granite bowls became a single alms bowl with four rims.

The two brothers then put their alms food into the Buddha's alms bowl, and the Buddha ate the food. After the Buddha had finished eating, the brothers offered water for drinking and washing. Then they made obeisance to the Buddha and sat in a suitable place. The Buddha gave them a discourse, at the end of which, both brothers were established in the two refuges.

> The story of the establishment of the two brothers in the two refuges (*dve-vācika-saraṇa-gamana*) was described in chapter 8, and is repeated in the following paragrah.

The Buddha then received the rice-cakes and balls of honey-food with that alms bowl and partook of them and then delivered a discourse of appreciation which was suitable to the merchant brothers. Then the two brothers took refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma only, as the treasure of the Saṅgha had not come into existence at that time, and thereby they became devotees who had only to pronounce the two-sentence refuge (devācika-saraṇa) with reference to the Buddha and the Dhamma, saying: Ete mayaṁ bhante, Bhagavantaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchāma Dhammañ-ca, "we take refuge, sir, in the Fortunate One and the

Dhamma." These two were the first devotees in whom the two-sentence refuge formula was established.

After having been established in the two refuges, before departing, the two brothers requested from the Buddha: "Venerable sir, may the Fortunate One, out of compassion, bestow on us something which we may revere every day." The Buddha passed his right hand over his head and gave them eight hairs as relics. The brothers put the hairs in a gold casket and took them home. Back at their town, they erected a shrine at the entrance of the town of Asitañcana where the eight relic-hairs from the living Buddha were enshrined. On the Observance Days (*Uposatha*), the shrine emitted a Buddha-radiance.

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery and acknowledging distinguished lay disciples accordingly to their merits, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ upāsakānaṁ paṭhamaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchantānaṁ yad-idaṁ Tapussa-Bhallikā vāṇijā.*
>
> Monastics, among my lay disciples who have taken refuge earliest in the Buddha and the Dhamma, the merchant brothers, Tapussa and Bhallika, are the foremost.

The Attainment of Path-Knowledge

Tapussa and Bhallika were the earliest of the Buddha's lay disciples who took refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma. Later, the Buddha made his first discourse, the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*), at the Deer Park near Bārāṇasī. After that, he went and resided in Rājagaha. The two brothers also arrived at Rājagaha on a trading journey. They visited the Buddha, made obeisance and sat in a suitable place. The Buddha gave a discourse to them, at the end of which, the elder brother Tapussa was established in Stream-entry knowledge and its

fruition. The younger brother became a monastic and in due time became an Arahat and was endowed with the six supernormal powers.[316] [1421]

2. Anāthapiṇḍika the Rich Man

Aspiration in the Past

The future Anāthapiṇḍika was reborn into a wealthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When he was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named as the foremost lay disciple among those who delight in generosity. He had a strong desire to become such a distinguished disciple and after making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, he expressed his aspiration before him, and it was confirmed.

Discipleship in his Last Existence

The future Anāthapiṇḍika was reborn in fortunate destinations for 100,000 aeons and during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn as the son of Sumana, a rich man of Sāvatthī. His name, given by his parents, was Sudattha. Sudattha in time became the head of the family. He earned the reputation of Anāthapiṇḍika, "one who gives food to the destitute."

> For more details about this remarkable man refer to chapter 20c. Here, only a brief account will be given as described in the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*).

One day, Anāthapiṇḍika went to Rājagaha on a trading trip where he visited his friend a rich man in Rājagaha. There, he learned the news that the Buddha had appeared in the world. He could not wait till the city gates of Rājagaha were open the next morning so he could meet the Buddha. Such was his zeal. So he left the city at dawn with the Devas opening the gate for his visit. He met the Buddha, benefitted from a discourse by him, and was established in the fruition of Stream-entry knowledge. On the next day, he made a great offering to the Buddha and his Saṅgha and had the Buddha's consent to visit Sāvatthī.

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[316] The commentary on the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*, Thag 7).

He returned to Sāvatthī, and on the way back he made arrangements with his friends of each location by providing them with 100,000 pieces of money to build a monastery at an interval of one league along the way for the temporary residence of the Buddha and his company of monastics. The distance between Rājagaha and Sāvatthī being 45 leagues, he therefore spent 4,500,000 on the 45 temporary transit monasteries.

At Sāvatthī, he bought a large park, which was the pleasure garden of Prince Jeta. He paid a sum of money according to the number of gold coins laid out over the entire park, with their rims touching each other. This amounted to 180 million. On that piece of land, he built a golden monastery costing another 180 million. At the formal dedication ceremony of the Jetavana monastery, which lasted for three months,[317] a lavish feast was provided to guests, both in the mornings and in the daytime. This cost him another additional 180 million.

Foremost Title Achieved

The Jetavana monastery alone therefore cost 540 million. The regular donations to the Buddha and his Saṅgha consisted of the following offerings:

1. 500 monastics were offered alms food daily by the ticket system (*salaka-bhatta*).
2. 500 monastics were offered alms food once during the waxing period of the month and once during the waning period.
3. 500 monastics were offered rice gruel daily by the ticket system.
4. 500 monastics were offered rice gruel once during the waxing period of the month and once during the waning period.
5. Daily offerings of alms food were made to: 500 monastics who had arrived in Sāvatthī recently and who had not acquainted themselves with the daily route for collecting alms food; [1422] 500 monastics who were about to go on a journey; 500 monastics who were sick; 500 monastics who tended the sick monastics,

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[317] Some say five months, some even nine months.

6. There was always a seating place for 500 monastics at any time at Anāthapiṇḍika's house.

Hence, on one occasion when the Buddha, while residing at the Jetavana monastery, was acknowledging lay disciples according to their merit, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ upāsakānaṁ dāyakānaṁ yad-idaṁ Sudatto gahapati Anāthapiṇḍiko.*
>
> Monastics, among my lay disciples who delight in giving, Sudattha the householder, also known as Anāthapiṇḍika, is the foremost.

The Discourse Giving Advice to Anāthapiṇḍika

> Here we shall give a condensed account of the Discourse giving Advice to Anāthapiṇḍika (*Anāthapiṇḍikovāda-sutta*) which Anāthapiṇḍika liked very much. A full account of this discourse is contained in the Collection of the Middle Length Discourses (*Majjhima-nikāya*, MN 143).

During the Buddha's residence at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder was sick, in pain, and gravely ill. Then he called an attendant and said: "Please approach the Fortunate One. Prostrate yourself at his feet, and say to him: 'Venerable sir, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder is sick, in pain, and is gravely ill. He pays homage with his head at the feet of the Fortunate One.' Further, approach Ven. Sāriputta, and prostrate yourself at his feet, and say to him: 'Venerable sir, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder is sick, in pain, and gravely ill. He pays homage with his head at the feet of Ven. Sāriputta.' And also say thus: 'Venerable sir, may Ven. Sāriputta, out of compassion, come to the house of Anāthapiṇḍika.' "

> When Anāthapiṇḍika was in good health, he usually paid a visit to the Buddha at least once a day, and twice or thrice if he could manage it. But now that he was on his death bed, he was sending an attendant as messenger.

"Very well, sir," replied the attendant to Anāthapiṇḍika, and went to the Buddha. He paid homage to the Buddha, prostrating himself at his feet, and said to him as instructed by his master. Then it was nearly sunset, and he next went to Ven. Sāriputta, approached him, prostrating himself at his feet, and said to Ven.

Sāriputta as instructed by his master, requesting the venerable to visit Anāthapiṇḍika. Ven. Sāriputta signified his acceptance by remaining silent.

Then, Ven. Sāriputta robed himself up, and carrying his alms bowl and double robe, went to the house of Anāthapiṇḍika the householder, accompanied by Ven. Ānanda as his attendant in place of another monastic which was the custom. Upon arrival and after taking the seat prepared for him, he asked Anāthapiṇḍika: "Householder, are you feeling well? Are you feeling better? Is your pain decreasing and not increasing? Does it appear to be decreasing and not increasing?"

Anāthapiṇḍika, replied to Ven. Sāriputta how he was feeling unwell, how he was not feeling any better, how his pain was increasing and not decreasing, and how it appeared to be increasing and not decreasing, by giving four examples.

Ven. Sāriputta knew that the illness of the householder was not controllable but that it would end only with this death. So he considered it important not to talk about anything but to give a discourse that would be of benefit to him.

> He gave the following discourse in a comprehensive manner: Since there is no possibility of checking an ailment which will end only with the death of the sufferer who, being under the influence of craving, conceit and wrong view, is attached to the six sense spheres, the six sense objects, the six kinds of consciousness, the six kinds of contact, the six kinds of sensation, etc.

So he said: "Householder, you should practise thus: 'I will have no attachment for the eye, by way of either craving or conceit or wrong view, which is corporeality with sensitivity of seeing; then the consciousness which is dependent on the eye, through a subtle fondness (*nikanti-taṇhā*) for the eye [1423] will not arise in me!' Householder, you should practise the threefold training in this way."

> Herein, "You should practise thus: 'I will have no attachment to the eye,' is said to exhort the householder to view the eye as impermanent (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and unsubstantial (*anatta*). This is so because if one views the eye as impermanent, conceit cannot gain any foothold, and it cannot arise; if one views the eye as suffering (*dukkha*), craving and attachment to the eye as "my eye" cannot arise; if one views the eye as unsubstantial, the wrong view of a personal identity or the ego as "my self" cannot arise. Hence to be free of the misconceptions through conceit,

craving and wrong view, one should repeatedly view the eye as impermanent, suffering and unsubstantial.

The three misconceptions of conceit, craving and wrong view are crude mental states. Even when those misconceptions disappear, there is a subtle fondness (*nikanti*) for the eye that tends to persist. Ven. Sāriputta exhorts the householder to have his consciousness freed of this subtle fondness. The same applies to the other five sense bases, such as ear, nose, etc. and also to sense objects, etc.

Having exhorted Anāthapiṇḍika to train himself to be free of attachment from the eye through conceit, craving and wrong view, and also to have no lingering fondness for the eye, Ven. Sāriputta further exhorted him as follows:

"That being so, householder, you should practise thus: 'I will have no attachment for the ear … the nose … the tongue … for the mind, the mind-base; and not even a subtle fondness for the mind.'

That being so, householder, you should practise thus: 'I will have no attachment for visual objects … sounds … odours … tangible objects … mind-objects; and not even a subtle fondness for mind-objects.'

That being so, householder, you should practise thus: 'I will have no attachment for eye-consciousness … ear-consciousness … nose consciousness … body-consciousness … mind-consciousness; and not even a subtle fondness for mind-consciousness.'

That being so, householder, you should practise thus: 'I will have no attachment for eye-contact … ear-contact … nose-contact … tongue-contact … body-contact … mind-contact; and not even a subtle fondness for mind-contact.'

That being so, householder, you should practise thus: 'I will have no attachment for sensation arising out of eye-contact … ear-contact … nose-contact … tongue-contact … body-contact … mind-contact; and not even a subtle fondness for sensation arising out of mind-contact.'

That being so, householder, you should practise thus: 'I will have no attachment for the element of solidity … the element of cohesion … the element of heat … the element of motion … the element of space … the element of consciousness; and not even a subtle fondness for the element of consciousness.'

That being so, householder, you should practise thus: 'I will have no attachment for corporeality … sensation … perception … volitions … consciousness; and not even subtle fondness for consciousness.'

That being so, householder, you should practise thus: 'I will have no attachment for the absorption (*jhāna*) of the infinity of space … the infinity of consciousness … nothingness … neither-consciousness-nor-non-consciousness; and not even a subtle fondness for the absorption of neither-consciousness-nor-nonconsciousness.'

That being so, householder, you should practise thus: 'I will have no attachment for the present world; then the consciousness which is dependent on the present world, [1424] through a subtle fondness for the present world, will not arise in me.' Householder, you should practise the threefold training in this way.

That being so, householder, you should practise thus: 'I will have no attachment for the hereafter; then the consciousness which is dependent on the hereafter, through a subtle fondness for the hereafter, will not arise in me.' Householder, you should practise the threefold training in this way."

> From the first to the eighth round of exposition, the sentient world is being referred to. In the last, ninth round, "the present world" refers to volitions related to dwelling, food and raiment and other possessions; "the hereafter" means all forms of existence beyond the human existence. Ven. Sāriputta, by mentioning the hereafter, hints that the householder should not crave for grand mansions, gorgeous food and raiment, etc. in any of the celestial worlds.
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> Thus Ven. Sāriputta gave a comprehensive discourse in nine turns on the same theme. It may be noted that the three roots: craving, conceit and wrong view, are completely eliminated on becoming an Arahat. Of the three, wrong view is eradicated when Stream-entry knowledge in gained.
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> Ven. Sāriputta repeatedly exhorted Anāthapiṇḍika to practise so that no attachment to anything arises in the mind through any of these misconceptions. This connotes that becoming an Arahat should be the goal. This theme he impressed on the householder by nine different factors: sense spheres, sense-objects, consciousness, contact, sensation, elements, aggregates, absorption of the formless realm, and all things (*sabba-*

> *dhamma*) knowable. The voidness, the emptiness, the unreality of these phenomena is comprehended when one becomes an Arahat.

When the discourse had ended, Anāthapiṇḍika, wept bitterly. Then Ven. Ānanda said to Anāthapiṇḍika: "Householder, are you attached to your possessions? Householder, are you wavering about your meritorious deeds?"

"Venerable sir," replied Anāthapiṇḍika, "I am not attached to my possessions. Nor am I wavering. I have indeed, for a long time, attended upon the Fortunate One. I have also attended upon the monastics who are worthy of respect. But, I have never heard such words of Dhamma before."

"Householder, the laity who wear white cloths cannot easily understand this word of the Dhamma."

> For lay persons it is not easy to follow the exhortation to break away from dear ones, such as wife and children, and various other possessions, such as valued attendants, fertile fields, etc.

"Householder, this word of the Dhamma can be understood easily only by monastics."

"Ven. Sāriputta, I beg of you. Let this word of the Dhamma be made clear to the laity who wear white cloths. Venerable sir, there are many worthy men whose understanding is not clouded by the dust of defilements. For them, it is a great loss in not being able to see the supermundane through not having heard the Dhamma. There are likely to be people who will be able to fully understand the Dhamma and become Arahats, if only you expound the Dhamma to them."

> "I have never heard such words of the Dhamma before," these words spoken by Anāthapiṇḍika needs to be explained. It is not that the householder was never before admonished by the Buddha using words of the same profound meaning. But the doctrine leading to becoming an Arahat expounded by means of such a comprehensive arrangement involving nine different rounds, such as the six sense spheres, the six sense objects, the six kinds of consciousness, the six elements, the aggregates, the four absorptions (*jhāna*) of the formless realm, the present world and the hereafter, through all manner of knowing them, through seeing, hearing, attaining, cognizing, has never been taught him before.

To explain in another way: Charity and the delight in giving is the hallmark of Anāthapiṇḍika's character. Never would he pay a visit to the Buddha or to monastics worthy of respect empty-handed. In the mornings, he would take gruel and edibles [1425] to them, in the afternoons, ghee, honey or molasses, etc. Even on some rare occasions when he had no offering to make to them, he would take his attendants along, carrying fine sand with them, which he let them spread about the monastic compound. At the monastery, he would make his offering, observe the precepts, and then go home. His noble behaviour was reputed to be one worthy of a Bodhisatta.

The Buddha, during the 24 years of his association with Anāthapiṇḍika, mostly praised him for his generosity: "I had practised generosity over four incalculable periods and 100,000 aeons. You are following my footsteps." Great disciples, like Ven. Sāriputta, usually discoursed to Anāthapiṇḍika on the benefits of giving in generosity. That is why Ven. Ānanda said to him: "Householder, the laity who wear white clothes cannot easily understand this word of the Dhamma," with reference to the present discourse by Ven. Sāriputta.

This should not be taken to mean that the Buddha never discoursed to Anāthapiṇḍika on the cultivating of insight, leading to path-knowledge and its fruition. In fact, the householder had heard the need for insight-development. Only that he had never listened to such an elaborate discussion running to nine rounds as in the present discourse. As the sub-commentary on the Discourse giving Advice to Anāthapiṇḍika has pointed out: "As a matter of fact, the Fortunate One had indeed discoursed to Anāthapiṇḍika on the subject of insight development as the straight course to the attainment of the noble path."

Anāthapiṇḍika reborn in the Tusita Realm

After admonishing Anāthapiṇḍika, Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Ānanda departed. Not long after they had left, Anāthapiṇḍika passed away and was reborn in the Tusita Realm.

Then, around the middle watch of the night, the Deva Anāthapiṇḍika approached the Buddha, and made obeisance to him.

Herein, the reason for Deva Anāthapiṇḍika's visit to the Buddha should be noted. Being reborn in the Tusita Realm, Anāthapiṇḍika found out, was a

great thing, full of sense pleasures. His body, three miles long, was shining like a mass of gold. His mansion, pleasure gardens, the wish-fulfilling tree where he could get anything by mere wishing, etc. were indeed alluring.

He reviewed his past existence and saw that his devotion to the Three Treasures had been the cause of this resplendent fresh existence. He considered his new Deva life. It was full of ease and comfort which could easily drown him in sense pleasures and forget the good doctrine. "I must now go to the human world and sing the praises of the Jetavana monastery, which was his past deed of merit, the Saṅgha, the Buddha, the noble path, and Ven. Sāriputta. Only on returning from the human world will I start enjoying this freshly acquired life."

Four Verses addressed to the Buddha

[These verses are found in the Discourse giving Advice to Anāthapiṇḍika (*Anāthapiṇḍikovāda-sutta*, MN 143)]

Venerable sir, this Jetavana monastery is the resort by day and by night of the Saṅgha, comprising monastics who are Arahats as well as those training themselves for Awakening. It is the residence of the Fortunate One, the King of the Dhamma. That is why it is source of delight to me.

The Jetavana monastery was a monastic complex comprising the Buddha's Perfumed Chamber, the square pinnacled monastery, a number of monastic dwellings with exquisite ornate designs with fruit trees, flowering trees and shrubbery and restful seats. It was a religious place of rare elegance, a visitor's delight. However, the real attraction of the Jetavana monastery lay in its residents, the taint-free noble ones (*ariya*) such as the Buddha and his noble disciples. And it was that spiritual beauty of the place rather than the sensual attraction that appealed to a noble one (*ariya*) like Anāthapiṇḍika. [1426]

It is through action, volitions associated with the path (*magga*), knowledge, including right view and right thinking, Dhamma, meaning right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration, and virtuous living based on morality, meaning right speech, right action and right livelihood, that beings are purified. They are not purified through lineage or wealth.

In this verse, Anāthapiṇḍika extols the noble path of eight constituents.

That being so, the wise person, discerning his own welfare which culminates in Nibbāna, should contemplate, with right perception, the impermanence, the suffering and the unsubstantiality of the five aggregates which are the objects of clinging. Contemplating this, that person is purified through realizing the four noble truths.

The mind-body complex which one clings to as oneself, when brought to its ultimate analysis by means of insight-development, reveals its true nature. As insight fully develops into path-knowledge, the truth of the suffering (*dukkha*) of repeated existences, is seen through by the full understanding of phenomena. The truth of the origin of suffering is seen through and discarded. The truth of the cessation of suffering is realized by direct experience. The truth of the path is penetratingly understood by developing it. Then the yogi is free from the defilements and purity is achieved. In this verse, Anāthapiṇḍika extolled the development of insight and the realization of the path-knowledge.

A certain monastic reaches the other shore of Nibbāna. In this respect, he is equal to Ven. Sāriputta. But Ven. Sāriputta, with his knowledge (*paññā*), morality (*sīla*) and calm (*upasama*), through the pacification of the pollutants (*āsava*), is the noblest among those monastics who reach the other shore of Nibbāna.

In this verse, Anāthapiṇḍika extols the virtues of Ven. Sāriputta.

Deva Anāthapiṇḍika addressed these four verses to the Buddha. The Buddha listened to them without making any interruption, thus showing his approval. Then, Deva Anāthapiṇḍika thinking gladly: “The Teacher is pleased with these words, of mine,” made obeisance to the Buddha and vanished there and then.

Then, when the night had passed and morning had come, the Buddha addressed the monastics thus: “Monastics, last night, about the middle watch of the night, a certain Deva approached me, made obeisance to me, and stood in a suitable place. Then he addressed me with these verses.” The Buddha recited to the monastics the verses spoken by Deva Anāthapiṇḍika.

Here, the Buddha did not mention the name of Anāthapiṇḍika because he wanted the intuition of Ven. Ānanda to be brought to the fore.

Accordingly, as soon as the Buddha had spoken, Ven. Ānanda, without hesitating a moment, said: "Venerable sir, that Deva must have been the Deva Anāthapiṇḍika. Venerable sir, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder had much devotion to Ven. Sāriputta."

"Well said, Ānanda, well said, Ānanda, you have the right intuition. Ānanda, that Deva was indeed Deva Anāthapiṇḍika," so said the Buddha.

3. Citta the Householder

Aspiration in the Past

The future Citta the householder was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, while listening to the [1427] Buddha's discourse, he saw a certain disciple being named by him as the foremost in expounding the doctrine. The worthy man aspired to that distinction. After making an extraordinary offering, he expressed his wish that, in some future existence, he would be designated by a Buddha as the foremost disciple in expounding the doctrine, and this was confirmed.

The Son of a Hunter

The future Citta was reborn either in the Deva realm or the human realm for 100,000 aeons. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, he was born as a son of a hunter. When he came of age, he took up the vocation of hunter. One rainy day, he went to the forest to hunt, carrying a spear. While searching for game, he saw a monastic with his head covered with his robe of dirt-rags, sitting on a rock platform inside a natural cavern. He thought that must be a monastic meditating. He hurried home and had two pots cooked simultaneously, one in which rice was boiled and the other for meat.

When the rice and the meat had been cooked, he saw two monastics come to his house for alms food. He invited them into his house, took their alms bowls, and requested them to accept his offering of alms food out of compassion for him. Having had the two monastics seated, he let his family take care of the offering of alms food to them while he hurried back to the forest to offer the alms food to the meditating monastic. He carried the rice and the meat in a pot properly covered with banana leaves. On the way, he gathered various kinds of flowers and wrapped them in some leaves. He went to the monastic in the cavern, filled

his alms bowl with the alms food and offered it and the flowers to him reverentially.

Then he sat in a suitable place and said to the monastic: "Just as this offering of delicious food and flowers makes me very glad, may I, in future existences in the course of Saṁsāra, be blessed with all kinds of gifts. May flowers of five hues shower down on me!" The monastic saw that the supporter was destined to gain sufficient merit leading to attaining of path and fruit and taught him in detail the method of contemplating the 32 aspects of the parts of the body.

That son of the hunter, the future Citta, lived a life full of good deeds and at his death, he was reborn in the Deva realm. There, he was blessed with showers of flowers that rained down on him up to knee-deep.

Discipleship in his Last Existence

The future Citta was reborn in fortunate destinations throughout the aeon that intervened between the appearance of the two Buddhas, and during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn as the son of a rich man in the town of Macchikāsaṇḍa, in the province of Magadha. At the time of his birth, flowers of five hues rained down over the whole town until they were knee-deep. His parents said: "Our son has brought his own name, for he has delighted the mind of the whole town by being blessed with the wondrous floral tribute of five colours. Let us call him Citta."

When young Citta came of age, he was married and at the death of his father, he succeeded to the office of a rich man of Macchikāsaṇḍa. At that time, Ven. Mahānāma, one of the Group-of-Five ascetics, came to Macchikāsaṇḍa. Citta was full of reverence for Ven. Mahānāma for his serenity. He took the alms bowl of Ven. Mahānāma, and invited him to his house for an offering of alms food. After Ven. Mahānāma had finished his meal, Citta took him to his orchard, had a monastery built for him and requested him to reside there as well as to accept daily alms food from his house. Ven. Mahānāma consented out of compassion, and seeing that the householder was destined to acquire sufficient merit leading to the attainment of the paths and fruitions, he taught a discourse to him extensively on the six internal sense spheres and the six external sense spheres, that is, on the sense objects. This subject was taught to Citta because he was a person of middling intelligence (*majjhima-puggala*).

As Citta had, in his past existences, cultivated insight into the impermanence, suffering and unsubstantiality of mind and matter which are conditioned phenomena, his [1428] present efforts in insight-meditation led him to the stage of a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*).

> It is not mentioned in the scriptures by which method of meditation he attained Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-phala*). However, considering his training, it might be assumed that he attained path-knowledge by meditating on the sense spheres.
>
> Incidentally, the difference in the attainments between Citta and Anāthapiṇḍika should be noted here. Anāthapiṇḍika, supporter of the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī, was a Stream-enterer who delighted in generosity (*dānābhirata*); whereas Citta, supporter of the Ambāṭaka monastery in Macchikāsaṇḍa, was a Non-returner who delighted in generosity (*dānābhirata*) as well as in Dhamma (*Dhammābhirata*).

Citta's Delight in Charity and in the Dhamma

A few instances of Citta's natural delight in generosity and in the Dhamma are mentioned here as recorded in the Thematic Discourses concerning Citta (*Citta-saṁyutta*, SN 41).

The Diversity of Elements

[The First Discourse by Isidatta (*Paṭhama-isidatta-sutta*, SN 41.2).]

At one time, many monastics were living in the Ambāṭaka monastery which was donated by Citta the householder, in Macchikāsaṇḍa. One day, Citta went to the monastery and after paying respects to the elders, he invited them to an offering of food in his home the next day. Next day, when the elders were seated at the prepared seats, Citta made obeisance, sat in a suitable place, and said to the senior-most monastic present then: "Venerable sir, 'diversity of elements,' 'diversity of elements' (*dhātu-nānattaṁ*) has been said. To what extent is there the diversity of elements as taught by the Fortunate One?" The elder knew the answer but he was diffident to give a reply to the question, and so he remained silent. For a third time too the elder kept his silence.

Then Ven. Isidatta, the junior-most monastic among the monastics present, thought: "The elder does not answer the question, nor ask another monastic to answer. The Saṅgha, by not answering Citta's question, makes him appear to be

harassing them. I shall save the situation by answering his question." So, he went near the elder and said: "Venerable sir, may I be allowed to answer the question by Citta." And the elder gave him permission to do so. Then, Ven. Isidatta returned to his seat and said to Citta: "Householder, you asked the question: "'Diversity of elements,' 'diversity of elements,' has been said; to what extent is there a diversity of elements?"

"Yes, venerable sir, that is so," replied Citta.

"Householder, as taught by the Fortunate One there are various elements, such as the eye-element (*cakkhu-dhātu*), the element of visual object (*rūpa-dhātu*), the eye-consciousness element (*cakkhu-viññāṇa-dhātu*) … the mind-element (*mano-dhātu*), the element of thought (*dhamma-dhātu*), the mind-consciousness element (*mano-viññāṇa-dhātu*). Householder, these are the various elements (*dhātu-nānatta*), as taught by the Fortunate One."

Citta was satisfied with the answer given by Ven. Isidatta and personally attended to him at the food offering. When, after finishing the meal, the monastics returned to monastery, the elder said to Ven. Isidatta: "Friend Isidatta, you perceived the problem well. I have no such perception; therefore, friend Isidatta, when similar questions are asked of us, you may do the answering."

Personality View

[The Second Discourse by Isidatta (*Dutiya-isidatta-sutta*, SN 41.3).]

On another occasion, when Citta the householder was making an offering of food to the Saṅgha in his residence, before serving the food he put this question to the elder: "Is the world permanent or is it impermanent?" The question is characteristic of wrong views, and implies the arising or otherwise of such a view. As in the previous case, the elder did not answer although he knew it. When he kept silence for three repeated questionings by Citta, Ven. Isidatta obtained the elder's permission to answer and replied to him: "When there is the erroneous concept regarding the present [1429] body or the five aggregates, personality view (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*) arises; when there is no erroneous concept regarding the five aggregates, personality view does not arise."

Citta pursued the problem with questions as to how the erroneous concept regarding the present body of five aggregates arises, and how that concept does not arise. Ven. Isidatta gave analytical answers to his satisfaction.[318]

After that a conversation between Citta and Ven. Isidatta took place as follows:

Citta: "From which place do you come, venerable sir?"

Isidatta: "I come from Avanti country."

Citta: "Venerable sir, in Avanti country there is a friend of mine, whom I have never met, by the name of Isidatta who had become a monastic. Have you met him, venerable sir?"

Isidatta: "Yes, I have, householder."

Citta: "Venerable sir, where is that monastic now?"

Ven. Isidatta did not give a reply.

Citta: "Venerable sir, are you my friend whom I had never seen?"

Isidatta: "Yes, householder."

Citta: "Venerable sir, may Ven. Isidatta be pleased to stay in Macchikāsaṇḍa. The Ambāṭaka monastery is pleasant to live in. I will see to all the four requisites, robes, alms food, dwelling and medicines."

Isidatta: "Householder, you speak well."

> Ven. Isidatta said so merely to express his appreciation of the donation, but he did not say so with the intention of accepting the donation of any of the four requisites.

Citta was delighted with the answer given by Ven. Isidatta and personally attended on Ven. Isidatta in making offerings of alms food. When the monastics returned to the monastery the elder spoke to Ven. Isidatta in the same words as he did previously on the occasion of the First Discourse by Isidatta.

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[318] For the complete set of questions and answers the reader may read the complete Second Discourse to Isidatta (*Dutiya-isidatta-sutta*, SN 41.3).

Then Ven. Isidatta considered that after revealing his identity as an unseen friend of Citta before becoming a monastic, it would not be proper for him to stay in the monastery donated by Citta. So after tidying up his living quarters and the monastery, he took his alms bowl and double robe and left the monastery for good, never to return to the town of Macchikāsaṇḍa.

Ven. Mahaka

[The Discourse on the Miracles of Mahaka (*Mahaka-pāṭihāriya-sutta*, SN 41.4).]

At one time, many monastics were living in the Ambāṭaka monastery, which was donated by Citta the householder, in Macchikāsaṇḍa. Then Citta went to the monastery and after paying respects to the Saṅgha, he invited them to his farmyard the next day, where his cows were kept. On the following day, the Saṅgha went to his farmyard and sat in the seats prepared for them. Then the householder personally offered milk rice to the Saṅgha.

He was served the milk rice in a gold vessel by his servants at the same time the Saṅgha were being served. As he was accompanying the Saṅgha, after the meal, to the monastery, he gave orders to his servants to make offerings of the remaining milk rice to suitable people. Then he accompanied the Saṅgha to their monastery.

It was scorching hot when the Saṅgha left the householder's farmyard. Walking in the hot sun, a rich meal was a rather inconvenient thing for the Saṅgha. Then Ven. Mahaka, the junior-most monastic, said to the senior-most monastic: "Elder, would a cool breeze in an overcast-sky with slight rain drops be convenient for everyone?" And the elder replied: "Friend Mahaka, a cool breeze in an overcast sky with slight rain drops would be convenient for everyone." [1430] Thereupon, Ven. Mahaka, by his powers, changed the weather, letting the cool breeze blow in an overcast sky with slight rain drops.

Citta noted this event as a marvellous power possessed by the junior monastic. When they arrived at the monastery, Ven. Mahaka said to the elder: "Elder, is that enough?" And the elder replied: "Friend Mahaka, that is enough. Friend Mahaka, that is something done well that deserves reverence." After this recognition of Ven. Mahaka's powers, all the monastics returned to their respective dwelling places within the monastery complex.

Then Citta requested Ven. Mahaka to display his miraculous powers. Ven. Mahaka said: "In that case, householder, spread your cloak at the door-step to my monastery. Put a pile of grass from the bundle of grass on the cloak." Citta did as was instructed by Ven. Mahaka. Then Ven. Mahaka entered the monastery, bolted the door from inside and sent out flames through the keyhole and through the edges of the door. The flames burned up the grass but the cloak remained unburnt. Then Citta picked up his cloak and, awestruck with goose-flesh appearing on his skin, he sat in a suitable place.

Thereafter, Ven. Mahaka came out of the monastery and said to Citta: "Householder, is that enough?" Citta replied: "Ven. Mahaka, that is enough. Ven. Mahaka, that is something accomplished. Ven. Mahaka, that deserves reverence. Venerable sir, may Ven. Mahaka be pleased to stay in Macchikāsaṇḍa. The Ambāṭaka monastery is pleasant to live in. I will see to the four requisites of robes, alms food, dwelling, medicines."

Ven. Mahaka said: "Householder, you say what is good."

However, Ven. Mahaka considered that it would not be proper for him to stay at the Ambāṭaka monastery. So after tidying up his living quarters and the monastery, he took his alms bowl and upper robe and left the monastery for good.

> In the above two discourses, Citta the householder had great reverence and admiration for Ven. Isidatta and Ven. Mahaka in donating his monastic complex to the two monastics. However, from the point of view of the monastics, the four requisites they were donated were flawed because they amounted to rewards for their actions; Isidatta for expounding the Dhamma, and Mahaka for displaying miraculous power. Hence, out of regard for the monastic rules of conduct, they left the place for good.[319]
>
> We have chosen these three discourses (*sutta*), the two about Ven. Isidatta and the one about Ven. Mahaka as examples of how Citta the householder cherished the Dhamma. The reader is advised to go through the rest of the discourses in the Thematic Discourses concerning Citta (*Citta-saṁyutta*, SN 41).

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[319] The commentary and the sub-commentary are silent on this point.

A Brief Story of Ven. Sudhamma

The following is mentioned in the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*). For details refer to the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 73-74).

One day, the two chief disciples, accompanied by 1,000 monastic disciples, visited the Ambāṭaka monastery. At that time, Ven. Sudhamma was the Abbot of the monastery. Citta the householder, supporter of the monastery, made magnificent preparations to honour the visiting Saṅgha without consulting Ven. Sudhamma. Ven. Sudhamma took exception to it and remarked: "There is one thing missing in this lavish array of offerings and that is sesame cake." This was an innuendo to belittle Citta, whose family, in the earlier generation, were sellers of sesame cakes.

Citta made a suitably rude response in vulgar language to the sarcastic remark of the Abbot, who was touched to the quick and took the matter to the Buddha. After listening to the Buddha's admonition, the Abbot, Ven. Sudhamma, made amends to Citta. Then, staying at the Ambāṭaka monastery, and practicing the Dhamma, Ven. Sudhamma gained insight and became an Arahat. [1431]

Citta's Pilgrimage to the Buddha

The following account is also taken from the commentary on the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 73-74).

When Ven. Sudhamma became an Arahat, Citta the householder reflected thus: "I have become a Non-returner. But the stages of Awakening from Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) to Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-phala*) had been attained without even meeting the Buddha. It behoves me to go and meet him now."

He had 500 carts fully laden with provisions, such as sesame, rice, ghee, molasses, honey, clothing, etc., for the long journey to Sāvatthī. He made a public invitation to the populace in Macchikāsaṇḍa that anyone, male or female monastic, male or female lay disciple, might, if they wished, join him on a pilgrimage to the Buddha and that he would see to every need of the pilgrims. And, in response to his invitation, there were 500 monks, 500 nuns, 500 male lay disciples and 500 female lay disciples who joined him on the pilgrimage.

The 2,000 pilgrims who joined Citta plus the 1,000 of his entourage, totalling 3,000, were well provided for the 30-league journey. However, at every league of his journey, on the way Devas welcomed them with temporary shelter and celestial food, such as gruel, edibles, cooked rice and beverages and every one of the 3,000 pilgrims was attended on to his satisfaction.

By travelling a league a day, meeting with the Devas' hospitality at every stop, the pilgrims reached Sāvatthī after a month. The provisions carried in his 500 carts were not used. They even had surfeit of provisions which were offered by the Devas and human beings along the way, and which they donated to other persons.

On the day when the pilgrims were due to arrive in Sāvatthī, the Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Ānanda, this evening Citta the householder, accompanied by 500 lay disciples, will be paying homage to me." Ānanda asked: "Venerable sir, will miracles happen then?"

"Yes, Ānanda, there will be miracles."

"In what manner will they happen, venerable sir?"

"Ānanda, when he comes to me, there will rain a thick floral tribute of five hues that will rise knee-deep over an area of fourteen acres."

This dialogue between the Buddha and Ven. Ānanda aroused the curiosity of the citizens of Sāvatthī. People passed on the exciting news of Citta's arrival, saying: "A person of great past merit by the name of Citta the householder is coming to town. Miracles are going to happen! He is arriving today! We will not miss the opportunity of seeing such a great person." With presents ready, they awaited on both sides of the road for the visitor and his friends.

When the pilgrim party arrived near the Jetavana monastery, the 1,000 monastics of the party went first. Citta told the 500 female lay disciples to stay behind, and follow later; and he went to the Buddha accompanied by 500 male lay disciples.

> It should be noted that the disciples paying homage to the Buddha were not an unruly crowd but well-disciplined; whether sitting or standing, they left a passageway for the Buddha to go to his raised platform, and they would remain motionless and silent on either side of the aisle.

Citta then approached the aisle between the huge gathering of devotees. Whichever direction the noble disciple, who had been established in the fruition of the three lower paths glanced, the people murmured: "That is Citta the householder!" He became a thrilling object in that big gathering. Citta drew close to the Buddha and he was enveloped by the six Buddha-radiances. He stroked the Buddha's ankles with great reverence and vigour and then the floral tribute of five colours, described earlier, rained down. People cheered enthusiastically loud and long.

Citta spent one whole month in close attendance on the Buddha. During that time, he [1432] made a special request to the Buddha and the Saṅgha not to go out for alms food but to accept his offerings at the monastery. All the pilgrims that had accompanied him also were taken care of in every aspect. In his month-long stay at the Jetavana monastery, none of his original provisions were used, for Devas and humans made all sorts of gifts to Citta.

At the end of one month, Citta made obeisance to the Buddha and said: "Venerable sir, I came with the intention of making offerings of my own property to the Fortunate One. I spent one month on the way and another month here in the Jetavana monastery. Still I have had no opportunity to offer my own property for I have been blessed with all sorts of gifts from Devas and humans. It would seem that even if I were to stay here a year, I still may not have the chance to make offerings of my own property. It is my wish to deposit all the property I have brought here in this monastery for the benefit of the Saṅgha. May the Fortunate One be pleased to show me the place to do so."

The Buddha asked Ven. Ānanda to find a suitable place for Citta to leave the 500 cart loads of provisions which were then offered to the Saṅgha. Then Citta returned to Macchikāsaṇḍa with the 500 empty carts, people and Devas, seeing the empty carts, remarked in mild rebuke: "Citta, have you done such deeds in the past as would lead to your going about with empty carts?" Then they loaded his empty carts to the full with the seven kinds of treasures. Citta also received sufficient gifts of all kinds, with which he catered to the needs of the pilgrims till he reached Macchikāsaṇḍa in ease and comfort.

Ven. Ānanda paid respects to the Buddha and said: "Venerable sir, Citta the householder took one month coming to Sāvatthī, and spent another month at the

Jetavana monastery. During this period, he had made great offerings with gifts received from Devas and humans. He had emptied his 500 carts of all provisions which he had brought, and was returning home with empty carts. However, people and Devas who saw the empty carts said in mild rebuke: 'Citta, have you done such deeds in the past as would lead to your going about with empty carts?' And they are said to have filled Citta's 500 carts with the seven kinds of treasures. And Citta is said to have returned home comfortably, looking after the needs of his companions with gifts received from Devas and humans.

Venerable sir, may I be allowed to ask a question: Does Citta meet with such abundance of honour and tribute only because he was on a pilgrimage to the Buddha? Would he meet the same kind of honour and tribute if he were to go elsewhere?"

The Buddha said to Ven. Ānanda: "Ānanda, Citta the householder will receive the same kind of honour and tributes whether he comes to me or goes elsewhere. This is indeed so, Ānanda, because Citta the householder is one who has firm conviction about productive deeds (*kamma*) and their consequences, both in the mundane aspect and the supermundane aspect. Further, he is fully convinced about the supermundane benefits that the Three Treasures are capable of. For a person of such a nature, honour and tribute lines his path wherever he goes." The Buddha further uttered this verse, which is translated in prose (Dhp 303):

> Ānanda, the noble disciple who is endowed with conviction regarding the mundane and the supermundane aspects of one's own actions and morality, and is possessed of following and wealth, is held in reverence by men and Devas wherever he goes.

By the end of the discourse many hearers attained path-knowledge, such as Stream-entry, etc.

Foremost Title Achieved

From that time onwards, Citta the householder went about accompanied by 500 noble lay disciples. On one occasion, when the Buddha was naming distinguished lay disciples according to their merit, he declared, with reference to the discourses made by [1433] Citta as recorded in the Thematic Discourses concerning Citta (*Citta-saṁyutta*, SN 41):

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ upāsakānaṁ
Dhamma-kathikānaṁ yad-idaṁ Citto gahapati Macchikāsaṇḍiko.

Monastics, among my lay disciples who are exponents of the Dhamma, Citta the Householder, of Macchikāsaṇḍa is the foremost.

The proficiency of Citta in expounding the Dhamma may be gleaned from the Discourse about the Fetters (*Saṁyojana-sutta*, SN 41.1), and the First Discourse concerning Kāmabhū (*Paṭhama-kāmabhū-sutta*, SN 41.5).

Seeing the Sick

[The following is based on the Discourse about Seeing the Sick (Gilāna-dassana-sutta, SN 41.10), and its commentary.]

As a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*) who was the foremost expounder of the Dhamma among lay disciples, Citta the householder gave a discourse even on his deathbed.

When Citta was terminally ill many Devas who were guardians of his premises, guardians of the forest, guardians of certain trees and guardians who had power over herbs and trees, being of huge proportions, assembled before him and said to him: "Householder, now make a wish saying: 'May I be reborn as a Universal Monarch when I die.' " Citta replied to them: "Being a Universal Monarch is impermanent in nature, unstable in nature. It is something that one must leave behind at last."

His relatives and friends by his bedside thought he was uttering those strange words in a fit of delirium and said to him: "Lord, be careful; do not talk absent-mindedly."

Citta asked them: "You say: 'Lord be careful; do not talk absent-mindedly.' With respect to what words of mine do you say so?" And the relatives and friends said: "Lord, you were saying: 'Being a Universal Monarch is impermanent in nature, unstable in nature. It is something that one must leave behind at last.' "

Citta then said to them: "Men, Devas who are guardians of my premises, guardians of the forest, guardians of trees, guardians who have power over herbs and trees, came and said to me: 'Householder, now make a wish saying: "May I be reborn as the Universal Monarch when I die." ' So I told them: 'Being a Universal Monarch is impermanent in nature, unstable in nature. It is

something ones must leave behind at last.' I was not saying these words absent mindedly."

Thereupon Citta's friend and relatives asked him: "Lord, what advantages did these Devas see in advising you to wish for rebirth as Universal Monarch?"

Citta replied: "Men, these Devas thought: 'This householder Citta has morality, has clean conduct, if he would wish for it he could easily have his wish fulfilled. One who is righteous can see benefits accruing to the righteous.' This was the advantage they saw in advising me to wish for rebirth as a Universal Monarch. Thus, I replied to them: 'Being a Universal Monarch is impermanent in nature, unstable in nature. It is something one must leave behind at last.' I was not saying these words absent-mindedly."

The friends and relatives of Citta then asked him again: "In that case, Lord, give us some admonition." And Citta gave his last discourse thus: "In that case, friend and relatives, you should practise with the resolve: We will have perfect confidence in the Buddha, reflecting that:

1. The Buddha is worthy of homage by the greatest of humans, Devas and Brahmas.
2. The Buddha knows all things fundamentally and truly by his own perfect wisdom.
3. The Buddha is endowed with supreme knowledge and good conduct.
4. The Buddha speaks only what is beneficial and true. [1434]
5. The Buddha knows the three worlds.
6. The Buddha is incomparable in taming those who deserve to be tamed.
7. The Buddha is the teacher of Devas and humans.
8. The Buddha makes known the four noble truths.
9. The Buddha is endowed with the six great qualities of glory.

We will have perfect confidence in the Dhamma reflecting that:

1. The Dhamma of the Fortunate One is well expounded.
2. Its truths are evident.

3. It is not delayed in its results.
4. It can stand investigation.
5. It is worthy of being perpetually borne in mind.
6. Its truths can be realized by the noble ones individually by their own effort and practice.

We will have perfect confidence in the Saṅgha reflecting that:

1. The eight categories of noble disciples of the Fortunate One, the Saṅgha, are endowed with noble practice.
2. They are endowed with straightforward uprightness.
3. They are endowed with right conduct.
4. They are endowed with correctness in practice deserving reverence. Being thus endowed with these four attributes.
5. The eight categories of noble disciples of the Fortunate One consisting of four pairs are worthy of receiving offerings brought even from afar.
6. They are worthy of receiving offerings specially set aside for guests.
7. They are worthy of receiving offerings made for the sake of acquiring great merit for the hereafter.
8. They are worthy of receiving respect.
9. They are an incomparably fertile field for all to sow the seed of merit.

And also you should practice with the resolve: 'We shall always lay everything we have at the disposal of recipients who have morality and who conduct themselves well.' "

Citta the householder then made his friends and relatives established in paying reverence to the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha and in generosity. With these last words he expired.

The scriptures do not specifically say in which realm Citta the householder was reborn, but since he was a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*), he was presumed to be reborn in one of the fifteen Brahma realms of the form realm outside of the formless realm, most probably in the Pure Abodes (*Suddhāvāsa*).

4. Hatthaka Āḷavaka, the Kind Prince

Aspiration in the Past

The future Hatthaka Āḷavaka was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, when he was listening to the Buddha's discourse, he saw a lay disciple being named the foremost among those lay [1435] disciples who were accomplished in the practice of the four ways of kind treatment to others, through generosity, kindly speech, beneficial conduct and impartiality (*Saṅgaha-vatthu*, see AN 4.256). He admired that man, and, making an extraordinary offering, he aspired to that distinction. The Buddha predicted that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

Discipleship in his Last Existence

The future Hatthaka Āḷavaka was reborn in the good destinations for the entire 100,000 aeons. During the time of Buddha Gotama he was reborn as Prince Āḷavaka, son of King Āḷavaka, in the city of Āḷavī, and it was decided to give the young prince to the Yakkha Āḷavaka as a sacrifice.

> Before this could happen, however, the Buddha converted the Yakkha (see chapter 33c for details). The story of the young prince, which is reproduced from the same chapter continues:

When the king's men from the city of Āḷavī heard the tumultuous acclaim, they thought to themselves: "Such a roar could not have occurred about any personage other than the Fortunate One. Could it be that the Fortunate One has come?" On seeing the bodily-radiance of the Buddha, they no longer remained outside the mansion but entered it without fear. There, in the Yakkha's mansion, did they encounter the Buddha seated and the converted Yakkha Āḷavaka standing with his hands joined in adoration.

After seeing thus, the king's men bravely handed the little Prince Āḷavaka over to the Yakkha Āḷavaka, saying: "Great Yakkha, we have brought this Prince Āḷavaka to give you in sacrifice. You may eat him if you wish. Do as you please." As Āḷavaka had already become a noble Stream-enterer (Sotāpanna) at that time and especially as he was told so in front of the Buddha, he felt greatly ashamed.

Then Āḷavaka tenderly took over the little prince with his two hands and offered him to the Buddha, saying: "Exalted Buddha, I offer this royal child to you. I give you the boy in generosity. Buddhas are kind and protective to sentient beings for their welfare. Exalted Buddha, please receive him, this Prince Āḷavaka, for his welfare and happiness." He also uttered this verse (SnpA, PTS 1.240):

Imaṁ kumāraṁ sata-puñña-lakkhaṇaṁ,
sabbaṅgupetaṁ paripuṇṇa-byañjanaṁ,
udagga-citto sumano dadāmi te,
paṭiggaha loka-hitāya cakkhumā.

Exalted Buddha of the fivefold eye! Being elated and happy I, Āḷavaka by name, faithfully give you the Prince named Āḷavaka, who possesses more than 100 marks owing to his past meritorious deeds, who also has all the big and small limbs and a developed physical appearance. Buddhas look after the sentient beings for their benefit. Kindly accept the prince for his own welfare.

The Buddha accepted the little Prince Āḷavaka with his hands. While he was thus accepting, in order to give his blessing for the benefit of long life and good health of the Yakkha and the prince, the Buddha uttered three verses, each omitting a line to be filled up by somebody else. That blank in each verse was filled up three times as the fourth line by the Yakkha in order to establish the little prince in the three refuges. The incomplete verses [785] which were uttered by the Buddha and completed by the Yakkha are as follows:

Buddha:

Dīghāyuko hotu ayaṁ kumāro,
tuvañ-ca Yakkha sukhito bhavāhi,
abyādhitā loka-hitāya tiṭṭhatha.

May this Prince Āḷavaka live long! Yakkha Āḷavaka, may you also have physical and mental happiness! May you both remain long, being free from the 96 diseases, for the welfare of many!

Yakkha:

Ayaṁ kumāro saraṇam-upeti Buddhaṁ.

Exalted Buddha! This Prince Āḷavaka takes refuge in the Fortunate One, lord of the world, and omniscient Buddha.

Buddha:

Dīghāyuko hotu ayaṁ kumāro,
tuvañ-ca Yakkha sukhito bhavāhi,
abyādhitā loka-hitāya tiṭṭhatha.

May this Prince Āḷavaka live long! Yakkha Āḷavaka, may you also have physical and mental happiness! May you both remain long, being free from the 96 diseases, for the welfare of many!

Yakkha:

Ayaṁ kumāro saraṇam-upeti Dhammaṁ.

Exalted Buddha! This Prince Āḷavaka takes refuge in the Dhamma consisting of the ten features, such as the four paths, four fruitions, Nibbāna and the entire body of teaching.

Buddha:

Dīghāyuko hotu ayaṁ kumāro,
tuvañ-ca Yakkha sukhito bhavāhi,
abyādhitā lokahitāya tiṭṭhatha.

May this Prince Āḷavaka live long! Yakkha Āḷavaka, may you also have physical and mental happiness! May you both remain long, being free from the 96 diseases, for the welfare of many!

Yakkha:

Ayaṁ kumāro saraṇam-upeti Saṅghaṁ.

Exalted Buddha! This Prince Āḷavaka takes refuge in the Saṅgha of the noble ones in the ultimate and noble sense of the word (paramattha-ariya).

Then the Buddha entrusted the little prince to the king's officers, ordering: "Bring up this royal child and later return him to me!"

The original name of the prince was Āḷavaka. As has been said, the day the Yakkha was tamed, the prince was passed from the hands of the royal officers to the Yakkha's hands, from the Yakkha's hands to the Buddha's hands, from the

Buddha's hands back to the hands of the officers. Hence he was named Hatthaka Āḷavaka – Āḷavaka who has been handed over from person to person.

When the officers returned, carrying the little prince, they were seen by farmers and foresters and other people, who asked timidly: "How is it? Is it that the Yakkha does not want to devour the prince because he is too small?" – "Friends, do not be afraid," replied the officers, "The Fortunate One has made him free from danger," and they related the whole story to them.

Then the entire city of Āḷavī cheered, shouting: Well done! Well done! The people faced in the direction where the Yakkha Āḷavaka was and roared: "The Fortunate One has caused safety! The Fortunate One has caused safety!" When it was time for the Buddha to go to town for alms food, the Yakkha went along, carrying the Buddha's bowl and robe half the way down to see the Buddha off, and then he returned to his mansion. [786]

After the Buddha went on alms round in the city of Āḷavī and when he had finished his meal, he sat on the splendid seat which was prepared under a tree in quietude at the city gate. Then King Āḷavaka came with his hosts of ministers, troops and they were joined by the citizens of Āḷavī who did obeisance to the Buddha and sat down around him and asked: "Exalted Buddha, how could you tame such a wild and cruel Yakkha?"

The Buddha then delivered the Discourse to Āḷavaka (*Āḷavaka-sutta*, Snp 1.10) in twelve verses in which he started his narration with the attack made by the Yakkha and related in detail: "In this manner did he rain down nine kinds of weapons, in this manner did he exhibit such horrible things, in this manner did he put questions to me, in this manner did I answer his questions." By the end of the discourse 84,000 sentient beings realized the four truths and found emancipation.

Now King Āḷavaka and the citizens of Āḷavī built a shrine for the Yakkha Āḷavaka, near the original shrine of the Deva Vessavaṇa. And they regularly made offerings to the Yakkha of things worthy of divine beings (*devatā-bāli*) such as flowers, perfumes, etc.

When the little prince grew up into an intelligent youth, they sent him to the Buddha with these words: "You, prince, have secured a new lease of life because of the Fortunate One. Go and serve the master. Serve the Saṅgha of monks as

well!" The prince approached the Buddha and the monks and rendered his service to them, practised the Dhamma, and was established in the Non-returning fruition (*Anāgāmi-phala*). He also learned all the teachings of the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*) and acquired a retinue of 500 lay devotees for the Buddha.

Foremost Title Achieved

One day, Hatthaka Āḷavaka, who kept the Observance Day precepts, accompanied by 500 lay disciples, visited the Buddha. After paying respects to him, he sat in a suitable place. When the Buddha saw his big following, and very sedate manners of those that came with Hatthaka Āḷavaka, he said: "Āḷavaka you have a big following; what sort of kind treatment do you extend to them?" And Hatthaka Āḷavaka replied: "Venerable sir, I practise generosity towards those persons who would be delighted by my act of generosity; I use pleasant words to those who would be delighted by pleasant words; I give necessary assistance to those who are in need of such assistance and who would be delighted by my assistance; I treat those as my equals in respect of those who would be delighted by such treatment.

With reference to that conversation between the Buddha and Hatthaka Āḷavaka, on one occasion, during the Buddha's residence at the Jetavana monastery when he was conferring titles to outstanding lay disciples, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ upāsakānaṁ*
> *catūhi saṅgaha-vatthūhi parisaṁ saṅgaṇhantānaṁ yad-idaṁ*
> *Hatthako Āḷavako.*

Monastics, among my lay disciples who treat their followers kindly in four ways, Hatthaka Āḷavaka is the foremost.

5. Mahānāma, the Sakyan Prince

Aspiration in the Past

The future Mahānāma was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. One day, while he was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named as the foremost lay disciple in offerings of the most delicious and palatable alms food, medicines

and medicinal articles. He had a strong wish to become such a distinguished lay disciple in future. After making an extraordinary offering, he made known his aspiration to the Buddha who then predicted that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

Discipleship in his Last Existence

One day, the Buddha, after staying in Verañjā for the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period, made a journey to Kapilavatthu, travelling in stages. Upon arrival, he took up his abode at the Nirodhārāma monastery in Kapilavatthu, together with many monastics.

When Mahānāma, the Sakyan Prince, the elder brother of Ven. Anuruddha, learned of the arrival of the Buddha, he visited him, made his obeisance, and sat in a suitable place. Then he said to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, I have been told that the Saṅgha have had a hard time in gathering alms food in Verañjā. May I be allowed the privilege of offering daily alms food to the Saṅgha for a period of four months, so that I may provide the [1436] necessary nourishment to compensate for the deficiency of nourishment during the last three months or more." The Buddha signified his assent by remaining silent.

Prince Mahānāma, understanding that the Buddha had accepted his invitation, made offerings of five kinds of very delicious foodstuffs and the four sweets (*catu-madhu*) which have medicinal effects to the Buddha and his Saṅgha from the following day onwards. At the end of the four months, he obtained the Buddha's consent to make the same kind of offerings for another four months, at the end of which he obtained permission to continue with his offerings for a further four months, thus totalling twelve months in all. At the end of one year, he sought further approval but the Buddha refused.

> At the end of the year, Prince Mahānāma sought and obtained the approval of the Buddha to let him have the privilege of offering medicinal requisites to the Saṅgha for life. Yet later, due to circumstances that led to a Vinaya provision in the matter, the Buddha did not extend the period beyond one year. After the Buddha had agreed to let Mahānāma provide medicinal requisites to the Saṅgha for life, the Group-of-Six monastics bullied Prince Mahānāma and caused much annoyance. When the Buddha heard this he rescinded the earlier privilege allowed to the Prince and laid down the rule known as An Invitation for Four Months (*Catu-*

māsappaccaya-pavāraṇā, Vin Pāc 47, PTS 4.101), that no monastic may, without further invitation and a standing invitation, accept medicinal requisites from a supporter. Breach of the rule entails a confession (*pācittiya*) offence.

Foremost Title Achieved

It became the routine practise of Prince Mahānāma to offer the five kinds of very delicious foodstuffs and the four sweets which have medicinal effects to every monastic who came to his door. This elaborate style of providing alms food and medicinal requisites to the Saṅgha became his hallmark which was recognised throughout Jambūdīpa.

Therefore, on a later occasion, when the Buddha, during his residence at the Jetavana monastery, was designating titles to outstanding lay disciples according to their merit, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ upāsakānaṁ paṇīta-dāyakānaṁ yad-idaṁ Mahānāmo Sakko.*
>
> Monastics, among my lay disciples who are in the habit of making offerings of delicious alms food and medicinal requisites, Mahānāma, the Sakyan Prince, is the foremost.

6. Ugga the Householder

Aspiration in the Past

The future Ugga was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, while he was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he saw a disciple being named as the foremost among those who made gifts that delighted the receivers. He aspired to that distinction, and after making extraordinary offerings, he expressed his wish before the Buddha. The Buddha predicted that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

Discipleship in his Last Existence

After being reborn in the Deva realm or the human world for 100,000 aeons, the future Ugga was reborn into a rich man's family in the city of Vesālī, during Buddha Gotama's time.

The future Ugga was not given any name during his childhood. When he came of age, he possessed a majestic physique like an ornamental door-post, or a golden apparel hung for display. His exquisite masculine body and personal attributes became the talk of the town, as such people came to refer to him as Ugga the householder, "the mighty householder."

> It is noteworthy that Ugga gained Stream-entry knowledge on his very first meeting with [1437] the Buddha. Later, he came to be established in the three lower paths and three lower fruits, and became a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*).

When Ugga grew old, he resorted to seclusion and this thought occurred to him: "I shall offer to the Fortunate One only those things that I cherish. I have learnt directly from the Fortunate One: 'He who makes a gift of what he cherishes, reaps the benefit that he cherishes.' " Then his thought extended to the wish: "That the Fortunate One knew my thought and appeared at my door!"

The Buddha knew the thought of Ugga and at that very moment appeared miraculously at his door, in the company of many monastics. Ugga, on learning of the Buddha's arrival, went to welcome him, paid respects to him with the hands, knees and forehead touching the ground, took the alms bowl from his hands and invited him to the prepared seat in his house, at the same time, he offered seats to the accompanying monastics. He served the Buddha and the Saṅgha with various kinds of delicious food, and after the meal was finished, he sat in a suitable place and addressed the Buddha thus:

1. "Venerable sir, I have learnt directly from the Fortunate One that: 'He who makes a gift of what he cherishes, reaps the benefit that he cherishes.' Venerable sir, my cake made to resemble the Sāla flower is delightful. May the Fortunate One, out of compassion, accept this food." And the Buddha, out of compassion for the supporter, accepted it. Further Ugga said:

"Venerable sir, I have learnt directly from the Fortunate One that: 'He who makes a gift of what he cherishes reaps the benefit that he cherishes.' Venerable sir:

2. My specially prepared dish of pork with jujube is delightful …

3. My vegetable dish of water convolvulus cooked in oil and water and done in oil gravy is delightful …

4. My special rice, carefully discarded of black grains …

5. My fine cloth made in Kāsi province is delightful …

6. Venerable sir, my dais … my big carpet of long-fleece … woollen coverlets with quaint designs … rugs made of black panther's hide … couches with red canopies and with red bolsters at either end are delightful. Venerable sir, I understand that these luxurious things are not proper for use by the Fortunate One. Venerable sir, this seat made of the core of sandalwood is worth over 100,000 pieces of money. May the Fortunate One, out of compassion, accept these pieces of furniture." The Buddha out of compassion for the supporter accepted them.

> Note here that Ugga the householder is offering the items of furniture after serving the gruel but before serving the main meal. His offerings are made not only to the Buddha but also to the Saṅgha. Under item 6) above, Ugga said: "I understand that these luxurious things are not proper for use by the Fortunate One." There are also things that are not proper for use by the Buddha. He has caused them to be heaped together and assigned items, which are improper for use by the Buddha, to his store room, and donates only items which are proper. The sandalwood, being very dear and rare, is valued highly. After the Buddha had accepted it, he had it cut up into small bits and distributed to the monastics for use as a powder in preparing eye-lotion.

Then the Buddha spoke the following verses in appreciation of the donations (AN 5.44).

> Ugga, one who gives in generosity with a delightful heart reaps the benefit of that deed in various delightful ways. One gives away clothing, dwelling place, food and various other things, strongly desirous of merit, to those noble ones who are straight in thought, word, and deed, who are Arahats.
>
> That virtuous one who distinctly knows the Arahats as the fertile field for sowing seeds of merit and gives up delightful things that are hard to be given up, abandons them, releases them liberally with a delightful heart, reaps the benefit of that deed in various delightful ways. [1438]

After uttering these verses in appreciation of the householder's memorable offerings, the Buddha departed.

On that occasion, Ugga the householder said to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, I have heard from the Fortunate One's teaching that 'He who makes a gift of what he cherishes, reaps the benefit that he cherishes.' Venerable sir, whatever suitable articles are in my possession may be assumed by the Fortunate One as already donated to the Fortunate One and his Saṅgha." Thenceforth, he always donated various suitable things to the Buddha and his Saṅgha.

Foremost Title Achieved

On account of this, when the Buddha, during his residence at the Jetavana monastery, was designating outstanding lay disciples according to their merit, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ upāsakānaṁ*
> *manāpa-dāyakānaṁ yad-idaṁ Uggo Gahapati Vesāliko.*
>
> Monastics, among my lay disciples who are in the habit of giving delightful things in generosity, Ugga the Householder of Vesālī, is the foremost.

Householders Ugga of Vesālī has eight marvellous qualities.

> A brief description of these qualities is given here. For a full account the reader is directed to the First Discourse about Ugga (*Paṭhama-ugga-sutta*, AN 8.21).

The Eight Marvellous Qualities of Ugga of Vesālī

At one time, while staying at the Kūṭāgārasāla monastery in the Great Wood, near Vesālī, the Buddha said to the monastics: "Monastics, note that Ugga the Householder of Vesālī, has eight marvellous qualities." He then retired to his private chamber.

Later, a monastic went to the house of Ugga and sat at a place prepared for the Saṅgha.[320] Ugga greeted him, paid respects to the monastic, and sat in a suitable

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[320] 500 seats being made available for the Saṅgha at all times.

place. To Ugga, the monastic said: "Householder, the Fortunate One said that you are endowed with eight marvellous qualities. What are these eight qualities?"

Ugga replied: "Venerable sir, I am not sure which eight qualities the Fortunate One sees in me that he calls marvellous, but as a matter of fact, I have eight qualities that are most extraordinary. May your reverence listen to them and consider well." – "Very well, householder," the monastic said, and Ugga told his story:

1. "Venerable sir, from the moment I cast my eyes on the Buddha, I had explicit faith in him as the Buddha, with no vacillation. So, venerable sir, my confidence in the Buddha at first sight is the first extraordinary thing about me.

2. Venerable sir, I approached the Buddha with pure conviction. The Fortunate One discoursed to me in a step-by-step exposition on the merits of giving with generosity; the [1440] virtue of morality; the description about the celestial world, the world of the Devas; and the practice of the noble path leading to the paths, fruitions (*magga-phala*) and Nibbāna. That made my mind receptive, malleable, free of hindrances, elated and clear. The Fortunate One, knowing this, expounded to me regarding the exalted Dhamma, the four noble truths of suffering (*dukkha*), the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the way leading to the cessation of suffering. Consequently, I gained the eye of the Dhamma and attained Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-phala*). From the time I became a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*) I took a lifelong vow of the supermundane refuge and observed the five precepts with a pure life of chastity (*brahma-cariyā*) as one of the routine precepts.[321] This is the second extraordinary thing about me.

3. Venerable sir, I had four teenage wives. When I returned home on the day I became a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*), I called the four wives and said to them: 'Dear sisters, I have taken a vow of chastity for life. You may continue staying in my house, enjoying my wealth and practising

[321] This is the ordinary five precepts with abstinence as a vow in lieu of the vow of wrongful sexual conduct.

generosity, or you may return to your parents' house, taking sufficient riches with you for a comfortable life. Or, if any one of you wishes to remarry, just tell me who is going to be your new bridegroom. Each of you are free to exercise these options.' Thereupon, my first wife expressed her wish to remarry and she named the bridegroom. I then let that man come to me, and holding my first wife in my left hand, and the libation jug in my fight hand, I offered my wife to that man and sanctified their marriage. In relinquishing my first wife, who was still very young, to another man, I felt nothing in my mind. Venerable sir, my detachment in giving up my first wife to another man is the third extraordinary thing about me.

4. Venerable sir, whatever possessions I have in my house, I deem them to be assigned to the virtuous ones with morality. I hold back nothing from the Saṅgha. It is as though they are already in the possession of the Saṅgha as a body. Venerable sir, this liberality towards the Saṅgha, in considering all my possessions as being assigned to the virtuous monastics, is the fourth extraordinary thing about me.

5. Venerable sir, whenever I attend to a monastic, I do so reverently and personally, but never irreverently, venerable sir. Reverentially attending to monastics is the fifth extraordinary thing about me.

6. Venerable sir, if that monastic teaches me a discourse, I listen reverentially, but never irreverently. If that monastic does not teach me a discourse, I will teach a discourse to him. Venerable sir, my listening reverentially to a discourse by a monastic, and my teaching a discourse to the monastic who does not teach me, is the sixth extraordinary thing about myself.

7. Venerable sir, Devas often come to me, saying: 'Householder, the Fortunate One expounds the Dhamma which is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, and excellent in the end.' I would say to those Devas: 'O Devas, whether you say so or not, the Fortunate One expounds the Dhamma which is indeed excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, and excellent in the end.' I do not think the Devas' coming to me to say those words is extraordinary. I do not feel

exhilarated by their coming to me and for the experience of conversing with them. Venerable sir, my indifference to the coming of Devas to me and the experience of conversing with them is the seventh extraordinary thing about me.

8. Venerable sir, I do not see any of the five fetters that tend to rebirth in the lower sensuous realms of existence that have not been discarded in me. Venerable sir, my having attained Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-magga*) is the eighth extraordinary thing about me.

Venerable sir, I know I have these eight extraordinary qualities. But I am not sure which eight qualities the Fortunate One sees in me that he calls marvellous."

Thereafter, the monastic, having received alms food from Ugga the householder, departed. He took his meal and then went to the Buddha, made obeisance to him, and sat in a suitable place. Sitting thus, he related to the Buddha the full details of the conversation that [1441] took place between him and Ugga the householder.

The Buddha said: "Good, good, monastic. Anyone who could answer your questions well should be given these very answers that Ugga the householder did. Monastic, I say that Ugga the householder is endowed with those eight extraordinary qualities that are marvellous. Monastics, note that Ugga the householder has these very eight marvellous qualities that he told you."

The Destination of Ugga the Householder

Thereafter, on a certain day, Ugga the householder of Vesālī died and was reborn in one of the five Pure Abodes (*Suddhāvāsa*) in the Brahma Realms. The Buddha was then residing at the Jetavana monastery. At that time, about the middle of the night, Brahma Ugga, with his resplendent body that flooded the whole of the Jetavana monastic complex, approached the Buddha, made his obeisance to him, and stood at a suitable distance. To that Brahma Ugga, the Buddha said: "How is it? Is your desire fulfilled?" And Brahma Ugga replied: "Venerable sir, my desire is indeed fulfilled."

> Herein, it might be asked: "What did the Buddha mean by 'desire'? And what does the Brahma's reply mean?" The answer is: the Buddha means becoming an Arahat and the Brahma's answer also means becoming an Arahat. For the main desire of Ugga was becoming an Arahat

Then the Buddha addressed Brahma Ugga in these two verses (AN 5.44):

> He who gives away a delightful thing begets a delightful thing. He who gives away the best begets the best. He who gives away what is desirable begets what is desirable. He who gives away what is praiseworthy begets what is praiseworthy.
>
> He who is in the habit of giving away the best things, things that are desirable, things that are praiseworthy, is reborn as one who lives long and who has a big following.

7. Uggata the Householder

Aspiration in the Past

The future Uggata was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, he was listening to a discourse by the Buddha when he saw a lay disciple being named as the foremost in attending on the Saṅgha without discrimination. He admired that man. As such, he made an extraordinary offering to the Buddha and his Saṅgha and after that, he aspired to the same distinction in front of the Buddha who predicted that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

Discipleship in his Last Existence

The future Uggata was reborn in fortunate destinations for 100,000 aeons before being reborn into a rich man's family in Hatthigāma, in the country of the Vajjis, during the time of Buddha Gotama. He was named Uggata, and when he came of age, he inherited his father's estate.

At the time when the Buddha, after a tour of the country in the company of many monastics, arrived at Hatthigāma and was sojourning in the Nāga Park, Uggata was then [1439] indulging himself in a drinking spree, in the company of dancing girls, for seven days at the Nāga Park too. When he saw the Buddha, he was overwhelmed with shame and when he went before the Buddha, he became sober suddenly. He made obeisance to the Buddha and sat in a suitable place. Then the Buddha taught him a discourse, at the end of which, he was established in the three lower paths and fruitions, and became a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*).

From that moment on, he released the dancing girls from his service and devoted himself to generosity. Devas would come to him at the middle watch of the night and report to him as to the conduct of various monastics. They would say: "Householder, such and such a monastic is endowed with the three knowledges; such and such a monastic is endowed with the six kinds of super knowledges; such and such a monastic has morality; such and such a monastic has no morality, etc." Uggata disregarded the failings of the monastics who lacked in morality as his devotion to the Saṅgha remained steadfast on account of the monastics of good morality. In making gifts therefore, he never discriminated between the good and the bad monastic, his devotion being directed to the Saṅgha as a whole. When he went before the Buddha, he never mentioned about the bad monastics but always extolled the virtues of the good.

Foremost Title Achieved

Therefore, on one occasion, during his residence at the Jetavana monastery, when prominent lay disciples were mentioned for their respective merits, the Buddha declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ upāsakānaṁ*
> *Saṅghupaṭṭhākānaṁ yad-idaṁ Hatthigāmako Uggato gahapati.*
>
> Monastics, among my lay disciples who devotedly attend on the Saṅgha without discrimination, Uggata the householder of Hatthigāma is the foremost.

Householders Uggata of Hatthigāma has eight marvellous qualities.

The Eight Marvellous Qualities of Uggata of Hatthigāma

At one time, when the Buddha was sojourning at Hatthigāma, in the country of the Vajjians, he said to the monastics: "Monastics, note that Uggata the householder of Hatthigāma has eight marvellous qualities." After saying this brief statement, the Buddha went into the monastery.

Later, a monastic went to the house of Uggata and sat at a place prepared for the Saṅgha. Uggata greeted him, paid respects to the monastic, and sat in a suitable place. To Uggata, the monastic said: "Householder, the Fortunate One said that you are endowed with eight marvellous qualities. What are these eight qualities?"

Uggata replied: "Venerable sir, I am not sure which eight qualities the Fortunate One sees in me that he calls marvellous, but as a matter of fact, I have eight qualities that are most extraordinary. May your reverence listen to them and consider well." – "Very well, householder," the monastic said, and Uggata told his story:

1. "Venerable sir, while I was indulging myself in sensuous pleasures in my own Nāga Park, I saw the Buddha from a distance. As soon as I cast my eyes on the Buddha, I had explicit faith in him as the Buddha, and was deeply devoted to him. I became suddenly sober after my drunken bout. Venerable sir, my explicit faith in and devotion to the Buddha at first sight and my recovering sobriety at that moment is the first extraordinary thing about me.

2. Venerable sir, I approached the Buddha with a pure conviction. The Fortunate One discoursed to me in a most appropriate step-by-step exposition on: 1) The merits of giving in generosity, 2) the virtue of morality, 3) the description about the world of Devas, 4) the practice of the noble path. That made my mind receptive, malleable, free of hindrances, elated and clear. The Fortunate One, knowing this, expounded to me the exalted Dhamma, the four noble truths of suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the way leading to the cessation of suffering. Consequently, I gained the eye of the Dhamma, and attained Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-phala*). From the time I became a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*), I took a lifelong vow of the supermundane refuge, together with the observance of the five precepts with abstinence (*brahma-cariyā*) as one of them. Venerable sir, my attainment of Non-returning (*Anāgāmi-phala*) after my first meeting with the Buddha and my subsequent taking up of the supermundane refuge of the five precepts with the vow of abstinence, is the second extraordinary thing about me.

3. Venerable sir, I had four teenage wives. When I returned home on the day I became a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*), I called up my four wives and said to them: 'Dear sisters, I have taken the vow of chastity for life. You may continue staying in my house, enjoying my wealth and practising generosity, or you may return to your parents' house, taking sufficient

riches with you for a comfortable life. Or, if anyone of you wishes to remarry, just tell me who is going to be your new bridegroom. Each of you are free to exercise those options.' Thereupon, my first wife expressed her wish to remarry and she named the bridegroom. I then let that man come up to me, and, holding my first wife in my left hand, and the libation jug in my right hand, I offered my wife to that man and sanctified their marriage. In relinquishing my first wife, who was still very young, to another man, I felt nothing in my mind. Venerable sir, my detachment in giving up my first wife to another man is the third extraordinary thing about me.

4. Venerable sir, whatever possessions I have in my house, I consider them to be assigned to the virtuous monastics. I hold back nothing from the Saṅgha. Venerable sir, this liberality towards the Saṅgha, in considering all my possessions as being assigned to the virtuous monastics, is the fourth extraordinary thing about me.

5. Venerable sir, whenever I attend to a monastic, I do so reverently and personally, but never irreverently. If that monastic teaches me a discourse, I listen reverentially, but never irreverently. If that monastic does not teach me a discourse, I teach a discourse to him. Venerable sir, my reverentially attending to monastics, reverentially listening to [1442] their discourses, and my teaching a discourse to the monastic who does not teach me, is the fifth extraordinary thing about me.

6. Venerable sir, whenever I invite the Saṅgha to my residence, Devas would come to me and say: 'Householder, such and such a monastic is emancipated both ways from the corporeal body (*rūpa-kāya*) and the mental body (*ubhato-bhāga-vimutta*); such and such a monastic has attained emancipation through full knowledge and insight (*paññā-vimutta*); such and such a monastic is one who has realized Nibbāna in his own person (*kāya-sakkhi*); such and such a monastic has attained to the three higher paths (*magga*) and fruitions (*phala*) through right view (*diṭṭhippatta*); such and such a monastic is emancipated through faith (*saddhā-vimutta*); such and such a monastic is one who follows faith (*saddhānusarī*); such and such a monastic is one who pursues Dhamma (*Dhammānusārī*); such and such a monastic has morality, and is

virtuous; such and such a monastic lacks morality and is vile." I do not think the Devas' coming to me to say these words is extraordinary. When I attend to the Saṅgha, it never occurred to me that such and such a monastic lacks morality, and so I will make only scant offering to him, or that such and such a monastic is virtuous and so I will make great offerings to him. I make offerings both to the virtuous monastics and the vile monastics in the same reverential spirit. Venerable sir, my indiscriminate offering and attendance on both the virtuous and the vile monastics is the sixth extraordinary thing about me.

7. Venerable sir, Devas often come to me, saying: 'Householder, the Fortunate One expounds the Dhamma which is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, and excellent at the end.' And I would say to those Devas: 'O Devas, whether you say so or not, the Fortunate One expounds the Dhamma which is excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, and excellent in the end.' I do not think that the Devas coming to me to say those words is extraordinary. Venerable sir, my indifference to the coming of Devas to me and the experience of conversing with them is the seventh extraordinary thing about me.

8. Venerable sir, in the event of my predeceasing the Fortunate One, the Fortunate One's remarks about me such as: 'Uggata the householder of Hatthigāma has no fetters in him that tend to rebirth in the sensuous realm,' will not be anything extraordinary. Venerable sir, the fact that there is no fetter in me that tends to rebirth in the sensuous realm is the eighth extraordinary thing about me.

Venerable sir, I know I have these eight extraordinary qualities. But I am not sure which eight qualities the Fortunate One sees in me that he calls marvellous."

Thereafter, the monastic, having received alms food from Uggata the householder, departed. He took his meal and then went to the Buddha, made obeisance to him, and sat in a suitable place. Sitting thus, he related to the Buddha the full details of the conversation that took place between him and Uggata the householder.

The Buddha said: "Good, good, monastic. Anyone who could answer your questions well should be given these very answers that Uggata the householder did. Monastic, I say that Uggata the householder is endowed with those eight extraordinary qualities that are marvellous. Monastics, note that Uggata the householder has these very eight marvellous qualities that he told you."

> In the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) discourses both the above two householders are called "Ugga." Here we are leaning on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) about the foremost disciples in calling the householder of Hatthigāma, Uggata, in contradistinction to Ugga, the householder of Vesālī. Since the noble and rare attributes of these two householders inspire devotion, these notes are somewhat more than summarized statements.

8. Sūrambaṭṭha the Householder

Aspiration in the Past

The future Sūrambaṭṭha the householder was born into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named by the Buddha as the foremost lay disciple who had firm conviction in the teaching. He aspired to that distinction, and, after making an extraordinary offering, he expressed his wish that at some future existence his aspiration would be fulfilled.

Discipleship in his Last Existence

The future Sūrambaṭṭha was reborn in the Deva or human realms for 100,000 aeons before being reborn into a rich man's family of Sāvatthī, during the time of [1443] Buddha Gotama. His name was Sūrambaṭṭha. When he came of age, he married and became a regular lay supporter of ascetics who were outside the Buddha's teaching.

Early one morning, the Buddha, in his routine review of the world for individuals who were ready for Awakening, saw the ripeness of the past merit of Sūrambaṭṭha the householder to gain Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*). So, he went to Sūrambaṭṭha's house for alms food. Sūrambaṭṭha thought to himself: "Ascetic Gotama comes from a royal family and has earned a vast reputation in

the world. Perhaps, it is only proper for me to welcome him." Thinking thus, he went to the Buddha, made obeisance at his feet, took his alms bowl, and conducted him to a raised couch which was set aside for noble persons. He made offerings of food and after attending on him, sat in a suitable place.

The Buddha taught a discourse, which suited the mental framework of Sūrambaṭṭha, at the end of which, he was established in Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). After bestowing Sūrambaṭṭha with Stream-entry knowledge, the Buddha returned to the monastery.

Then Māra thought: "This Sūrambaṭṭha the householder belongs to my fold and is a follower of the ascetics which are outside the Buddha's teaching. But the Buddha has visited his house today. Why? Has Sūrambaṭṭha become a noble one (*ariya*) after hearing the Buddha's discourse? Has he escaped from my domain of sensuality? I must find out." Then, being possessed of powers of impersonating anyone, he assumed the form of the Buddha complete with the 32 marks of the great man and in perfect Buddha-style of holding the alms bowl and the robe. In that deceitful impersonation, he stood at the door of Sūrambaṭṭha the householder.

Sūrambaṭṭha wondered why the Buddha visited a second time, when he was informed by his attendants. "The Buddha never comes without some good reason," he thought, and approached the impersonated Buddha in the belief that he was the real Buddha. After paying respects to the impersonated Buddha, he stood in a suitable place, and asked: "Venerable sir, the Fortunate One has just left this house after having a meal. For what purpose does the Fortunate One come again?"

The bogus Buddha, who was really Māra, said: "Lay supporter Sūrambaṭṭha, I made a slip in my discourse to you. I said that all of the aggregates are impermanent, suffering and insubstantial. But the five aggregates are not always of that nature. There are certain of the five aggregates that are permanent, stable and eternal."

Sūrambaṭṭha, a Stream-enterer, was vexed by that statement. He pondered thus: "This is a statement of most serious import. The Buddha never makes a slip in his speech, for he never utters a word without proper consideration. They say that Māra is the opponent of the Buddha. Surely this must be Māra himself."

Thinking correctly thus, he asked bluntly: "You are Māra, are you not?" Māra was shocked and shaken as if struck with an axe because it was a confrontation by a noble one. His disguise fell off and he admitted it: "Yes, Sūrambaṭṭha, I am Māra."

Sūrambaṭṭha rebuked him: "Wicked Māra, even 1,000 of your kind will not be able to shake my conviction. Buddha Gotama, in his discourse has said: "All conditioned things are impermanent." And the Buddha's discourse has led me to Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*). Get out of here!" He said it so sternly to Māra, snapping his fingers. Māra had no words to cover up his ruse, and vanished immediately.

In the evening, Sūrambaṭṭha went to the Buddha and related the visit of Māra to him and what Māra had said, and how he had dealt him. "Venerable sir," he said to the Buddha, "in this way has Māra attempted to shake my conviction." [1444]

Foremost Title Achieved

Referring to this incident, the Buddha, during his residence at the Jetavana monastery, on the occasion of naming outstanding lay disciples in accordance with their merits, declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ upāsakānaṁ aveccappasannānaṁ yad-idaṁ Sūrambaṭṭho.*
>
> Monastics, among my lay disciples who have unshakeable conviction in my teaching, Sūrambaṭṭha is the foremost.

9. Jīvaka the Physician

Aspiration in the Past

The future Jīvaka was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named as the foremost among those who had personal devotion to the Buddha. He aspired to that distinction in a future time. After making an extraordinary offering, he expressed his wish before the Buddha who then predicted its fulfilment.

Discipleship in his Last Existence

The future Jīvaka was reborn in the Deva realm or the human realm for 100,000 aeons, before being reborn, under strange circumstances, in the city of Rājagaha, during the time of Buddha Gotama. He was conceived in the womb of a courtesan named Sālavatī, the conception being caused by Prince Abhaya.

It was the custom of courtesans to nurture only female children whereas male children were discarded discreetly. Accordingly, Sālavatī, the courtesan, had her newly-born baby put on an old bamboo tray and thrown into a rubbish heap by a trusted servant without being noticed by anyone.

The child was observed from a distance by Prince Abhaya who was on his way to attend on his father King Bimbisāra. He sent his attendants: "Men, what is that thing surrounded by crows?" The men went to the rubbish heap and finding the baby, said: "My Lord, it is a newly-born baby boy!"

"Is he still alive?"

"Yes, my Lord, he is."

Prince Abhaya had the child taken to his royal residence and taken care of. As the prince's attendants replied to their master: "It is still alive" (*jīvati*), the child was named Jīvaka. And since he was brought up by Prince Abhaya, he was also called: "Jīvaka, Komārabhacca."

Young Jīvaka, the adopted son of Prince Abhaya, was sent to Takkasilā for his education at the age of sixteen. He learned medicine and gained mastery of the subject. He became the king's physician. At one time, he cured King Caṇḍapajjota of a grave illness, for which he was honoured by that king with 500 cartloads of rice, 16,000 pieces of money of silver, a pair of fine clothes made in the province of Kāsi, and 1,000 pieces of cloth to supplement it.

At that time, the Buddha was staying in the mountain monastery on the side of Gijjhakūṭa Hill, near Rājagaha. Jīvaka, the king's physician, cured the constipation of the Buddha by administering a mild laxative. Then it occurred to Jīvaka: "It were well if all the four requisites of the Fortunate One were my donations," and accordingly, he invited the Buddha to stay in his Mango Grove as a monastery. After curing the Buddha's illness, he offered the fine Kāsi cloth

to the Buddha and the 1,000 pieces of cloth that were supplementary to it were offered to the Saṅgha.

This brief account of Jīvaka is based on the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*). For a fuller account, the reader is urged to refer to the Vinaya (Vin Mv 8).

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, during the Buddha's residence at the Jetavana monastery when he conferred titles to distinguished lay disciples in accordance with their merit, he declared: [1445]

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ upāsakānaṁ puggalappasannānaṁ yad-idaṁ Jīvako Komārabhacco.*
>
> Monastics, among my lay disciples who have personal devotion, Jīvaka, the adopted son of Prince Abhaya, is the foremost.

10. Nakulapitu the Householder

Aspiration in the Past

The future Nakulapitu was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While he was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, he saw a lay disciple being named by him as the foremost among those who were close to the Buddha. He aspired to that title. After making extraordinary offerings, he expressed his wish in front of the Buddha, who then predicted that his aspiration would be fulfilled.

Discipleship in his Last Existence

The future Nakulapitu was reborn either in the Deva realm or the human realm for 100,000 aeons until, during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn into a rich man's family in Susumāragira in the province of Bhagga. When he succeeded to the family estate, he and his wife were called by the name of their son Nakula, as "the father of Nakula" (Nakulapitu) and "the mother of Nakula" (Nakulamātu).

The Buddha, on his tour of the country in the company of many monastics, arrived at Susumāragira and was sojourning in the Bhesakaḷā Forest.

> Susumāragira, "the sound of a crocodile," was the name of the town because, at the time of the founding of the town, a crocodile's sound was heard. The forest was known as Bhesakaḷā because it was the domain of a female demon by the name of Bhesakaḷā.

Nakulapitu and his wife Nakulamātu went to the Bhesakaḷā forest along with other people of the town to visit the Buddha. At the first sight of Buddha, the couple took him as their own son and prostrating themselves before him, saying together: "Dear son, where have you been over this long time, away from us?"

> Nakulapitu in the past 500 existences had been the father of the Bodhisatta; for 500 existences he had been his paternal uncle who was junior to his father; for 500 existences he had been his paternal uncle who was senior to his father; for 500 existences he had been his maternal uncle.
>
> Nakulamātu for the past 500 existences had been the mother of the Bodhisatta; for 500 existences she had been his maternal aunt who was junior to his mother; for 500 existences she had been his maternal aunt who was senior to his mother; for 500 existences she had been his paternal aunt. These long blood-relations of the past existences had left such a strong sense of affection in the hearts of the Nakulapitu and Nakulamātu for the Buddha that they perceived him as their own son who had been somehow staying away from them.

The Buddha allowed the couple to remain at his feet holding them for as long as they wished, and waited until such time they were satisfied emotionally with the joy of seeing him again. Then, when the parents of his past existences had gained a mental state of equanimity, the Buddha, knowing their mental framework and their inclination, taught them a discourse, at the end of which, they were established in the fruition of Stream-entry knowledge.

On a later occasion, when the couple were advanced in age, they made another visit to Susumāragira. The old couple invited the Buddha to their house and on the next day offered delicious food of various kinds. When the Buddha had finished his meal, the old couple approached him, made their obeisance, and sat in a suitable place. Then Nakulapitu said to him: "Venerable sir, since in my youth I married my wife, I had never been disloyal to her even in my thoughts, not to speak of being disloyal physically. Venerable sir, we wish to see each

other in the present existence, and we wish to see each other in our future existences." [1446]

Nakulamātu also said likewise to the Buddha: "Venerable sir, since in my youth I became the wife of Nakulapitu, I had never been disloyal to him, even in my thoughts, not to speak of being disloyal physically. Venerable sir, we wish to see each other in our present existence, and we wish to see each other in our future existences."

> The commentary to the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) gives only a brief account. We shall supplement it here.

Thereupon, the Buddha said to them: "Lay supporters, if a certain couple wish to see each other in the present existence as well as in the future existences, their wishes will be fulfilled on these four conditions: 1) They should have the same degree of conviction in the teaching; 2) they should have the same degree of morality; 3) they should have the same degree of giving in generosity; and 4) they should have the same degree of intelligence."

Then the Buddha uttered the following verses (AN 4.55):

> 1-2. "For that couple, both of whom possess conviction in teaching, who have a liberal mind towards those who come for help, who have restraint in thought, word and deed, who use kind words towards each other, who lead a righteous life, benefits multiply, and a life of ease and comfort is their lot. Unfriendly people bear malice against such a couple with equal morality.
>
> 3. For such a couple with equal morality and good conduct who are desirous of sensual objects, living a life according to the Dhamma in the present existence, both of them find delight in this world and rejoice in the Deva realm."

Foremost Titles Achieved

The above discourse stemming from the intimate statements made by the Nakulapitu couple is known as the First Discourse about Living in Balance (*Paṭhama-sama-jīvī-sutta*, AN 4.55). The discourse reveals the intimate relationship that existed between them and the Buddha in the nature of filial connection. The old couple evidently put great faith in and reliance on the

Buddha, whom they considered as their own son. That was why they disclosed their inner sentiments to the Buddha, without any sense of diffidence.

That was why, while the Buddha was staying in the Jetavana monastery and outstanding lay disciples were designated by him as foremost in their own merit, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvakānaṁ upāsakānaṁ vissāsakānaṁ yad-idaṁ Nakulapitā gahapati.*
>
> Monastics, among my lay disciples who are close to the Buddha, Nakulapitu, the householder, is the foremost. [1447]

45b: The Life Stories of the Female Lay Disciples

1. Sujātā, Wife of the Householder of Bārāṇasī

Aspiration in the Past

The future Sujātā was reborn into the family of a rich man in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, as she was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, she saw a female lay disciple being named by the Buddha as the foremost in getting established in the three refuges. She aspired to that distinction. After making an extraordinary offering, she expressed her aspiration before the Buddha who predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

Discipleship in her Last Existence

The future Sujātā was reborn either in the Deva realm or the human world for 100,000 aeons. Some time before the appearance of the Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of Seniya, in the town of Senā, near the Uruvelā forest. When she came of age, she went to the banyan tree which was near her town and after making an offering to its guardian spirit, she vowed that if she should be married to a bridegroom of equal social status and if she bore a boy as her first child, she would make an offering to the guardian spirit yearly. Her wish was fulfilled.

Sujātā was married to the son of a rich man of Bārāṇasī and her first child was a boy whom was named Yasa. She kept her vow and made annual offerings to the guardian spirit of the banyan tree.

After making these annual offering at the banyan tree for 20 times or so, on the day the Buddha was to attain Perfect Awakening in the year 528 BCE, Sujātā went to make her annual offering to the guardian spirit of the banyan tree.

On that occasion, Sujātā's son, Yasa, was already married and was indulging in luxury in the three mansions. This is mentioned because Sujātā had been generally imagined as a young maiden when she offered the specially prepared milk rice to the Buddha.

On the full moon of May (*Vesākha*) in 528 BCE, after six years of self-tormenting practice in search of the truth, the Buddha attained Perfect Awakening. Sujātā

rose early that morning to make an offering at the banyan tree. On that day, the young calves somehow did not go near their mothers for milk. When the housemaids of Sujātā brought the vessels to draw milk from the cows, the nipples of the cows automatically flowed freely with milk. On seeing the strange phenomenon, Sujātā herself collected the milk, put it in a new cooking vessel, kindled the fire and started cooking the rice milk.

When the milk was being boiled, extra-large bubbles arose in a series and rotated in clockwise direction in the pot and not a drop of milk overflowed. The Mahā Brahma held the white umbrella above the pot; the Four Great Kings guarded the pot with the royal swords in hand; Sakka attended to the fire which boiled the milk; Devas brought various nutrients from the four island continents and put them into the pot. In these ways, the celestial beings joined in the effort of Sujātā in preparing the milk rice.

While Sujātā was preparing the rice-milk, she called her servant Puṇṇā and said: "Good girl, Puṇṇā, I believe the guardian spirit of the banyan tree is in a particularly good mood because I had never seen such strange phenomena happen before in these long years. Now, go quickly and clean the precinct for offering at the banyan tree." – "Very well, madam," the servant girl responded and went to the banyan tree promptly.

The Bodhisatta sat at the foot of the banyan tree, earlier than the time for collection of his daily alms food. The servant girl, who went to clean the foot of the banyan tree, [1448] mistook the Bodhisatta for the guardian spirit of the tree and she reported to her mistress with excitement. Sujātā said: "Well, girl, if what you say is true, I will release you from bondage." Then dressing and decorating herself, Sujātā went to the banyan tree, carrying on her head the milk rice, which was put into a golden vessel worth 100,000 pieces of money, covered with a golden lid and wrapped with a white piece of cloth and over which, garlands of fragrant flowers were placed so that they hang around the vessel. When she saw the Bodhisatta, whom she presumed to be the guardian spirit of the tree, she was intensely glad and approached him, bowing as she approached. Then she put down the vessel, took off the lid and offered it to the Bodhisatta, saying: "May your desire come to fulfillment as has mine!" Then she left him.

The Bodhisatta went to the River Nerañjarā, put down the golden vessel of rice-milk on its bank and bathed in the river. Then, coming out of the river, he ate the rice-milk in 49 morsels. After which, he placed the empty gold vessel on the River Nerañjarā. It floated against the river current and then sank.

He then went to the foot of the Bodhi tree. He attained Perfect Self-Awakening and remained there for seven weeks; each week at seven locations at and around the Bodhi tree. At the end of 49 days, during which the Buddha dwelled in the attainment of cessation, he went to Isipatana Deer Park where he set the Dhamma Wheel rolling by expounding the Dhamma to the Group-of-Five ascetics. Then he saw the ripeness of the past merit of Yasa, the son of Sujātā, wife of the householder of Bārāṇasī and he waited for him by sitting underneath a tree.

Yasa had grown weary of sensuous pleasure after seeing the unsightly spectacle in his harem in the middle of the night. "How suffering are these sentient beings with their mind and body being oppressed by all sorts of defilements! O, how terribly they are being tormented by defilements!" Yasa murmured and left his home in sheer disgust with life.

On leaving the town, he met the Buddha and after listening to his discourse, he gained penetrative knowledge of the truth and became established in the fruition of Stream-entry knowledge.[322]

Yasa's father traced his son's whereabouts almost behind his heels. He went and asked the Buddha whether his son came that way. The Buddha, by his power, hid Yasa from his father's vision and taught a discourse to his father. At the end of which, Yasa's father attained Stream-entry knowledge and Yasa became an Arahat. Then, the Buddha made Yasa a monastic by summoning him: "Come, monastic," and Yasa's appearance instantly changed into that of a monastic, complete with alms bowl, robes and essential items for monastic use. These were all mind-made by the Buddha's power.

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[322] In the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*), it is said he gained the three lower paths and fruitions.

Yasa's father invited the Buddha to his home the next day for an offering of alms food. The Buddha went, accompanied by Ven. Yasa. After the meal, he taught a discourse, at the end of which, Ven. Yasa's mother, Sujātā, and his erstwhile wife were established in the fruition of Stream-entry knowledge. On the same day, they were established in the three refuges.

> This is a brief account of Sujātā and her family. For fuller details, the reader may refer to chapter 12.

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, while the Buddha was naming foremost female lay-disciples, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ upāsikānaṁ*
> *paṭhamaṁ saraṇaṁ gacchantīnaṁ yad-idaṁ Sujātā Seniya-dhītā.*

Monastics, among my female lay-disciples who were the earliest to get established in the refuges, Sujātā, daughter of Seniya the householder, is the foremost. [1449]

2. Visākhā, Builder of Pubbārāma Monastery

Aspiration in the Past

The future Visākhā was reborn into a rich man's family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, when she was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, she saw a female lay disciple being named by him as the foremost in giving in generosity. She aspired to that distinction. After making an extraordinary offering, she expressed her aspiration before the Buddha, who predicted that it would be fulfilled.

The Youngest Daughter of King Kikī

The future Visākhā was reborn either in the Deva realm or the human world for 100,000 aeons, where five Buddhas are to appear. During the time of Buddha Kassapa, she was reborn as the youngest of the seven daughters of King Kikī, in the province of Kikī.

Princess Saṅghadāsī, the youngest of the seven daughters of King Kikī was reborn in the Deva realm or the human realm for the entire interim period between the two Buddhas Kassapa and Gotama.

Discipleship in her Last Existence

During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was conceived in the womb of Sumanadevī, the chief consort of Dhanañjaya the householder, son of Meṇḍaka the householder, in the town of Bhaddiya, in the province of Aṅga. She was named Visākhā by her parents and kinsmen. When Visākhā was seven years of age, the Buddha arrived in Bhaddiya in the company of many monastics on his religious mission in the country. He visited Bhaddiya for the purpose of causing the Awakening of Sela, the Brahmin, and other persons whose past merit had ripened for Awakening.

Five Personages with Great Past Merit

At that time, Meṇḍaka, the father-in-law of Visākhā, was the chief among the five remarkable personages endowed with great past merit: 1) Meṇḍaka the householder, 2) Candapadumā, his wife, 3) Dhanañjaya, the son of Meṇḍaka, 4) Sumanadevī, the wife of Dhanañjaya and 5) Puṇṇa, the servant of Meṇḍaka.

> How remarkably endowed with great past merit these five persons were, will be described here, condensed from the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 252).

1. The miraculous power of Meṇḍaka the householder.

One day, Meṇḍaka, wishing to know his own power, had his 1,250 granaries emptied. Then, after washing his head, he sat in front of the door of his house and glanced skyward. Suddenly, there rained from the sky heavy showers of top quality red rice which filled his 1,250 granaries. Meṇḍaka further wished to know the miraculous powers of the members of his household and asked them to find out themselves.

2. The miraculous power of Candapadumā, wife of Meṇḍaka.

Then, Candapadumā, wife of Meṇḍaka, having adorned herself, took a measure of rice in the presence of everybody and had it cooked. She sat at a seat prepared at her front door and after announcing to all that anyone wishing to have cooked rice might go to her, she ladled it out with her golden ladle, to

every caller. Her rice-pot never diminished more than one ladle-mark, even after the whole day's distribution.

In her past existence, during the time of some past Buddha, this remarkable lady had offered alms food to the Saṅgha, with her left hand holding the rice vessel and her right [1450] hand holding the spoon, filling the alms bowl full. As a result of that good deed, in her present existence, her left palm bore the mark of a lotus flower (*paduma*) while her right palm bore the mark of a full moon (*canda*). Further, she had, during the time of some past Buddha, offered filtered water with her hand holding the water-strainer and going about from one monastic to another. As the result of that good deed, her right sole bore the mark of a full moon while her left sole bore the mark of a lotus flower. On account of these distinctive marks on her palms and soles, she was named Candapadumā, "Moon and Lotuses," by her parents and kinsmen.

3. The miraculous power of Dhanañjaya, son of Meṇḍaka.

Dhanañjaya the householder, after washing his hair, sat at his door with 1,000 pieces of money of silver by his side, after making a public proclamation to the effect that anyone wishing to have money, could ask from him. He filled the vessel of every caller with money. After having done so, his money of 1,000 pieces of money remained the same amount.

4. The miraculous power of Sumanadevī, the daughter-in-law of Meṇḍaka.

Sumanadevī adorned herself and sat in the open with a basket of seed grain, after making an announcement that anyone wishing to have seed grain could ask from her. She distributed the seed grain to every caller, filling their vessel. After having done so, her basket of seed grain remained the same amount.

5. The miraculous power of Puṇṇa, the trusted servant of Meṇḍaka.

Puṇṇa, after dressing decently as benefiting his status, yoked a team of oxen, on whose side he made his five-finger imprint of scented unguent and whose horns he decorated with gold, harnessing them to golden chains, and mounting a plough, he started ploughing Meṇḍaka's field before the spectators. His plough made not just a furrow underneath his plough but made three extra furrows on either side, so that in one operation he accomplished seven times the effort.

Thus the whole populace of Jambudīpa obtained all their needs, such as rice, seed grain, money, etc., from Meṇḍaka's house. This is a brief description of the five personages with great past merit.

Within the area of Rājagaha, King Bimbisāra's domain, besides Meṇḍaka, there were four other householders: Jotika, Jaṭila, Puṇṇa and Kākavaliya. King Bimbisāra had within his domain these five householders with inexhaustible resources.

> Of these five, the story of Puṇṇa the householder will be included in the story of Uttarā. The other four will be briefly described in chapter 45c.

When Meṇḍaka heard of the arrival of the Buddha, he said to his granddaughter, the daughter of Dhanañjaya: "Granddaughter, what I am going to say is for the auspicious earning of merit for you and as well as for me. Go and welcome the Buddha, who is on his way, ride with your 500 female attendants in each of your coaches together with 500 maid servants."

Visākhā established in Stream-Entry at Age Seven

Visākhā gladly obeyed her grandfather and left home in 500 coaches. Her grandfather might have thought of her riding the coach to the presence of the Buddha, such being his sense of self-importance, but Visākhā was a person of innate wisdom and considered it improper to go to the Buddha's presence riding in a coach. As such, she dismounted at a reasonable distance from the Buddha, went on foot to him, made obeisance to him and sat in a suitable place.

The Buddha taught her a discourse which suited the mental frame of a seven-year old. At the end of the discourse, Visākhā and her 500 attendants attained Stream-entry knowledge and first fruition.

Meṇḍaka also visited the Buddha, made obeisance to him and sat in a suitable place. The Buddha taught a discourse to suit the mental frame of Meṇḍaka, at the end of which, he was established in the fruition of Stream-entry knowledge. He invited the Buddha to an [1451] alms food offering in his house the next day. The following day he made an offering of delicious food to the Buddha and his Saṅgha. He made the offerings on a lavish scale for fifteen days continuously. The Buddha stayed at Bhaddiya for as long as there were people who deserved to be Awakened.

Visākhā and Family moved to Sāketa

Pasenadi of Kosala, King of Sāvatthī, wrote to King Bimbisāra saying that as there was no householder of inexhaustible resources in his kingdom, he requested him to send one such family to Kosala.

King Bimbisāra held a conference with his ministers, who said: "Great King, we cannot afford to spare any of our householders who are of inexhaustible resources. But, to satisfy the King of Kosalans, let us send the son of one of your five such householders." King Bimbisāra agreed to the proposal. Dhanañjaya, son of Meṇḍaka, was requested to move to the Kosalan kingdom.

> Herein, the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) states that the Kosalan King and King Bimbisāra were brothers-in-law, in a double sense. King Bimbisāra could not fail to satisfy the wish of the Kosalan King. He also could not offend his five famous householders, and so he requested Dhanañjaya to go and settle in the Kosalan kingdom. Dhanañjaya agreed and he was sent to the King of the Kosalans.

After moving his family from Bhaddiya to the Kosalan kingdom, Dhanañjaya identified a location which had great potential for human settlement. He asked the Kosalan King as to whose territory that location belonged to. And being told that it lay within the Kosalan kingdom, he further asked as to how far it was from Sāvatthī, the capital. The king answered: "It is one league from here to Sāvatthī." Then Dhanañjaya said to the king: "Great King, Sāvatthī is not big enough for my householder to live in. If your majesty would agree, I would settle in this location so that my big following can live in comfort." The king consented, and Dhanañjaya founded a town at that location. Since it was a location of the settler's choice, it was named "Sāketa."

In Sāvatthī, Puṇṇavaḍḍhana, son of Migāra the householder, had come of age. His father considered that it was time for his son to get married and he told his kinsmen to look for a bride for his son. The bride should come from a householder's family. Intelligent and discreet scouts were sent to look for such a bride but none could be found in the city of Sāvatthī. The scouts therefore went to Sāketa.

One day, Visākhā went to a lake, which was outside Sāketa, accompanied by 500 attendant maidens who were of the same age as her, to bathe and frolic in the

water. At that time, the scouts from Sāvatthī had left Sāketa, without success in looking for a suitable lady. They resorted to standing at the town's gate. Then rain started to pour down. Visākhā and her companions left the town to seek shelter from the rain in a public rest house. The 500 maidens ran into the rest house. None of them caught the eyes of the scouts as promising. But, coming behind these maidens was young Visākhā, who was walking towards the rest house in her normal pace, disregarding the rain. The scouts recognized her beauty. They pondered: "As regards personal appearance, there can be no other girl in the world who can equal her. However, personal beauty is like a fresh ripe pomegranate. Her manner of speech needs to be assessed. We should start a conversation with her." And so they addressed her in the following way:

"Little daughter, you walk like an elderly lady."

Visākhā replied: "Fathers, why do you say so?"

"Your companions entered this rest house by running, fearing to get wet. As for you, you came at your normal pace, like an elderly lady. You do not seem to mind your dress being drenched. Supposing an elephant or a horse were after you, would you take the same leisurely steps?"

"Father, clothing may be bought without difficulty. What does my dress matter? But my [1452] person is important to me, for a girl is like a piece of merchandise. If by running, I were to stumble and break my limbs and become physically unsound, where is my worth as a likely bride? That was why I did not run."

The scouts from Sāvatthī agreed amongst themselves that they had found a suitable bride for their master's son; a girl fair in form as well as fair in speech, with a beautiful voice. They threw the bridal garland above Visākhā, who, understanding what it meant, acquiesced in the act by sitting on the spot. Migāra's scout then put up a screen around the proposed bride. Having been thus ceremonially treated, Visākhā went back to her home accompanied by her maid servants. Migāra's scouts went along to the house of her father, Dhanañjaya the householder.

A conversation between Migāra's men and Visākhā's father about the proposed betrothal took place as follows:

Dhanañjaya: O men, what is your native village?

Elders: Householder, we represent Migāra the householder of Sāvatthī. Our master has learnt that you have a young daughter who is of marriageable age and he wants her as the bride for his son. We came to request the hand of your daughter.

Dhanañjaya: Very well, men, your master is not our equal in wealth. However, he is of equal status by birth. It is a rare thing to meet one's equal, both in status and wealth. Go back and tell your master that his proposal for betrothal is accepted.

Migāra's representatives returned to Sāvatthī and reported to him: "Householder, we have obtained the consent of Dhanañjaya, the householder of Sāketa, to have his daughter betrothed to Puṇṇavaḍḍhana." Migāra was overjoyed to find a bride from such a great family for his son. He sent an urgent message to Dhanañjaya to the effect that he would come and fetch the bride in a few day's time, and would Dhanañjaya made suitable arrangements? Dhanañjaya replied that he would made every arrangement and requested Migāra to do the needful.

The Kosalan King honours the Betrothal

Migāra the householder went to the Kosalan King and sought permission to go to Sāketa to attend the wedding ceremony of his son, Puṇṇavaḍḍhana, a trusted servant of the king, to Visākhā, daughter of Dhanañjaya the householder of Sāketa.

The king said: "Very well, householder, need we go with you?"

"Great King," Migāra said, "how could we expect the presence of such an important personage as yourself?" The king wanted to honour both parties to the betrothal with his presence and said: "So be it, householder, I will go with you." And so the king went to Sāketa together with the householder.

When Dhanañjaya was informed of the arrival of Migāra and the Kosalan King, he greeted the king personally and escorted him to his house. He made careful arrangements to host the king and his army, Migāra and his entourage. Food, lodging, flowers, perfumes and every item of comfort was provided to all, according to their need and status. He attended to these details personally so that every guest had the impression that Dhanañjaya the householder was doing a special favour to them.

Later on, one day, the Kosalan King said to Dhanañjaya through a messsenger: "Householder, we are here in too big a crowd. We might be causing a burden to you if we were to stay long. Maybe, you should think of the time for sending the bride to Sāvatthī." To which, Dhanañjaya replied through the messenger: "Great King, now is the rainy season. Your army will find it difficult to make a journey. Let the provision of every need of your army be my responsibility. I would request your majesty to return to Sāvatthī only when I make the send-off."

From the time of the arrival of Migāra and his party, the whole of Sāketa was in a festive atmosphere. Three months passed in gaiety. The rainy season ended in [1453] October. The great ornamental dress for the bride was still in the goldsmith's hand, nearing completion. Dhanañjaya's executives reported to him that although every item needed in hosting the big gathering from Sāvatthī was no problem but they had met with a shortage of fuel for cooking. Dhanañjaya ordered that all the stables for his horses and sheds for his elephants be dismantled for fuel. But these structures lasted only fifteen days as fuel and the matter was conveyed to Dhanañjaya again, who said: "Wood fuel would be hard to get during the rainy season. So, open all my textile stores, make strips of rough cloth into ropes, soak them in oil vats and use them as fuel." In this expedient way another fifteen days supply of fuel for cooking was made available, by which time the great ornamental dress for the bride was completed too.

The bride was sent to the bridegroom on the next day, after the great bridal dress was completed. On the day of her departure, Dhanañjaya called his daughter, Visākhā, to his side and gave this admonition: "Dear daughter, a housewife, who is to serve her husband faithfully in his household, should know these principles and practise them accordingly:[323]

Dear daughter, a daughter-in-law living in the parents-in-law's house:

1. Should not take out the fire from the inside of the house.
2. Should not take the fire from outside into the house.
3. Should lend only to those who returned what they borrowed.

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[323] At that time Migāra was listening in the next room.

4. Should not lend to those who do not return what they borrowed.
5. Should give to those whether they give you back or not.
6. Sit peacefully.
7. Eat peacefully.
8. Sleep peacefully.
9. Tend to the fire respectfully.
10. Worship the deities of the house.

On the following day, Dhanañjaya had all his guests assembled together and in the midst of the Kosalan army appointed eight learned householders to be patrons of Visākhā at Sāvatthī, with the request that they, as a body, gave hearing and settled any disputes that might arise concerning her daughter. Then, he had the bride garbed in the great bridal dress of gold lace and jewels, worth 90 million. He gave her 154 cartloads of money for her toiletry, 500 maid servants, 500 coaches which were drawn by thoroughbred horses and a variety of useful items in 100 pieces for each kind. Having bequeathed these things, as his wedding present, in front of the assemblage, he first made a send-off for the Kosalan King and Migāra the householder.

When it was time for Visākhā to start her journey, Dhanañjaya called the controller of his cattle yards and gave these instructions: "My men, my daughter will need in her new home milk cows and thoroughbred bulls for harnessing to her carts. Let a herd of cattle that will fill the road to Sāvatthī for an area of three miles in breath and three miles in length be let out from the pens. The landmark for three miles is from the pens to a certain ravine. When the foremost cattle in the herd reached that ravine, let a drum signal be made so that the pens can be closed in time." And the responsible persons complied faithfully. As soon as the pens were opened, the stoutest milk-cows only came out. But when the pens were closed, strong draught oxens and bulls jumped over the fence and followed Visākhā. This was the result of Visākhā's past merit, because during the time of Buddha Kassapa, whenever she made an offering of food to the Saṅgha, she used to persuade the monastics to take various delicacies even after they had taken their fill. [1454]

Visākhā enters Sāvatthī

When Visākhā's carriage arrived at the city of Sāvatthī, she considered whether she should enter the city seated in her coach or stand up, exposing herself to public view. When she remembered the great bridal dress (*mahā-latā*) that she was wearing, she thought it wise to expose herself by standing in her carriage so that the greatness of her bridal dress would be seen by all. As she did so, every citizen of Sāvatthī who saw her was excited, saying among themselves: "Here she is! The famous Visākhā! How exquisitely beautiful! And look at that gorgeous bridal dress she wears! How becoming she looks in that wonderful dress!" Thus, Visākhā's entry into her new residence at Migāra's house was a great success.

Right from the moment of her presence in Sāvatthī, the citizens were fresh with the memories of their long stay in Sāketa as guests of honour to Dhanañjaya, who had so lavishly and caringly treated them. So they started sending gifts to Visākhā according to their means. Visākhā distributed the gifts to various other citizens of Sāvatthī, ensuring that all houses received them. In this way, the citizens of Sāvatthī were soaked in generosity from her first day there.

On the first night of her arrival at her father-in-law's house, as soon as the first watch of the night had passed, and it was bedtime, a thoroughbred female ass in Migāra's house gave birth to a foal. She had her maid servants hold up the lamps and she attended to the delivery of the foal. She had the mother ass bathed in hot water and then had oil applied onto her body. After seeing through these operations, she went back to her chamber.

Wedding Reception at Migāra's House

Migāra held a reception for seven days in his house, on the occasion of his son's wedding. Even though the Buddha was staying in the Jetavana monastery, Migāra, being a follower of different faiths, disregarded the Buddha for the occasion of his son's wedding, but, instead, he invited a houseful of naked ascetics. He called Visākhā to make obeisance to the "Arahats." When Visākhā heard the word "Arahats," she, being a noble one (*ariya*) herself, a Stream-enterer, eagerly went to see the so-called "Arahats." She was greatly disappointed to see the naked ascetic. "How could these shameless fellows be

Arahats?" She made her judgment and wondered why her father-in-law asked her to pay respects to them. "Fie! Fie!" she uttered in disgust and turned away.

The naked ascetics, on their part, were angry at Visākhā's behaviour. "Householder," they said to Migāra, "can't you get a better daughter-in-law? Why have you made this detestable woman, a follower of the ascetic Gotama, a member of your household? Cast away this demon of a woman!" But Migāra thought that he could not expel his daughter-in-law on the advice of the naked ascetics, for she came from a high class family. So, he had to palliate his teachers by saying: "Teachers, young people are reckless and say things intentionally or otherwise. Would you kindly keep your patience?"

Being a good daughter-in-law, Visākhā attended on her father-in-law respectfully. She made him sit on a high seat, and served him with milk rice in which undiluted milk was used. She ladled it out with a gold spoon into a vessel and gave it to Migāra who relished the meal. At that time, a monastic, on his alms round, stood at Migāra's door. Visākhā saw the monastic but, knowing her father-in-law was a follower of the naked ascetics, she thought it wise not to tell him about the presence of the monastic but merely moved herself aside so that the monastic would stand in direct view of Migāra. Foolish as he was, Migāra did see the monastic, but pretended not to notice him with his face turned down to his meal only. Visākhā knew that her father-in-law was purposely ignoring the monastic, so she went to the monastic and said: "Empty-handed, I pay homage to you, venerable sir. My father-in-law lives only on old food."

Hearing this, Migāra was irritated. When Visākhā derided the naked ascetics, he [1455] could bear it. But now that his daughter-in-law said that he was eating excreta, which is how he interpreted Visākhā's word for "old food," he could not bear it. He held away his hand from the vessel he was eating from and said angrily to his attendants: "Keep this milk rice! Expel Visākhā from this house. Look, while I am eating this auspicious milk rice in my auspicious house, Visākhā says: 'I am eating human excreta!' " However, the whole of the household staff were Visākhā's servants, and who would take Visākhā by the hand or by the feet and expel her? Far from doing physical violence against her, nobody in the house dared even to offend her by word.

When Visākhā heard her father-in-law's angry words, she spoke to him cordially and respectfully: "Father, I am not obliged to go away from this house by your command, which is not right and proper. You have not brought me to this house like a water carrier girl. A good daughter, whose parents are still living, does not obey this kind of unlawful command. To see to righteous behaviour on all sides, on the day of my departure my father had appointed a panel of eight wise householders, saying: 'If there should arise any problem concerning my daughter, you would be pleased to hear the case and settle it.' These eight people are my father's trustees in whom my security lies. Would you refer my case to them now?"

Migāra thought Visākhā's words were sensible. He sent for the panel of eight learned householders and laid his complaint, saying: "Gentlemen, this girl Visākhā has not been in this house for a week and she insulted me, who lives in an auspicious house, as someone who eats excreta."

Elders: Now, daughter, did you say as the householder has alleged?

Visākhā: Fathers, my father-in-law might like to eat excreta. I never referred to him as an eater of excreta. The fact is that as he was eating milk rice cooked with undiluted milk, a monastic stood at his door for alms food. My father-in-law ignored the monastic. So, I went up to the monastic and said: 'Empty handed, I pay homage to you, venerable sir. My father-in-law lives only on old food.' By this, I meant to say that my father-in-law does no deed of merit in his present existence but is living only on the fruit of his past merit.

Elders: Householder, in this case, our daughter is not at fault. She has spoken reasonably. Why should you be angry?

Migāra: So be it, gentlemen. But his young girl had from the very first night in this house ignored her husband and absented herself from the house.

Elders: Dear daughter, did you absent yourself as alleged?

Visākhā: Fathers, I did not go to any other place but the fact is that I was attending to the birth of a foal by a thoroughbred ass at the stable that night. I considered it my duty to do so. I had my maid servants hold the lamps and I supervised the proper delivery of the foal.

Elders: Householder, our daughter has been dutiful and done what even your maid servants could not do. She had done it for your good only. Why should you take it as an offence?

Migāra: So be it gentlemen. But I wish to complain about her father, Dhanañjaya's admonition to her on the day of her departure from her house. She was told: "Not to take out the fire from the inside of the house." How would it be possible for us not to give the fire when needed by our next door neighbours?

Elders: Dear daughter, were you told by your father as said by the householder?

Visākhā: Fathers, my father did not mean "fire" in the ordinary sense. What is meant is that the affairs of my parents-in-law and his family should not be divulged to the servants who are outsiders. If I were to do that, I would be causing [1456] unnecessary trouble at home. My father uses the expression "the fire from the inside of the house" in this sense only.

Migāra: So be it, gentlemen. But then her father also said that: "She should not take the fire from outside into the house." How would it be possible for us not to take the fire from another house, in case all the fire had gone out in our home?

Elders: Dear daughter, is that true?

Visākhā: Fathers, my father did not mean "fire" in the ordinary sense. What is meant here is that what the servants say in criticising the family should not be reported to the members of the family. If I were to do so, I would be causing unnecessary trouble at home. My father used the expression "the fire from outside" in this sense only. Also when my father said:

3. "You should lend only to those who return what they borrow." This is not to let those defaulters, who fail to return the things they borrow from me, get the better of me.

4. "You should not lend to those who do not return what they borrow." This is not to let the defaulters exploit my goodness.

5. "You should give to those whether they repay you or not." This means to be liberal to the poor relatives or friends who come to see me. I should make gifts to them regardless of whether they can repay me or not.

6. “You should sit peacefully.” This means I should show deference to my father-in-law and mother-in-law. When they approach, I should stand up.

7. “You should eat peacefully.” This means I should not eat before my parents-in-law and my husband have eaten. Only when they have had sufficient to eat, then I should eat.

8. “You should sleep peacefully.” This means I should not go to bed before my parents-in-law and my husband have gone to bed. Only after I have tended to their needs and they have retired, should I then go to bed.

9. “You should tend to the fire.” This means I should consider my parents-in-law and my husband as the fire that are to be always held in reverence. They should be attended on with respect.

Migāra: So be it, gentlemen. But what about her father’s admonition “to worship the deities of the house?”

Elders: Dear daughter, what is it that your father-in-law wants to know?

Visākhā: Father, it is true that my father told me “to worship the deities of the house.” By these words, my father admonished me that when I become a housewife, I should give alms food to monastics who stand at my door for alms. Only after offering alms food to them, should I eat.

Elders: Householder, you seem to please yourself by ignoring monastics who come to you for alms food. Migāra found no word to retort to this sarcastic remark and held down his face.

Then the eight learned householders said to Migāra the householder: “Householder, is there any other fault with our daughter?” Migāra admitted that there was none. They continued: “Householder, in spite of her innocence, why did you expel her from your home?” Then Visākhā stood up and said: “Fathers, I did not deem it wise to obey my father-in-law’s rash command in expelling me. For my father had entrusted me to your care and to settle any problems concerning myself. Now that I am cleared of my fault, I am happy to go.”

Visākhā then returned to her private chamber and ordered her male and female servants to prepare coaches and do other things for travel. Thereupon, Migāra called the eight-man [1457] panel of trustees and apologised to Visākhā for his fault in their presence: “Dear daughter, I had been reckless. Forgive me.”

Visākhā, seeing her opportunity, said to her father-in-law: "Dear father, I really forgive you for what is forgivable. Only that I wish to lay down a condition, which is that I, as an unshakeable devotee of the Buddha, cannot stay away from the Saṅgha, if only I be allowed to make offerings to the Saṅgha freely, I shall stay here. Otherwise, I will leave." To which Migāra promptly replied: "Dear daughter, you are at liberty to do so."

Migāra the Householder attains Stream-Entry

Thereafter, Visākhā invited the Buddha to her house the next day for an offering of food. On the following day, the Buddha went to her house, accompanied by a large number of monastics, who filled the house and were given seats. Naked ascetics, on learning of the visit of the Buddha to Migāra's house, took a keen interest and sat watching around it.

Visākhā made her food offerings and poured the libation water. After that she sent her assistant to inform her father-in-law that everything was ready to serve the meal to the Buddha and his Saṅgha, and invited him to attend to the Buddha personally. Migāra, who was under instructions by his teachers, the naked ascetics, replied to Visākhā: "Let my daughter herself attend on the Buddha." Visākhā proceeded to do so, offering the Buddha various kinds of delicious food and beverages. After that, she informed her father-in-law that the offering of food to the Buddha had finished and she invited him to join in listening to a discourse by the Buddha.

Migāra's past merit now began to tell on him, for he thought to himself: "If I were to refuse the invitation it would be very wrong." He got an inner urge to listen to the Buddha's discourse, and went to where he was sitting. However, his teachers, the naked ascetics, advised him to be screened off from the Buddha if he were to listen to his discourse. His servants therefore drew a curtain around the place where he was to sit.

The Buddha taught his discourse as if asserting his own power of letting any listeners hear him well, however hidden or far away from him, whether divided by a wall or as distant as the whole extent of a world-element. As if a big mango tree laden with its golden ripe fruit was shaken from its trunk, the Buddha directed his discourse beginning with alms giving, through morality and the

celestial forms of existence, culminating in the paths and fruitions (*magga-phala*).

> Note here that when the Buddha gave a discourse, everyone among the audience, whether in front of him or at his back, whether thousands of world-elements away, or even in the topmost Brahma realm of Akaniṭṭha, feels that the Buddha is addressing him alone, face to face. It is like one's relationship with the moon, which rides on the sky in her own course, but which seems to you to be always above your head. This unrivalled power of the Buddha is the result of his fulfilling the perfections, more particularly, his supreme abandoning in giving away his head or limbs, his eyes or heart, or his freedom by serving others as a slave, or as in Vessantara's existence when he gave his young son and daughter to an old Brahmin, or his own wife, Maddī Devī.[324]

At the end of the discourse, Migāra was established in the fruition of Stream-entry knowledge. He lifted the screen and prostrated at the Buddha's feet with the hands, knees and forehead touching the ground, and extolled Visākhā before the Buddha's presence, with these words: "Dear daughter, from this day on, you are my mother!" Since then Visākhā came to be known as "Migāra's mother."

> This is what is mentioned in the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*). In the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*), which follows the reciters of the text, it is mentioned thus: "Migāra came out of the screen, came to his daughter-in-law, and putting her breast in his mouth, exclaimed: "From today on, you are my mother!" Since then Visākhā came to be known as "Migāra's mother." Later, when a son was born to her, he was called "son of Migāra, the householder."
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> In this connection, the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) gives only a brief account of Visākhā, but for the benefit of the reader, the events connected with her will now be [1458] related based on the commentary to the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 53).

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[324] This is based on the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*).

Migāra's Wife also attained Stream-Entry

After recognizing his daughter-in-law as his mother, Migāra went to the Buddha and prostrating himself at his feet, holding them adoringly and kissing them with his mouth, said: "Venerable sir, previously I did not understand how the making of gifts to the different types of person is of benefit. Now I have come to know it, thanks to my daughter-in-law. Now I am saved from the wretched destinations, the lower worlds. The arrival of my daughter-in-law, Visākhā, has brought me my welfare and happiness." Further, he uttered this verse in elation:

> "Venerable sir, today I have come to understand as to making gifts to what type of person is of great benefit. My daughter-in-law, the possessor of noble characteristics, has indeed, due to past merit, come to my house for my benefit."

On the next day also, the good Visākhā invited the Buddha for another offering of food. Then, on the following day, her mother-in-law also became a Stream-enterer. From that day onwards, Migāra's house was an open door for all needs related to the teaching.

> "The arrival of noble person at a house, opens up the door to the eightfold path for its many residents, facilitating their entry to Nibbāna."[325]

Visākhā honoured by her Father-in-Law

Then Migāra thought to himself: "My daughter-in-law, Visākhā, is my great benefactor. I should repay my debt of gratitude to her. The great creeper (*mahā-latā*) bridal gown is too cumbersome for her to wear daily. I shall give her a suitable dress of distinction which may be worn by her by day or by night and in all her bodily postures." So thinking, he had a solid but flexible and easy-to-wear garment worth 100,000 pieces of money of silver, called the compact head (*ghana-maṭṭhaka*), made for Visākhā. When the dress was ready, he invited the Buddha and the Saṅgha to an offering of food. He let his daughter-in-law bathe in sixteen pots of scented water, and put on the special dress in the presence of the Buddha, in which she was to pay homage to the Buddha. The Buddha spoke words in appreciation of the offering and returned to the monastery.

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[325] This is a translation of a Myanmar verse.

From that time onwards, Visākhā's life was one of meritorious deeds such as giving generously in which she took great delight, and which she could afford to do as much as she liked. She won wide recognition as the great female lay supporter after she obtained eight special privileges as boon from the Buddha.

> The eight privileges as boons: 1) Lifelong privilege of donating robes to the Saṅgha for use in the rainy season; 2) the privilege of offering food to visiting bhikkhus; 3) the privilege of offering food to travelling bhikkhus; 4) the privilege of offering food to sick bhikkhus; 5) the privilege of offering food to the bhikkhus who were nursing the sick bhikkhus; 6) the privilege of offering medicine to sick bhikkhus; 7) the lifelong privilege of offering gruel for breakfast; 8) the privilege of offering under robes to bhikkhunīs (see Vin Mv, PTS 1.92).

Her story was comparable to that of the moon in the sky. Her reputation as the head of a big family also was noteworthy, for she had ten sons and ten daughters who had, like herself, ten sons and ten daughters each. These 400 grandchildren had also ten sons and ten daughters each, thus making a total of 8,000 great grandchildren. The ancient venerables versified this fact thus: [1459]

> "For having 20 children, 400 grandchildren and 8,000 great-grandchildren, Visākhā is renowned throughout Jambudīpa."

Some Distinctive Qualities of Visākhā

Visākhā lived up to 120 years of age. Not having a single grey hair, she looked always as if she was the age of a sixteen year old. When she went to the Buddha's monastery, accompanied by her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, she was undistinguishable from them.

When people saw Visākhā walking, they never felt satisfied with watching her walk. But when she stood, she looked as graceful; when she sat or when she was lying down, people thought her very graceful in that posture.

She had physical might equivalent to five great elephant bulls. On one occasion, the King of Kosala, wishing to test her reputed strength, let loose a great elephant bull in her direction. The beast ran towards her menacingly with its trunk uplifted. Visākhā's 500 companion girls ran away in fear. Some of her 500

companions hugged her, as if to safeguard her.[326] "What's up?" she asked them. They said: "Maiden, the king wants to test your strength and has sent an attacking elephant bull at you!"

Visākhā thought: "What is the use of running away from this beast? And if I were to handle it squarely, I will be crushed." So thinking, she gently took the beast's trunk in her two fingers and turned them, which sent him reeling. The onlookers cheered Visākhā and then proceeded home.

The Construction of the Pubbārāma Monastery

Visākhā was widely known as the auspicious lady, not only for her perennial beauty, but also for the health and robustness of her children and grandchildren for none of them died before the end of their lifespan. The citizens of Sāvatthī would invite Visākhā as the guest-of-honour whenever they held ceremonial offerings. One day, after attending such a function she was proceeding to the Buddha's monastery, and thought it lacking in modesty if she went before him, attired in her gorgeous great creeper (*mahā-latā*) dress. So, at the entrance to the monastery, she entrusted it to her maid servant who was reborn into the world due to Visākhā's past great deed, for she had to be, like Visākhā, as strong as the equivalent of five great elephants bulls.

Leaving the great creeper dress with her maid-servant and putting on the compact head (*ghana-maṭṭhaka*) dress instead, Visākhā went before the Buddha and listened to a discourse. After the discourse, she made obeisance to him and left the monastery. The maid-servant left the great creeper dress at the place where she was listening to the Buddha's discourse and forgotten to collect it when she left. It was Ven. Ānanda's routine duty to collect things left through the forgetfulness of visitors to the Buddha's monastery. On that day, when he found Visākhā's great creeper dress, he reported it to the Buddha who asked him to store it away in a suitable place. Ven. Ānanda picked it up and hung it at one end of the flight of stairs.

Visākhā then went around the various places in the Jetavana monastery together with Suppiyā, a well-known female lay-disciple, to find out the needs of the

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[326] This is the Sri Lankan version.

guest monastics, the [1460] sick monastics, and monastics who were going on a journey. It was usual for junior monastics and novices who needed ghee or honey or oil to bring containers to be filled by the two visiting ladies on such rounds.

> Suppiyā the female lay disciple was the wife of Supiya the Householder of Bārāṇasī. This couple were highly devoted to the Three Treasures. They were regular supporters of the Saṅgha with regard to the four monastic requisites. The female disciple Suppiyā once sacrificed her own flesh from the thigh to cook a soup for a sick monk. Due to her intense devotion to the Buddha, the spot, where her flesh was cut, was miraculously restored without leaving a scar (see Vin Mv 6, PTS 1.216).

After she had visited the sick monastics, the junior monastics and novices and attended to their needs, she left the Jetavana monastery by another gate. Before leaving the monastery compound, Visākhā asked her maid-servant to bring the great creeper dress for her to wear. Then only the maid remembered it and said: "My lady, I have forgotten to pick it up."

"Then, go and fetch it," instructed Visākhā. "But," she continued, "in case Ven. Ānanda were to have moved it to another place himself, say to him that the dress is to be considered as donated to him." She said this because she knew that Ven. Ānanda always kept in his custody all articles left by forgetful visitors of the four classes to the Jetavana monastery.

When Ven. Ānanda saw Visākhā's maid-servant, he asked her why she returned. And being told of the great creeper dress, Ven. Ānanda said to her: "I have hung it at one end of the stairway. Go and get it." Then she said: "Venerable sir, my lady has instructed me that if the dress had been held in the hand of your reverence, she would not take it back because she would deem it already donated to you." The maid went back to Visākhā and reported the matter to her.

Then, Visākhā said to her: "My girl, I consider it donated to Ven. Ānanda. I have no desire to wear it after Ven. Ānanda has handled it. However, keeping it in his custody would be troublesome to him. I will donate something that is proper for the Saṅgha to use. Go and get it." And the maid did as she was bidden. Visākhā sent for the goldsmith and let them appraise the value of the great creeper dress. The goldsmith said: "This dress is worth 90 million in material

value plus 100,000 in workmanship." Visākhā let the great creeper dress displayed on an elephant and put it up for public sale.

But there was no one who could afford to buy a dress worth such a fortune. Moreover, there were no women who could withstand the sheer weight of that bejewelled great gown. As a matter of fact, there were only three women on earth who could afford and wear this kind of dress. They were:

1. Visākhā.
2. Mallikā, wife of Bandhula the commander-in-chief.
3. The daughter of the King of Bārāṇasī.

Since there was no buyer of the great dress, Visākhā herself bought it at the appraised price of 90 million and 100,000. She put the money in a cart and took it to the Jetavana monastery where, after paying respects to the Buddha, she said to him: "Venerable sir, Ven. Ānanda, in keeping my great creeper dress in his custody, has handled it. From that time onwards, it is not proper for me to wear it. Therefore, I have sold it out for the benefit of the Saṅgha and in such a way the Saṅgha might properly put it to use. Since there was no one who could buy it, I have now bought it at its sales value of 90 million and 100,000. In which way, out of the four requisites should this money be utilised?" The Buddha said: "It would be fitting if you built a monastery for the Saṅgha near the eastern gate of this Sāvatthī." Visākhā was very glad to hear this. She bought a piece of land for the site of the monastery for the price of 90 million. The building was to cost her another 90 million. Construction soon began.

Ven. Moggallāna supervises the Construction

One morning, the Buddha reviewed the world for beings deserving of Awakening and he saw Bhaddiya, the son of the householder of Bhaddiya, who had had his former existence in the Deva realm. So, after his meal in the house of Anāthapiṇḍika, the Buddha went in the direction of the northern gate of Sāvatthī.

> It may be noted that the Buddha usually received an offering of alms food at Visākhā's house. After which, he would go through the city's southern gate to Jetavana monastery as his residence. If he received his alms food from [1461] Anāthapiṇḍika he would go through the city's eastern gate to

the Pubbārāma monastery as his residence. When he left the city by the northern gate, people understood that he was taking a journey.

When Visākhā heard the news of the Buddha taking the northern gate, she went to see him and said: "Venerable sir, are you making a journey?" the Buddha replied: "Yes, Visākhā, it is so." Visākhā said: "Venerable sir, I have sacrificed such a big fortune of 90 million to build a monastery for your use. Would you wait till the building is complete?" – "Visākhā, my present trip cannot be postponed." Then, Visākhā understood that the Buddha had in mind some prospective disciple whose past merit having ripened, was due for the paths and fruitions (*magga-phala*), and said: "Venerable sir, in that case, would you leave behind some monastics who would supervise the construction?" Thereupon, the Buddha said: "Visākhā, take the alms bowl of the monastic of your choice."

Visākhā had a natural liking for Ven. Ānanda. However, she thought that Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, with his great powers, would be a real help in the expeditious completion of her monastery. So, she took the alms bowl of Ven. Moggallāna, who glanced towards the Buddha. The Buddha said to the venerable: "Moggallāna, you and your followers of 500 monastics will stay behind." And so Ven. Moggallāna became the monastic to supervise Visākhā's monastery construction.

By the great power of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, big distances as much as 50 or 60 leagues were made every day by the people who collected building materials. In carrying them too, they could do it without great hardship. No mishaps such as broken axles on the carts ever occurred. Soon, the two-storey seven-tier monastery was completed on a clear and level site eight acres wide. The seven-tier monastery had 500 chambers on the ground floor and 500 chambers on the first floor. Around the main building, she added, for better perspective and practical usefulness, 500 meditation cells, 500 smaller tiered monastic dwellings and 500 stairways.

The Donation Ceremony lasting Four Months

The Buddha returned from his tour after nine months. By that time, the construction of the Pubbārāma monastery had been completed, thanks to the supervision of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna. Visākhā had a broad gold plate, about the size that might contain 60 water pots, fashioned for the pinnacle of the

monastery. When she heard that the Buddha was returning to the Jetavana monastery, she invited him to stay in her new monastery, known as the Pubbārāma, the Eastern Monastery, together with his Saṅgha, because she wanted to hold ceremonies marking the donation of the monastery. She said: "Venerable sir, I would request the Fortunate One to stay in this monastery for the four rainy months."

The Buddha having acceded to her request, she made great offerings of food to the Buddha and his Saṅgha. Then, a female friend of Visākhā went to her and requested a favour: "Friend Visākhā, I would like to donate a piece of floor cover worth 100,000 pieces of money to your monastery. Kindly show me where I should put it." Visākhā replied: "Very well, friend, look for the place yourself, for if I were to say: 'There is no place for your floor cover, you might misunderstand me.' " – "Her friend went about the Great Monastery, inspecting every part of it, on both storeys, but could not find a spot which was not already covered with flooring material of the same quality or better than the one she had brought. She was greatly disappointed and wept in a corner.

Ven. Ānanda saw her weeping and asked her the reason. She told him her story. Ven. Ānanda then consoled her: "Do not worry, I will show you the spot where you may spread your flooring material," and he pointed to her an uncovered spot at the end of the stairway which was the place for the Saṅgha to wash their feet. She was told that all the monastics would step over that flooring before the monastery, after washing their feet and that would be a really meritorious thing for her as the supporter. That was the only spot which Visākhā's attention had missed. [1462]

Offering Four Requisites to the Saṅgha

For four rainy months, Visākhā made offerings of the four monastic requisites to the Buddha and his Saṅgha. On the full moon of November (*Kattikā*) she donated the robe material of superior quality. The lowest quality received by a newly admitted monastic was worth 1,000. All the monastics also received the four sweet foods (*catu-madhu*), to fill their alms bowl full. The four months long offerings that marked her donation of the Pubbārāma monastery cost her 90 million.

Thus, the site costing 90 million, the building, 90 million, and the ceremonial offering, 90 million, made a total of 27 billion which Visākhā incurred in her donation towards the Pubbārāma monastery, a sum of money which very few women did on such a scale, and more remarkable for her since she lived in the house of a non-believer.

On the evening at the end of the four month long ceremony Visākhā, amidst her big company of offerings, was very happy in her thought that her lifelong ambition had been fulfilled. In sheer exultation, she sang the following five verses in a wonderfully melodious voice while going round the big monastery (Comm. to Dhp 53, PTS 1.416):

1. "My cherished ambition with the thought: 'When would I, having made my earnest wish and acquiring merit over 100,000 aeons, be able to build a monastery of fine concrete structure that would delight every visitor, monastic and layman alike?' This thought that had occupied my mind, setting Nibbāna as my goal, since the time of Buddha Padumuttara is fulfilled now!

2. My cherished ambition with the thought: 'When would I be able to donate a monastic living place to the Saṅgha, complete with couch, reclining chair, cushion, pillow, etc.?" This thought that had occupied my mind, setting Nibbāna as my goal, since the time of Buddha Padumuttara is fulfilled now!

3. My cherished ambition with the thought: 'When would I be able to make offerings of food to the Saṅgha, the merit whereof accomplishes long life, personal charm, happiness, strength and intelligence, comprised of the seven types of food offering, such as food offering by casting lots, and rice cooked in meat, etc.?' This thought that had occupied my mind, setting Nibbāna as my goal, since the time of Buddha Padumuttara is fulfilled now!

4. My cherished ambition with the thought: 'When would I be able to donate robes to the Saṅgha, that is, robes made of costly Kāsi cloth, cloth made from cotton fibre, etc.?' This thought that had occupied my mind, setting Nibbāna as my goal, since the time of Buddha Padumuttara is fulfilled now!

5. My cherished ambition with the thought: 'When would I be able to donate to the Saṅgha the physician's formula as medicine, that is, the four sweets comprising ghee, honey, sesame oil and molasses?' This thought that had occupied my mind, setting Nibbāna as my goal, since the time of Buddha Padumuttara is fulfilled now!"

Foremost Title Achieved

In the morning, Visākhā's house was aflame with the colour of the saffron robes of monastics coming and going freely, and the atmosphere was vibrating with the movement of monastics whose robes filled the air with the odour of the dye-stuff. As in the house of Anāthapiṇḍika, Visākhā's house had meals cooked for offering to monastics of varying needs: the travelling ones, the sick ones, the visiting ones.

In the morning, Visākhā offered food to these monastics. In the afternoon, she would go to the Buddha's monastery with her maids, carrying medicinal properties, such as ghee, butter-milk, honey and molasses, and also the eight kinds of beverages made from rose-apple, mango, the Indian butter fruit, white turmeric, honey, two kinds of banana, and the nectar of the lotus, and offered them according to the needs of the monastics. [1463] Then she would listen to a discourse by the Buddha before returning home. This was a typical day for Visākhā, which was replete with meritorious deeds.

Therefore, on one occasion, when the Buddha was naming foremost female lay-disciples according to their merit, he declared:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ upāsikānaṁ dāyikānaṁ yad-idaṁ Visākhā Migāramātā.

Monastics, among my female lay disciples who delight in generosity, Visākhā, Migāra's mother, is the foremost.

3-4. Khujjuttarā and Sāmāvatī

Aspirations in the Past

The future Khujjuttarā and Sāmāvatī were reborn into the families of rich men in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. As they went to the Buddha's monastery to listen to a discourse given by the Buddha, the

future Khujjuttarā saw a female lay disciple being named by him as the foremost among female lay disciples in learning. She had a strong desire to become the same herself. After making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, she expressed her aspiration to him, and he predicted the fulfilment of her aspiration.

The future Sāmāvatī saw a female lay disciple being named by the Buddha as the foremost in abiding in loving-kindness. She had a strong desire to be so designated by a Buddha in future time. After making an extraordinary offering to the Buddha, she expressed her aspiration to that designation to him, and he predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

These two ladies spent their whole lives in deeds of merit. At the end of their respective lifespan, they were reborn in the Deva realm. After being reborn in either the Deva realm or human world for 100,000 aeons, the present world-element with five Buddhas arrived.

During the time of Buddha Gotama, in the city of Kosambī, Ghosaka the householder and his wife made a routine alms giving of 1,000 pieces of money everyday.[327]

Discipleship in their Last Existences

It was during the time in which the Ghosaka couple were practising their routine generosity that the future Khujjuttarā passed away from her Deva existence and was conceived in the womb of the governess in the house of Ghosaka. She was humpbacked at birth and was called Khujjuttarā.

About the same time, the future Sāmāvatī passed away from her Deva existence and was reborn as the daughter of Bhaddavatiya the householder in Bhaddiya, in the province of Bhaddiya. She was named as Sāmā by her parents.

At one time, the town of Bhaddiya suffered from famine and the people left the town for other towns for their own survival. Bhaddiya the householder said to his wife: “Dear wife, we cannot know when this famine will end. We too must leave this place. Our friend Ghosaka the householder of Kosambī will recognise

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[327] For details of this illustrious couple, read chapter 27a.

us if he sees us. Let us go to him." He told his wife about going to Ghosaka but the two householders had known each other by their reputations only and had never met. They decided to go, leaving behind their servants. The father, mother and daughter, went in the direction of Kosambī, travelling by stages. After going through much hardship on the way, they at last reached Kosambī and stayed in a public rest house which was outside the city.

Ghosaka the householder was making his daily alms giving to all the needy who called at [1464] his door. Destitute travellers and mendicants thronged to his house every day. Bhaddavatiya the householder and his family were looking haggard after a hard journey. They decided they should not present themselves before Ghosaka in the present unsightly state but should rest and recoup themselves first. So, they remained at the rest house while their daughter Sāmā was sent to the alms giving station of Ghosaka to beg for food.

Sāmāvatī, as a daughter of a householder, was reluctant to jostle through her way in the unruly crowds of alms seekers. As she stood apart in a hesitant manner, her dignified demeanour was noticed by the superintendent of alms distribution. He thought to himself: "While everyone else is making loud noise and trying to reach out ahead of others like in a fisherman's fish distribution, this young maiden is keeping back. She must be of some worthy family. And she has a fine personality." And so he addressed Sāmāvatī: "Dear girl, why don't you step up and beg?" She replied: "Dear father, how could a decent girl like me elbow through in such a jammed packed crowd?"

"How many persons are there in your family?"

"There are three, father."

The man doled out three food packages to her.

Sāmāvatī gave the food to her parents. Her father who had not eaten for some time, ate it greedily and died of overeating on that very day. On the next day, Sāmāvatī went to the food distribution point and asked for only two food packages. Her mother who was not used to poor food as this and she was also bereaved for the loss of her husband, and was taken ill that evening and died after midnight. Then, on the next day, Sāmāvatī went and asked for only one food package.

The superintendent asked her: “Dear girl, on the first day, you asked the food package for three persons; on the second day, you asked only for two and now on the third day, you are asking for only one. Why is this?” Sāmāvatī told him about the death of her father on the first day, her mother after midnight on the second day, and that she alone survived.

“Where do you come from?” the man inquired. Sāmāvatī told him how her family had fled famine in Bhaddiya and the subsequent happenings. “In that case,” the superintendent said, “you should be deemed as a daughter of Ghosaka the householder. But I have no daughter of my own, so you will henceforth be my daughter.”

Sāmāvatī, the adopted daughter of the superintendent of the alms distribution place, asked her adopted father: “Father why is there such a din at the place?”

“When there is such a huge crowd, there has to be a big noise,” he replied.

“But, father, I have an idea!”

“Then, say it.”

“Father, let there be fencing around the place, keep only one entrance; let the people go in, receive their alms, and go out on the other end, through the only exit.”

The father took her advice and after following her instruction, the distribution centre then became as quiet and dignified as a lotus pond. Soon after that Ghosaka noted the silence that prevailed in the alms distribution place which was usually full of noise and asked his superintendent: “Are you not giving alms today?”

“Yes, I am giving, master.”

“But why is it so quiet at the centre which used to be so much of a din?”

“Ah! That is true, indeed, master. I have a wise daughter, I have been able to maintain quiet at the place on the advice of my daughter.”

“But, I never knew you had a daughter. Where have you got one?”

The superintendent had to confess the truth. He related to his master the circumstances under which Sāmāvatī became his adopted daughter. Thereupon,

Ghosaka said to him: [1465] "Man, why did you do that? You are doing a very improper thing indeed. You have kept me in the dark about this girl who is my daughter in this circumstance. Bring her to my house immediately." The superintendent had to obey his master's order. From then onwards, Sāmāvatī became the adopted daughter of Ghosaka who cherished her as his own daughter and found for her 500 companions, who were of her own age and from worthy families.

Sāmāvatī became Queen of King Udena

One day when King Udena of Kosambī went round the city, he happened to see Sāmāvatī and her 500 maid companions, romping in the garden and fell in love with her. On inquiring her parentage, he was told that she was the daughter of Ghosaka the householder. The king enquired whether she was married or not, and learning that she was not married, he sent his royal messengers to Ghosaka to ask for the hand of Sāmāvatī in marriage to him. Ghosaka thought to himself: "Sāmāvatī is our only daughter. We cannot put her life at risk in the king's court which is full of intriguing women." So he bluntly refused the king's request. The king was furious and ordered that Ghosaka and his wife be evicted from their house which was to be sealed off.

When Sāmāvatī and her playmates returned and met her parents sitting miserably outside the house, she asked them what had happened. On hearing the story, she said to them: "Dear parents, why did you not tell the king's men that your daughter would go and live at the palace on the condition that her 500 maid-companions were allowed to go with her there? Now, dear parents, give your reply to the king as I suggest." Her parents said to her: "Very well, daughter, we did not know how you would accept the king's proposal."

King Udena was greatly pleased to hear the message from Ghosaka. He said: "Let all the maid-companions come and stay with Sāmāvatī, even if they number 1,000!" Afterwards, on an auspicious day, at the auspicious hour when the planets were favourable, Sāmāvatī, together with her 500 companions, were conveyed to the palace of King Udena. The king appointed all 500 maids as ladies-in-waiting to his wife Sāmāvatī when he made her queen with ceremonial anointing, and put her in a golden terraced mansion of her own, with the full state of a queen.

About this time, Ghosaka and his two householder friends, Kukkuṭa and Pāvārika of Kosambī, learning the news of the appearance of the Buddha and his residence at Sāvatthī, went to him. After listening to a discourse by the Buddha, they were established in Stream-entry knowledge. Later, they returned to Kosambī after making great offerings to the Buddha and his Saṅgha for fifteen days. They obtained the assurance from the Buddha that he would visit Kosambī when they would invite him later. They built a monastery each and on completion of which, they sent messages to the Buddha, inviting him to visit Kosambī. Hence, the Buddha began his journey to Kosambī but seeing the ripeness of the past merit in a Brahmin couple by the name of Māgaṇḍiya, he made a detour to Kammāsadamma, a market town in the province of Kuru, where he caused the Māgaṇḍiyas to comprehend the noble truths and then proceeded to Kosambī.

Travelling by stages, he reached Kosambī and accepted the gift of three monasteries which were donated by three noble (*ariya*) householders. When he entered the town on an alms collecting round, he and his procession of monastics were reviled by a gang of drunken men who were instigated by Queen Māgaṇḍiya, who held a grudge against the Buddha. Ven. Ānanda suggested to the Buddha that they leave the town which appeared so inhospitable. Instead, the Buddha gave a discourse to Ven. Ānanda on the importance of taming oneself, which was recorded in the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 320-322). The Buddha stayed on for some time in Kosambī in the three monasteries in towns.[328] [1466]

Khujjuttarā attains Stream-Entry

The three householders of Kosambī attended on the Buddha and his Saṅgha in turns, making big offerings for a month. Then they extended the privileges of honouring the Buddha and his Saṅgha, in making great offerings, to other people of Kosambī by organizing them into localities or associations.

One day, the Buddha and his company of a large number of monastics were at the house of a florist, to receive his offerings. At that time, Khujjuttarā, the personal attendant to Queen Sāmāvatī, went to buy flowers, which was her

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[328] For details of this episode, read chapter 27a.

routine duty. The florist said to her: "Ah, dear Uttarā, I have no time to serve you this morning. I am busy attending on the Buddha and his Saṅgha. Will you lend a hand in our food offering? This good deed of yours will lead to your emancipation from bondage." Khujjuttarā ate her portion of food given by the florist and joined him and his people in serving food to the Buddha. She learnt by heart the Buddha's discourse, which was taught to those who came near him. At the end of the discourse, she was established in the fruition of Stream-entry.

Sāmāvatī and 500 Ladies-in-Waiting attain Stream-Entry

Khujjuttarā, in her daily purchase of flowers for Queen Sāmāvatī, usually bought only four coins worth of flowers and pocketed four coins out of the queen's daily allowance of eight coins for flowers. But on the day she became a noble Stream-enterer, Khujjuttarā had no mind to steal the money entrusted to her, and bought eight coins worth of flowers, which now filled her basket. Queen Sāmāvatī, seeing an unusually large quantity of flowers in Khujjuttarā's basket, asked her: "Why dear Uttarā, do you have such a big basket of flowers today, unlike the previous days! Did the king increase my allowance for flowers?"

Khujjuttarā, as a Stream-enterer, was now incapable of telling lies, and so confessed her previous misconduct. The queen asked her: "Why, then, have you brought such a big quantity of flowers today?" And Khujjuttarā replied: "Because I did not steal the money today. I cannot do so because I have realized Nibbāna. I have comprehended deathlessness, after hearing the Buddha's discourse." Thereupon, Queen Sāmāvatī and her 500 ladies-in-waiting spread out their hands and asked Khujjuttarā: "Dear Uttarā, give us a share of that deathless Nibbāna!"

"Dear friends, Nibbāna is not something that can be apportioned to others. I will tell you the words of the Buddha. If you are endowed with past merit you may gain Nibbāna, the deathless, on hearing them."

"Dear Uttarā, do go ahead!"

"But, I have to sit on a higher level than your seats before I start making the discourse."

Queen Sāmāvatī arranged a higher seat for Khujjuttarā and listened to her discourse, sitting at a lower level. Khujjuttarā, exercising the analytical knowledge pertaining to a Stream-enterer, while teaching still as a trainee (*sekkha*), gave a discourse to Sāmāvatī and her 500 ladies-in-waiting. At the end of which all of them were established in the fruition of Stream-entry. From that time onwards, Khujjuttarā was relieved of her all-round service duties and was given the task of going to the Buddha's monastery to listen to his discourses and, in turn, to teach Queen Sāmāvatī and her ladies-in-waiting what she had learnt from the Buddha. In this way, Queen Sāmāvatī and her company of ladies-in-waiting were given regular discourses in the palace by Khujjuttarā.

Khujjuttarā's Past Merit and Demerit

Why was Khujjuttarā reborn into a slave family? It was due to her past evil deed. She had, during the time of Buddha Kassapa, made a female novice assist her in odd jobs, running errands for her. On account of that misdeed, she was reborn into a slave family for 500 existences in succession.

Why was she born with a humpback? When she was a lady at the court of the King of Bārāṇasī before the advent of Buddha Gotama, she saw a Paccekabuddha with a humpback who went to the palace to collect alms food. Then she mimicked the Paccekabuddha in the presence of the other court ladies. For that evil deed, she was born humpbacked in the present existence which was her last existence. [1467]

What merit did she earn in the past to be endowed with inmate wisdom in her last existence? When she was a lady at the court of the King of Bārāṇasī before the advent of the Buddha, she saw eight Paccekabuddhas carrying alms bowls which were filled with milk rice and were piping hot. To relieve the heat on the hands of these revered ones, she removed eight gold bangles which she was wearing and offered them to use as buffers underneath the alms bowls. That thoughtful deed was the merit she earned.

Queen Māgaṇḍiyā's intrigue against Queen Sāmāvatī

Although Queen Sāmāvatī and her 500 ladies-in-waiting had become Stream-enterers, they never had the opportunity of meeting the Buddha because King Udena was a non-believer. Since they were Stream-enterers, they had a great

longing to see the Buddha in person. All they could hope for was to get a glimpse of the Buddha whenever he was passing through the city. As there were no sufficient trellis windows to peep through, the ladies bore holes in the walls of their sleeping quarters, through which they peeped to gain precious glimpses of the Buddha.

One day, as Queen Māgaṇḍiyā was strolling outside she noticed the small holes on the walls of the ladies-in-waiting of Queen Sāmāvatī and asked the maidens what the holes were for. They did not know that Queen Māgaṇḍiyā was holding a grudge against the Buddha and honestly divulged their secret arrangement that had enabled them to watch the Buddha passing by and to honour him by standing in their own rooms and peeping through the small holes in the wall. Queen Māgaṇḍiyā thought to herself, grinning, thus: "Now my time has come to avenge ascetic Gotama. These girl followers of Gotama will also have their deserts!"

Then, when Queen Māgaṇḍiyā was alone with King Udena, she said to him: "Great King, Queen Sāmāvatī and her ladies-in-waiting have given their hearts to someone else besides you. They are plotting against your life in a few days. They have no affection for you. They have such great interest in ascetic Gotama that they peep at him whenever he goes into the city. They have made holes in the wall of their rooms to get a view of the ascetic Gotama. The king did not believe her at first but Māgaṇḍiyā repeated her story another time, yet the king still did not believe her. For the third time, she repeated it, and when the king refused to believe her, she suggested that the king go to the private quarters of the ladies-in-waiting and inquire. The king did as she had suggested and saw the small holes. He asked the ladies-in-waiting about the holes and they honestly and truthfully told him the purpose of the holes. The king was not angry with them but merely ordered that the holes be closed. He let a trellis windows be fixed on the upstairs of the ladies' quarters. This was then the first malicious report on the part of Queen Māgaṇḍiyā.

Queen Māgaṇḍiyā then hatched another plot. She said to the king: "Great King, let us put to the test the loyalty of Sāmāvatī and her company towards you. Send them eight living hens and ask them to cook a meal with them for your majesty." The king did as Māgaṇḍiyā advised. Queen Sāmāvatī, being a noble disciple of

the Buddha, was above killing and so replied to the king that it would not be proper to kill the hens.

But Māgaṇḍiyā was crafty enough. She said to the king: "Great King, say to Sāmāvatī to cook a meal with the hens for ascetic Gotama." The king did as he was told. This time, Māgaṇḍiyā had the hens killed on the way, before they reached Queen Sāmāvatī, who, on receiving the lifeless hens, had no suspicions about them in her simple mind. She had them cooked and sent the cooked dish to the Buddha. Queen Māgaṇḍiyā then pointed out the fact of Sāmāvatī's behaviour to the king, saying: "Now, do you see where Sāmāvatī's interest lies?" However, the king still did not take offence against his beloved Sāmāvatī. This was the second malicious plot on the part of Queen Māgaṇḍiyā.

King Udena had three queens: 1) Queen Sāmāvatī, 2) Queen Vāsuladattā, daughter of King Caṇḍapajjota of Ujjenī and 3) Queen Māgaṇḍiyā. Each Queen had 500 ladies-in-waiting. The king spent seven days with each of his three queens in turn, in their respective palatial mansions. Queen Māgaṇḍiyā kept a small cobra by her side in a bamboo [1468] container which she stealthily transferred into the king's harp and sealed the small hole in it, when the king visited her. The king always carried his harp wherever he went. He was so fond of it because its music could cast a spell on elephants which would become attracted to its player, the king.

When the king was about to go to Queen Sāmāvatī, Queen Māgaṇḍiyā said to him as if she had real concern for the king's safety: "Great King, Sāmāvatī is a follower of ascetic Gotama. She does not value your life as much as a blade of grass. She is always intent on doing harm to you. So, please beware."

After the king had spent seven days with Queen Sāmāvatī, he went to stay with Queen Māgaṇḍiyā for another seven days. She said to him: "How was it, Great King, did Sāmāvatī find no opportunity to harm you?" Then, taking the harp from the king's hand, and shaking it, she exclaimed: "Why? There's some living thing moving about inside the harp!" And after stealthily opened the small hole in the harp, she exclaimed: "O! Death unto me! There is a snake in the harp!" She dropped the harp and ran away from it. The snake's coming out from the harp was enough to arouse the king's anger. Like a bamboo forest on fire, the

king hissed with fury. “Go and bring Sāmāvatī and all her ladies-in-waiting!” he shouted. The king’s men obeyed promptly.

Queen Sāmāvatī knew that the king was angry with them. She advised her ladies-in-waiting to diffuse loving-kindness towards the king for the whole day. When they were brought before the king, Sāmāvatī and her ladies-in-waiting were made to line up facing the king who stood with bow and poisoned arrow. They remained diffusing loving-kindness towards the king, who found himself unable to shoot and at the same time unable to put down the bow and arrow. Perspiration flowed from his body which was trembling. His mouth discharged saliva. He resembled a man who had suddenly lost his faculties.

Queen Sāmāvatī said to him: “Great King, are you feeling exhausted?”

The King replied: “My dear Queen, I do feel exhausted. Be my support.”

“Very well, O king,” she said, “direct your arrow towards the ground.”

The king did as he was told. Then Sāmāvatī wished: “May the arrow be released.” And the poisoned arrow went into the ground.

At that moment, King Udena went and dipped himself in water and in his wet cloths and hair, he fell at Sāmāvatī’s feet, saying: “Forgive me, my dear queen. I acted foolishly under the instigation of Māgaṇḍiyā.”

“I forgive you, king,” said Sāmāvatī.

“Very well, queen, you are full of forgiveness towards me. From now on, you are free to make offerings to the Buddha. Do make offerings and do go to the Buddha’s monastery in the afternoons and attend his sermons. From now on you shall be well protected.”

Sāmāvatī, seizing the opportunity, made this request: “If so, Great King, would you ask the Buddha to arrange for a monastic to come to the palace and teach us the good doctrine every day?” King Udena went to the Buddha and made the request, whereupon the Buddha assigned Ven. Ānanda the task. From that time on, Sāmāvatī and her ladies-in-waiting invited Ven. Ānanda to the palace and made daily food offerings, after which, they learnt the doctrine from him.

> Ven. Ānanda had in one of his past existences offered a needle and a small piece of robe material of a palm’s width to a Paccekabuddha. For that

good deed, in his present existence, he was endowed with innate wisdom, and also received gifts of robe material on 500 occasions. [1469]

Sāmāvatī and her Ladies-in-Waiting burnt to Death

Queen Māgaṇḍiyā was at her wit's end in her attempts to estrange King Udena from Queen Sāmāvatī. She became desperate and made a desperate attempt. She persuaded the king to go on a picnic in the park. She detailed her uncle to commit arson at the palace during the absence of the king. Queen Sāmāvatī and her ladies-in-waiting were to be ordered to remain indoors, using the king's authority. Then their mansion was to be burnt. Queen Māgaṇḍiyā's uncle, the foolish Brahmin, executed the plot successfully.

As their past evil deed had now fructified, Sāmāvatī and her 500 ladies-in-waiting could not dwell in the attainment of the fruition of Stream-entry on that fateful day and lost their lives in the flames, like lumps of bran in a storehouse. The guards, at Queen Sāmāvatī's mansion reported the calamity to the king.

The king made discreet inquiries into the prime mover in this horrible case of arson, and knew that it was none other than Queen Māgaṇḍiyā. However, he did not reveal his true intention. Instead, he sent for Queen Māgaṇḍiyā and said to her: "Dear Māgaṇḍiyā, you have done for me what I ought to have done by myself. You have done away with Sāmāvatī who had made various attempts on my life. I adore you for this act. I am going to reward you amply. Now, call your kinsmen."

Queen Māgaṇḍiyā was delighted to hear the king's words. She gathered all her relatives and also her friends, who were as close as her relatives. When all of Māgaṇḍiyā's associates were gathered, the king had deep pits dug in the palace ground, where all the culprits were put in with only their heads showing above the ground. Their heads were then severed and then iron plough shares were driven across their broken skulls. As for Queen Māgaṇḍiyā, her body was cut into pieces and cooked in oil.

The Past Evil Deeds of Sāmāvatī and her Ladies-in-Waiting

The death of Sāmāvatī and her ladies-in-waiting by being burnt alive had its root in their past evil deeds. In one of their existences before the advent of Buddha Gotama, the 500 maidens were standing on the river bank at the Ganges

after having a long frolicking bath. As they were shivering with cold, they saw a small thatched hut nearby, which was the dwelling of a Paccekabuddha. They rashly burnt it for warming themselves without first seeing whether there was any occupant inside or not.

At that time, the Paccekabuddha was dwelling in the attainment of cessation. Only when the little hut was reduced to ashes they found, to their horror, the sitting Paccekabuddha in a motionless state. Although in setting fire to the hut, they had no intention to kill the Paccekabuddha, the thought of killing him now entered their frightened minds because they recognized him as the Paccekabuddha who went to the king's palace for daily alms food. To avoid the king's wrath, they must burn the revered one and leave no trace of him. So, by way of cremation, they gathered more fuel and set fire to the sitting Paccekabuddha. This act being done with an intention to kill, it constituted a grave misdeed, carrying grave consequences.

> When the fuel which the maidens put to the fire was exhausted, the Paccekabuddha rose from dwelling in the attainment of cessation, cleaned his robes of ashes and rising into the air, went away, even as the maidens were watching in great wonder. They suffered in the lower worlds of Niraya for that evil deed, and as a remaining resultant thereof, they were burnt alive.

Foremost Titles Achieved

After the utter destruction of Queen Sāmāvatī and her 500 ladies-in-waiting, there arose words of praise among the four types of assembly: the assembly of monks, that of nuns, that of male lay disciples and that of female lay disciples, such that: "Khujjutarā was learned and although a woman, she could expound the doctrine that resulted in 500 ladies of the court attaining Stream-entry. [1470] Sāmāvatī was accomplished in the practice of dwelling in loving-kindness such that she was able to avert the arrow of King Udena through the diffusion of goodwill towards the king."

Later on, when the Buddha was staying at the Jetavana monastery and was naming female lay disciples, he declared, in respect of Khujjutarā:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ upāsikānaṁ bahussutānaṁ yad-idaṁ Khujjuttarā.*

Monastics, among my female lay-disciples who are learned, Khujjutarā is the foremost.

Khujjutarā earned the distinction because she was given by Queen Sāmāvatī and her ladies-in-waiting, after their attaining Stream-entry, the task of learning further about the Buddha's doctrine by listening from him, and repeating his sermons daily. This privilege of hers made her so immersed in the doctrine that she learnt the Dhamma by heart. This was why the Buddha named her the "foremost in learning."

As a trainee (*sekkha*), a noble one still learning by herself for Awakening, Khujjutarā was endowed with the four analytical knowledges pertaining to a trainee which enabled her to bring Awakening to Sāmāvatī and her ladies-in-waiting.

While the Buddha was staying in Kosambī, Khujjutarā went to the Buddha daily and listened to the sermons. On returning to the palace, she repeated what she had learnt to Sāmāvatī and her ladies-in-waiting. She would begin her discourses to them with these words: "Indeed the Fortunate One has said this; I have heard the Arahat say this …" The 112 discourses she made to the ladies have been put on record by the elders at the Council as the Buddha's words, under the title of Thus-saids (*Iti-vuttaka*).[329]

On that occasion, the Buddha said in respect of Sāmāvatī:

Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ upāsikānaṁ
Mettā-vihārīnaṁ yad-idaṁ Sāmāvatī.

Monastics, among my female lay-disciples who dwell in the absorption of loving-kindness (*mettā-jhāna*), Sāmāvatī is the foremost.

5. Uttarā Nandamātā

Aspiration in the Past

The future Uttarā Nandamātā was reborn into a rich family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. As she was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, she saw a female lay disciple being named as the foremost among those who dwelt in absorption (*jhāna*). She had a strong desire

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[329] See the commentary on the Thus-Saids (*Iti-vuttaka*).

for that distinction in some future existences. After making a great offering, she expressed her aspiration to the Buddha who predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled.

Discipleship in her Last Existence

The future Uttarā, after passing away from that existence, was reborn either in the Deva realm or the human realm for 100,000 aeons. During the time of Buddha Gotama, she was reborn as the daughter of Puṇṇasīha and his wife Uttarā, who were household servants to Sumana the householder in Rājagaha.

It was a festive occasion in Rājagaha on account of the auspicious day, according to the planets. Sumana the householder of Rājagaha called to Puṇṇasīha and said: "Puṇṇa, attending the festivities on this auspicious day and keeping the Observance Day precepts are actually matters that should not concern poor folks like you. Yet, I am going to give you an allowance for this festive day, and you may either go and enjoy yourself at the festival or do your ploughing as usual. Just let me know whichever you choose." Puṇṇasīha replied: "Master, let me first consult this matter with my wife."

At home, Puṇṇasīha told his wife Uttarā what his master had said to him. She said [1471] to him: "Dear husband, the householder is our master. Whatever the master says to you is to be taken as justified. But I think you ought not to miss a day's work for him." And Puṇṇasīha, agreeing with his wife's suggestion, yoked his oxen and went to the field to do the ploughing.

It so happened that on that great day for Puṇṇasīha, Ven. Sāriputta, after rising from his absorption in the attainment of cessation, reviewed the world as to who deserved his blessing. He saw the ripening of Puṇṇasīha's past merit as a sufficing condition for Awakening.

> "Sufficing condition for Awakening." For gaining the paths and fruitions (*magga-phala*), one must be endowed with past merit, for present favourable conditions by themselves cannot lead to one's Awakening. Likewise, an action that brings its result in the present existence also needs the support of sufficing past merit to fructify. Therefore, being a virtuous person with the right reasoning, the fortunate present conditions need sufficing past merit for one to gain Awakening (sub-commentary).

Ven. Sāriputta took his alms bowl and double robe at the time for alms round, and went to the place where Puṇṇasīha was ploughing. He stood at a short distance where he could be seen by Puṇṇasīha, who, on seeing him, stopped ploughing and went up to him and made his obeisance with the hands, knees and forehead touching the ground. Ven. Sāriputta, wishing to do good to the poor man, looked at him and asked him where some good water might be available. Puṇṇasīha thought that the venerable wanted to wash his face, and so he made a tooth-brush out of a creeper nearby and gave it to him. While Ven. Sāriputta was brushing his teeth, Puṇṇasīha took the alms bowl and water-strainer and fetched a bowl full of fresh clear water, which was properly strained.

After washing his face, Ven. Sāriputta went on his way to collect alms food. Then, it occurred to Puṇṇasīha thus: "Ven. Sāriputta had never come this way before. He came today probably to bring benefit to me. Oh, if my wife had brought my meal, how good it would be to offer it to Ven. Sāriputta!"

Puṇṇasīha's wife remembered that it was an auspicious day according to the planets. She had cooked a meal early in the morning with the ration which she received and carried it to her husband. On the way, she saw Ven. Sāriputta and thought to herself: "On previous days, although I saw him, I did not have anything to offer to Ven. Sāriputta, or when I had something to offer I did not meet him. Today, I have both the gift and the monastic at hand. I will cook another meal for my husband and offer this meal to Ven. Sāriputta now." Thinking thus, she put her cooked rice into Ven. Sāriputta's alms bowl and made her wish, saying: "May we be free from this life of poverty." Ven. Sāriputta responded: "May your wish be fulfilled," showed appreciation and returned to the monastery.

> Herein, it may be noted that in performing a deed of merit there arise many impulsion thought processes of great merit, each consisting of seven meritorious impulsions or sub-moments of the thought process. If conditions are favourable, the first of these seven impulsions brings immediate result even in the very present existence.
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> Four present conditions must be there for such an immediate resultant: The receiving monastic is an Arahat or at least a Non-returner; the gift is something righteously obtained; the supporter has a strong will or volition in making the gift, his intention is intense before the act, during the act,

> and he feels glad for it after the act; and the receiving monastic has just arisen from dwelling in the attainment of cessation. And above all, there must be sufficient past merit in the supporter.
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> In the case of Puṇṇasīha and his wife, all the required present and past conditions co-existed. His past merit to make him a rich man was ripe, so on that very day he reaped a harvest of solid lumps of gold from the field he was ploughing. This elevated him to the status of a rich man as conferred by the king.

Puṇṇasīha's wife returned to her home without proceeding to her husband and cooked [1472] another meal for her husband, and brought it to him. Fearing that her husband might be angry, and more so because his anger would nullify the good consequence of her good act, she began with some palliative words, saying: "Dear husband, I would request that you restrain yourself from anger for today."

"Why?" asked her husband, wondering.

"Dear husband, I met Ven. Sāriputta on my way and offered him your meal; I had to go home and cook another meal for you. That is why I am rather late today."

Puṇṇasīha said to her: "Dear wife, you have done the most pleasing thing. I myself have offered a tooth-brush and fresh water to him for washing his face early this morning. So, for this day, every need of Ven. Sāriputta has been supplied by us!" The couple were elated about their good deeds.

Puṇṇasīha then had his meal. After that he took a nap with his head on his wife's lap. On waking up, he saw all around him, where he had ploughed, a sea of yellow objects somewhat like the yellow flowers of the sponge gourd profusely scattered about. Surprised, he asked his wife: "Dear wife, what are those things?" Directing his finger at those yellow objects which were clods of earth: "Everywhere I turn, the earth look like gold!" his wife said: "Dear husband, perhaps you are having a hallucination after your hard work." But Puṇṇasīha insisted: "Look there yourself!" And she looked and exclaimed: "Dear husband, what you say is true. Those things do look like gold!"

Puṇṇasīha stood up and picking up a clod of the yellow earth, struck it against the shaft of his plough. It was a soft lump of gold and stuck to the shaft like a lump of molasses. He called and said to his wife, showing a sample of gold:

"Dear wife, other people have to wait three or four months to reap what they sow. For us, our meritorious deed, sown on the fertile soil that is Ven. Sāriputta have now brought us this harvest. Throughout this field of about two acres there is not a piece of earth the size of a myrobalan fruit which has not turned into gold."

"What should we do about this?" his wife asked.

"Dear wife," Puṇṇasīha replied, "we cannot hide this amount of gold." So saying, he picked up clods of earth, filled the vessel, which was used to carry his meal, with lumps of gold, and went to the palace and showed it to the king.

King: Where did you get this gold?

Puṇṇasīha: Great King, the field I ploughed today has been turned into clods of gold. May the king send his men take it.

King: What is your name?

Puṇṇasīha: Great King, my name is Puṇṇa.

Then the king ordered his men to yoke carts and go and collect the gold from Puṇṇasīha's field.

The Family of Puṇṇasīha attain Stream-Entry

The king's men collected the clods of gold, saying: "This is what the great past merit of the king has brought into being." The gold clods instantly changed back into clods of earth! Not a piece of gold was collected by them. They reported the matter to the king. King Bimbisāra told them: "In that case, men, say: 'This is what Puñña's great past merit has brought into being,' when you pick up those clods." The men went back, said the words as instructed by the king when collecting the gold and were successful in obtaining the gold.

The clods of gold, taken in many cartloads, were piled on the main square of the palace. When heaped up it was the height of that of a palmyra tree. The king summoned merchants and asked: "Whose house in the city holds a pile of gold as big as this?" The merchants answered: "Great King, there is no house that holds this much gold." The king further asked: "What should we do with Puṇṇa, who is the owner of this gold?" The merchants [1473] unanimously replied: "Great King, Puṇṇa should be given the title of Royal Treasurer." The king agreed. And

so Puṇṇasīha became the Royal Treasurer. All the gold gathered was handed over to him. On that same day, Puṇṇasīha's inauguration as Royal Treasurer was held in high ceremonial state.

Puṇṇasīha, now the Royal Treasurer, held a grand celebration on that auspicious acquisition of the royal title for seven days, when the Buddha and his Saṅgha were honoured with magnificent offerings. On the seventh day, after hearing the Buddha's discourse, in appreciation of his great generosity, all the members of his family: Puṇṇasīha, his wife Uttarā and their daughter Uttarā, were established in the fruition of Stream-entry.

This is the story of Puṇṇasīha, one of the five great rich men within the dominion of King Bimbisāra who had inexhaustible resources. The stories of the other four will be given in chapter 45c.

Puṇṇasīha's Family and the Sumana Family

Sumana the householder of Rājagaha, on learning that Puṇṇasīha had a grown-up daughter, sent messengers to ask for the hand of his daughter in marriage to his son. Puṇṇasīha gave a flat refusal, and Sumana became furious. "That fellow, who had been dependent on me, now disdains me because he has become a great man," he thought, conceited as he was of his own wealth. He sent this view of his to Puṇṇasīha through messengers. Puṇṇasīha was not to be outdone. He explained to Sumana's messengers: "Your master is being arrogant. Even though what he says is a fact, he should remember that a man should not be expected to always remain poor because he was born poor. Now, I am wealthy enough to buy householders like Sumana as slaves. But, I do not say this in derogation of his lineage. I still honour him as a worthy householder. My point is my daughter is a Stream-enterer, a noble one (*ariya*) in the Buddha's teaching. She spends one gold coin every day on flowers in her offerings to the Three Treasures. I cannot send my daughter to the house of a non-believer like Sumana."

When Sumana learnt the adamant stand taken by Puṇṇasīha, he changed his tone. He sent words to Puṇṇasīha, saying: "I do not wish to break our old ties of friendship. I will see to it that my daughter-in-law gets two gold coins worth of flowers everyday." Puṇṇasīha, being a man who knew the value of gratitude, agreed to Sumana's proposition and sent his daughter in marriage to Sumana's son.

Uttarā's Great Faith in Religious Practice

One day, Uttarā said to her husband: "Dear husband, in my parents' house I keep the Observance Day (*Uposatha*) precepts eight days every month. If you may agree, I would do that here too." Although she made her proposition in gentle words, her husband bluntly refused it. She had to put up with the refusal meekly. At the beginning of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) period, she sought his permission again to keep the Observance Day during the three-month period. Again she received a blunt refusal.

When two and a half months had gone by and only fifteen days were left of the Rains Retreat period, Uttarā asked her parents to send her 15,000 pieces of money, letting them know that in the confines of wedlock, she had not had a day to keep the Observance Day. She did not say how and why the money was needed. Her parents did not bother to ask why she needed the money but sent her the sum she asked for.

Uttarā then sent for Sirimā, a courtesan in Rājagaha, who was the sister of Jīvaka the physician, and said to her: "Dear Sirimā, as I intend to keep the Observance Day for fifteen days, I would request you to attend on my husband during these days for a fee of fifteen thousand coins." Sirimā accepted her offer. Uttarā's husband was only too happy about this arrangement and allowed her to keep the Observance Day for fifteen days.

Having obtained her husband's permission, Uttarā went about her meritorious deeds freely. She prepared food offerings for the Buddha early in the morning, assisted by her servants. After making offerings to the Buddha, and when the Buddha returned to the monastery, she kept the Observance Day precepts and would stay upstairs alone, reflecting on morality. Fifteen days passed peacefully. On the morning of the first waning of the last [1474] month of the three-month period, the day on which her observance was to end, she was preparing gruel and other items of food for offering to the Buddha. She was busy with the job since early morning.

> Such is the nature of sensual objects that through their continued enjoyment one tends to forget that they belong to another, and is tempted into thinking that they are one's own.

At that time, the householder's son, having fun with Sirimā on the upper storey of the mansion, drew aside the lace curtain of the window and looked down into the inside of the house. At the same time, Uttarā happened to look up into the window and her eyes met those of her husband. The husband smiled with the thought: "This Uttarā is looking like a being from the lower worlds of Niraya. How strange of her to deny herself the luxury of her status and to toil herself unnecessarily in the kitchen, mingling with the servants." Uttarā also smiled with the thought: "This son of the householder, being forgetful, thinks that this life of ease and comfort is lasting."

Sirimā, who saw the couple smile at each other, became furious with jealousy. "This slave, Uttarā, is flirting with my husband even in my presence," she thought to herself, for she had now an illusion that she and the householder's son were actually husband and wife. She ran down the stairs, fuming. Uttarā understood that Sirimā, after half a month of dominion of the house, considered it her own. So, she entered into the absorption of loving-kindness (*mettā-jhāna*) and stood sedately. Sirimā, rushing through the servants, took hold of a ladle, filled it with boiling oil from a pot which was cooking over the fire, and suddenly poured it over Uttarā's head. But, since Uttarā was dwelling in the absorption of loving-kindness, and her whole body was diffused with loving-kindness, she did not feel the heat of the oil which flowed over her body like water onto a lotus leaf.

At that moment, Uttarā's servant accosted Sirimā with abusive words, saying: "You slave woman, you are a mere hireling of our mistress. Yet after staying in this house for just fifteen days you try to rival our mistress." These words awakened Sirimā to her true position. She realized she had gone too far. She went to Uttarā, fell on her feet, and apologised to her, saying: "Dear madam, I had been reckless in my behaviour. Do forgive me!" Uttarā replied: "Dear Sirimā, I cannot accept your apology now. You must first obtain forgiveness from my father, the Buddha, before I can forgive you."

Just then, the Buddha and his company of monastics arrived and sat on the seats prepared for them. Sirimā approached the Buddha and prostrating herself at his feet, said: "Venerable sir, I have done some wrong against Uttarā. I apologised to her for it and she says that I must first obtain forgiveness from the Fortunate One before she will forgive me. May the Fortunate One forgive me." The

Buddha said: "Sirimā, I forgive you." Then she went to Uttarā and made obeisance to her as a token of her apology.

The Buddha, in his discourse in appreciation of the food offering, uttered the following verse (Dhp 223):

> Conquer the angry one by loving-kindness; conquer the wicked one by goodness; conquer the stingy one by generosity; conquer the liar by speaking the truth.

At the end of the discourse, Sirimā was established in the fruition of Stream-entry. After the attainment, she invited the Buddha to her residence the next morning and she made great offerings to the Buddha and his Saṅgha.

Thus goes the story of Uttarā the householder's daughter, who also was known as Nanda's mother after she gave birth to a son by the name of Nanda.

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery naming distinguished female lay-disciples, he declared: [1475]

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ upāsikānaṁ jhāyīnaṁ yad-idaṁ Uttarā Nandamātā.*
>
> Monastics, among my female lay-disciples who dwell in absorption (*jhāna*), Uttarā, the mother of Nanda, is the foremost.

6. Princess Suppavāsā the Koliyan

Aspiration in the Past

The future Suppavāsā was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While she was listening to a discourse by the Buddha, she saw a certain female lay disciple being named by him as the foremost in offering superior articles. She thus had a strong desire to become such a disciple in the future. After making extraordinary offerings, she aspired to that distinction in front of the Buddha, who predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled in her future existence.

Discipleship in her Last Existence

The future Suppavāsā, after being reborn in either the Deva realm or human realm for 100,000 aeons, was reborn as a princess of the Sakyan clan, in the city of Koliya. She was named Suppavāsā. When she was of marriageable age, she was given in marriage to a Sakyan prince. As the housewife in the household of the prince, she had the occasion to listen to a discourse by the Buddha which resulted in her attaining Stream-entry. Later, she gave birth to a son, named Sīvali.[330]

Foremost Title Achieved

At one time, Princess Suppavāsā, the mother of Sīvali, offered choicest food to the Buddha and his Saṅgha. After finishing the meal the Buddha taught a discourse in appreciation of the special offering, saying: "My female lay disciple Suppavāsā, in making this food offering, has in effect made five kinds of offering: life, good appearance, happiness, strength and intelligence.

Offering of life leads to longevity, either in the Deva realm or in the human realm. Offering of good appearance, happiness, strength and intelligence leads to the blessing of good appearance, happiness, strength and intelligence respectively either in the Deva realm or in the human realm." This was the occasion that became the ground for the Buddha's naming of Suppavāsā as a foremost female lay disciple.

On another occasion, when the Buddha was residing in the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī, and was naming distinguished female lay disciples, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ upāsikānaṁ*
> *paṇīta-dāyikānaṁ yad-idaṁ Suppavāsā Koliya-dhītā.*
>
> Monastics, among my female lay disciples who make gifts of the choicest quality, Suppavāsā, the Koliyan Princess, is the foremost.

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[330] Details of the episode of the birth of Sīvali have been described in chapter 43:18.

7. Suppiyā, who attended the Sick

Aspiration in the Past

The future Suppiyā was reborn into a worthy family in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. On one occasion, while listening to a discourse by the Buddha, she saw a certain female lay disciple being named as the foremost in looking after a sick monastic in an exceptional way. She had a strong desire to become such a disciple in her future existence. After making a great offering, she made her wish in front of the Buddha who predicted that her wish would be fulfilled in her future existence.

Discipleship in her Last Existence

After faring for 100,000 aeons in the Deva realm or the human realm, she was reborn into the family of a rich householder in the city of Bārāṇasī, during the time of Buddha Gotama, and was named Suppiyā. When she was of marriageable age she [1476] became the wife of a son of a householder.

It was then that the Buddha visited Bārāṇasī in the company of many monastics and was staying in the monastery at the Isipatana Deer Park. Suppiyā, the householder's wife, visited the Buddha and after listening to his discourse on her first visit, she was established in the fruition of Stream-entry.

Suppiyā's Astounding Zeal in Giving

One day, after listening to the Buddha's discourse, Suppiyā made a round of the monastic dwellings in the Deer Park to see to the needs of their residents. She came across a wan, enfeebled monastic who had taken some purgative. She asked him what sort of food or medicine would do him good. He replied: "Lay supporter, meat soup would do me good." Suppiyā said: "So be it, venerable sir, I will send some meat soup to you," and she left after paying respects to the monastic. The next day, she sent her servant to buy some meat in the bazaar, hoping to get some meat for sale to unspecified buyers. The servant could not find such meat and reported to her.

Suppiyā thought to herself: "I have promised to the sick monk to send meat soup. If I do not make good my word, he would feel ill at ease because he is not likely to get meat soup from anywhere else. So, I must see that he gets the meat soup

somehow." She went into her bedroom and cut a piece of flesh from her thigh, which she gave to her housemaid to cook some soup using the usual ingredients, such as chilli, onion and other condiments, and said: "Take this soup to the sick monk and offer it to him. If he asks about me, tell him that I am taken ill." The housemaid did as she was told.

The Buddha heard about the matter. The next morning, at the time of making the daily alms round, after being invited by her husband, he went to Suppiyā's house in the company of many monastics. After having sat at the special seat prepared for him, the Buddha asked the householder: "Where is Suppiyā?"

"She is unwell, venerable sir," answered the householder.

"Let her come to me, even though she is unwell."

"She is unable to walk, venerable sir."

"Then carry her."

The householder went and carried his wife, Suppiyā, when, to her surprise, at the instant she looked at the Buddha, the big wound on her thigh suddenly disappeared and was restored to its normal flesh with body hair. Thereupon, the householder and his wife, Suppiyā, exclaimed: "Marvellous it is! Astounding it is! Friend, great is the power of the Fortunate One. At the very instant of seeing the Fortunate One, such a deep wound is restored to natural flesh!" Feeling elated, they served the Buddha and his Saṅgha with the choicest food, specially prepared for offering.

After finishing the meal and teaching a discourse to the supporter, the Buddha returned to the monastery. Then, at the congregation of monastics, the Buddha asked: "Monastics, who asked for meat from Suppiyā the householder's wife?"

"I did, venerable sir," answered the sick monastic.

"Did she send the meat soup? Did you enjoy it?"

"Yes, venerable sir, I did."

"Did you ask what meat it is?"

"No, venerable sir, I did not."

The Buddha reprimanded the monastic showing many reasons and laid this rule of conduct for monastics: "Monastics, lay supporters, who have conviction in the Three Treasures, even give up their own flesh to the Saṅgha. Monastics, human flesh should not be consumed. Any monastic who consumes human flesh is liable to a breach of a heavy offense (*thullaccaya*). Monastics, it is improper for a monastic to [1477] consume meat without inquiring about it. He who does so without inquiring about it incurs a breach of a wrong doing (*dukkaṭa*) rule."[331] Thus took place the event leading to Suppiyā earning the title of foremost female lay-disciple.

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, when the Buddha was residing in the Jetavana monastery naming distinguished female lay disciples, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ upāsikānaṁ gilānupaṭṭhākīnaṁ yad-idaṁ Suppiyā upāsikā.*
>
> Monastics, among my female lay disciples who look after the sick monastics, Suppiyā is the foremost.

8. Kātiyānī of Unshakable Conviction

Aspiration in the Past

During the time of Buddha Padumuttara the future Kātiyānī was born into a rich man's family in the city of Haṁsavatī. She saw a certain female lay disciple being named as the foremost in unshakable conviction in the teaching. She admired that female lay disciple. After making extraordinary offerings, she aspired to the same recognition in front of another Buddha, and he predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled in a future existence.

Discipleship in her Last Existence

The future Kātiyānī, for 100,000 aeons was reborn either in the Deva realm or human realm, before she was reborn into the family of a householder in the town of Kuraraghara, during the time of Buddha Gotama. She was named

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[331] For details, refer to the Vinaya Great Chapter (*Mahā-vagga*).

Kātiyāni by her parents. When she came of age, she became a close friend of Kāḷī the householder's wife who was the mother of Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa (see chapter 43:17).

The Unshakable Conviction of Kātiyānī

On one occasion, Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa, on his return from the Buddha's monastery, was requested by his mother to reproduce the Buddha's words for her benefit. In compliance, he delivered a discourse in the community hall for Dhamma lectures at the town square. As he was starting his discourse from the raised platform, with his mother as the chief listener, Kātiyānī the householder in the company of her friend Kāḷī, arrived and reverentially listened to the discourse in the audience.

At that time a group of five hundred robbers who had dug a tunnel from the outskirts of the town to the house of Kātiyānī according to their secret markings made in the day, had reached the house. Their leader did not join them but was making personal inquiries into the activities of the townsfolk. He stood behind Kātiyānī in the assembly where Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa was teaching a discourse on the Dhamma.

Kātiyānī said to her female assistance: "Go, girl, get some oil from my house for the lamps. Let us light up the lamps at this meeting hall, and we shall share the merit with our friend Kāḷī in this way. The servant went to the house but on noticing the robbers who were lurking in the tunnel, she was scared and returned to the Assembly Hall without bringing the oil. She reported the matter to her mistress, saying: "Madam, there is a tunnel dug in our compound by robbers!" The robber chief heard the girl's urgent report to Kātiyānī and thought to himself: "If Kātiyānī were to go home in response to her maid's report, I will cut off her head immediately. If, on the other hand, she were to keep on listening to the discourse with attention, I will return her all the property which my men loot from her house."

Kātiyānī said to her maid in whispers: "Hush! The robbers will take only what they find in the house. I am listening to the Dhamma which is hard to be heard. Don't disturb and [1478] spoil it!"

When the robber chief heard Kātiyānī's words he pondered: "What a devout lady she is! If I were to take the property looted from the house of such a

meritorious lady, we would be devoured alive by the great earth." He hurried to Kātiyānī's residence, ordered his followers to return everything they had looted and went back with them to the Assembly Hall to listen to the discourse, taking their seats at the end of the audience.

Kātiyānī was established in the fruition of Stream-entry at the end of the discourse by Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa. When dawn came, the robber chief went to Kātiyānī and prostrating at her feet, said: "Dear madam, kindly forgive us for our fault." Kātiyānī asked: "What wrong have you done to me?" The robber chief admitted their plot to her. "I forgive you all," she said.

"Madam, your forgiveness does not exonerate us yet. As a matter of fact, we would request that your son, Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa, admit all 500 of us into the Saṅgha as novices." Kātiyānī took the gang to Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa, and she herself bore all the responsibilities regarding the four requisites for them. They were admitted into the order as novices by Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa. They strove to gain path-knowledge and ultimately became Arahats. This is the story of Kātiyānī the householder whose conviction in the Three Treasures was unshakable.

Foremost Title Achieved

On a later occasion, during the Buddha's residence at the Jetavana monastery, when he was naming distinguished female lay disciples according to their respective merits, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ upāsikānaṁ aveccappasannānaṁ yad-idaṁ Kātiyānī.*
>
> Monastics, among my female lay disciples who have unshakable conviction in the teaching, Kātiyānī is the foremost.

9. Nakulamātu

The story of Nakulamātu has already been told, when dealing with the story of Nakulapitu (see chapter 45a:10). Here we only need pay attention to Nakulamātu. Nakulapitu and Nakulamātu were of the same aspiration in the time of Buddha Padumuttara. When the future Nakulapitu was a lay disciple, he witnessed a lay disciple being designated as the foremost among lay disciples

who were close to the Buddha. He made a great offering and aspired to that designation. Likewise, when the future Nakulamātu witnessed a female lay disciple being designated as the foremost among female lay-disciple who were close to the Buddha, she made great offerings and aspired to that title.[332] Nakulamātu, like Nakulapitu, was declared by the Buddha:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ upāsikānaṁ vissāsikānaṁ yad-idaṁ Nakulamātā gahapatānī.*
>
> Monastics, among the female lay disciples who are close to me, Nakulamātu is the foremost.

10. Kāḷī, the Disciple of Kuraraghara

Aspiration in the Past

The future Kāḷī was reborn into the family of a rich man in the city of Haṁsavatī, during the time of Buddha Padumuttara. While listening to a discourse by the Buddha, she saw a female lay disciple being named by him as the foremost in devotion to the Buddhas, even before meeting the Buddha. She strongly aspired to be such a person in her future existence. After making great offerings to the Buddha, she made her aspiration in front of him. The Buddha predicted that her aspiration would be fulfilled in her future life. [1479]

Discipleship in her Last Existence

The future Kāḷī, after being reborn in either the Deva realm or human realm for 100,000 aeons, was reborn as a daughter of a householder in Rājagaha, during the time of Buddha Gotama. She was named Kāḷī by her parents.

When she came of marriageable age, she was given in marriage to a son of a householder of Kuraraghara, which was a market town in Avanti province in the Deccan and had to go and live with her parents-in-law in that town. After a time, she became pregnant.

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[332] Since both stories are identical, the commentary does not give a separate account of Nakulamātu.

When her pregnancy advanced, Kāḷī considered it unwise to have the child born at a place away from her own parents' home, and thus she went back to Rājagaha. Then, on one night, the full moon of July (*Āsāḷha*) 528 BCE, the day the Discourse setting the Dhamma Wheel Turning (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*, SN 56.11) was taught, at midnight, she happened to overhear the Devas, Sātāgiri and Hemavata, discussing the salutary effects of the Three Treasures above her mansion, in mid-air. She was instilled with devotion for the Buddha so much so that even without having met him, she was established in the fruition of Stream-entry (see chapter 10).

Kāḷī was the first among the females who attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*) and became a noble disciple so that she was the eldest among the Buddha's female disciples. That very night, she gave birth to a child, the future Ven. Soṇa Kuṭikaṇṇa, and after staying at her parents' house for as long as she liked, she returned to Kuraraghara.

Foremost Title Achieved

On one occasion, when the Buddha sat in glory at the congregation of monastics, in the Jetavana monastery and was naming distinguished female lay disciples, he declared:

> *Etad-aggaṁ bhikkhave mama sāvikānaṁ upāsikānaṁ anussavappasannānaṁ yad-idaṁ Kāḷī upāsikā Kuraraghārika.*
>
> Monastics, among my female lay disciples who are devoted to me, even without having met me, Kāḷī of Kuraraghara is the foremost. [1480]

45c: Rich Men with Inexhaustible Resources

[Within the area of Rājagaha, King Bimbisāra's domain there were these five householders with inexhaustible resources: Jotika, Meṇḍaka, Jaṭila, Kākavaliya and Puṇṇa. Puṇṇa's story has been told above in chapter 45b:5. The other four are told here.]

1. Jotika, the Rich Householder

[This story is based on the commentary to Dhp 416.]

His Past Existence as a Sugar Cane Planter

In times past, prior to the time of Buddha Vipassī who appeared 91 aeons previous to the present aeon, there lived in the city of Bārāṇasī two rich brothers who were sugar cane planters and who had a number of workers in the plantation. One day, the younger brother went to the plantation and cut up two stems of cane, one for himself and the other for his brother. He carefully wrapped the ends with leaves so as to contain the juice.

> In those times, sugar-cane did not need to be crushed for its juice but by merely cutting up the stem and hanging it up on one end, the juice flowed down freely.

On his way home, he met a Paccekabuddha who had just arisen from dwelling in the attainment of cessation and who, on reviewing the world, saw the younger of the two brothers as the person deserving his blessing since he was in a position to make a meritorious gift. Accordingly, he stood in front of the sugar-cane planter, after having left his Gandhamādana abode, travelling through the air carrying his alms bowl and double robe. The householder was delighted to see the Paccekabuddha and had great devotion to him. He asked the revered one to wait a moment on his shawl which he placed carefully on a high spot. Then he requested him to tilt the alms bowl to receive the sugar-cane juice which he released by unwrapping the stem of the cane. The juice from one stem filled the alms bowl.

The Paccekabuddha drank the sugar-cane juice. The householder, having enjoyed much satisfaction in his gift of the juice to the Paccekabuddha, now thought of making a second gift of the cane which he had carried for his elder

brother. “I might pay its price to him, or if he refuses payment, perhaps I will share the merit with him,” he thought to himself.

He said to the Paccekabuddha: “Venerable sir, kindly tilt the alms bowl to receive the juice from another cane.” He filled the alms bowl with the juice by unwrapping the second cane. Herein, the younger brother was carrying the cane for his elder brother who did not know about it. By using it as he liked, by giving it to the Paccekabuddha, it never occurred to him that his elder brother might cut another stem for himself. Such was his honest, simple nature.

The Paccekabuddha, having taken the juice from the first cane, reserved that from the second one for a fellow Paccekabuddha. As he remained still seated, the younger brother knew that the Paccekabuddha was not going to take another drink. He made obeisance to him and said: “Venerable sir, for this offering of sugar cane juice, may I enjoy sensual pleasure in the Deva realm and the human world and ultimately realize the Dhamma that you have realized.” The Paccekabuddha said: “May your wish be fulfilled.” After saying words of appreciation for the offering in two verses beginning with these words, he rose into the air in the presence of the householder and returned to the Mount Gandhamādana where he offered the sugar-cane juice to the 500 Paccekabuddhas. He willed that this good deed be seen by the supporter.

After witnessing the miraculous power of the Paccekabuddha, the younger brother went to his elder brother who asked him where he had been. He told him that he had been inspecting the plantation. The elder brother said: “What use is your going on inspection since you do not even bother to bring a sample.” The younger brother replied: “Yes, brother, I did bring a cane for you but I met a Paccekabuddha on my way home and offered the cane juice to the Paccekabuddha. After that I had an urge to make a further offering with the other cane, which was meant for you. I thought that I would pay you the cost of it, or else I would share the merit with you and made another [1481] offering of the juice out of the other cane to the Paccekabuddha. Now, brother, what do you say, would you take the cost of the cane meant for you, or would you share the merit?”

“What did the Paccekabuddha do with your offering?”

"He drank the first offering on the spot, and brought back the second one, which he offered to the 500 Paccekabuddhas at the Gandhamādana monastery where he returned by his psychic power."

The elder brother was thrilled to hear the meritorious deed of his younger brother. He said: "May my good deed, through my brother, result in the realization of the Dhamma which the Paccekabuddha had realized." Thus, while the younger brother aspired to glorious existence in the Deva realm and the human world, and then the realization of Nibbāna; the elder brother aspired to becoming an Arahat straight away. These were the past aspirations of the two brothers.

Another Round of Existence as Householder Brothers

The two brothers lived to the full lifespan of the times. After passing away from that existence they were reborn in the Deva realm during the interim period of innumerable years, an infinite period between the time of Buddha Phussa and that of Buddha Vipassī. While they were still living in the Deva realm, Buddha Vipassī appeared in the world. They passed away from that Deva existence and were reborn as two brothers in the family of a householder in Bandumatī. The elder brother was reborn as the elder one and the younger as the younger again. The elder brother was named Sena, the younger, Aparājita, by their parents.

When they came of age, they succeeded to their family estate. As they were managing the family affairs, there arose a clamour of noises throughout the city of Bandumatī, such as: "Virtuous persons, the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha have appeared in the world, like the sun and the moon! Give in generosity! Perform deeds of merit! Today is the eighth day of the month, an Observance Day (*Uposatha*). Today is the fourteenth day of the month, an Observance Day. Today is the fifteen day of the month, an Observance Day. Keep the Observance Day precepts. Listen to the expositions of the Dhamma."

These exhortations were ringing through the city on the appropriate days. They were made by devout disciples of the Buddha. And the people would piously respond. In the morning, they would make alms giving and in the afternoon they would go to the Buddha's monastery to listen to his sermons. Sena joined the devotees in going to the Buddha's monastery to listen to his discourse. He sat at the end of the audience.

Buddha Vipassī knew the devout tendency of Sena the householder and taught a discourse in the usual graduated levels beginning from the merit in giving, the merit in morality, and so on. At the end of that discourse, Sena was so enthusiastic about taking up the religious life that he requested the Buddha to admit him into the Saṅgha, the Buddha said to him: "Lay supporter, are there relatives whose permission you need to obtain?"

"Yes, venerable sir, I have," replied Sena.

"If so, first get their permission."

Then, Sena went to his younger brother Aparājita and said: "Younger brother, you become the sole successor to our family estate from now."

"But what are you going to do?" Aparājita queried.

"I am going to become a monastic under the Buddha."

"Dear brother, since the death of our mother, I have regarded you as my mother; since the death of our father, I have regarded you as my father. Our family estate is a vast one. You can do meritorious deeds living in the house. Do not go away to be a monastic."

"I have heard the Buddha's discourse. It is not possible to practice the doctrine perfectly as a householder, I must be a monastic now. Stay back, dear brother," Sena did not allow any further protestations and, leaving behind Aparājita, he went to Buddha Vipassī and was admitted into the Saṅgha, first as a novice, and later as a full-fledged monastic. With [1482] diligence in the monastic practice, he soon became an Arahat.

Donation of a Perfumed Chamber for Buddha Vipassī

Aparājita the householder celebrated his elder brother's going forth into the monastic life with big offerings to the Buddha and his Saṅgha for seven days. Then paying respects to his elder brother, he said: "Venerable sir, you have renounced the world for the sake of liberation from repeated existence. As for me, I have not been able to break the bonds of sense pleasures. Advise me as to what sort of meritorious deeds should be performed in a big way."

"Good, good, you wise man," said Ven. Sena, "build a private chamber for the Buddha."

"Very well, venerable sir," responded Aparājita.

He procured various kinds of choicest timber, from which he made posts for the building and seven kinds of precious metals were used to embellish each post for the building. The roofing also was embellished with the seven kinds of precious metals.

Portico to the Buddha's Perfumed Chamber

During the construction of the private chamber for the Buddha, Aparājita Junior, nephew of Aparājita the householder, asked his uncle to allow him to participate in the construction so as to have a share of merit. Uncle Aparājita refused, saying that he could not share the merit with anyone.

Aparājita Junior, being repeatedly refused by his uncle to participate in the construction of the brick monastery, built a separate portico in front of the main building. That Aparājita Junior was reborn as Meṇḍaka the householder during the time of Buddha Gotama. His story will be told after this one.

The Grandeur of the Buddha's Perfumed Chamber

Special features of the brick monastery for use as the Buddha's private chamber included three big windows ornately finished with the seven precious stones. Directly against each of them, Aparājita the householder dug three square lotus ponds of concrete beds which were filled with scented waters, and planted with the five kinds of lotus. The idea being to let the fragrant pollen from the lotus flowers constantly waft through the air towards the Buddha.

The pinnacles were plated with gold sheets and its peak was finished in coral. Its roofing was of emerald glass tiles. The pinnacle had the appearance of a dancing peacock with its feathers in full display. The compound of the monastery was filled with the seven precious stones to a thickness knee-deep, some wrought as ornaments, some in their natural state.

Donating the Monastery to the Buddha

When the brick monastery was completed in all its grandeur, Aparājita the householder said to his elder brother, Ven. Sena: "Venerable sir, the brick monastery is finished. I would like to see it occupied by the Buddha as his private chamber. That would bring me much merit, I understand." Ven. Sena informed the Buddha about the wish of his younger brother.

Buddha Vipassī rose from his seat, went to the newly built monastery, and seeing the whole compound filled with precious stones up to knee-deep, stood at the entrance. Aparājita the householder invited the Buddha to enter the monastic compound but the Buddha did not move and remained standing at the entrance. Thrice, the householder requested the Buddha to go in, but to no avail. On the third time the Buddha glanced at Ven. Sena, who knew from that glance the Buddha's wish. So he said to his younger brother: "Go to the Buddha and say to the Buddha: 'Venerable sir, these precious stones will be solely my responsibility. May the Fortunate One reside here without bothering about them.' " Hence, Aparājita the householder went to the Buddha, made obeisance to him with the hands, knees and forehead touching the ground, and said: "Venerable sir, just as men would leave the shade of the tree unconcernedly, or ferry across a river without thinking about the ferryboat [1483] they have used, so also, may the Fortunate One enter and stay in the monastery unconcerned about these precious stones."

> The Buddha refused to enter the monastic compound because of the precious stones. The Buddha's monastery was open door to all visitors, coming in the mornings as well as in the afternoon. The Buddha could not keep watch and ward over the precious stones. Hence the Buddha considered: "If visitors take them away and the householder Aparājita might put the blame on me for the loss he would be incurring grave consequences leading to the four lower worlds (*apāya*), these considerations made the Buddha refuse to enter.

When Aparājita made it clear that precious stones should not bother the Buddha for they were the sole responsibility of the supporter Aparājita only, the Buddha agreed and entered the monastery. The supporter placed some watchmen at the monastic compound with the words: "Men, if visitors were to collect these precious stones inside pockets or baskets, or sacks, you must prevent them from doing so but, if they were to grab them in their hands only, let them do so."

Aparājita let every household in the city know that he had strewn about precious jewels up to knee-deep inside the monastic compound of the Buddha's Perfumed Chamber, and invited all and sundry who had listened to the Buddha's discourse to take them. The poor were expected to take two fistfuls while the rich should take only one fistful. The householder's idea was to give incentive to those who had no natural inclination to go to the Buddha's monastery and attend the

sermons and thus help them towards emancipation. He had also the good will to extend his gift to the naturally inclined devotees.

The people abided by the supporter's stipulation about the gifts at the Buddha's monastery: The poor enjoying two fistfuls of the treasures, the rich only one fistful. When the precious stones were exhausted, a second round up to knee-deep, were strewn about. And when the second was exhausted, the third round followed.

An important event then occurred. Aparājita had a strong idea: He wanted visitors to the Buddha to take delight in watching the golden radiance emitted by the Buddha, side by side with the glow emitted by a ruby of priceless quality, of the size of a bitter cucumber which he had placed at the Buddha's feet. The people enjoyed the wondrous sight of the two kinds of radiance as desired by the householder.

The Ruby is stolen by a Brahmin

One day, a Brahmin, who was a non-believer in the Buddha, went before the Buddha with the intention of stealing the ruby. From the time he went close to the Buddha, past the audience, Aparājita had an inkling of the Brahmin's evil intent. "How good it would be if this Brahmin would not snatch away my ruby!" he thought to himself.

The Brahmin pretended to make obeisance to the Buddha, stretching out his hands towards the Buddha's feet and suddenly snatched the ruby, hid it in the fold of his lower garment, and left. Aparājita, the supporter of the Great Monastery, could not stand the brazenness of the Brahmin. When the Buddha had ended his discourse, he approached him and said: "Venerable sir, I had strewn the monastic compound with precious stones up to knee-deep three times, and had no grudge against those people who took them away. In fact, I was pleased with my own gift-making. But today I had forebodings about the Brahmin's visit to the Fortunate One and I had wished that he would not steal the ruby. My foreboding has been proved correct. I cannot keep my mind calm and clear."

Aparājita's Aspiration

Buddha Vipassī said to Aparājita: "Lay supporter, it is possible for one to prevent pilferage of one's property, is it not?" Catching the meaning of the

Buddha's broad hint, the householder made obeisance to the Buddha and made his aspiration in these terms: "Venerable sir, from today onwards, let no one, be they 100 kings or robbers, be able to rob me, or in any way dispossess me of any of my property, be it as trifling as a strand of thread. Let no fire burn my property. Let no flood wash [1484] away my property," and the Buddha said: "May all your wishes be fulfilled."

Aparājita held great celebrations to mark the donation of the grand monastery. For nine whole months he offered food to 6,800,000 monastics at the monastery. On the day of libation, he donated a set of three robes to each of the monastics. The junior-most monastic received, on that occasion, robe-material worth 100,000.

His Last Existence as Jotika the Householder

When Aparājita passed away after a lifetime of meritorious deeds, he was reborn as a Deva. And for 91 aeons he was never reborn in the four lower worlds. During the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn in the family of a rich householder. After nine and a half months of conception in his mother's womb, on the day he was born, all weaponry in Rājagaha blazed like flames, and all jewellery worn on the person of the citizens gleamed like the glow of the sun, so that the whole city was glowing.

The householder, who was the father of the boy, went to see the king. King Bimbisāra asked him: "Householder, today all weaponry are blazing and the whole city is glowing. Do you know what has caused this?"

"Yes, I do, Great King," replied the householder.

"What is it?"

"A new royal servant of your majesty was born in my house. It is due to the great past merit of my infant son that this strange phenomenon has happened."

"How is it, householder? Is your son going to become a robber?"

"No, Great King, he will not become a robber. He is endowed with vast past merit."

"In that case, bring him up with care. Let him have 1,000 pieces of money for his nursing."

From then onwards, the king gave 1,000 pieces of money every day towards the boy's upkeep. On the day of the boy's naming, he was given the name Jotika, "Luminous," signifying the glow that marked his birth.

Sakka's Creation of Jotika's House

When Jotika came of age, his parents cleared a site for building a house for him. At that moment, Sakka's crystal seat warmed up by way of signalling some event called for his attention. He reviewed the world and saw that people were marking out a site for building a house for Jotika. Sakka thought to himself: "This man Jotika is no ordinary man who has to live in a house built by human hands. I must see to a proper residence for him," and he descended to the human world in the guise of a carpenter. He asked the men at the site: "Men, what is this all about?"

"We are pegging out the house to be built for Jotika's residence."

"Then, make way men, Jotika is not the kind of man who has to live in a house built by human hands."

So saying, he intently looked at a stretch of land that was fourteen acres wide.

1. The land became flat and smooth like a meditation device for meditating on the earth element.

2. Then, Sakka, looking intently at the chosen site, willing in his mind: "Let there arise, opening up the earth, a seven-tiered mansion finished with the seven kinds of precious stones," and instantly a seven-tiered mansion complete with the seven kinds of precious stones arose opened up the earth.

3. Next, Sakka, looking intently at the mansion, willing in his mind: "Let there appear seven walls finished with the seven kinds of precious stones around the mansion," and instantly the seven walls appeared around the mansion. [1485]

4. Next, Sakka, looking intently at the walls, willing in his mind: "Let there appear wishing trees inside each of the seven walls," and instantly there appeared wishing trees inside each of the seven walls.

5. Next, Sakka looked intently at the mansion and willed in his mind: "Let there appear four gold jars full of precious stones at each of the four corners of the mansion," and his wish materialized.

> In this connection, Jotika's four treasure jars are different from the treasure jars that usually appeared for Bodhisattas, in that in the latter case, the four jars were of various sizes at their mouths varying from one league in diameter: ¾ league, ½ league, and ¼ league; they had their bottoms reaching down to the base of the great earth. In the former case, the size of the mouths of the jars is not mentioned in the old commentaries, but they contained jewels about the size of palmyra fruits whose faces have been cut off.

6. At the four corners of the great mansion, four sugar cane plants of solid gold appeared, each with a stem the thickness of a palmyra tree. The leaves of the trees were emerald. These trees bore witness to Jotika's immense past merit.

The seven entrances to the seven walls were guarded by seven Yakkha generals with their armies: at the first gate, Yamakoḷi was in charge with 1,000 Yakkhas under him; at the second gate, Uppala was in charge with 2,000 Yakkhas under him; at the third gate, Vajira was in charge with 3,000 Yakkhas under him; at the fourth gate, Vajirabāhu was in charge with 4,000 Yakkhas under him; at the fifth gate, Kasakanda was in charge with 5,000 Yakkhas under him; at the sixth gate, Kaṭattha was in charge with 6,000 Yakkhas under him and at the seventh gate, Disāpāmukha was in charge with 7,000 Yakkhas under him.

King Bimbisāra makes Jotika Royal Treasurer

When King Bimbisāra heard the news of the Jotika phenomenon comprising the arising through the earth of the bejewelled seven-storied mansion, the seven walls and its great gates, and the appearance of the four great gold jars, and so on, he made him the Royal Treasurer, and had all the paraphernalia of the office such as, the white umbrella, etc., sent to him. From that time, Jotika was widely known as the Royal Treasurer.

The lady who had been Jotika's partner in doing meritorious deeds in the past now happened to be reborn in the northern island continent. The Devas took the lady, named Sakulakāyī, from her native island continent and installed her in Jotika's seven-storied mansion. She brought with her a small measure of rice and three crystals with heat potential in them. This quantity of rice and the three stones provided all the cooked food throughout their lives. The small vessel that contained the original rice could hold any quantity of fresh rice, even as much as 100 cart-loads of them could be poured into it!

When the rice was to be cooked, it was put into a cooking pot and placed on the three crystals, which served as a fireplace and which glowed with heat until the rice became properly cooked and then the glow faded out. When curries and other dishes were cooked, the three crystals worked for the same purpose. Thus the Jotika couple never had the use of fire for cooking. For lighting as well, they never used fire because they had emerald and rubies that glowed and gave sufficient light.

The great opulence of Jotika became well-known throughout the whole of Jambudīpa and people thronged to his mansion to admire it. Some came from afar using carts and other vehicles. Jotika entertained them to the special quality rice that grew only in the northern island continent which was cooked on the three crystals. He also asked his visitors to take away whatever they fancied at the wishing trees. Further, he would ask them to take away gold, silver and jewels from the gold jar whose mouth was one quarter of a league wide. All visitors from Jambudīpa enjoyed Jotika's munificence. It is especially remarkable that the gold jar never depleted even for an inch but always remained full to its brim. This wonderful phenomenon was the result of [1486] Jotika's munificence in his past life as Aparājita during the time of Buddha Vipassī when he let the visitors to the Buddha's monastery to take away the seven types of precious metals and precious stones strewn knee-deep about the precincts of the monastery repeatedly for three times.

King Bimbisāra visits Jotika's Mansion

King Bimbisāra wanted to go and see Jotika's mansion but, during the earlier period, when there were many visitors making their visits and enjoying the munificence of Jotika, the king did not go there. Only when most people had been there and there were only a few visitors, the king gave word to Jotika's father that he would pay a visit to Jotika's mansion. The householder told his son about the king's intention, and Jotika said the king would be welcome. King Bimbisāra went to Jotika's mansion with a big retinue. When he met a maid-servant who was a sweeper and refuse-scavenger at the first entrance, she extended her hand to the king as a welcoming gesture, but the king mistook her to be the wife of the Treasurer Jotika and out of shyness did not hold her hand. At the later entrances too, although the maid-servants extended their hands to the king, the king did not hold their hands for the same reason. Thus it is to be

seen that at Jotika's residence even maid-servants had the appearance of the wives of the Treasurer.

Jotika welcomed the king and, after saluting him, followed him. The king dared not step on the emerald flooring which seemed to him like a deep chasm. He had doubts about Jotika's loyalty, for he thought that his Treasurer was plotting against him by digging a great pit. Jotika had to prove his innocence by saying: "Great King, this is no pit. Let me go ahead, would your majesty come after me?" Then only the king found that everything was well. He inspected the mansion, from the emerald flooring upwards at the great mansion.

> Prince Ajātasattu had nefarious thoughts at that time. Prince Ajātasattu was by his father's side, holding his hand. It occurred to young Ajātasattu thus: "How foolish my father is! For he lets his subjects enjoy a greater style of life than himself. The man of inferior caste is living in a bejewelled mansion while the king himself lives in a palace built of timber. If I were king, I would never, even for a day, allow this rich man to live in this mansion."

Even while the king was inspecting the grandeur of the upper stories, meal time arrived. He said to Jotika: "Treasurer, we shall have our morning meal here." Jotika replied: "I know, Great King. I have made all the arrangements for it."

Then King Bimbisāra took a bath with sixteen potfulls of scented water. He sat on the seat usually used by Jotika. He was offered some water to wash his hands. Then a bowl of thick milk rice was placed before him in a golden bowl, which was worth 100,000 pieces of money. The king thought it to be a course of his meal and prepared to take it. Jotika said to him: "Great King, this is not for eating. It is placed here to warm the rice that is to come." The attendants of Jotika brought the rice cooked from the special rice from the northern island continent in another golden bowl, which was worth 100,000 pieces of money. They put the rice bowl above the bowl of milk rice which provided constant steamy heat to the rice, thereby making it palatable throughout the meal.

The king relished the delicious rice brought from the northern island continent so much so that he did not know when to stop eating. Jotika said to him after saluting him: "Great King, that should be enough, if you eat more you will not be able to digest it." The king said: "Are you making much of your rice?" Jotika replied: "Not at all, Great King, for I am feeding the same rice to all members of your retinue. I only fear disrepute."

“What kind of disrepute?”

“If due to too much eating of this food, which is especially nutritious, your majesty would feel lethargic on the next day, then people might say that I had fed you with this food and that I might have drugged you with the food.”

“In that case, clear the table. Give me the drinking water.”

After the king had finished his meal, all the members of his retinue were fed with the same [1487] rice.

Then, a friendly exchange of pleasantries took place between the host and his king, whereupon the latter inquired after the wife of the host.

“Don’t you have a wife in your household?”

“Yes, your majesty, I have a wife.”

“Where is she now?”

“She is sitting in our private chamber. She does not come out because she does not know that your majesty has come.”

Jotika thought it only proper that his wife should come and meet the king and went to his wife, saying: “The king is paying us a visit. Ought you not see him?” Sakulakāyī in her reclining posture in their private chamber, replied: “My lord, what sort of person is a king?”

“The king is the person who rules over us.” Sakulakāyī was not pleased to learn that and did not want to hide her displeasure. So she said: “We had done meritorious deeds in the past in a wrong way. That is why we are being ruled over by someone. Our volition in the past in doing good deeds was not genuine so that, although we are wealthy, we are born as subjects to someone. Our gifts must have been made without conviction about the law of productive deeds and their results. Our present state of being subjects of some ruler is the result of our practice of generosity with sham conviction. But now, what is expected of me?” Jotika said: “Bring the palm-leaf fan, and fan the king.”

Sakulakāyī obediently did as she was told. As she sat fanning the king, the odour that wafted from the king’s headdress hurt her eyes and tears flowed from them. The king, seeing her tears, said to Jotika: “Treasurer, womenfolk are short of wisdom. She is weeping probably because she thinks the king is going to

confiscate your property. Tell your wife that I have no design on your property. Let her mind be set at ease."

Jotika said to the King: "Great King, my wife is not weeping."

"But, why do those tears flow from her eyes?"

"Great King, the odour coming from your majesty's headdress hurts her eyes, and so the tears fall. She has a most delicate constitution. She has never used fire in her everyday existence. She gets heat and light from crystals and gems. As for your majesty, you are used to the light of oil lamps, I presume."

"That's true, Treasurer."

"In that case, Great King, from now on, may your majesty live by the light of a ruby." And he presented the king with a priceless gem, the size of a bitter cucumber. King Bimbisāra studied Jotika's mansion closely and, uttering his sincere comment: "Great indeed is Jotika's wealth," he departed.

Jotika's Spiritual Urgency and Awakening

Later on, Prince Ajātasattu, under the evil influence of Devadatta, imprisoned his own father, King Bimbisāra, and made him unable to walk inside his cell by cutting open the soles of his feet and exposing the wounds to burning charcoals, and starving him to death. This he did to usurp the throne. No sooner had he ascended the throne, than he took his big army to confiscate Jotika's mansion by force. But, as his army came in front of the jewelled wall, the reflection of his own forces on the wall looked as if the guards of Jotika were about to attack him, and he dared not go near the wall.

Jotika was keeping the Observance Day (*Uposatha*) at that time. He had finished his meal early in the morning and gone to the Buddha's monastery where he listened to the Buddha's discourse. Thus, while Ajātasattu was burning with greed, Jotika was enjoying the serenity of the [1488] Buddha's company.

> The moral of this is: "Just as foolish ones, ruffians blinded by inordinate greed, fret and fume and torment themselves, while the wise ones, cherishing the Dhamma, find mental happiness and physical ease."

When King Ajātasattu's army approached the first wall of Jotika's mansion, Yamakoḷī, the guardian Deva of the gate raised a fierce alarm: "Now, where will you escape?" and routed the king's army which fled in confusion in every

direction. Ajātasattu ran towards the Buddha's monastery in a haphazard manner.

When Jotika saw the king, he rose and went to him and asked: "Great King, what's up?" The king said furiously: "You detailed your men to fight me while you come here and pretend to be attending to the Buddha's discourse. How is that?"

"Great King, did you go to my place to confiscate it by force?" inquired Jotika.

"Yes, I did," said the king angrily.

Jotika coolly said to him: "Great King, not to speak of yourself alone, 1,000 monarchs will find it impossible to take my mansion by force without my consent."

"Are you going to be king?" he felt greatly insulted by Jotika's remarks.

But Jotika replied coolly: "No, no, Great King. No one can take any of my property, not even a strand of thread, without my consent. And that includes kings."

"I am the king. I can take whatever you possess whether you consent or not."

"In that case, Great King, here are 20 rings around my fingers. I do not give them to you. Now, try and take them."

King Ajātasattu was a man of great physical prowess. He could leap up, while sitting, to a height of eighteen cubits and while standing, up to a height of 80 cubits. He attempted to remove the rings from Jotika's fingers but was unable even to take one. His kingly dignity was thus gravely impaired. Jotika now said to him: "Great King, if you would spread out your dress, I will show you." And he straightened his fingers towards the king's dress, which was spread in front of him, and all the 20 rings readily dropped onto it. He said: "Great King, you have seen for yourself that your majesty cannot confiscate my property against my wish." He was greatly edified by the encounter with the king. A sense of spiritual urgency arose in him and he said to the king: "May your majesty allow me to become a monastic."

The king thought that if he renounced his home life and became a monastic, his great mansion would easily fall into his hands, so he allowed the request promptly. Jotika was admitted into the Saṅgha at the feet of the Buddha. Not

long afterwards, with due diligence, he became an Arahat and became known as Ven. Jotika. At the instant of his attaining Awakening, his great mansion and other items of wealth suddenly disappeared. His wife Sakulakāyī was sent back by the Deva to her native place, the northern island continent.

One day, some monastics asked Ven. Jotika: "Friend, do you have attachment to the great mansion and Sakulakāyī?" Ven. Jotika replied: "No, friend, I do not have any attachment." The monastics went to the Buddha and said: "Venerable sir, Ven. Jotika falsely claims Awakening."

Then, the Buddha said: "Monastics, it is true that there is no attachment to the great mansion and his wife in the mental state of Ven. Jotika, who is an Arahat." Further the Buddha spoke this verse (Dhp 416):

> He, who in this world has given up craving that arises at the six sense doors and has renounced the home-life to become a monastic, who has exhausted craving for existence, and made an end of all forms of existence, him I call a Brahmin.

By the end of this discourse a large multitude of people attained path-knowledge at the various levels. [1489]

2. Meṇḍaka, the Householder

Aspiration in the Past

The future Meṇḍaka was a nephew of Aparājita the householder, who lived in the days of Buddha Vipassī, 91 aeons previous to the present aeon. His name also was Aparājita. His uncle Aparājita started construction of a brick monastery as a private chamber for the Buddha. Then, Aparājita Junior went to his uncle Aparājita and asked that he be allowed to be co-builder of the monastery. The uncle would not accept the idea, for he did not want to share the merit with anyone. Aparājita Junior then thought of building a portico in front of his uncle's main building. He put up the portico with timber. The posts for the building were each finished in silver, in gold, in rubies, and in the seven kinds of precious stones. Likewise, the beams, rafters, roof-trusses, purlin, trellis-work, door-leaves and roofing tiles were finished in gold and silver and precious stones. He planned the portico to be used by the Buddha.

On the top of the portico were pinnacles made with gold sheet roofing and coral. 1) The centre portico was occupied by an Assembly Hall with a raised platform for the Buddha which had a floor frame and legs of solid gold; 2) the base of the legs were sculpted in the form of golden goats (*meṇḍaka*); 3) the leg-rest had, at its base, a pair of golden goats; 4) and there were also six golden goats placed around the Assembly Hall; 5) the flooring for the seating of the orator was woven with cotton thread at the base, golden thread in the middle, and finished with beads of pearl; 6) the back of the orator's seat was of solid sandalwood.

When the construction of the portico and all the appointments in it were finished to the satisfaction of the supporter Aparājita Junior, a four month long ceremony, marking the donation was held, where the Buddha and 6,800,000 monastics were offered alms food. On the last day, sets of three robes were donated to the Saṅgha, even the junior-most monastic received robes worth 100,000 pieces of money.

Rich Man of Bārāṇasī

Having performed those meritorious deeds during the time of Buddha Vipassī, the future Meṇḍaka was reborn in the present aeon as a rich man's son in Bārāṇasī. He succeeded to his father's estate as the "rich man of inexhaustible resources." One day, as he was going before the king at his audience, he discoursed on astronomical readings with the king's chief counsellor. He asked the Brahmin chaplain:

"How is it, teacher, have you been studying the planets recently?"

"Of course I have, what other pursuit do I have than a constant study of the planets?"

"If so, what do the planets presage about the general populace?"

"Some catastrophe is going to happen."

"What sort of catastrophe?"

"There will be famine."

"When is it going to happen?"

"Three years hence."

The rich man of inexhaustible resources then expanded his cultivation. He invested all his wealth in rice grains which he stored in 1,250 storehouses. The excess of his collection of rice was put into big jars, and then the excess was buried in the ground. The last portion of the excess was mixed with mud which was plastered onto the walls of his house.[333]

When the famine broke out as predicted by the councellor, the rich man's household subsisted for some time on the hoarded grains of rice. When the granaries and the storage in big jars were exhausted, the rich man was perforce to send away his servants to go into the forest at the end of the mountains and find things to eat for their survival until such [1490] time as things became normal, in which case, they might or might not choose to come back to him as they wished. They wailed and after seven days depending on their master, were obliged to leave.

There was only one servant, named Puṇṇa, who personally attended on the members of the rich man's family, comprising the rich man and his wife, their son, and their daughter-in-law. The five members of the household next subsisted on the rice grains which were buried in the ground. When that store was used up, they scraped off the mud plastered in the walls of the house, salvaged the few grains from it and managed to survive. But, the famine raged on. At last, the only source of seed grain was extracted from the base of the walls where the mud plaster held a few precious grains. The mud yielded half a measure of rice grain, from which, when the husks were pounded off, a quarter measure of edible grains were obtained. Being afraid of robbers who might loot whatever edibles were available at their house, the family prudently hid the last meagre store of grains in the ground, carefully shut up in a small pot.

One day, the rich man, who had come home from attending on the king, said to his wife: "Dear wife, I feel hungry. Is there anything to eat?" The wife did not say: "No," but answered: "My lord, we have a quarter measure of rice grain, it is the last we have."

"Where it it?"

"I have hidden it in the ground for fear of thieves."

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[333] This was a remarkably prudent way of forestalling famine.

"If so, cook that little rice."

"My lord, if I were to cook it into rice it would provide us a meal. If I were to make gruel, it would provide us with two meals. What shall I do with it?"

"Dear wife, this is our only and last source of food. Let us eat to the full and face death. Cook it into rice."

The rich man's wife obediently cooked the rice, and making five portions of the cooked rice, placed one in front of her husband. At that moment, a Paccekabuddha, who had just risen from dwelling in the attainment of cessation at the Mount Gandhamādana, reviewed the world with his divine power of sight and saw that the southern island continent of Jambudīpa was reeling under a grave and prolonged famine.

> An Arahat, or a Paccekabuddha in this case, does not feel hunger during the seven-day dwelling in the attainment of cessation. On rising from that state, the pangs of hunger are felt inside the stomach. So the Paccekabuddha reviews the world, as is the natural thing, for a prospect of getting alms food. A supporter of some gift to a Paccekabuddha at that time is usually rewarded by his or her own merit on that day. If he were to wish for the post of commander-in-chief, he would get it.

The Paccekabuddha knew that a rich man of Bārāṇasī had a quarter measure of rice grain which had been cooked to provide a meal for five persons. He also knew that the five persons in the rich man's household had sufficient conviction in the law of productive deeds (*kamma*) to offer him the cooked rice. So he took his alms bowl and double robe and stood at the rich man's door.

The rich man was intensely pleased to see the Paccekabuddha who had come to his door for alms food. He thought to himself: "In the past I failed to make offering to alms seekers, as the result of which I am falling under this catastrophe. If I were to eat my portion of rice I would live for one day. If I were to offer it to this the venerable one, it would lead to my welfare for millions of aeons." Thinking thus, he had the rice-vessel in front of him withdrawn, and, approaching the Paccekabuddha, paid respects to him with the hands, knees and forehead touching the ground and invited him to the house. After showing him the seat, he washed the Paccekabuddha's feet, and wiped off the water. Then, letting the Paccekabuddha sit on a raised platform with golden legs; he put his rice into the Paccekabuddha's alms bowl.

The Paccekabuddha closed the lid of his alms bowl when the supporter's vessel was left with half of its contents. But the supporter said: "Venerable sir, this rice is just one-fifth of a quarter measure of rice grain and can serve as only one meal for one person. It cannot be [1491] divided into two for two persons. Do not consider my welfare for this present world but consider my welfare in the hereafter. I wish to offer the whole to your reverence." Then he aspired thus: "Venerable sir, may I never, in my faring in Saṁsāra, meet with famine like this again. From now on, may I be the provider of food and seed grains to all the population of Jambudīpa. May I be free from manual labour to earn my bread. May I have 1,250 storehouses for storing rice grain, in which superior red rice grains falling from the sky get filled up the moment I look up skyward as I sit there with my head washed. In all my future existences, may I have my present wife as my wife, my present son as my son, my present daughter-in-law as my daughter-in-law, and my present servant as my servant."

The Conviction of Others in the Householder

The wife of a rich man thought to herself: "I cannot eat while my husband starves," and offered her share of the rice to the Paccekabuddha. She made her wish thus: "Venerable sir, may I never, in my faring in Saṁsāra, meet with starvation. May I have a vessel of cooked rice which never gets depleted however much is taken from it by the populace of Jambudīpa, while I sit distributing the rice. In all my future existences, may I have my present husband as my husband, my present son as my son, and my present daughter-in-law as my daughter-in-law, and my present servant as my servant."

The rich man's son also offered his share of rice to the Paccekabuddha, and made his wish: "May I never, in my faring in Saṁsāra, meet with starvation. May I have a bag of silver coins containing 1,000 pieces out of which I may distribute silver to everyone in Jambudīpa, and may the bag remain as full as ever. In all my future existences, may my present parents be my parents, may my wife be my wife, and may our present servant be our servant."

The rich man's daughter-in-law also offered her share of the rice to the Paccekabuddha and made her wish thus: "May I never, in my faring in Saṁsāra, meet with starvation. May I have a basket of rice grain, out of which I may distribute rice to all the populace of Jambudīpa, and may that basket never get depleted. In all my future existences, may my present parents-in-law be my

parents-in-law, may my present husband be my husband, and may our present servant be our servant."

The servant Puṇṇa also offered his share of rice to the Paccekabuddha and made his wish thus: "May I never, in my faring in Saṁsāra, meet with starvation. In all my future existences, may all the present members of my master's family be my master. When I plough a field, may there appear three extra furrows on the left and three extra furrows on the right of the main furrow in the middle, thereby accomplishing my work sevenfold, making a seed bed for sowing four baskets of seed grains."

> Puṇṇa could have wished for and become commander-in-chief if he so aspired to it. However, his personal ties with a rich man's family were so strong that he wished that in all his future existences his present masters be his masters.

When the five supporters had made their respective wishes the Paccekabuddha said: "May your wishes be fulfilled quickly. May all your aspirations come to full realisation like the full moon. May your wishes be fulfilled in every respect. May all your aspirations come to full realisation as with the wish-fulfilling gem."

Having expressed his appreciation of the offerings, he made a wish that his supporters, for enhancement of their convictions, see him and his further actions, then he rose into the air and went to the Mount Gandhamādana, and shared the alms food he had collected with the 500 Paccekabuddhas. The rice that was meant for the consumption of five persons was offered and satisfied the 500 Paccekabuddhas, thanks to the supernormal powers of the original donor. This was witnessed by the five supporters whose devotion [1492] increased by leaps and bounds.

The Result experienced the Same Day

A remarkable thing now happened. At noon, the rich man's wife washed her cooking pot and put the lid on it. The rich man, who was suffering the pangs of hunger, dozed off. When he woke up in the evening, he said to his wife: "Dear wife, I am starving. See if you could scrape out some bits of cooked rice from the pot." The wife was certain that not a tiny bit of cooked rice clung to the pot which she had washed clean. But she did not say so; instead, she thought of opening the lid of the pot first before reporting to her husband.

As soon as she removed the lid of the rice pot, she found the rice pot was filled with finely cooked rice, like a cluster of jasmine buds that filled the pot to its brim and even causing the lid to rise. With joyous astonishment she breathlessly reported the strange phenomenon to her husband: "Look, my lord, I washed the rice pot clean and covered its lid. But now it is brimful with cooked rice, like a cluster of jasmine buds. Meritorious deeds are indeed worthwhile doing! Alms giving is indeed worthwhile doing! Now, my lord, get up and eat it in joy."

The rich man's wife first served the rice to her husband and her son. When they had finished eating, she and her daughter-in-law ate it. Then she gave it to their servant Puṇṇa. The rice in the pot did not decrease any further than the first spoonful taken out. On that very day, all the granaries and jars were filled with rice grain again. The rich man announced to all the citizens of Bārāṇasī that his house had sufficient rice grain and cooked rice for anyone to come and take it. And the people came and took it joyfully. The populace of Jambudīpa were saved from famine on account of the rich man.

His Last Existence as Meṇḍaka the Rich Man

After passing away from that existence, he was reborn in the Deva realm. From then onwards, he fared in the Deva realm or the human world until the time of Buddha Gotama when he was born into the family of a rich man in Bhaddiya. He married the daughter of another rich man.

As the result of his having donated statues of golden goats to Buddha Vipassī, the rich man's compound behind the house, about fourteen acres in area, was tightly occupied by solid gold statues of goats which rose up from the ground. The mouths of the statues of the goats were adorned with small cotton balls the size of marbles in five colours. By removing these ornamental stoppers at the mouth, one could take out from the goats any article one wished, such as clothes or gold or silver, etc. A single goat statue could yield all the needs of the whole population of Jambudīpa such as ghee, oil, honey, molasses, clothing, gold, silver, etc. As possessor of these miraculous goat statues, the rich man came to be called Meṇḍaka, signifying that he was the owner of the golden goat (*meṇḍaka*)."

Their son was the son in their previous existence. That son was Dhanañjaya who became the father of Visākhā. Their daughter-in-law was the daughter-in-law in their previous existence. The wife of Meṇḍaka was named Candapadumā, the

daughter-in-law, wife of Dhanañjaya, was named Sumanadevī, their servant was named Puṇṇa.

> Reference may be made to chapter 45c on the lives of the female lay disciples, on Visākhā, and concerning the details about Meṇḍaka's household up to the point where Meṇḍaka gained Stream-entry.

It is important to note here that Meṇḍaka the rich man, after attaining Stream-entry, consequent to his listening to a discourse by the Buddha, told the Buddha how he had been dissuaded by the ascetics of other faiths from visiting him, and how they denigrated him.

Thereupon the Buddha said: "Rich man, it is the nature of people not to see their own faults but to fabricate other peoples' faults and spread them about like a winnower winnowing chaff." Further, the Buddha spoke this verse (Dhp 252): [1493]

> Householder, it is easy to see the faults of others, but difficult to see one's own fault. Like the winnower winnowing chaff in the wind, one spreads the faults of others but hides one's own faults like a crafty fowler covers himself.

By the end of this discourse a large multitude of people gained Awakening at various levels.

3. Jaṭila, the Treasurer

> [This story is also told in the commentary to Dhp 416.]

Aspiration in the Past

The future Jaṭila was a goldsmith during the time of Buddha Kassapa. After the passing away of the Buddha, when a shrine to store the relics of the Buddha was being built, an Arahat, who went to supervise the construction, asked the workers: "Men, why is the northern entrance not complete?" And the men replied: "Venerable sir, there is a lack of gold to complete it."

"I will go to the town to find supporters to give gold. Meantime, you will do your work sincerely." The Arahat then went about the town and called for supporters of gold, making them realize that their contributions were needed to complete the northern entrance to the big shrine they were building.

When he visited the house of the goldsmith it so happened that the man was having a quarrel with his wife. The Arahat said to the goldsmith: "Lay supporter, the big shrine that you have undertaken to build cannot be completed at its northern entrance due to a shortage of gold. So it would be well if you could contribute some." The goldsmith who was angry with his wife said to the Arahat: "Go and throw your Buddha image into the water!" Thereupon his wife scolded him: "You have done a great wrong. If you are angry, you should have abused me, or beaten me as you please. Why do you vilify the Buddhas of the past, the future and the present?"

The goldsmith saw his mistake and suddenly a spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) having arisen in him, he apologised to the Arahat: "Venerable sir, pardon me my fault." The Arahat said: "You have not wronged me in any way. You have wronged the Buddha. So you ought to make restitution in front of the Buddha."

"How should I do that, venerable sir?"

"Make three flower vessels of gold, enshrine them in the relic chamber of the great shrine, wet your clothes and your hair, and atone for your mistake."

"Very well, venerable sir," the goldsmith said and he started to make the gold flowers. He called his eldest son and said to him: "Come, son, I have vilified the Buddha, for which I am going to make restitution by making three bunches of gold flowers which are to be enshrined in the relic chamber of the great shrine. I would ask you to be a partner in this good work." The eldest son replied: "I did not ask you to vilify the Buddha. You did it on your own accord. So you go alone." The goldsmith then called his middle son and asked for his co-operation, who gave the same reply as the eldest brother. The goldsmith called his youngest son and sought his help. The youngest son said: "Whatever business there is to be discharged by you, it is my duty to help." And so he helped his father in making the gold flowers.

The goldsmith made three gold flower vessels, about half a cubit high, put gold flowers in them, and enshrined them in the relic chamber of the great shrine. Then, as advised by the Arahat, he wetted his clothes and hair, and atoned for his grave blunder. This is how the future Jaṭila performed a meritorious deed.

His Last Existence as Jaṭila, the Treasurer

For his improper remarks concerning the Buddha, the goldsmith was sent adrift in the river for seven existences. In his last existence, during the time of Buddha Gotama, he was reborn to the daughter of a rich man in Bārāṇasī under strange circumstances. The rich [1494] man's daughter was extremely beautiful when she was about fifteen or sixteen years old, so her parents put her on the seventh floor of their house with a governess. They lived there alone in the private chamber. One day, as the girl was looking out through the window, a Vijjādhara with supernormal power travelling through the air happened to see her. He was deeply enamoured of her and came in through the window. The two fell in love with each other.

She became pregnant by the man, and her governess asked her how she became pregnant. She confided in her about her secret affair but forbade her to tell it to anyone. The governess dared not disclose the secret to anyone. On the tenth month of pregnancy, the child, a boy, was born. The young mother had the baby put inside an earthen pot, had its lid covered, and placing garlands and bunches of flowers over it, she ordered the governess to carry it on her head and send it adrift on the river Ganges. If anybody were to inquire about her action, the governess was to say that she was making a sacrificial offering for her mistress. This scheme was carried out successfully.

At that time, two ladies, who were bathing downstream, noticed the earthen pot floating down. One of them said: "That pot belongs to me!" The other said: "The contents of that pot belong to me!" So, they took the pot from the water, placed it on dry ground and opened it. On finding a baby in it, the first lady, who said the pot belonged to her, claimed the child as hers. The second lady, who said the contents of the pot belonged to her, also claimed the child as hers. They brought the dispute to the court of justice which was at a loss to give a judgment. They referred it to the king who decided that the child belonged to the second lady.

The lady who won the claim over the child was a female lay supporter who was a close attendant of Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana. She brought up the child with the intention of sending him to Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana, to be admitted as a novice. Since the child at birth was not bathed, his hair was tangled with dried dirty matter from his mother's womb and on that account, he was given the name Jaṭila, meaning "knotted hair."

When Jaṭila was a toddler, Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana went to the lady's house for alms food. She offered alms food to Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana, who saw the boy and asked her: "Female lay supporter, does this boy belong to you?" And she replied: "Yes, venerable sir. I intend to send him to your reverence to be admitted into the order. May your reverence admit him as a novice."

Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana said: "Very well," and took the boy with him. He reviewed the fortunes of the boy and saw by his super knowledge that the boy had great past merit and was destined to enjoy a high status in life. And considering his tender age, he thought that the boy was too young for admission into the order and his faculties were not mature enough. So he took the boy to the house of a lay supporter in Takkasilā.

The lay supporter of Takkasilā, after paying respects to Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana, asked him: "Venerable sir, does this boy belong to you?" And Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana answered: "Yes, lay supporter. He will become a monastic. But he is still too young. Let him stay under your care." The lay supporter said: "Very well, venerable sir," and he adopted the boy as his son.

The lay supporter of Takkasilā was a merchant. It so happened that he had a considerable quantity of merchandise which for twelve years he found no buyers. One day, as he was going on a journey, he entrusted this unsold merchandise to the boy, to be sold at certain prices.

On the day when Jaṭila was in charge of the shop, the guardian spirits of the town exercised their power over the townsfolk, directing them to Jaṭila's shop for whatever needs they had, even as trifling as condiments. He was able to sell the unsellable merchandise in a single day. When the merchant returned home and saw none of his unsellable goods, he asked the boy: "Son, have you destroyed all those goods?" Jaṭila replied: "No, I did not destroy them. I have sold them at the prices you stated. Here are the [1495] accounts, and here is the money." His adoptive father was highly pleased. "This boy has the making of a successful man. He is an invaluable asset of a man," thus reflected the merchant. Accordingly, he married his grown up daughter to Jaṭila. Then, he had a big house built for the couple. When the construction of the house was completed, he presented it to the couple for their residence.

Jaṭila, Lord of the Golden Hill

When Jaṭila took occupancy of his house, as soon as he put his foot at the threshold of the house, a golden hill 80 cubits high suddenly appeared through the earth at the back of the house. On learning the news of Jaṭila's immense fortune, the king conferred on him the position of Royal Treasurer, sending him the white umbrella and the paraphernalia of the Treasurer's office. From then onwards, he was known as Jaṭila, the Treasurer.

Jaṭila had three sons. When they had grown to adulthood, he had a desire to become a monastic. But he also had the duty to the king as treasurer. If there were to exist in Jambudīpa another rich man who was equal in wealth to him, he might be released by the king so that he could join the Saṅgha. Otherwise, he had no chance to become a monastic. So, he had a gold brick, a gold goad and a pair of gold slippers made, which he entrusted to his men, saying: "My men, go around Jambudīpa taking these articles with you and enquire about the existence or otherwise of a rich man whose wealth is equal to mine."

Jaṭila's men went around the country and reached the town of Bhaddiya where they met Meṇḍaka the rich man, who asked them: "Men, what is your business in touring this place?"

"We are touring the country to find something," said Jaṭila's men. Meṇḍaka, seeing the gold brick, the gold goad and the pair of gold slippers which the visitors were carrying with them, rightly surmised that the men were making enquires about the wealth of the country. So he said to them: "Men, go and see at the back of my house."

Jaṭila's men saw at the back of Meṇḍaka's house an area of about fourteen acres packed with golden goat statues of the sizes of a bull or a horse or an elephant. Having inspected all those gold statues, they came out of Meṇḍaka's compound. "Have you found the things you were looking for?" asked Meṇḍaka, and they said to him: "Yes, rich man, we have." – "Then you may go," said Meṇḍaka.

Jaṭila's men returned to their home town and reported to their master about the immense wealth of Meṇḍaka of Bhaddiya. "Rich man, what is your wealth when compared to Meṇḍaka's?" they said to Jaṭila and they gave the details of what they had seen at the backyard of Meṇḍaka's house. Jaṭila was happy about the discovery. "We have found one type of rich man. Perhaps another type also

exists," he thought to himself. This time he entrusted his men with a piece of velvet, which was worth 100,000 pieces of money, and sent them around in search for another type of rich man.

The men went to Rājagaha and stationed themselves at a place not far from Jotika's great mansion. They collected some firewood and were making a fire when they were asked by the people what they were going to do with the fire. They answered: "We have a valuable piece of velvet cloth for sale. We find no one who can afford the price. We are returning to our hometown. This piece of velvet cloth would attract robbers on the way. So we are going to destroy it by burning it." This was, of course, said as a pretence, to probe the mettle of the people.

Jotika noticed the men and enquired what was afoot. On being told about the men's tall story, he called them up and asked: "How much is your cloth worth?" They answered: "Rich man, it is worth 100,000 pieces of money." Jotika ordered his men to pay the price of 100,000 to the sellers and, entrusting the cloth to them, said: "Men, give it to my maid-servant who is scavenging at my gate."

The scavenger came to Jotika murmuring in the presence of Jaṭila's men: "Rich man, [1496] how is it? If I am at fault, you could chastise me by beating. But sending such a coarse piece of cloth to me is too much. How could I use it on my person?" Jotika said to her: "My dear girl, I did not send it for wearing. I meant it to be used as your foot rug. You could fold it up under your bed and when you go to bed you could use it for wiping your feet after washing them in scented water, couldn't you?" – "That I could do," said the maid servant.

Jaṭila's men reported back their experiences in Rājagaha and told their master: "Rich man, what is your wealth when compared to that of Jotika?" They said this to Jaṭila, and they described the marvellous grandeur of Jotika's mansion, his vast wealth, and his maid-servant's remarks about the velvet piece.

Jaṭila tests the Past Merits of his Three Sons

Jaṭila was overjoyed to learn about the presence, in the country, of two great rich men. "Now I shall get the king's permission to enter the Saṅgha," he thought and went to see the king about it.

> Herein, the commentary does not specify the name of the king. However, in the commentary on the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*), in the story of

> Visākhā, it has been said: "It is important to remember that within the domain of King Bimbisāra, there were five rich men of inexhaustible resources: Jotika, Jaṭila, Meṇḍaka, Puṇṇaka and Kāḷavaliya." Hence the king here should he understood to mean King Bimbisāra.

The king said to Jaṭila: "Very well, rich man, you may go forth into the monastic life." Jaṭila went home, called his three sons, and handing over a pick-axe with a gold handle and diamond bit, said to them: "Sons, go and get me a lump of gold from the golden hill behind our house." The eldest son took the pick-axe and struck at the golden hill. It felt like he was striking at granite. Jaṭila than took the pick-axe from him and gave it to the middle son to try it; and he met with the same experience.

When the third son was given the pick-axe to do the job, he found the golden hill was like mounds of soft clay. Gold came off it in layers and lumps at his easy strokes. Jaṭila said to his youngest son: "That will do, son." Then he said to the two elder sons: "Sons, this golden hill does not appear on account of your past merit. It is the result of the past merit of myself and your youngest brother. Therefore, be united with your youngest brother and enjoy the wealth peacefully together."

> Herein, we should remember the past existence of Jaṭila as the goldsmith. In that existence, he had angrily said to an Arahat: "Go and throw your Buddha image into the water!" For that verbal misconduct, he was sent adrift in the river of Saṁsāra for seven successive existences. At his last existence also he met with the same fate.
>
> When the goldsmith was making golden flowers to offer to the Buddha at the shrine, which was built in honour of the deceased Buddha Kassapa, to atone for his verbal misconduct, only his youngest son joined in the effort. As the result of their good deed, the father, Jaṭila and his youngest son alone had the benefit of the golden hill that appeared.

After admonishing his sons, Jaṭila the Treasurer went to the Buddha and entered the monastic life. With due diligence in monastic practice, he became an Arahat in two or three days.

Later on, the Buddha went on his alms round with 500 monastics and arrived at the house of Jaṭila's three sons. The sons made food offerings to the Buddha and his Saṅgha for fifteen days.

At the congregation of monastics in the Assembly Hall, monastics asked Ven. Jaṭila: "Friend Jaṭila, do you still have attachment today to the golden hill of 80 cubits in height, and to your three sons?"

Ven. Jaṭila, an Arahat, replied: "Friend, I have no attachment to the golden hill and my three sons." [1497] The monastics said: "This Ven. Jaṭila claims Awakening falsely." When the Buddha heard the accusations of these monastics, he said: "Monastics, there is no attachment whatsoever in the mental state of Ven. Jaṭila to that golden hill and his sons." Further, the Buddha spoke this verse (Dhp 416):

> The one who has given up craving that arises at the six sense spheres and has renounced the home life to become a monastic, who has exhausted craving for existence, and made an end of all forms of existence, him I call a Brahmin.

By the end of discourse many persons attained path-knowledge such as Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

4. Kāḷavaḷiya, a Rich Man

> A brief account of Kāḷavaḷiya, a rich man, is found in the commentary to MN 101, which is reproduced here.

During the time of Buddha Gotama, there lived in Rājagaha a poor man by the name of Kāḷavaḷiya. One day, his wife cooked a meal of sour gruel mixed with some edible leaves, for rice was not within their means. On that day, Ven. Mahā Kassapa, rising from dwelling in the attainment of cessation, reviewed the world, contemplating to whom he should bring his blessing. He saw Kāḷavaḷiya in his supernormal vision and went to his door for alms food.

Kāḷavaḷiya's wife took the alms bowl of Ven. Mahā Kassapa and emptied her cooking pot into it. She offered her poor meal of sour gruel mixed with edible leaves to Ven. Mahā Kassapa, without keeping back anything for themselves, an offering that was, therefore, complete (*nirāvasesa-dāna*). Ven. Mahā Kassapa went back to the monastery and offered the gruel to the Buddha. The Buddha accepted just a portion of it, with which to satisfy himself, and gave the remainder to the 500 monastics who had enough to eat from that meal. Kāḷavaḷiya happened to be at the Buddha's monastery to beg for gruel.

Ven. Mahā Kassapa asked the Buddha about the benefit that would result to Kāḷavaḷiya on account of the brave deed of sacrificing his food completely. And the Buddha said: "Seven days hence Kāḷavaḷiya will get the white umbrella of the treasurer's office, he will be made a royal treasurer by the king." Kāḷavaḷiya heard these words of the Buddha and hastened home to tell his wife about it.

At that time, King Bimbisāra was on his inspection round and he saw a criminal tied on a stake outside the city. The man impudently said to the king in a loud voice: "Great King, I would request that a meal, which was prepared for your majesty, be sent to me." The king replied: "Ah, yes, I will." When dinner was being brought to to the king, he remembered his promise to the criminal on the stake and ordered the officials concerned to find someone who would send his dinner to the criminal outside the city.

The outside of the city of Rājagaha was infested with demons so that very few people dared to go out of the city by night. The officials went around the city announcing that 1,000 pieces of money would be awarded on the spot to anyone who would take the king's meal to the criminal on the stake outside the city. No one came out at the first round of announcements with the beating of the gong; and the second round also was fruitless. But at the third round, Kāḷavaḷiya's wife accepted the offer of 1,000 pieces of money.

She was brought before the king as the person undertaking the king's mission. She disguised herself as a man and wielded five kinds of weapons. As she fearlessly went out of the city carrying the king's meal, she was accosted by Dīghatāla, the guardian spirit of a palm tree who said: "Stop there, stop! You are now my food." But Kāḷavaḷiya's wife was not afraid and said: "I am not your food. I am the king's messenger."

"Where are you going?"

"I am going to the criminal on the stake." [1498]

"Could you convey a message for me?"

"Yes, I could."

"If so, cry aloud all along your way this message: 'Kāḷī, daughter of Sumana, the chief of celestial Devas, wife of Dīghatāla, has given birth to a son!' There are seven pots full of gold at the root of this palmyra tree. Take them as your fee."

The brave woman went her way crying aloud the message: "Kāḷī, daughter of Sumana, the chief of celestial Devas, wife of Dīghatāla, has given birth to a son!" Sumana, the chief of celestial Devas heard her cry while presiding over a meeting of celestial Devas and said to his assistants: "There is a human being bringing happy tidings. Bring her here." And so she was brought before Sumana who thanked her and said: "There are pots full of gold underneath the shade at noon of the big tree. I give them all to you."

She went to the criminal on the stake, who had to be fed with her hand. After taking his meal, when his mouth was wiped clean by the woman, he felt the feminine touch and bit her knotted hair so as not to let her go. The woman being courageous, had presence of mind, she cut the hair-knot with her sword and freed herself.

She reported to the king that she had fulfilled her task. "What proof can you show that you have actually fed that man?" asked the king. "My hair-knot in the mouth of that villain should be sufficient proof. But I have further proof too," replied Kāḷavaḷiya's wife and related her meeting with Dīghatāla and Sumana. The king ordered the pots of gold described by her to be dug up. All were found. The Kāḷavaḷiya couple became very rich all at once. "Is there anyone as wealthy as Kāḷavaḷiya?" inquired the king. The ministers said: "There is none, Great King." So the king appointed him as Treasurer of Sāvatthī and gave him the paraphernalia, seal and title of office.

Here ends the Great Chronicles of the Buddhas

Dated: the 13th waxing day of the 1st Wazo (*Āsāḷha*), 1331 Mahā Era (1969 CE).
Completed at 11:00 am
U Vicittasārābhivamsa
Dhammanāda Monastery, Mingun Hill [1499]

Epilogue

Nine Pāḷi verses and their translation:

1-2. On Saturday, the thirteenth waxing day of July (*Āsāḷha*), 1331 Myanmar Era (1969 CE), the 2,513th year of the Dispensation, the month when the Alexandrian laurel blooms forth in the forest and the traditional festival of admitting new entrants into the Saṅgha is being held throughout the land, at 11 a.m.

3. This work entitled "The Great Chronicles of the Buddhas," the tome that came into being under the sponsorship of the State Dispensation Council as a sequel to the Sixth Buddhist Council, portraying the life story of the Buddhas and especially that of Buddha Gotama from the fulfilling of the perfections to the day-to-day events relating to him, was completed for the edification of the followers of the Buddha who uphold righteousness, a most auspicious achievement indeed.

4. The Buddha, the Conqueror of the five kinds of death (*māra*), endowed with great diligence, who occupied himself by day and by night with the five functions of the Buddha, lived for 45 Rains Retreats (*Vassa*) after Awakening, during which he ferried the multitudes of Devas and humans across to the yonder shores of Nibbāna by means of the ship of the eightfold noble path.

5. To the Buddha, the Conqueror of the five kinds of death, I, acclaimed as a great, distinguished venerable who has memorized the Three Piṭakas, who, thanks to past merit, has been fortunate enough to live a life devoted to Buddhist studies since his novicehood, pay homage humbling myself in body, speech and mind, with this tome entitled: "The Great Chronicles of the Buddhas," arranged in 45 chapters in respectful memory of the 45 years of the Buddha's noble mission, an exegetical work embodying erudite judgements on readings in the text and the commentaries.

6. As the result of this work of great merit made by me with diligence, knowledge and conviction, may all sentient beings benefit from it: May they clearly understand through learning, reflecting and cultivating the Dhamma, the good doctrine expounded by the supreme lord of righteousness for the welfare of the multitudes, for their happiness pertaining to the human world and the Deva realm, and the peace of Nibbāna.

7. May the multitudes, by following the middle way of eight constituents which is purified by shunning the two extremes of self-indulgence and self-mortification, which brings happiness by clearing away the hindrances to path-knowledge and its fruition, realize with facility through the ten stages of insight, the supreme peace of Nibbāna that liberates one from craving for all forms of existence, that is free from all sorrow caused by the five kinds of loss and grief that gnaws at the hearts of worldlings.

8. May the Buddha's teaching that consists of learning, training and penetration, last for 5,000 years, shining forth like the sun, overriding the corroding influence of sophists or captious contenders. May all beings in the human world, the Deva realm and the Brahma world have firm conviction in, and deep respect for the Dhamma expounded by the Buddha. May the rain god, the benefactor of the human world, bless the earth with his bounteous showers at the proper time, at night, for fields of poor fertility once in five days, for fields of medium fertility once in ten days, and for fields of good fertility once in fifteen days.

9. May the rulers of the country give protection to the people like the good kings of yore. May they work for the welfare of the people just as they would for their own children, on the example of those benevolent rulers who extended their loving care to their subjects by upholding the ten principles of rulership. [1500]

Ven. Buddhaghosa, the famous commentator, in his Epilogue to the commentary of the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA), an exegesis on the Abhidhamma, and the commentary on the last five books of the Abhidhamma (*Pañca-pakaraṇa*) made his wish in four verses beginning with: *Yaṁ pattaṁ kusalaṁ tassa*, "for he who has done wholesome deeds," We have adopted them here, respectfully endorsing his sentiments therein, in verses 6-9 above.

In doing so, we are also endorsing the view of the sub-commentator, Ven. Saṅgharakkhita Mahāsāmi, author of the Charming Essence of Meaning (*Sārattha-vilāsinī*),[334] wherein it has been said: "For one who does not work for the benefit of others, no real benefit accrues to him. This is a statement fit to be proclaimed with one's right arm raised."

Such being the words of the wise, may all right-minded persons make a point of directing their efforts towards the good of others and thereby do good to themselves as well.

This is the completion of "The Great Chronicles of the Buddhas."

May I be endowed with the three knowledges (*vijjā*). [1501]

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[334] A sub-commentary on Moggallāna's grammar.

Further Explanations

Foreword

The explanation of the word *Anudīpanī*: *anu* means "further" and *dīpanī* means "explanation," hence "further explanations" of what is not explicit in the original writing is called the Further Explanations. After Ven. Ledi Sayādaw had written an exegetical work, the Explanation of the Ultimate Truth (*Paramattha-dīpanī*) on the Collection of Meaning in the Abhidhamma (*Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha*), he composed another work, entitled the Further Explanations (*Anudīpanī*), to explain again what is vague in the Explanation of the Ultimate Truth.

Similarly, an expository work under the title of the Further Explanations on some words or passages of the Great Chronicle which deserve elaboration or explication is written here separately as a supplement. Had the expositions been included in the original work, readers might have found it confusing. This would have been a distraction for readers. Therefore, it is deemed necessary to compile comprehensive notes on important points and topics in the text as the Further Explanations (*Anudīpanī*) for the benefit of the serious students of the Great Chronicle.

It is hoped that, by going through the Further Explanations, difficult subjects in the Chronicle would become more easily understandable and profound meanings of some usages would become clearer. Therefore, it is suggested that after reading the Chronicle, readers should study the Further Explanations with great interest. May they understand easily the deep and important meanings, which might otherwise remain unrevealed or overlooked.

Miscellaneous Topics

The Commentarial Classification of Teachers

[Because of its general importance in understanding the methods of the commentaries I have moved this section out of the First Treatise on the Perfections, where it was originally given as part of an obscure discussion of the foundations (*adiṭṭhāna*) and placed it at the head of the Further Explanations.]

Certain Teachers

> In stating the different views of various teachers in the treatises, they are mentioned as certain theories (*eke vāda*) or other theories (*aññe vāda*) when these teachers have qualifications worthy to be the author's teacher; when they have qualifications equal to his, the author describes their views as secondary theories (*apare vāda*); when they are inferior to him, he refers to theirs as some theories (*keci vāda*).
>
> This traditional way of recording is handed down generation after generation: "Certain" or "other" means those worthy to be the author's teachers; "secondary" means those with qualifications equal to those of the author, and "some" implies those inferior to him. [101]

As to how the fulfilment of the four foundations – the foundations of truthfulness (*saccādhiṭṭhāna*), abandoning (*cāgādhiṭṭhāna*), tranquillity (*upasamādhiṭṭhāna*), wisdom (*paññādhiṭṭhāna*) – take place in the Bodhisatta's last existence, certain (*eke*) teachers maintain that the four foundations are already fulfilled at the time when the Bodhisatta is conceived.

> Just as the Bodhisatta's conception takes place in his last existence only when the perfections are completely fulfilled, so also does it take place only when the four foundations reach complete fulfilment.

The explanation given by certain (*eke*) teachers: Having completely fulfilled the foundation of wisdom at the time of descending into his mother's womb, while remaining there for ten months and when emerging from it, the Bodhisatta is bound to possess mindfulness and clear comprehension.

Ordinary worldlings are not aware of their descending into their mother's womb, nor are they aware of remaining there and emerging from it at birth. The 80 future disciples are aware of descending into their mothers' wombs, but they are not aware of remaining there or of emerging from them; the two future chief disciples and future Paccekabuddhas are aware of their descending into their mothers' wombs, and of remaining there, but not of emerging from them at birth. True, these future chief disciples and future Paccekabuddhas, when the time draws near for their births, are flung in a tumble by internal pressure of the womb towards the external genital orifice, as if plunged into a very deep chasm. Then they undergo extreme suffering in emerging from the genital orifice, just like the big elephant would if it were to push its way through a keyhole. Therefore, these future chief disciples and future Paccekabuddhas are unable to

know that they are emerging from their mothers' wombs. In this way, one should have a deep sense of spiritual urgency by contemplating the extreme suffering of conception in the mother's womb with the thought: "Even such personages, who are accomplished in the perfections, are subjected to intense suffering on such an occasion!"

The Bodhisattas, however, are conscious of all the three events of descending into the mother's womb, of remaining there and of emerging from it at birth. The internal pressure is not capable of turning them topsy-turvy in the womb. On their birth they always emerge from the mother's womb with both hands stretched out, eyes open, and standing firmly and straight. Apart from the Bodhisattas, there is no single being who is mindful of these three events. Therefore, at the time of their taking conception in the mother's womb, and at the time of birth, the 10,000 world-element shook violently (see the commentary to the Discourse on Inspiring Confidence (*Sampasādanīya-sutta*, DN 28, PTS 3.886).

Having completely fulfilled the foundation of truthfulness, as soon as he is born, the Bodhisatta goes forward taking seven steps towards the north, and surveying boldly all the directions, makes a truthful utterance three times without fear, like a lion's roar: "I am the foremost in the world (*aggohaṁ asmi lokassa*); I am the most eminent in the world (*jeṭṭhohaṁ asmi lokassa*); I am the most praiseworthy in the world (*seṭṭhohaṁ asmi lokassa*)."

Having completely fulfilled the foundation of tranquillity, when he sees the four signs of the old man, the sick man, the dead man and the ascetic, the arrogance due to youthfulness, healthiness, longevity and wealth ceases in the mental continuum of the Bodhisatta, who has deep understanding of the four epitomes of Dhamma (*Dhammuddesa*): how this body is oppressed by old age, ailments, death, and how escape from servitude to craving for pleasures and wealth is impossible unless there is complete detachment from it as given in the Discourse to Raṭṭhapāla (*Raṭṭhapāla-sutta*, MN 82).

Having completely fulfilled the foundation of abandoning, the Bodhisatta leaves behind, without any concern, all the royal relatives and kinsmen; he also abandons the kingship he has been enjoying and the sovereignty of a Universal Monarch which [102] is about to come within his grasp.

This is the interpretation by certain (*eke*) teachers. The commentator, Ven. Mahā Dhammapāla, gives no comment on this theory (*eke vāda*).

Some Teachers

According to some (*keci*) teachers, the four foundations are completely fulfilled only on the occasion of becoming a Buddha. Their interpretation is: When he becomes a Buddha attaining the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) and omniscience through the past accumulation of the foundation of truthfulness in accordance with his vow, he penetrates the four noble truths; hence the foundation of truthfulness is fully accomplished then. Through the past accumulation of the foundation of abandoning, he eradicates all the defilements; hence the foundation of abandoning is fully accomplished then. Through the past accumulation of the foundation of tranquillity, he achieves the most sublime peace of Nibbāna when he becomes a Buddha, hence the foundation of tranquillity is fully accomplished then. Through the past accumulation of the foundation of wisdom, he achieves the unobstructed knowledge of all there is to know (*anāvaraṇa-ñāṇa*); hence the foundation of wisdom is fully accomplished then.

This is the interpretation by some (*keci*) teachers, on which the commentator, Ven. Mahā Dhammapāla, remarks: "Their statement is imperfect because Full Awakening (*Abhisambodhi*), which is the path-knowledge of an Arahat or omniscience, is purely absolute reality; because the foundation of tranquillity means extinction through non-arising of the suffering of Saṁsāra or complete peace; and because this is attainable only on realization of Nibbāna or Parinibbāna."

Other Teachers

Other (*aññe*) teachers, however, say that the four foundations are completely fulfilled on the occasion when the discourse on the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) is taught, when the Buddha develops the knowledge of teaching (*desanā-ñāṇa*).

This is how other (*aññe*) teachers explain their view: The mental continuum of the Buddha, who has in the past made an accumulation of the foundation of truthfulness, becomes accomplished in it by teaching the noble truths in three modes of the knowledge that it is the truth (*sacca-ñāṇa*); the knowledge that a

certain function, with regard to that truth, has to be performed (*kicca-ñāṇa*); and the knowledge that the function, with regard to that truth, has been performed (*kata-ñāṇa*) with regard to each of the four noble truths.

The mental continuum of the Buddha, who has in the past made an accumulation of the foundation of abandoning, becomes accomplished in it by making the great offering of the true Dhamma. The mental continuum of the Buddha, who has in the past made an accumulation of the foundation of tranquillity, becomes accomplished in it by having attained himself the peace of freedom from defilements and causing others to attain the same as himself. The mental continuum of the Buddha, who has in the past made an accumulation of the foundation of wisdom, becomes accomplished in it with full comprehension of the propensities and latent tendencies of beings.

This is the interpretation by other (*aññe*) teachers, on which the commentator, Ven. Mahā Dhammapāla, remarks: "The statement of other (*aññe*) teachers is also imperfect because the four foundations become completely accomplished only when the duties of a Buddha (*Buddha-kicca*) are over; with the teaching of the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse, the Buddha has just begun performing his duties, he has not yet finished them. Hence the statement of other (*aññe*) teachers remains incomplete."

Secondary Teachers

Secondary (*apare*) teachers maintain that the four foundations are completely fulfilled on the occasion when Nibbāna is fully realized, when he passes away in Parinibbāna.

This is how the secondary (*apare*) teachers explain their view: Of the four aspects of the foundation of truthfulness, Nibbāna as the absolute (*paramattha*) foundation of truthfulness, is paramount; its function is not yet complete by mere attainment of the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*) through the extinction of the defilements (*kilesa-parinibbāna*).

Its function is complete only when existence comes to an end with the extinction of [103] the aggregates (*khandha-parinibbāna*). It is only then that the foundation of truthfulness becomes perfect. At that time, because all the four aggregates: the substratum of sense desires (*kāmūpadhi*), the substratum of the body (*khandhūpadhi*), the substratum of the defilements (*kilesūpadhi*) and the

substratum of volitions (*abhisaṅkhārūpadhi*) have been rejected, the foundation of abandoning becomes perfect. Then, because all the volitions cease, the foundation of tranquillity becomes perfect. At that time too, because the purpose of wisdom is achieved, the foundation of wisdom becomes perfect. That is the view of the secondary (*apare*) teachers.

Without making any criticism of their view, the commentator, Ven. Mahā Dhammapāla, gives his own interpretation as a supplement to it: 1) The perfection of the foundation of truthfulness is particularly evident at the time of the Bodhisatta's birth; 2) the perfection of the foundation of wisdom is particularly evident at the time of his Awakening; 3) the perfection of the foundation of abandoning is particularly evident when he makes the great gift of Dhamma by delivering the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse; 4) the perfection of the foundation of tranquillity is particularly evident when he realizes Parinibbāna.

To summarise the various views of different teachers:

1. Certain (*eke*) teachers say that the four foundations become perfect on the first occasion, when conception takes place in the last existence.
2. Some (*keci*) teachers say that the four foundations become perfect on the second occasion, when Awakening is attained.
3. Other (*aññe*) teachers say that the four foundations become perfect on the third occasion, when the Dhamma Wheel (*Dhamma-cakka*) discourse is delivered.
4. Secondary (*apare*) teachers say that the four foundations become perfect on the fourth occasion, when Parinibbāna is realized.

Following the tradition of authors, who express last in their works the view they endorse, Ven. Mahā Dhammapāla mentions last the secondary theories (*apare vāda*) because he approves of it and accepts it with a supplementary remark, which is: "The four foundations become perfect only on the fourth occasion, when Parinibbāna is realized, as stated by the secondary (*apare*) teachers. However, it is particularly evident that the foundation of truthfulness is perfect at the time of the first event; the foundation of wisdom at the time of the second event; the foundation of abandoning at the time of the third event; and the foundation of tranquillity at the time of the fourth event."

Supplement to IX

Bodhisatta Gotama's Lives

[Previously this formed the end of chapter IX, but it seems placed better here, in the Further Explanations.]

Bodhisatta Gotama received the prediction from the 24 Buddhas from Dīpaṅkara to Kassapa. His lives, in which the prophecy was declared, may be classified as follows.

Five Lives as a Recluse

1. He received the first definite prophecy as the recluse Sumedha from Buddha Dīpaṅkara, he heard the same prophecy as:
2. Jaṭila the recluse, from Buddha Nārada.
3. Susīma the recluse, from Buddha Atthadassī.
4. Maṅgala the recluse, from Buddha Siddhattha.
5. Sujāta the recluse, from Buddha Tissa.

Nine Lives as a Monk

The event occurred when he was born:

1. As the Universal Monarch Vijitāvī, and later became a monk (*bhikkhu*) in Buddha Koṇḍañña's presence.
2. Brahmin Suruci, who became a monk in Buddha Maṅgala's presence.
3. Brahmin Uttara, who became a monk in Buddha Sumedha's presence.
4. A Universal Monarch, who became a monk in Buddha Sujāta's presence.
5. King Vijitāvī, who became a monk in Buddha Phussa's presence.
6. King Sudassana, who became a monk in Buddha Vessabhū's presence.
7. King Khema, who became a monk in Buddha Kakusandha's presence.
8. King Pabbata, who became a monk in Buddha Koṇāgamana's presence.
9. Jotipāla the Brahmin youth, who became a monk in Buddha Kassapa's presence.

Five Lives as a Layman

He received the prediction as:

1. The Brahmin Atideva, from Buddha Revata.
2. The Brahmin Sujāta, from Buddha Sobhita.
3. The wealthy Jaṭila, from Buddha Padumuttara.
4. Kassapa the Brahmin youth, from Buddha Piyadassī. [199]
5. King Arindama, from Buddha Sikhī.

Two Lives as a Nāga

He also received the prediction as:

1. Atula the Nāga King, from Buddha Sumana.
2. Another Nāga King, also named Atula, from Buddha Vipassī.

Three Different Lives

1. In one life as Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, he received the prediction from Buddha Dhammadassī.
2. In another life as a warrior King of the Yakkhas, he received the prediction from Buddha Anomadassī.
3. In another life as a lion king, from Buddha Paduma.

Reflections on the Rarities

In this way, throughout the duration of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons in which our Bodhisatta Gotama was fulfiling the perfections, it was only in the 24 existences from Buddha Dīpaṅkara's Dispensation to Buddha Kassapa's that he encountered a Buddha's Dispensation. Bearing this in mind, we should realize the rarity of such an encounter and should strive to make the most of the opportunity we are blessed with.

Even a being so great as the Bodhisatta, who had received the definite prophecy from Buddha Dīpaṅkara, had witnessed only 24 Dispensations, which were very few if we take into consideration that long duration. Even in those 24 Dispensations, it was only in nine that he obtained monkhood. Judging from this, it is clear that becoming a monk is a rarity, as it is said in the texts, the state of

becoming a monk is rare (*pabbajita-bhāvo dullabho*). Becoming a monk, which proves to be so difficult for a Bodhisatta to attain, who had even received the predictions, will be all the more so for ordinary persons.

Nowadays, in Buddhist society, some thoughtful people, who have some off-days while toiling to earn a living, put on robes temporarily lest their leisure should be futile. They would make use of it to their advantage. Such a monk is called a "rare (*dullabha*) monk." As they could not live long as a monk, the state of which is very difficult to obtain, they try to take it up for a short period.

If one fails to understand its meaning, one is bound to have the wrong notion that only such a temporary monastic is a "rare monastic." But he who, after becoming a novice in his younger days, attains monkhood in due course, a monk who has all along been in the robe since his childhood, is not a "rare monastic." Because of this notion, people are inclined to show their generosity to a rare monastic more than to a lifelong monastic who has been ordained from their twentieth year. If a temporary monkhood is difficult to achieve, it goes without saying that a permanent monkhood is even more difficult to achieve.

Government Servants and Monastic Life

Since there is a rule: Monks, royal attendants should not be made monks (*na bhikkhave rāja-bhaṭo pabbājetabbo*), some would say that even though they would make a request to become monks during their spare time, it is not permissible for the Saṅgha to grant [200] their request as it is against the Vinaya, and they argue government servants nowadays should not be ordained.

It is not proper to say this either. In the commentary on the Story of the Soldier (*Rāja-bhaṭa-vatthu*) of the Great Chapter (*Mahā-khandhaka*) of the Vinaya (PTS 1.73), it is explained: "Although, originally, a royal attendant, he who now has returned his salaries to the king; he who has handed over his post either to his son or to his brother; and has informed the king that he is no longer in royal service; he who has fully performed his duties for which he is paid; and he who got the permission to become a monk, willingly given by his rightful employer, the king: it is lawful to ordain them." In view of this explanation, if pensioners nowadays want to become monks permanently for life, they should do so after returning their pensions to the government or after being given permission willingly from the government saying: "You may become a monk, if you wish."

The rule that "royal attendants should not be made monks," has been promulgated only with reference to those who took the shelter of the Dispensation so that they might escape the king's employ. This should be known from the text of the Story of the Soldier (*Rāja-bhaṭa-vatthu*, Vin Mv PTS 1.73). Government servants today have no intention of escaping service. In fact, they are even worried lest they should be dismissed by incurring the employer's displeasure as he would ask: "Why should you become a monk?" Therefore, those who become temporary monastics are not against the rule of the Vinaya Great Division (*Mahā-vagga*), provided they do so after getting permission from the authorities concerned.

Even if the one ordained had the intention to escape government service, as is referred to by the rule, it is those monastics conferring ordination upon him that violate the rule, and not the one ordained who is still a valid monk. This is clearly stated in the Vinaya texts.

Another way of thinking is as follows: Even a great being like our Bodhisatta, who had received the definite prophecy, happened to be a monastic only nine times despite the fact that he had encountered 24 Buddhas. From this one is likely to think: "Rare is it to become a monk." Be that as it may. But, if one takes into consideration the statements in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) that 400,000 Arahats accompanied Buddha Dīpaṅkara when entering into Rammavatī city for alms food, and that there were 100,000 Arahats on the first occasion of the three meetings, as the number of Arahats was so great, one can hold that it is not hard to become a monk.

The saying: "Rare is it to become a monk" means "it is seldom that circumstances are favourable for such an event." Each time the Bodhisatta encountered a Buddha's Dispensation, he hardly had access to becoming a monk because circumstances were not favourable. Those numerous Arahats in the lifetime of Buddha Dīpaṅkara were the ones who had favourable circumstances, not only to become monastics but to become Arahats. In any endeavours, it is difficult to get a result when circumstances are not favourable. On the other hand, achievement of a result is easy under favourable circumstances.

It was because they had been endowed with the perfections, which were fulfilled in their past existences and with all other factors leading to Awakening that they became not only monks but also Arahats.

In the Discourse about the Fools and the Wise (*Bāla-paṇḍita-sutta*, MN 129), there is a simile of a blind tortoise in connection with the saying: Rare is life as a human being (*manussatta-bhāvo dullabho*). Suppose a man throws a yoke, which has only one hole, into the sea. That yoke would float adrift to the west if blown by the east wind, to the east if blown by the west wind, to the south if blown by the north wind and to the north if blown by the south wind. In the sea there is a tortoise blind in both eyes which comes up to the surface of the sea every hundred years. The chance of getting its head into the hole of the drifting yoke is rare indeed. For a being, who has been suffering in the suffering abodes in one of his existences, it is more than 100 times more difficult to be reborn as a human being. Other Pāḷi texts also contain explanations that a human life is difficult to achieve. [201]

While, on the one hand, the rarity of birth as a human being is thus taught, there is teaching, on the other hand, in such books as the Traditions (*Apadāna*), the Stories about Heavenly Mansions (*Vimāna-vatthu*), etc., that human and divine bliss can be attained for several existences with the gift of a single flower. This may lead to the impression that: "Human life is not difficult to gain, but easy." The Traditions (*Apadāna*) and the like are delivered concerning those who are unable to be reborn as humans for lack of agreeable resources, whereas the Discourse about the Fools and the Wise (*Bāla-paṇḍita-sutta*, MN 129) and such discourses are given concerning the possibility of rebirth in several human existences through the gift of a flower. The rarity of monkhood is to be viewed in the same manner.

With regard to human existence, it may be taken that even though one does not contemplate deeply it is not hard to become a human because of the fact that the world's population is growing day after day; but on the other hand, it may be realized that the number of beings in the four suffering states is far greater than that of human beings. Even in the animal world alone, there are countless species. If we take just the population of ants alone and compare them with that of humans, it exceeds the latter beyond all comparison. Judging from the countless number of beings in the four suffering states as well as from the limited number of humans, it is obvious that rebirth in the human world is indeed very rare.

Similarly, it is difficult to join the Saṅgha each time there arises a Buddha's Dispensation in the world. Those who have the potential qualities to become

monastics in the Dispensation of a Buddha become not only monastics but Arahats as well. Therefore, the number of such persons is considerable. But this should not lead one to believe that it is easy to become a monk just because they happen to be congregated in the presence of each Buddha under favourable circumstances.

In other words, he who is endowed with two factors is likely to become a monk: 1), Birth in a Buddha's Dispensation, which is hard to come by (*Buddhuppāda-dullabha*) and 2), the life of a human being which is hard to come by (*manussatta-dullabha*). There is absolutely no possibility of becoming a monk in the absence of a Buddha's Dispensation though one may be a human. There is absolutely no such possibility if one is a Deva, Sakka, Brahma or a being in a suffering abode, even though there is Dispensation of a Buddha.

Of these two events, birth in a Buddha's Dispensation, which is called *Buddhuppāda-navama*, is harder to come by. Only when there appears a Buddha can there be his Dispensation. And to appear as a Buddha, it takes one at least four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons, even after receipt of the prophecy predicting one will become a Buddha, and for so long a period, one is to fulfil the perfections assiduously with the aforesaid four modes of development. When there appears a Buddha at long last, and his Dispensation shines forth, but if one is not born a human being or even when thus born, if one encounters other hindrances, one cannot become a monastic. Taking this seriously into consideration, it may be said that becoming a monk is even rarer than witnessing a Buddha's Dispensation in the world.

Those who, as a result of their meritorious deeds, have the two factors of witnessing the Dispensation and of being a human, which are both difficult to obtain, should not find formidable hardships in their way to becoming a monk which is brought about by the two factors. Though it seems that the possibility of becoming a monk is simple because a billion Arahats in the lifetime of Buddha Dīpaṅkara possessed the two necessary factors: a Buddha's Dispensation and a human existence, it is really difficult to have these immediate causes for becoming a monk, hence the saying: "Rare indeed is becoming a monk."

Fulfilling the Perfections in Different Lives

The Bodhisatta, the recluse Sumedha, before meeting Buddha Dīpaṅkara and while in his youth, had engaged in generosity by giving away all his possessions;

in renunciation, by going forth from household life to the homeless state; in morality, by observing the precepts as an ascetic and in tranquillity (*samatha*) meditation, by putting in efforts to attain the absorptions (*jhāna*) and super knowledges (*abhiññā*). Having done so, he received the definite prophecy from Buddha Dīpaṅkara and that was followed by his contemplating the ten perfections and his exertion and fulfilment of the perfections, beginning with generosity (*dāna*) through the aforesaid four modes of development that lasted four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons up to his existence as Prince [202] Vessantara.

In fulfilling the ten perfections, as mentioned in the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA), and the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary with regard to the perfection of generosity (*dāna-pāramī*), the existences in which he performed generosity were countless, as he had done so when he was the Brahmin Akitti, Brahmin Saṅkha, King Dhanañjaya, King Mahā Sudassana, Brahmin chaplain Mahā Govinda, King Nimi, Prince Candakumāra, the wealthy Visayha, King Sivi and Prince Vessantara, etc. What are particularly mentioned in these commentaries is that the generosity shown by the Bodhisatta, as the wise hare (Ja 316), at the sacrifice of his life, was the highest perfection of generosity (*paramattha-dāna-pāramī*).

With regard to the perfection of morality (*sīla-pāramī*), the existences in which he observed morality are countless, as he had done so when he was the Nāga King Campeyya, Nāga King Bhūridatta, elephant King Chaddanta, Prince Jayaddisa, Prince Alīnasattu, etc. In particular, his observance of morality at the sacrifice of his life while he was the Nāga King Saṅkhapāla (Ja 524) was the highest perfection of morality (*paramattha-sīla-pāramī*).

With regard to the perfection of renunciation (*nekkhamma-pāramī*), the existences in which he renounced the world are countless, as he had done so leaving behind his kingdom when he was Prince Hatthipāla, the wise Ayoghara, etc. In particular, his renunciation of the kingly wealth that had come to him when he was Cūḷa Sutasoma (Ja 525) and which he found loathsome as spittle, absolutely without attachment, was the highest perfection of renunciation (*paramattha-nekkhamma-pāramī*).

With regard to the perfection of wisdom (*paññā-pāramī*), the existences in which he fulfilled the perfection of wisdom were countless, as he had done so

when he was the wise Vidhura, Mahā Govinda, Kudāla, Araka, Mahosadha, etc. In particular, his ability to assert by means of his wisdom that there was a snake in the leather bag without seeing it with his own eyes when he was the wise Senaka in the Birth Story about the Sack of Flour (*Sattu-bhasta-jātaka*, Ja 402), was the highest perfection of wisdom (*paramattha-paññā-pāramī*).

With regard to the perfection of energy (*viriya-pāramī*), the existences in which he fulfilled the perfection of energy were countless. In particular, his effort putting forth energy swimming in the great ocean as Prince Mahā Janaka of the Birth Story about King Mahā Janaka (*Mahā-janaka-jātaka*, Ja 539) was the highest perfection of energy (*paramattha-viriya-pāramī*).

In the Birth Story about Khantivādī (*Khantivādi-jātaka*, Ja 313), as Khantivādī the ascetic, his forbearance without anger at the chopping off of his limbs, big and small, by King Kalābu was the highest perfection of forbearance (*paramattha-khanti-pāramī*).

In the Birth Story about Mahā Sutasoma (*Mahā-sutasoma-jātaka*, Ja 537), as King Sutasoma, his keeping of his promise and being true to his word given to the cannibal Porisāda, by returning to him, and potentially sacrificing his life, was the highest perfection of truthfulness (*paramattha-sacca-pāramī*).

In the Birth Story about the Wise Mūgapakkha (*Mūga-pakkha-jātaka*, Ja 538), as Prince Temiya, his maintenance of resolve to keep silent at the sacrifice of his life, when he was subjected to tests of endurance, sometimes mildly, and at other times severely, for sixteen long years was the highest perfection of resolution (*paramattha-adhiṭṭhāna-pāramī*).

In the Birth Story about the King Ekarājā (*Eka-rāja-jātaka*, Ja 303), or in the Birth Story about the Wise Suvaṇṇasāma (*Suvaṇṇasāma-jātaka*, Ja 540), his goodwill directed towards the malicious king as well as towards lions, tigers and other beasts was the highest perfection of loving-kindness (*paramattha-mettā-pāramī*).

In the the Birth Story about the Bristling Hair (*Loma-haṁsa-jātaka*, Ja 94), his being equally indifferent to all treatment such as being spat on by village children with mucus, phlegm and saliva, or the honour done to him with flowers, scents, etc. by village elders was the highest perfection of equanimity (*paramattha-upekkhā-pāramī*).

When the Birth Stories Occured

The narration by the commentators of these existences, in which the ten perfections were fulfilled, are reproduced from their respective stories of the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*). A study of these stories shows that all the stories, except five, occurred in the present aeon. The five exceptional ones are:

1. The Birth Story about the Merchant from Seri (*Seriva-vāṇija-jātaka*, Ja 3).

This story originated five aeons ago as is evidenced by the following sentence read in the commentary: In the fifth aeon, reckoned from the present one, in the country of Seriva, the Bodhisatta was a hawker named Seriva who roamed about with bags on his shoulder selling beads (*atīte* [203] *ito pañcame kappe bodhisatto seriva-raṭṭhe seriva-nāmako kaccha-puṭa-vāṇijo ahosi*).

2. The Birth Story about the Bristling Hair (*Loma-haṁsa-jātaka*, Ja 94).

This story originated 91 aeons ago as is evidenced by the following commentarial statement: In the 91st aeon, reckoned from the present one, the Bodhisatta was an Ājīvaka, having taken up the life of a naked ascetic in order to investigate heretical asceticism (*atīte eka-navuti-kappa-matthake bodhisatto bāhiraka-tapaṁ vīmaṁsissāmī ti ājīvaka-pabbajaṁ pabbajitvā acelako ahosi*).

3. The Birth Story about the Teacher Araka (*Araka-jātaka*, Ja 169).

This story originated seven aeons ago as is evidenced by the following commentarial statement in the concluding portion of the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*): In this way, the Bodhisatta did not fall from the absorptions, but was reborn in the Brahma abode and did not come to the human world for the period in which the aeon dissolved seven times and evolved seven times (*evaṁ bodhisatto … aparihīnajjhāno brahma-loke nibbattitvā satta saṁvaṭṭa-vivaṭṭa-kappe na imaṁ lokaṁ puna āgamāsi*).

4. The Birth Story about the Ascetic Kesava (*Kesava-jātaka*, Ja 346).

This story originated 570 aeons ago.

5. The Birth Story about Brahma Baka (*Brahma-baka-jātaka*, Ja 405).

This story originated also 570 aeons ago.

The two Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) of Kesava and Baka are the stories between which there was no intervening period of existence. The stories given in detail

in the commentary may be retold as follows: in the Birth Story about the Ascetic Kesava (*Kesava-jātaka*, Ja 346), Kesava was first an ascetic and on his death became Baka Brahma. That Baka Brahma was reborn in Vehapphala abode first, living for 500 great aeons (*mahā-kappa*). When his life there came to an end, he was reborn in the Subhakiṇhā abode, living for 64 great aeons. Again, when his life there came to an end, he was reborn in Ābhassara abode, where he lived for eight great aeons. This shows that he attained Ābhassara abode only after passing through 500 aeons in Vehapphala and 64 aeons in Subhakiṇhā, thus totalling 564 aeons. It is said that he held wrong view when he reached Ābhassara abode.

As a Brahma he held wrong view, according to the commentary. Although there is no mention as to which of the eight aeons in that abode that he did so, by taking the two Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) together, it may be estimated that about 570 aeons had passed before he started harbouring the view that happened to be wrong.

Generations of teachers are of the belief that the text of any Birth Story (*Jātaka*) in which the commentator does not refer to the time of its origin in aeons, saying: "In such and such an aeon reckoned from the present one," but which simply says: In the past (*atīte*), belongs to the present aeon. On the authority of this belief, the stories in the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) and Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary originated in the present aeon, for they only have the simpler words, In the past (*atīte*) with regard to the time of the Bodhisatta's rebirth. But all the stories belonging to this aeon cannot be told because they are too numerous. The stories told are only those that have relationship with the present episodes. The number of the stories left untold is far greater.

If only a few pertinent stories are delivered out of those innumerable ones that happened in this aeon, it follows that the stories of his fulfilment of the perfections which had not been dealt with in previous aeons must also be countless. Besides, considering that the existences in which the Bodhisattas fulfilled the perfections during the period of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons cannot be calculated in terms of aeons, not to speak of in terms of existences before the present one, their task of fulfilling the perfections is immensely formidable for ordinary persons.

On the other hand, if one thinks of the Bodhisattas, these great beings, who undertook the fulfilment of the perfections, they are worthy of our most profound adoration [204] and endless admiration.

The series of these numerous existences in which our Bodhisatta had fulfilled the perfections ended with that of Prince Vessantara. Bodhisatta Sumedha, first and foremost, fulfilled the perfection of generosity (*dāna-pāramī*) by giving away all his possessions while as a layman before his renunciation. Similarly, when he had become an ascetic and received the prediction about his Buddhahood, he contemplated the factors leading to Buddhahood and found that the perfection of generosity is the first of the perfections, he resolved to act accordingly. All of this points to the fact that it was the perfection of generosity with which the Bodhisattas commence the fulfilment of the perfections, and it was the same perfection with which they ended their fulfilment, as in the existence of Prince Vessantara.

The perfection of generosity (*dāna-pāramī*) results in an attainment of a better life (*bhava-sampatti*) and attainment of wealth (*bhoga-sampatti*), which follow one like a shadow, and which cannot be prevented from doing so until one realizes Nibbāna. It is essential for all who go from one birth to another in Saṁsāra, as has been explained in the section on the perfection of generosity (*dāna-pāramī*) in the Further Explanantions (*Anudīpani*). Since the Bodhisattas are leaders of those beings in Saṁsāra, they specially fulfilled this perfection in their final existence, as that of Prince Vessantara. After doing so in their final existence they withdraw from their task of fulfilling the perfections. Since their fulfilment is complete, they move on to Tusita for their last existence, and await the right time for becoming a Buddha.

The Eight Differences

Though these eight differences (*vematta*) are given at the end of the Chronicle of Buddha Gotama in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary, here, in this work, they are given in the Further Explanations.

Vematta is a Pāḷi word derived from *vimatta*, *vi* meaning “varied” and *matta* “length” or “size.” The Buddhas: Dīpaṅkara, Koṇḍañña, etc., possessed the same and equal attributes but they were different from one another in eight particulars.

These eight are:

1. Difference in lifespan (*āyu-vematta*).
2. Difference in height (*pamāṇa-vematta*).
3. Difference in clan (*kula-vematta*).
4. Difference in striving (*padhāna-vematta*).
5. Difference in bodily radiance (*rasmi-vematta*).
6. Difference in vehicles used in renunciation (*yāna-vematta*).
7. Difference in the Bodhi tree (*Bodhi-vematta*).
8. Difference in seat (*pallaṅka-vematta*).

1. Difference in Lifespan

Difference in lifespan (*āyu-vematta*).

Buddhas Koṇḍañña, Anomadassī, Paduma, Padumuttara, Atthadassī, Dhammadassī, Siddhattha and Tissa; these nine Buddhas appeared when the lifespan was 100,000 years.

Buddhas Maṅgala, Sumana, Sobhita, Nārada, Sumedha, Sujāta, Piyadassī and Phussa; these eight Buddhas appeared when the lifespan was 90,000 years.

Buddhas Revata and Vessabhū; these two Buddhas appeared when the lifespan was 6,000 years.

Buddha Vipassī appeared when the lifespan was 80,000; Buddha Sikhī, when it was 70,000; Buddha Kakusandha, when it was 40,000; Buddha Koṇāgamana, when it was 30,000; Buddha Kassapa, when it was 20,000 and our Buddha Gotama when it was just 100 years.

It may be argued that these Buddhas should be of equal lifespan as they were great [205] beings who had fulfilled the perfections to a great degree. In this connection, an elaborate explanation given in the commentary on the Long Discourse on the Traditions (*Mahāpadāna-sutta*, DN 14) should be noted in brief. The span of life of beings in the world depends on the observance of righteousness by the ruler. When he observes righteousness, all his people will do so and likewise, so do the Devas who cause rainfall and do other helpful things. This leads to regularity in climate and production of nutritious fruits and

vegetables, etc., for people, who live long because of good health. When the ruler does not observe righteousness, many of his people do not also; nor do the Devas who cause sufficient rainfall and other favourable conditions. Consequently, fruits and vegetables become deficient in nourishment and the climate becomes irregular. As a result, people are exposed to ill-health and become short-lived (see AN 4.70). In this way, those Buddhas who appeared in a period of long lifespan enjoy longevity and those who appeared in a period of short lifespan do not.

Though all Buddhas have the power to prolong their lives as a result of their past deeds that have effected their conception, their lifespans are different in length. According to the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary which says:

> *Upacita-puñña-sambhārānaṁ dīghāyuka-saṁvatta-niya-kamma-samupetānam-pi Buddhānaṁ yuga-vasena āyuppamāṇaṁ appamāṇaṁ ahosi.*
>
> Though they are endowed with the merits of their past deeds that can bring about longevity as a result of their acquisition of wholesome prerequisites, Buddhas are of unequal length of life in accordance with their lifespans (*āyu-kappa*).

To give a worldly example: If the seed of a teak tree that has the ability to last for 1,000 years is sown in a dry zone where the soil is hard and barren, it cannot live that long. Similarly, the meritorious deeds of the Bodhisattas in their final existence caused their conception and the power to prolong their lives. However, if they attain Buddhahood in the short period of a lifespan (*āyu-kappa*), that is like the dry, hard, barren land their lives have to be short according to their lifespan.

Length of Lifespan when a Buddha Appears

Buddhas usually do not appear in an aeon when the lifespan of beings is on the increase. Because if a Buddha were to appear in such an aeon and teach the doctrine of impermanence and the like, beings would fail to understand the characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and the non-self (*anatta*) of conditioned things as their lives become longer and longer, one aeon after another. For this reason, Buddhas do not appear in any of the aeons on the increase but they do so in the decreasing aeons.

Even with regard to the decreasing aeons, Buddhas appear only in the aeons that have a lifespan of at most 100,000 years. They do not appear in the aeons that have a lifespan longer than 100,000 years because their teaching of the three characteristics of conditioned things would fall on deaf ears. When the lifespan decreases, 100 years is the minimum of the aeons in which they would appear. When the lifespan goes down from 100 years, Buddhas do not appear in those aeons of shorter lifespan because, even though the characteristics of conditioned things manifest themselves glaringly, as their impurities of greed, hate and delusion grow more at the time, beings are unable to accept, follow and practise the Dhamma despite the Buddhas' teaching. Hence aeons of less than 100 years of lifespan are devoid of Buddhas.

In this way, Buddhas appeared during the aeons ranging from that of the maximum lifespan which was 100,000 years to that of the minimum lifespan which was just 100 years. Though it is true that they appeared in the decreasing aeons between the two aeons, that is, that of the maximum lifespan and that of the minimum, Buddhas appeared only in the aeon in which the lifespan agrees with the degree of maturity of the prerequisites for the perfections while they were Bodhisattas. Those Bodhisattas, whose prerequisites reached maturity, which coincided with the period of 100,000 years of lifespan, which was appropriate to their Awakening, appeared as a Buddha in that aeon of 100,000 years of lifespan.

Those Bodhisattas, whose prerequisites were not yet mature as they are still at the stage of fulfilling the perfections, [206] could not appear as Buddhas in the aeon of 100,000 years of lifespan, but could appear in the aeons in which they would reach the maturity of their prerequisites, which might be of 90,000 years of lifespan, or 80,000 years, 70,000 years, 60,000 years, and so on, of lifespan.

In this Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*), Buddha Kakusandha appeared in the aeon of 40,000 years lifespan; after him, passed one inclusive period (*antara-kappa*), and Buddha Koṇāgamana appeared in the aeon of 30,000 years lifespan; after him, passed one inclusive period; and Buddha Kassapa appeared in the aeon of 20,000 years lifespan. From this, it might be anticipated that our Buddha Gotama should appear in like manner, that is, in the lifespan of 10,000 years when one inclusive period had elapsed after Buddha Kassapa. But he was unable to appear then, because the prerequisites for the perfections had not yet reached maturity. He was unable to do so even in the aeon of 5,000 years of lifespan, or

of 1,000 years or of 500 years. The reason was that his complete fulfilment of the perfections took place only in his life as Prince Vessantara. His life as Prince Vessantara occurred in the aeon of 100 years of lifespan. Since his undertaking of the fulfilment of the perfections came to an end in the aeon of 100 years, Buddha Gotama appeared only in the aeon of the same length of lifespan.[335]

2. Difference in Height

Difference in height (*pamāṇa-vematta*) is the difference in the height of the Buddhas.

The height of Buddha Sumana was 90 cubits.[336]

The height of four Buddhas: Koṇḍañña, Maṅgala, Nārada and Sumedha, was 88 cubits.

The height of six Buddhas: Dīpaṅkara, Revata, Piyadassī, Atthadassī, Dhammadassī and Vipassī, was 80 cubits.

The height of Buddha Sikhī was 70 cubits.

The height of three Buddhas: Siddhattha, Tissa and Vessabhū, was 60 cubits.

The height of five Buddhas: Sobhita, Anomadassī, Paduma, Padumuttara and Phussa, was 58 cubits.

The height of Buddha Sujāta was 50 cubits.

The heights of three Buddhas: Kakusandha, Koṇāgamana and Kassapa, were 40 cubits, 30 cubits and 20 cubits respectively.

Buddha Gotama's height was 16 or 18 cubits.[337]

It should be noted that the differences in height of the Buddhas are caused mainly by climate and food. Since the Buddhas were a part of mankind and are thus human beings, their lifespan is naturally the same as that of the people of their times. The Buddhas who appeared in the period of 90,000 years lifespan

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[335] Here the author inserts Sayagyi U Lin's remark on the four ages (*yuga*) in explaining the word *yuga-vasena*. We leave it out from our translation at it is not quite applicable here.

[336] [I have rearranged these lists, and other lists below, in order of size, time, etc.]

[337] The different versions are explained in the Chronicle of Buddha Gotama.

generally lived up to 90,000 years. Those who appeared in the period of 100,000 years lifespan generally lived up to 100,000 years. In this way, the length of their lifespan agreed with that of the people.

Their heights, however, cannot be determined by their lifespans because, though they appeared in the same period of 100,000 years of lifespan, Buddhas Dīpaṅkara, Atthadassī, and Dhammadassī were only 80 cubits tall while Koṇḍañña was 88 cubits; Buddhas Anomadassī, Paduma and Padumuttara were 58 cubits, Buddhas Siddhattha and Tissa were 60 cubits. This suggests that the heights of the Buddhas had nothing to do with their lifespans. If those of the same periods differed in height, so could those of different periods. [207]

From the statement made in the Vinaya (Pāc 92, PTS 4.173), that the Buddha's younger brother, Ven. Ānanda, was only four fingers shorter than his elder brother, it may be taken that other people of the time were as tall as the Buddha, if not of equal height. It therefore follows that the height of the Buddha was equal to that of the people who were his contemporaries. This, however, does not mean that the two heights were exactly the same.

That the Buddha's height was equal to contemporary people's height was due to the two factors: climate and food. When the unrighteousness of rulers is followed by that of the whole world, with the exception of the noble ones, there happen irregularities of climate and deficiencies of nutriment in food. Being associated with such climate and food the people's physical qualities cannot develop as much as they should. On the other hand, these qualities would develop well when righteousness prevails.

3. Difference in Family

Difference in family (*kula-vematta*) is the difference in clan in which the Buddhas belonged. Buddhas Kakusandha, Koṇāgamana and Kassapa were born in Brahmin clans, while the remaining 22 Buddhas were born in noble (*Khattiya*) clans. When people in the world recognized the supremacy of the aristocrats, Buddhas were born in the aristocratic clans; when they recognized the supremacy of the Brahmins, Buddhas belonged to the Brahmin clans.

4. Difference in Striving

Difference in striving (*padhāna-vematta*) is the difference in the duration of the austerities.

Seven Buddhas: Dīpaṅkara, Koṇḍañña, Sumana, Anomadassī, Sujāta, Siddhattha, and Kakusandha, practised the austerities for ten months.

Four Buddhas: Maṅgala, Sumedha, Tissa and Sikhī, practised for eight months.

Buddha Revata practised for seven months.

Four Buddhas: Piyadassī, Phussa, Vessabhū and Koṇāgamana practised for six months.

Buddha Sobhita practised for four months.

Three Buddhas: Paduma, Atthadassī, Vipassī, practised for half a month.

Four Buddhas: Nārada, Padumuttara, Dhammadassī and Kassapa, practised for seven days.

Our Buddha Gotama, Lord of the Three Worlds, endowed with inconceivable attributes, practised the austerities for six years.

As there were reasons for inequality of lifespan, height, etc., so here there is a reason for the difference in duration of the austerities, especially in the case of Buddha Gotama. On investigation, it would be found that it was due to his own deeds.

To explain further, in the Traditions about the Buddha's Previous Deeds (*Pubba-kamma-pilotika-Buddhāpadāna*, Th-ap 39.10, PTS 1.300) the Buddha himself says with regard to his demeritorious deed that resulted in his practice of the austerities for six long years:

> *Avacāhaṁ Jotipālo, Bhagavaṁ Kassapaṁ tadā: "Kuto nu bodhi muṇḍassa bodhi parama-dullabhā?" Tena kamma-vipākena, acariṁ dukkaraṁ bahuṁ, chabbassānuruveḷāyaṁ, tato bodhim-apāpuṇiṁ.*
>
> In the lifetime of Buddha Kassapa, I was Jotipāla, a Brahmin youth. Then I foolishly offended him saying: "How can this shaven headed man attain knowledge of Awakening and omniscience which are indeed very difficult to attain." Because of that verbal misdeed, I had to practise the austerities for six long years in my final existence.

In view of the fact that it is directly mentioned in the text that the Buddha had to spend six years for the practice of the austerities on account of his offence, it is understandable that those Buddhas who had to practise it only for seven days

did so in accordance with their sufficiently great deeds of merit. Therefore, it should be stated that the difference in duration of practice of the austerities was affected by their actions.

Though there were differences in the duration of their ascetic practices (*padhāna-viriya*) just before their attainments of Buddhahood, once they attained the goal, the degrees of the effort they put forth (*payatta-viriya*) being one of the six glories of a Buddha, are one and [208] the same.

5. Difference in Radiance

Difference in radiance (*rasmi-vematta*) is the difference in bodily radiance.

Buddha Maṅgala's radiance spread across the 10,000 world-element; Buddha Padumuttara's radiance did so up to twelve leagues; Buddha Vipassī's radiance up to seven leagues; Buddha Sikhī's up to three leagues; Buddha Kakusandha's up to ten leagues and Buddha Gotama's up to four cubits which form a fathom. The radiance of the rest of the Buddhas were not constant, they shone forth as far as these Buddhas desired.

> *Tatra rasmi-vemattaṁ ajjhāsaya-paṭibaddhaṁ hoti. Yo yattakaṁ icchasi, tassa tattakaṁ sarīrappabhā pharati. Maṅgalassa pana: "Dasa-sahassi-loka-dhātuṁ pharatū," ti ajjhāsayo ahosi.*[338]

> Of the differences, the difference in radiance is related to a Buddha's own wish expressed at the time of fulfilling the perfections. At the time of fulfilling the perfections, if a Buddha wishes that his physical radiance should spread to a certain extent, to that extent his radiance spreads. Buddha Maṅgala's wish was: "Let my radiance spread throughout the 10,000 world-element."

In the sub-commentary, aspiration (*ajjhāsaya*) is explained to be the aspiration that was said while the Bodhisatta concerned was fulfilling the perfections.

When one looks for the cause of the difference between the physical radiance of the Buddhas, one may say that it is the perfections which they had fulfilled. That it should be so is explained by the commentators in the story of Buddha Maṅgala whose radiance spread all over the 10,000 world-element.

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[338] [See the commentary on DN 14, PTS 2.425].

In his final existence, while fulfilling the perfections – similar to the existence of Bodhisatta Gotama as Prince Vessantara – Bodhisatta Maṅgala was once living with his family on a hill that resembled Vaṅkapabbata, when a Yakkha, Kharadāṭhika, in the guise of a Brahmin, asked the Bodhisatta to give him his children as alms. Thinking: "With pleasure, I shall give them away," he actually did so.

Leaning against the wooden railing at the end of the walk, the Yakkha devoured them as though he was chewing a bundle of lotus stalks in the Bodhisatta's presence. When the Bodhisatta looked at the Yakkha, he saw the red blood flowing like flames of fire from its mouth, which was open at that moment. But he did not experience even the slightest displeasure, simply thinking: "I have performed well the act of giving," he was indeed glad to have done so. "As a result of this meritorious act, may my physical radiance likewise emit from my body in future," so the Bodhisatta wished. Because of this aspiration, when he became a Buddha, his natural physical radiance reached every nook and corner in the 10,000 world-element.

From this story, it should be understood that the difference in radiance depended on whether the Buddhas had made an aspiration or not in the past. When one speaks of the difference of physical radiance, one generally means their natural radiance. If created by means of their power, in accordance with their wishes, any Buddha could make his radiance go as far as he desired. In the matter of power, there was no difference at all, one can never say: "This Buddha was of lesser power" or "that Buddha was of greater power."

Three Kinds of Physical Radiances

1. The kind of radiance that constantly emits from the natural body of the Buddha (*byāmappabhā*). Having a fathom in length, these radiances, surrounding his body, were so dense and massive that they could not be distinguished from the Buddha's body. When one looks at the light of an electric bulb from a distance one would think that the glow of light is a ball of fire. A closer and more careful look will reveal, however, the dazzling filament in the bulb. In the same way, the Buddha's body was accompanied by the encircling radiance, each beam measuring a fathom. Such radiances are called [209] *byāmappabhā*. They were thick and massive.

2. The kind of radiance that was the continuation of that which emits from the natural body and spread to a distance of 80 cubits (*asīti-niccalobhāsa*).

3. The kind of radiance that spread to countless world-elements because his blood, etc., became clearer when a Buddha contemplated the doctrine of the conditions or when he displayed the twin miracle, or on other occasions (*disā-pharaṇa*).

Two Kinds of Rays

The special quality of the Buddha's complexion, visible to humans, Devas and Brahmas, is called a radiance in this connection. According to the Abhidhamma, the radiance that constantly emits from the natural body of the Buddha (*byāmappabhā*) and the radiance that spreads to a distance of 80 cubits (*asīti-niccalobhāsa*) are to be called the radiance born of one's deeds of merit (*kammaja*), or the radiance born of temperature supported by one's deeds (*utuja-kamma-paccaya*), because these two kinds have past action as their cause.

The radiance that spread to countless world-elements (*disā-pharaṇa*) should be called the radiance born of one's mind (*cittaja*), or the radiance born of temperature and supported by one's mind (*citta-paccaya-utuja*) because it has the clarity of the mind as its cause. Thus, their classification should be known.

6. Difference in Vehicles

Difference in vehicles (*yāna-vematta*) is the difference in vehicles used by the Bodhisattas in renunciation.

Buddhas Dīpaṅkara, Sumana, Sumedha, Phussa, Sikhī and Koṇāgamana renounced the world riding elephants.

Buddhas Koṇḍañña, Revata, Paduma, Piyadassī, Vipassī and Kakusandha renounced the world riding chariots drawn by thoroughbred horses.

Buddhas Maṅgala, Sujāta, Atthadassī, Tissa and Gotama renounced the world riding horses.

Buddhas Anomadassī, Siddhattha and Vessabhū renounced the world riding golden palanquins.

Buddha Nārada renounced the world on foot.

Buddhas Sobhita, Padumuttara, Dhammadassī and Kassapa renounced the world in flying palaces.

7. Difference in the Bodhi Tree

Difference in Bodhi tree (*Bodhi-vematta*) is the difference in Mahā Bodhi trees under which the Bodhisattas become a Buddha.

Buddha Dīpaṅkara became a Buddha under a Pepper (*Pipphalī*) tree.[339]

Buddha Koṇḍañña became a Buddha under a Beautiful Sāla (*Sāla-kalyaṇī*) tree.

Buddhas Maṅgala, Sumana, Revata and Sobhita became Buddhas under an Ironwood (Nāga) tree.

Buddha Anomadassī became a Buddha under an Arjuna (*Ajjuna*) tree.

Buddhas Paduma and Nārada became Buddhas under a Great Soṇa (*Mahā-soṇa*) tree.

Buddha Padumuttara became a Buddha under a Salala tree.

Buddha Sumedha became a Buddha under an Asoka (*Mahā-nīpa*) tree.

Buddha Sujāta became a Buddha under a Great Bamboo (*Mahā-veḷu*) tree.

Buddha Piyadassī became a Buddha under a Kakudha tree.

Buddha Atthadassī became a Buddha under a Campak tree.

Buddha Dhammadassī became a Buddha under a Bimbijāla tree.

Buddha Siddhattha became a Buddha under a Kaṇikāra tree. [210]

Buddha Tissa became a Buddha under an Indian Laurel (*Asana*) tree.

Buddha Phussa became a Buddha under an Emblic Myrobalan (*Āmalaka*) tree.

Buddha Vipassī became a Buddha under a Trumpet Flower (*Pāṭalī*) tree.

Buddha Sikhī became a Buddha under a Fragrant Mango (*Puṇḍarīka*) tree.

Buddha Vessabhū became a Buddha under a Great Sāla tree.

Buddha Kakusandha became a Buddha under a Sirīsa tree.

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[339] [Mistakenly given as a Nigrodha tree in the original translation.]

Buddha Koṇāgamana became a Buddha under a Cluster Fig (*Udumbara*) tree.

Buddha Kassapa became a Buddha under a Banyan (*Nigrodha*) tree.

Buddha Gotama became a Buddha under an Asvattha (*Assattha*) tree.

> The fourfold path is called Bodhi because it leads to the knowledge of the four truths. Omniscience is called Bodhi because it leads to the knowledge of what should be known. Its definition should be: *Bujjhatī ti Bodhi*, "that which knows the four truths and that which knows what is to be known is Bodhi." The tree under which the Bodhisatta knows the four truths and others to be known thoroughly is also called Bodhi. The definition here is: *Bujjhati etthā ti Bodhi*, "the tree under which the Bodhisatta knows the four truths and all that is to be known is Bodhi."

8. Difference in Seats

Difference in seats (*pallaṅka-vematta*) is the difference in the size of the seat the Buddhas sat on when Awakening.

The seat on which Buddha Sumana become a Buddha measured 60 cubits.

The seats on which the Buddhas Koṇḍañña, Maṅgala, Nārada and Sumedha become a Buddha measured 57 cubits each.

The seats on which the Buddhas Dīpaṅkara, Revata, Piyadassī, Atthadassī, Dhammadassī and Vipassī become a Buddha measured 53 cubits each.

The seats on which the Buddhas Siddhattha, Tissa and Vessabhū become a Buddha measured 40 cubits.

The seats on which the Buddhas Sobhita, Anomadassī, Paduma, Padumuttara and Phussa become a Buddha measured 38 cubits.

The seats on which the Buddhas Sujāta and Sikhī became a Buddha measured 32 cubits.

The seat on which Buddha Kakusandha become a Buddha measured 26 cubits.

The seat on which Buddha Koṇāgamana become a Buddha measured 20 cubits.

The seat on which Buddha Kassapa become a Buddha measured 15 cubits.

The seat on which Buddha Gotama become a Buddha measured 14 cubits.

Two Kinds of Seat

In this connection, it may be noted that there are two kinds of seats (*pallaṅka*): sitting cross-legged (*ābhujana-pallaṅka*) and a kind of seat (*āsana-pallaṅka*). Of these two, by sitting cross-legged (*ābhujana-pallaṅka*) is meant sitting cross-legged as in: He sits down, after folding his legs crosswise (*nisīdati pallaṅkaṁ ābhujitvā*), of the Long Discourse about the Ways of Attending to Mindfulness (*Mahā-sati-paṭṭhāna-sutta*, DN 22), etc.

By a kind of seat (*āsana-pallaṅka*) is meant a type of seat. A kind of seat is of different sub-divisions, such as a rich man's seat (*seṭṭhi-pallaṅka*), a king's seat (*rāja-pallaṅka*), a Nāga's seat (*Nāga-pallaṅka*), a Deva's seat (*Deva-pallaṅka*), a Dhamma seat (*Dhamma-pallaṅka*), an Awakening seat (*Bodhi-pallaṅka*), etc.

In the commentary on The Birth Story about the Mayhaka Bird (*Mayhaka-jātaka*, Ja 390) it is said:

> *Gaccha, imaṁ amhākaṁ gharaṁ ānetvā, mama pallaṅke nisīdāpetvā, amhākaṁ paṭiyatta-bhattassa pattaṁ pūretvā dāpehi.*
>
> Go and take this Paccekabuddha to my house; let him sit down on my seat and fill his bowl with the food prepared for me.

Such a seat of the wealthy man of Bārānasi represents a seat used by well-to-do persons (*seṭṭhi-pallaṅka*). [211]

Such royal thrones as:

1. A lion seat (*sīhāsana-pallaṅka*) is a throne made of beechwood with lion figures at the base and is placed in the main hall of the palace where the king grants an audience.
2. A goose seat (*haṁsāsana-pallaṅka*) is a throne made of Thingan wood with goose (*haṁsa*) figures at the base and placed in the Jetavana Hall where the king paid homage to the Three Treasures.
3. A conch seat (*saṅkhāsana-pallaṅka*) is a throne made of mango wood with conch-shell figures at the base, and placed in the chamber where the king puts on his headdress.
4. A bee seat (*bhamarāsana-pallaṅka*) is a throne made of caraway wood with bee figures at the base and placed in the glass chamber where the king retires.

5. An elephant seat (*gajāsana-pallaṅka*) is a throne made of Saga wood with elephant figures at the base and placed in the Hall of Justice where the king gives rewards and punishments.

6. A peacock seat (*mayurāsana-pallaṅka*) is a throne made of rosewood with peacock figures at the base and placed in the northern chamber where the king accepts elephants and horses as tributes.

7. A deer seat (*migāsana-pallaṅka*) is a throne made of fig wood with figures of wild beasts at the base and placed in the southern chamber where the king holds meetings.

8. A lotus seat (*padumāsana-pallaṅka*) is a throne made of jack wood with lotus figures at the base and placed in the western theatrical chamber where the king is honoured.

These eight thrones used by a monarch as well as the 84,000 thrones used by the Universal Monarch, Mahā Sudassana, represent a king's seat (*rāja-pallaṅka*).

The throne used by Nāga kings, such as Dhataraṭṭha, is a Nāga's seat (*Nāga-pallaṅka*). The kind of throne mentioned in the Discourse concerning Janavasabha (*Janavasabha-sutta*, DN 18), the Discourse concerning Mahā Govinda (*Mahā-govinda-sutta*, DN 19), etc., where it is said: "Brahma Sanaṅkumāra may take his seat on a Deva's throne whichever one he likes," and also the kind of ruby throne measuring a league prepared for Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, as mentioned in the Short Discourse on the Destruction of Craving (*Cūḷa-taṇhā-saṅkhāya-sutta*, MN 37), represent a Deva's seat (*Deva-pallaṅka*).

The kinds of throne on which the respondants (*vissajjana*), Ven. Upāli and Ven. Ānanda, sat when the Frst Council was held, as mentioned in the introduction to the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*) commentary, etc., and the throne on which noble Dhamma preachers, such as Buddhas, etc., are seated, represent Dhamma seats (*Dhamma-pallaṅka*).

The kind of seat where all Bodhisattas sat cross-legged with a firm determination, resolving: "Never shall I get up from this place until I achieve the knowledge of the path towards Awakening and omniscience," is an Awakening seat (*Bodhi-pallaṅka*). Since it was on this seat that they overcame the five deaths (*māra*), the throne is also called the unconquered seat (*aparājita-pallaṅka*).

That Awakening seat (*Bodhi-pallaṅka*) was the throne lying four cubits east of the Bodhi tree which stands on the sacred site of the Awakening circle (*Bodhi-maṇḍala*). It was 100 cubits high and very beautiful. The throne arose instantly from the surface of the earth when the Bodhisatta spread the eight handfuls of grass at the very place. It was a result of his accumulated merits of deeds in fulfilling the perfections. The throne, being ornamented with various jewels, was full of splendour. Since it was the place on which the Bodhisatta arrived at the knowledge of the path to Awakening and omniscience, or where he became a Buddha, it is called the Awakening seat (*Bodhi-pallaṅka*).

The remaining pages of this section contain the author's note on the controversy over the height of the Buddha Gotama's Awakening seat (*Bodhi-pallaṅka*) and other matters related to it, quoting some extracts from such works as the sub-commentary on the Jewel Light (*Maṇi-dīpa-ṭīkā*), the sub-commentary on the Protection Discourses (*Paritta-ṭīkā*), the Light on the All-Seeing One (*Samanta-cakkhu-dīpanī*) and the decision given by the Taung Gwin Thathanabaing Sayādaw. As the author's note is mainly meant for the edification of Myanmar scholars we have left it out from our translation. [212]

The 18 Impossible Births

[Previously this was a stand-alone chapter VIII, entitled Eighteen *Abhabbaṭṭhānas*, but this 4-page section is better placed here, in the Further Explanations.]

There are 18 existences in which Bodhisattas, who have received the definite prophecy, are not reborn. Those Bodhisattas who, like the recluse Sumedha, are endowed with eight qualities[340] required for receiving the definite prophecy and who have actually received it, are not reborn in eighteen different existences throughout Saṁsāra; this statement and the enumeration of the eighteen existences are given in the commentary on the Discourse about the Rhinocerus (*Khagga-visāṇa-sutta*, Snp 3, PTS 1.49. ff).

The eighteen existences are the following:

1. Blind since birth.

[340] See chapter II: The Rare appearance of a Buddha.

2. Deaf since birth.
3. A lunatic.
4. Someone dumb.
5. A cripple.
6. A barbarian.
7. Someone born in the womb of a female slave.
8. Someone with perpetual wrong belief.
9. Someone whose sex changes from male to female.
10. Someone who commits the five severest crimes of matricide, patricide, killing of an Arahat, shedding the blood of a Buddha, and causing schism of the Saṅgha.
11. A leper.
12. An animal smaller than a quail or a warbler.
13. An Asura called an ever-hungry Peta (*khuppipāsika-peta*), a Peta burning with craving (*nijjhāma-taṇhika-peta*) and Kālakañcika.

    An ever-hungry Peta (*khuppipāsika-peta*) is an ever-hungry ghost, for he hardly has a chance to eat; a a Peta burning with craving (*nijjhāma-taṇhika-peta*) is another one who is always feeling hot, for he is always on fire. These are the Petas who in their previous lives were monks, the kind that Ven. Moggallāna encountered on Mount Gijjhakūṭa.

    Kālakañcika was the name of an Asura whose body was three miles in size; but as he is of scanty flesh and blood, his complexion is like the colour of a withered leaf. His eyes, lying on his head, protrude like those of a lobster. Since the mouth is the size of the eye of a needle, also lying on the head, he has to bend forward to pick up the food, if he finds any at all.

14. In Avīci and Lokantarika.

    Lokantarika is the space at the meeting of the three world-elements; it is the space where evil doers suffer for their misdeeds; such a place of intense suffering is called Lokantarika hell.

15. A Māra in a celestial abode of sensual pleasures.

16. A Non-percipient Brahma (*Asaññā-satta-brahma*) and a Brahma of the Pure Abodes (*Suddhāvāsa-brahma*).
17. In the Formless (*Arūpa-brahma*) abodes.
18. In another world-element.

Here the author gives a detailed explanation of "a quail or a warbler" mentioned in the twelfth item of the above list. The author's elucidations, quoting various authorities including two Birth Stories (*Jātaka*), are mainly meant for the benefit of Myanmar scholars and are [113] left out from the translation.

In listing the impossible births, the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) commentary and the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary on the one hand and the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*) commentary on the other, agree on some points and disagree on others. Of the eighteen existences given in the Anthology of Discourses commentary, the following eight are missing in the Abundance of Meaning commentary:

1. A lunatic.
2. A cripple.
3. A barbarian.
4. Someone whose sex changes from male to female.
5. Someone born in the womb of a female slave.
6. A leper.
7. A Māra.
8. In another world-element.

The Abundance of Meaning commentary does not give the exact number of these existences, and those listed in it omitted in the Anthology of Discourses commentary are:

1. A woman.
2. A hermaphrodite.

3. A eunuch.[341]

Of these three existences, that of a woman is easily understood.

The original Pāḷi word meaning a "hermaphrodite" is *ubhato-vyañjanaka*. *Ubhato* means, there have been two past productive deeds (*kamma*), one causing the female sex and the other, male; *vyañjanaka* means genital organs. A hermaphrodite is of two kinds: a female hermaphrodite, and a male one. In a female hermaphrodite, the female sex characteristics appear dominant while the male ones are subordinate at normal times; in a male hermaphrodite, the male sex characteristics appear conspicuous while the female ones are subordinate at normal times.

When a woman with both sexes desires to have intercourse taking the role of a man with another woman, her female organ disappears and the male organ appears. When a man with both sexes desires to copulate with another man, his male organ disappears and his female organ manifests itself.

The female hermaphrodite can conceive a child; she can also make another woman conceive. The male hermaphrodite cannot conceive, but he can impregnate a woman. This is the difference between the two, see the Vinaya Great Division (*Mahā-vagga*) commentary.

The Pāḷi term for a deviant is *paṇḍaka*, meaning a person with deviant sexuality. Despite his being male, he is different from other men in the sense that he doesn't engage in coital acts. There are five kinds of deviant:

1. One whose sexual urge is gratified by sucking another man's penis or taking that man's semen in his mouth (*āsitta-paṇḍaka*).
2. A voyeur, one whose sexual urge is gratified by stealthily watching the act of others' lovemaking and by feeling envious of them (*ussuyya-paṇḍaka*).
3. One who is castrated like a eunuch in-charge of women in a harem (*opakkamika-paṇḍaka*).

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[341] The list in the commentary to the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) is the same as that in the Abundnce of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) commentary.

4. One who has sexual urge during the dark fortnight of the lunar month and who is sexually calm during the bright fortnight (*pakkha-paṇḍaka*).

5. One who has been born without sexual characteristics (*napuṁsaka-paṇḍaka*).

> The last is without the sex decad in his make up since birth and remains without the sex [114] characteristics of a male or female. That one is therefore neither a man nor a woman. [115] The sex decad consists of the four elements of earth, water, temperature and wind, plus colour, smell, taste, nutrition, life principle and male or female formations constituting a cell (*kalāpa*) at the time of conception.

The 18 Attributes of the Buddha

The Four Kinds of Analytical Knowledge

It has been said above that as soon as the Buddha attained Perfect Awakening, he became possessed of the four kinds of analytical knowledge. These four knowledges are:

1. The analytic knowledge of meaning (*attha-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*).

2. The analytic knowledge of phenomena (*dhamma-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*).

3. The analytic knowledge of language (*nirutti-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*).

4. The analytic knowledge of intuition (*paṭibhāna-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*).

Paṭisambhidā means multifarious, diverse, various. Analytic knowledge (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*) means knowledge which is discriminating and comprehensive.

1. The analytic knowledge of meaning (*attha-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*). Herein meaning (*attha*) means: 1) Meanings that are dependent on conditions, understanding the results of causes; 2) Nibbāna; 3) the meaning of words; 4) the meaning associated with resultant thoughts (*vipāka*) with their mind and mental concomitants, 5) the meaning associated with non-causative thoughts (*kiriya*) with their mind and mental concomitants.

The Buddha became endowed with the above five kinds of meaning (*attha*) as soon as he become a Buddha. Being endowed with the analytical knowledge of meaning, the Buddha knew discriminately and comprehensively about everything, and was able to expound these to others. The great non-causative

consciousness (*mahā-kiriya-ñāṇa*) associated with the four kinds of knowledge that arise in the Buddha when his mind attends to the above five meanings, as well as path and fruit that he knows when his mind attends to Nibbāna, are called the analytic knowledge of meaning (*attha-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*) of the Buddha.

Thus, the analytic knowledge of meaning (*attha-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*) of the noble ones (*ariya*), who are still training themselves to become Arahats, such as that of Ven. Ānanda, consists of the great meritorious consciousness (*mahā-kusala-citta*), associated with the four kinds of knowledge that arises in [1163] them when their mind attends to those five meanings (*attha*), as well as the three lower paths and fruitions when their mind attends to Nibbāna.

2. The analytic knowledge of phenomena (*dhamma-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*). Discriminating and comprehensive knowledge about phenomena. Herein phenomena (*dhamma*) means: 1) Causes that produce results; 2) the four noble paths; 3) the spoken word of the Buddha; 4) meritorious thoughts with their mind and mental concomitants; 5) demeritorious thoughts with their mind and mental concomitants.

The Buddha became endowed with the above four kinds of phenomena (*dhamma*) as soon as he become a Buddha. Being endowed with analytical knowledge of phenomena, the Buddha knew discriminately and comprehensively about every phenomena and was able to expound on them to others. The great non-causative consciousness associated with knowledge that arises in the Buddha when his mind attends to the above five phenomena is the analytic knowledge of phenomena (*dhamma-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*) of the Buddha. In the case of noble ones (*ariya*), who are still training themselves to become Arahats, such as Ven. Ānanda, analytical knowledge of phenomena means the great meritorious consciousness associated with knowledge. The same applies with regard to the next two analytical knowledges.

3. The analytic knowledge of language (*nirutti-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*). This is analytical knowledge of the natural language of the noble ones (*ariya*), that is, Māgadhī or Pāḷi, concerning the five kinds of meaning (*attha*) and the five kinds of phenomena (*dhamma*). The Buddha became endowed with the analytical knowledge of the natural language of noble ones (*ariya*). Being endowed with

analytical knowledge of words and grammar of the natural language of the noble ones, the Buddha is able to teach it to others.

The five kinds of meaning (*attha*) and the five kinds of phenomena (*dhamma*) need a wealth of words. For each item, a wide range of vocabulary and grammatical forms and nuances of the natural language of the noble ones is at the facile command of the Buddha. For example, a single factor (*dhamma*): contact (*phassa*) is expressed in its various forms, such as the *phasso* (contact), *phusanā* (contacting), *samphusanā* (full contacting), to bring out its various intrinsic meanings. Likewise greed (*lobha*) is explained in more than 100 terms.[342]

4. The analytic knowledge of intuition (*paṭibhāna-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*). This is the analytical knowledge that the analytic knowledge of meaning (*attha-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*) has discriminative and comprehensive knowledge about results; that the analytic knowledge of phenomena (*dhamma-paṭisambhā-ñāṇa*) has discriminative and comprehensive knowledge about five phenomena (*dhamma*); that the analytic knowledge of language (*nirutti-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*) has analytical knowledge about words and grammar. Briefly put, it is knowledge about the three kinds of analytical knowledge, that knowledge which has all knowledge as object and considers them discriminately. The Buddha became endowed with this knowledge about the kinds of knowledge as soon as he became a Buddha.

> The analytic knowledge of language (*nirutti-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*) and the analytic knowledge of intuition (*paṭibhāna-paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*), like the previous analytic knowledges (*paṭisambhidhā-ñāṇa*), are the great non-causative consciousness associated with knowledge (*mahā-kiriya-mahā-kusala-ñāṇa*).
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> The fourth of the four analytic knowledges (*paṭisambhidhā-ñāṇa*) discriminately knows the functions of the three other knowledges but is not able to discharge those functions itself. It is just like a preacher without a good voice, who is well versed in scriptural knowledge, and who is unable to preach as well as another good preacher who is gifted with a good voice but has scanty knowledge of the scriptures.

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[342] See the Enumeration of Phenonema (*Dhamma-saṅgaṇī*). [The terms listed are actually synonyms, rather than explanations.]

Two monastics learnt the art of teaching. One is poor in voice but intelligent; the other had a good voice but is not intelligent. The latter made a great name everywhere he teaches, the audience had a very good impression of him and say: "From the way this monastic preaches, he must be one who has committed to memory the Three Baskets." When the learned monastic with a poor voice hears these remarks, he becomes jealous and says: "Well, you will find whether he is master of the Three Baskets when you hear him preach next time." He implies that: "You are going to hear much the same stuff." Yet whatever he might say about that popular preacher, he is just unable to preach as well as the one with a [1164] good voice who could captivate the audience.

Similarly, the analytic knowledge of intuition (*paṭibhāna-samhhidā-ñāṇa*) discriminately knows the functions of the three other analytical knowledges, but it cannot discharge these functions itself. This has been explained in the commentary on the Analysis of Analytical Knowledge (*Paṭisambhidā-vibhaṅga*, Vibh 15).

The Six Knowledges Unshared by Others

Six knowledges unshared by others (*asādhāraṇa-ñāṇa*), which are unique to the Buddha:

1. Knowledge of the disposition of others' faculties (*indriya-paro-pariyatta-ñāṇa*).
2. Knowledge of the underlying tendencies (*āsayānusaya-ñāṇa*).
3. Knowledge of the twin miracle (*yamaka-pāṭihāriya-ñāṇa*).
4. Knowledge of the attainment of Great Compassion (*Mahā-karuṇā samāpattiya-ñāṇa*).
5. Knowledge of omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*).
6. Unobstructed knowledge (*anāvaraṇa-ñāṇa*).

There are six kinds of knowledge which are possessed only by the Buddha and are not found in Paccekabuddhas or disciples, namely:

1. Knowledge of the disposition of others' faculties, (*indriya-paro-pariyatta-ñāṇa*), is the knowledge that discusses the readiness or otherwise of an individual to understand the truth. By this special knowledge, the Buddha decides such and such a being has his faculties ripe enough to gain Awakening

and is due for liberation. Here, faculties (*indriya*) means, faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom, five factors in all.

2. Knowledge of the underlying tendencies (*āsayānusaya-ñāṇa*), is the knowledge that discusses the natural bent and latent proclivities of individuals.[343] The term underlying tendencies (*āsayānusaya*) is a compound and may be rendered as "the seed-germ of an individual's mental makeup." By this special knowledge, the Buddha knows discriminately that such and such a being has such a natural bent of mind, such a latent potential for defilements that are dominant in his mental makeup.

It was due to the possession of the above two special knowledges that the Buddha could deliver the right message to the each person. Even Ven. Sāriputta, being not endowed with these special knowledges, could not know the state of readiness of his hearers to receive the message, i.e. about the ripeness or otherwise of the mental makeup of his hearers, with the result that his discourses, on a few occassions, fell flat on those listening.

3. Knowledge of the twin miracle (*yamaka-pāṭihāriya-ñāṇa*), is the knowledge that can bring about the twin miracle. On four occasions the Buddha employed this special knowledge, namely:

1. At the tree of Awakening, to clear away the doubt and conceit in the minds of Devas and Brahmas.
2. On his first visit to Kapilavatthu, to humble his kinsmen, the Sakyas.
3. At Sāvatthī, near the miraculous mango tree that grew and bore fruit on the same day it was planted by Kaṇḍa, the gardener, to humble the followers of other faiths.
4. On the occasion of the congregation concerning Pāthikaputta.

4. Knowledge of the attainment of Great Compassion (*Mahā-karuṇā samāpattiya-ñāṇa*), knowledge consisting of the Buddha-compassion on seeing the multitude struggling in the stormy ocean of Saṁsāra. He has great compassion for all beings that are living in the world which is like a burning

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[343] Refer to the discussion of the *Loka-vidu* in the Nine Attributes of the Buddha in chapter 42a above.

prison. The knowledge that enables the Buddha to attend his compassionate mind to those beings is associated with dwelling in the absorption state of the attainment of Great Compassion (*Mahā-karuṇa-samāpatti*). At every night and every dawn, the Buddha enters into this absorption that consists of 24,000 billion thoughts.

5. Knowledge of omniscience (*sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*), this is the knowledge that comprehends all knowable things. The Buddha is called the All-knowing Buddha on account of this special knowledge, which is also called all-round vision (*samanta-cakkhu*). For details about this Buddha-knowledge refer to the Path of the Analytic Knowledges (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*).

6. Unobstructed knowledge (*anāvaraṇa-ñāṇa*), this is the knowledge that there is nothing that can stand in the way of the arising of the Buddha knowledge (*natthi āvaraṇaṁ etassā ti anāvaraṁ*). This unhampered special knowledge of the Buddha is an essential feature of omniscience (*sabbaññuta-ñāṇa*). It is called unobstructed knowledge (*anāvaraṇa-ñāṇa*) in the same sense as conviction (*saddhā*), effort (*viriya*), mindfulness (*sati*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*) are called faculties (*indriya*) because they are the controlling factors, each in its own way. They are also called powers (*bala*) because they overpower their respective opponents: lack of conviction, sloth, negligence, distraction and delusion.

These are the six knowledges unshared by others (*asādhāraṇa-ñāṇa*).

The Ten Powers

The Buddha has ten powers (*dasabala-ñāṇa*). [1165]

1. Skill in knowledge that understands what is appropriate as appropriate, and what is impossible as impossible (*ṭhānāṭṭhāna-kosalla-ñāṇa*).
2. Knowledge of the operation of productive deeds (*kamma*) in the three periods: past, present and future, as to the immediate results and contributory or subsidiary result (*vipāka-ñāṇa*).
3. Knowledge that understands the ways or the modes of practice that leads to the various forms of existence, and the practice that leads to Nibbāna (*sabbattha-gāminī-paṭipadā-ñāṇa*).

4. Knowledge that understands the various elements pertaining to living beings, the aggregates, the sense spheres, etc. as well as those pertaining to non-living things as to their species, genes, etc. (*Aneka-dhātu-ñāṇa*).

   The Paccekabuddhas and the two chief disciples have some limited knowledge about the elements constituting living beings. They do not have knowledge of the various natures of non-living things. As for the Buddha, he understands what elements are responsible for the species of tree with a white stem, or for the species of tree with a dark stem; or for the species of tree with a dark smooth stem, or for the species of tree with thick bark; or for the species of tree with thin bark. He knows what particular elements make a certain species of tree have such and such leaves with such shape and colour, etc., what particular elements make a certain species of tree have flowers of a particular colour or of a particular smell, such as having a good smell or a bad smell, etc. He knows what particular elements make a certain species of tree have fruit of such and such shape, size, smell, and taste such as sweet, sour, hot or astringent. He knows what particular elements make a certain species of tree have thorns of such and such nature, such as sharp, blunt, straight, curved, red, black, white, brown, etc. He has knowledge of non-living things and their intrinsic nature such as these which are the province of the Buddha only, and are beyond the capabilities of Paccekabuddhas and disciples.

5. Knowledge of the different inclinations of beings (*nānādhimuttika-ñāṇa*).

6. Knowledge of the maturity and immaturity of the faculties in beings (*indriya-paropariyattha-ñāṇa*).

7. Knowledge concerning the defiling factors, and the purifying factors with regard to the absorptions (*jhāna*), deliverances, concentrations, attainments and knowledge of rising from absorption (*jhāna-vimokkha-samādhi-samāpatti-ñāṇa*).

8. Knowledge in remembering former existences (*pubbe-nivāsānussati-ñāṇa*).

9. Knowledge in perceiving with the divine eye how beings pass away and are reborn according to their actions (*cutūpapāta-ñāṇa* or *dibba-cakkhu-ñāṇa*).

10. Knowledge of the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*) through extinction of moral taints (*āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*).

1. First, the Buddha surveys the world with the first of the ten knowledges to see the beings who could possibly gain Awakening by examining whether there are the gross types of wrong view in them that render it impossible to gain the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*).

2. Next, he examines, by means of the second knowledge, the type of rebirth to see if they were born only with two good root causes (*dvi-hetu*) or with no root causes (*ahetu*), in which cases, the subject cannot gain Awakening in the present existence, being born with deficient merit.

3. Then he examines by the means of the third knowledge, the presence or otherwise of the five kinds of grave evil actions in the subject:

1. Killing one's own mother.
2. Killing one's own father.
3. Killing an Arahat.
4. Rupturing a Buddha's blood vessels.
5. Causing schism in the Saṅgha.

After examining beings by means of the first three knowledges, to see the state of their past actions, their defilements and their resultants, whether they were handicapped for Awakening or not in these three areas, the Buddha attends to those not so handicapped.

4. He engages the fourth knowledge to ascertain the right type of discourse to be given to the person, considering the latter's mental make up, the elements that [1166] constitute his mentality.

5. Then by means of the fifth knowledge, the Buddha examines the inherent inclination of the subject, regardless of sufficiency of effort on his part.

6. Having known the inclination of the subject, the Buddha examines, through the sixth knowledge, the quality of the faculties, such as conviction of the subject.

7. If the faculties are mature enough to gain absorption (*jhāna*) or the paths and fruitions, the Buddha would lose no time to go and deliver a discourse on the subject. He is able to do this because he is endowed with the seventh knowledge.

8. Having gone over the subject, the Buddha reviews, through the eighth knowledge, the past existences of the subject.

9. Through the ninth knowledge he reads the mind of the subject, reading other's minds being part of the knowledge called the divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu-ñāṇa*).

10. Ascertaining the present state of mind of the subject, the Buddha preaches the doctrine to suit the subject, with a view to his attaining the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*). This is the final step the Buddha takes with the tenth knowledge (*āsavakkhaya-ñāṇa*).

The Buddha discourses on the ten powers in the same order as he actually puts them to use for the benefit of the world at large.[344]

The fourteen Buddha knowledges therefore are: Knowledge of the four truths (*catu-sacca*); the four analytic knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*); and the six unshared knowledges (*asādharaṇa-ñāṇa*). Out of those fourteen, knowledge of the four truths and the four analytic knowledges are attained by the disciples also, but the six unshared knowledges are purely within the province of the Buddha. In as much as the six unshared knowledges belong only to the Buddha, there are also eighteen Buddha attributes (*āveṇika*) that belong only to the Buddha.

Ledi Sayādaw's Verses on the 18 Attributes

The late Ledi Sayādaw has composed a fine piece of devotional verse on the eighteen Buddha-attributes. The gist of which is given here:

> May I be free from all dangers and depredations both internally and externally! There is no one, such as Māra or Āḷavaka who can endanger the life of the Buddha within the usual life period, adopted by all Buddhas, being four-fifths of the lifespan period of the epoch pertaining to each

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[344] See the sub-commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*).

Buddha. There is no one, such as Mahissara, Brahma Baka, or an Asura, who can sully or dampen the all-knowing wisdom of the Buddha.

1. The Perfectly Self-Awakened One, endowed with the six exalted qualities, also counted in eight ways, has the all-knowing wisdom that can visualize all knowable things of the past, extending over myriads of aeons, and not the slightest obstruction can mar this vision.

2. The Perfectly Self-Awakened One, endowed with the six exalted qualities, also counted in eight ways, has the all-knowing wisdom that can visualize all knowable things of the future, extending over myriads of aeons, and not the slightest obstruction can mar this vision.

3. The Perfectly Self-Awakened One, endowed with the six exalted qualities, also counted in eight ways, has the all-knowing wisdom that can visualize all knowable things that are taking place at present in the 31 planes of existence in all the infinite world-elements, and not the slightest destruction can mar this vision.

4. The Perfectly Self-Awakened One, endowed with the six exalted qualities, also counted in eight ways, well-possessed of these three special attributes, has all bodily actions, in all postures and movements, preceded by four kinds of full comprehension, and all the bodily actions closely follow the guidance of the fourfold comprehension.

5. All his verbal actions, all his utterances, are preceded by the four kinds of full comprehension, and all the verbal actions closely follow the guidance of the fourfold comprehension. [1167]

6. All his mental actions, all his thoughts, are preceded by the four kinds of full comprehension, and all the mental actions follow the guidance of the fourfold comprehension.

7. The Perfectly Self-Awakened One, endowed with the six exalted qualities, also counted in eight ways, well-possessed of these six exclusive attributes, is never lacking, not having the slightest decline in the earnest desire that had arisen in him since his time as Bodhisatta Sumedha, to ferry across the floundering multitudes to the safe shore of Nibbāna, and in the will to achieve noble things beneficial to himself and to others, which is the exalted quality of accomplishment (*kāma*) itself.

8. His teaching, which has the sole object of liberating all deserving beings from the suffering round of existences, never falls short of the avowed objective.

9. His effort, which is rightly directed in three ways: the dauntless determination as Bodhisatta in being prepared to traverse an ocean of burning coals or of sharp stakes, laid over the entire surface of the universe which is 3,610,350 leagues wide, for the sake of attaining Buddhahood, which is the exalted quality of making effort (*payatta*) itself; the exclusive Buddha-knowledge consisting in the fourfold right efforts and the will to accomplish the five routine tasks set for himself every day, never shows the slightest decline.

10. His concentration in two aspects: the inherent firmness of mind that withstands the eight kinds of worldly conditions or vicissitudes that may befall him from any quarter, like Mount Meru withstands stormy winds that blow from the eight directions; the absorption power (*appanā-samādhi*) which is the very basis of all psychic powers (*abhiññā*), such as psychic power (*iddhi-vidha*), divine eye (*dibba-cakkhu*), knowing the minds of others (*ceto-pariyāya*), recollection of past lives (*pubbe-nivāsānussati*), knowing the deeds which cause rebirth (*yathā-kammūpaga*), knowing the future (*anāgataṁsa*), never show the slightest decline.

11. His wisdom that encompasses all happenings, like the rise and fall of conditional phenomena, taking place in the three worlds extending over the 10,000 world-element, which he surveys through the great diamond knowledge (*mahā-vajira-ñāṇa*), consisting of 24,000 billion times each day, never shows the slightest decline.

12. His release from the trammels of the world consists of five kinds: the four noble abidings in loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity with regard to the 10,000 world-element extending over the worlds of human beings, Devas, Brahmas and the four lower worlds; and the dwelling in the Arahat fruition absorption (*Arahatta-phala-jhāna*) which the Buddha is wont to resort to even in odd moments such as during recesses in delivering discourses, which consists of 24,000 billion times each day, never shows the slightest decline.

13. The Perfectly Self-Awakened One, endowed with the six exalted qualities, also counted in eight ways, well possessed of these twelve exclusive attributes, never indulges in light-hearted deeds, speech or thoughts.

14. He never indulges in any hasty action that is liable to be censured by the wise as thoughtless or ill-considered conduct.

15. He never commits any action that is liable to be called inadequate or uncomprehensive.

16. He never commits any action that is liable to be called impulsive by the wise.

17. He never indulges in the slightest remiss concerning his self-assigned task of bringing benefit to himself and to the world at large.

18. He never lets any moment pass without being mindful of the six sense objects that come within cognisance of the six sense spheres.

The Perfectly Self-Awakened One, endowed with the six exalted qualities, also counted in eight ways, well-possessed of these eighteen exclusive attributes, is not liable to be assailed by anyone, either against his life or against the all-knowing wisdom.

The above remarks about the eighteen Buddha-attributes are true indeed. I pay homage to the Buddha who is possessed of these attributes. May this meritorious verbal action bring [1168] fulfilment of all my aspirations both for the present and for the hereafter.

In conclusion, the analytic knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*), the unshared knowledges (*asādhāraṇa-ñāṇa*) and the ten powers (*dasa-bala-ñāṇa*), etc., are merely samples of the greatness of the Buddha's knowledge. Just as a drop of the sea water verifies the salty taste of the sea, so also the above special attributes are merely indicative of the profundity of the Buddha's knowledge and noble attributes which we have not yet mentioned in this work.

On 1: The Birth of the Bodhisatta

Five Uproars

An uproar (*kolāhala*) means a verbal agitation started by some people who say: "Thus will it happen," before the predicted event actually takes place. It arises

among people who are [1670] brought together and speak of the impending matter in the same language and in the same voice.

That is to say, an uproar is created with excitement by people at large as an omen before the actual occurrence of something. It does not mean a nonsensical commotion that prevails in towns and villages, falsely predicting an impossible thing, such as: "Prince Setkya is about to come back!"

> The name is spelt 'Tsakyamen' by Burney, British Resident at Ava (In-wa) during the reign of King Bagyidaw (1819-37). Tsakyamen or Prince Setkya, as the only son of the king, was heir-apparent. He was executed, according to the British, by Bagyidaw's brother, King Tharrawaddy, who usurped the throne in 1837, and the execution took place in April 1838. But tradition has it that Queen Mai Nu, Bagyidaw's wife and the prince's step mother, was instrumental in the execution. No matter who did it, it was true that the people's feelings were 'those of regret and indignation.'[345] The latter version is dramatized and popularized by theatrical troupes, which thereby enhanced the people's sympathy towards the unfortunate prince. Those who did not believe that the prince actually was killed entertained the hope that he would reappear some day. But there has been no sign of the return of the prince.

There are five uproars (*kolāhala*) in this world:

1. The uproar before the dissolution of the aeon (*kappa-kolāhala*).

The uproar that warns people of the dissolution of the world (*kappa-kolāhala*). When the time for the destruction of the world is drawing near, the deities named Lokavyūha of the Deva realm of sensual pleasures (*kāmāvacara-deva*), wearing red garments, letting their hair down, wiping the tears off their faces, roam in a distressed manner about roads and highways used by people and cry aloud to human beings at all places, a hundred years ahead of the event: "Friends, a hundred years from today, the world will dissolve! The great oceans will dry up! The great earth, Mount Meru and all will burn and disintegrate if the world is to be destroyed by fire; will be flooded and disintegrate if it is to be destroyed by water; will expose itself to violent storms and disintegrate if it is to be destroyed by the winds. There will be a destruction of the world extending

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[345] History of the British Residency in Burma 1826-1840 by W.S. Desai, p. 335.

from this great earth with Mount Meru and the oceans up to the abode of the Brahmas! Friends, develop loving-kindness (*mettā*), develop compassion (*karuṇā*), develop altruistic joy (*muditā*), develop equanimity (*upekkhā*) which are the conduct of Brahmas! Attend and serve your parents respectfully! Do good deeds! Do not be careless!" The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as the uproar before the dissolution of the aeon (*kappa-kolāhala*).

2. The uproar caused by the appearance of a Universal Monarch (*Cakka-vatti-kolāhala*).

The uproar that arises in the world of human beings proclaiming that a Universal Monarch will appear who rules over the human realm, including the four great island-continents and their satellite smaller islands, 2,000 in all, is called an uproar announcing a Universal Monarch (*Cakka-vatti-kolāhala*). The guardian deities of the world (*loka-pāla*), those sense-realm (*kāmāvacara*) Devas, knowing in advance of the appearance of a Universal Monarch, roam about public roads and highways and cry aloud to human beings at all places, a hundred years ahead of the event: "Friends, a hundred years from today, a Universal Monarch will emerge in this world!" The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as the uproar announcing a Universal Monarch (*Cakka-vatti-kolāhala*).

3. The uproar caused by the appearance of a Buddha (*Buddha-kolāhala*).

The uproar predicting in the world of human beings when a Buddha will arise is called an uproar announcing a Buddha (*Buddha-kolāhala*). The Brahmas of the Suddhāvāsa abode, knowing in advance of the advent of an omniscient Buddha and wearing Brahma clothing, ornaments and crowns, happily [1671] roam about public roads and highways and cry aloud to human beings at all places, 1,000 years ahead of the event: "Friends, 1,000 years from today, an omniscient Buddha will come into being in this world!" The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as an uproar announcing a Buddha (*Buddha-kolāhala*).

> Herein, the statement meaning that the uproar announcing a Buddha (*Buddha-kolāhala*) occurs 1,000 years ahead of the arrival of a Buddha should be noted in accordance with the lifespan of the appearing Buddhas. It should not be noted as a statement made regardless of their lifespans.

The reason is that the Bodhisattas, such as Prince Dīpaṅkara, Prince Koṇḍañña, Prince Maṅgala, etc., who had appeared in a period of long lifespans, after descending to the human world and enjoying kingly pleasures as human beings for 10,000 years or so, renounced the world, practised austerities (*dukkkara-cariyā*) and became Buddhas.

The uproar announcing a Buddha (*Buddha-kolāhala*) originates in the celestial world, and on account of that uproar, Devas and Brahmas in the 10,000 world-element approach the Bodhisatta to make the request. Only after getting his consent, do Suddhāvāsa Brahmas roam the human abode and make the announcement.

Thus, more than 1,000 years, or even more than 5,000 years, maybe 9,000 or 10,000 years, after the proclamation of an uproar announcing a Buddha (*Buddha-kolāhala*), the long-lived Buddhas appeared. Therefore, the aforesaid statement: "An uproar announcing a Buddha (*Buddha-kolāhala*) lasts for 1,000 years," should not be understood to apply to all Buddhas; the statement should be taken to have been made only with regard to a short-lived Buddha such as Buddha Gotama.

4. The uproar when the blessings are to be explained (*maṅgala-kolāhala*).

Undecided as to the exact meaning of the blessings (*maṅgala*), people gather and define the word each in his own way, saying: "These are the blessings," "Those are the blessings," which gives rise to a tumult crying out: "They say they are the blessings!" Such a tumultuous utterance is called an uproar over the blessings (*maṅgala-kolāhala*). Suddhāvāsa Brahmas, knowing in advance that the Buddha will give a discourse on the blessings and being aware of the thought of people who yearn for the truth about the blessings, roam about public roads and highways and cry aloud to human beings at all places, twelve years before the Buddha's delivery of the Discourse of the Blessings (*Maṅgala-sutta*, Khp 5, Snp 2.4): "Friends, twelve years from today, the Buddha will teach what are the blessings!" The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as the uproar over the blessings (*maṅgala-kolāhala*).

5. The uproar caused by someone wanting to know about moral perfection (*moneyya-kolāhala*).

The uproar concerning the ascetic practice of moral perfection is called an uproar over moral perfection (*moneyya-kolāhala*).[346] Suddhāvāsa Brahmas, knowing in advance that a monastic in the human world will approach the Buddha to ask about moral perfection, similarly roam about public roads and highways and cry aloud to human beings in all places, seven years before the Buddha's teaching: "Friends, seven years from today, a monastic will approach the Buddha and ask about moral perfection (*moneyya*)!" The uproar of the multitude caused by such loud cries is known as the uproar over moral perfection (*moneyya-kolāhala*).

These are the five uproars (*kolāhala*). Explanations of these five are given in the commentaries on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), Birth Stories (*Jātaka*), the Thematic Discourse about King Kosala (*Kosala-saṁyutta*), the Supplementary Readings (*Khuddaka-pāṭha*), the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*) and also in the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*).

The Five Auguries

Five auguries (*pubba-nimitta*) signal the approaching death of the Devas. [1672]

The five auguries are:

1. The withering of celestial flowers.
2. The dirtiness of celestial costumes and ornaments.
3. Sweating from the armpits.
4. Deterioration of physical beauty.
5. Displeasure in living in celestial residences.

1. Withering of celestial flowers; that is to say, the drying of divine blossoms that have appeared as decorations since the day these beings are reborn as deities. These flowers, that appear on their bodies simultaneously with their birth as Devas, never wither during their lifespan but remain fresh throughout. The flowers begin to wither only when there are seven days left for them to live, according to human reckoning.

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[346] An elaboration on the moral perfection (*moneyya*) practice is made in the section on Ven. Nālaka, see chapter 11.

> The flowers belonging to the Bodhisatta Setaketu did not go dry even once throughout the length of his life as a Deva living in Tusita abode, over the whole period of 576 million years by terrestrial calculations. They started withering seven human days before his passing away.

2. Dirtiness of celestial costumes and ornaments: As in the previous case, celestial costumes and ornaments normally never become dirty; only when it is seven days before the Devas' death do they show such dirtiness.

3. Sweating from the armpits: In the celestial realm, unlike in the human abode, there is absolutely no such change of weather conditions as intense heat or intense cold. Only seven days prior to death, beads of sweat flow from various parts of their bodies, especially from the armpits.

4. Deterioration of physical beauty: Such signs of old age as missing teeth, greying hair, wrinkled skin and the like that also betray decaying states of physical beauty never happen to them. Female deities always look like sixteen-year olds, and male deities like twenty-year olds. Though they are perpetually tender and youthful with fresh, brilliant, beautiful colours, deterioration of the bodies sets in, and they become weary and wretched as the time for their passing away comes near.

5. Displeasure in living in celestial residences: They never know unhappiness while living in celestial mansions throughout their divine lives. It is only when they are about to fall from their divine state that they lose delight and become displeased with life in the divine residences.

Though the five auguries (*pubba-nimitta*) occur to dying Devas as has been said above, it should not be understood that they do so to each and every divine being. Just as in the human world such omens as the falling of a meteor, the quake of the earth, the eclipse of the moon or of the sun and the like manifest with regard to great and powerful kings, ministers, etc., even so in the celestial world these predictions happen only with reference to the highly-placed male and female deities. They never occur to those deities of insignificant power.

As good or bad things predicted by the omens that occur in the human abode are understood only by learned interpreters, so the events, whether good or bad, forecast by those omens occurring in the celestial realm, are comprehended by wise Devas, not by unwise ones.

When the omens occur to Devas of inconsiderable merit, they become greatly frightened, wondering: "Who knows where I will be reborn?" Those of considerable merit do not feel so at all, knowing: "We shall enjoy further bliss in higher divine existences because of the merit that accrues from our deeds of generosity, our observance of morality and our practice of meditation."[347] [1673]

The Conception of the Bodhisatta

It may be questioned as to why Queen Māyā conceived the Bodhisatta only in the third period of the second stage of life. The answer is: The sensual desire in the first stage is usually strong, therefore, women who become pregnant at that stage are unable to look after their pregnancy well, and indeed many are those who cannot take care of it. Such an inability causes several forms of injury to the pregnancy.

The middle stage, which is the second of the equally divided three periods, may be sub-divided into three equal portions. When a woman reaches the third portion, her womb is clean and pure. A baby conceived in such a clean and pure womb is healthy, free from diseases.

The mother of a Bodhisatta in his last existence enjoys pleasure at her first stage, and it is customary that she dies after giving birth to him during the third portion of the middle stage.

> It is also a natural law (*dhammatā*) that she dies seven days after the birth of the Bodhisatta. She does not die because she is in labour; as a matter of fact, the Bodhisatta descends only when he has seen that his would-be mother has ten months and seven days more to live, after she begins to conceive, as has been mentioned in the account of the Bodhisatta's five great investigations. Taking this into consideration, it is clear that her death is not caused by childbirth; it should undoubtedly be held that the mother dies only because her time is up.[348]

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[347] For more information, see the commentary on the Great Discourse on the Traditions (*Mahāpadāna-sutta*, DN 14).

[348] See the commentary to the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*).

Mahā Māyā's Journey from Kapilavatthu to Devadaha

In the story of Queen Mahā Māyā's visit from Kapilavatthu to Devadaha, it is written in the Illustration of the Meaning of the Victor (*Jinattha-pakāsanī*) as follows: "Having cleaned and levelled the road of five leagues between Devadaha and Kapilavatthu, like a hardened plain ground …"

In the Light on the Realised One's Exalted Utterances (*Tathāgata-udāna-dīpanī*), however, the following is mentioned: "Having taken the journey of 30 leagues from Kapilavatthu to Devadaha, which had been repaired by digging, enlarging and filling the potholes so as to make it agreeable …"

The two statements therefore disagree.

In this Chronicles of the Buddhas, however, we follow the commentaries on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*), where the distance between the two kingdoms, Kapilavatthu and Devadaha, is not given; these commentaries simply describe the mending and levelling of the road. The vehicle taken by Queen Mahā Māyā is said in this work to be a golden palanquin, in accordance with the same commentaries.

> It should not be wondered how the palanquin was carried by 1,000 men because, as in the case of the statement that says: "The Bodhisatta was suckled by 240 wet-nurses," it is possible that they carried it in turn, or, it is probable that the palanquin was pulled by them simultaneously with long ropes of cloth.

In the first volume of the Light on the Realised One's Exalted Utterances (*Tathāgata-udāna-dīpanī*), it is unusually and elaborately written as follows: "The whole journey of 30 leagues was mended, improved and extensively and magnificently decorated. The queen rode the stately chariot drawn by eight horses of white lotus colour and of the Valāhaka Sindhi breed. King Suddhodana was together with her, for he was accompanying her up to the distance of half a league; there, he saw her off and turned back after she had paid her respects to him and he had said words of encouragement. The white horses merrily drew the chariot, thinking: 'This service of ours by taking Queen Mahā Māyā with the Bodhisatta in her womb will bring us merit leading to Nibbāna.' "

The commentaries on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) as well as the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) do not give such an account. All they tell us is that the journey was made in a golden palanquin. [1674] This treatise is in accordance with these commentaries and sub-commentaries.

The Sāla Grove of Lumbinī

With reference to the Sāla Grove of Lumbinī, there are two versions: One from the commentaries on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and the other from the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) that have been used in this work. The clause reading in the second passage: "Hovering around and enjoying the nectar themselves and carrying it for others as well," is in agreement with the Ngakhon Sayādaw's writing. It seems that the commentary in the Sayādaw's possession contained the Pāḷi word *anubhutta-sañcārāhi*. In the commentaries, whether older or the Chaṭṭha-Saṅgāyanā edition, there is *anubhutta-pañjarāhi*. Dictionaries give "cage" as the meaning of *pañjara* in the commentaries, but here the meaning "cage" is not agreeable.

Again, *parabhata-madhu-kara-vadhūhi* is translated as: "With female bees carrying the nectar for others as well." Though *parabhata* has "cuckoo" as its meaning in the Abhidhāna (vs 633), that meaning does not fit in here; it finds no place in this case. Therefore, the Ngakhon Sayādaw has appropriately said "carrying for others" in his translation.

When a rational interpretation is thought of, one recalls the distribution of work among bees: 1) There are female bees bringing all available kinds of nectar from the four directions and 2) female bees that are waiting at the hive and are able to turn the nectar of different tastes into honey of sweet taste.

In the commentray to the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), it seems that the female worker bees are meant. Therefore, *parabhata-madhu-kara-vadhūhi* should be translated as: "Liquefying female bees able to make honey out of different kinds of nectar brought by other nectar-carrying bees." And it will be acceptable only if its paraphrase is given as follows: "Liquefying female bees that can make honey of sweet taste from various types of nectar brought by nectar-bearing bees after flying around and around over trees big and small."

The Birth of the Bodhisatta

With reference to the birth of the Bodhisatta, the Light on the Realised One's Exalted Utterances (*Tathāgata-udāna-dīpanī*) and other Myanmar treatises on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) effectively say this: "When the time for Queen Mahā Māyā's delivery of her son was drawing very close, why did her younger sister, Pajāpatī Gotamī, extend help to her by supporting her on the left side? She gave birth by being aided by her attendants all around." In the commentaries on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) and Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*), however, it is said that when the time for child-birth was near, as she felt the force in the womb at the impetus for her delivery, those who were with her set up screens and stayed away from her. While they were thus staying aloof, the Queen gave birth to the Bodhisatta. This work follows the account given in these commentaries.

According to the exposition in the Long Discourse on the Traditions (*Mahāpadāna-sutta*, DN 14), the commentaries on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) the two streams of water, warm and cold, enabled the mother and child to adjust their body temperature immediately after the birth.

What is particularly said in the commentaries on the Long Discourse on the Traditions (*Mahāpadāna-sutta*, DN 14) is this: "Of the two water streams, the cold one falls into the gold jar and the warm one into the silver. These two streams that had fallen from the sky are mentioned to say that they were meant for the son and the mother to drink and to play with exclusively, not because they were dirtied by any impurity on earth. Apart from the warm and cold water from the sky, there was the water fetched in gold and silver pots, the water from the geese (*haṁsa*) lakes, etc. Water for them was indeed unlimited; it was plentiful.

The Story of Kāḷadevila, the Recluse

The account of Devila[349] will be reproduced from the commentary to the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*). [1675] This recluse Devila was the

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[349] The name of this recluse is given as Devala in the Sinhalese version. In the Myanmar version it is shown as Devila.

Brahminical adviser to King Sīhahanu, who was King of Kapilavatthu and father of the later King Suddhodana. Because of his dark complexion, the Brahmin recluse was also called Asita.[350] He was the king's instructor and counsellor who served King Sīhahanu by giving him advice so as to enable him to carry through all undertakings, be they political, administrative or otherwise.

During the reign of King Sīhahanu, he was tutor and guardian to Prince Suddhodana, who was then simply a Crown Prince and unconsecrated as of yet. Devila taught him various royal manners and palace customs and educated him in statecraft and trained him in all skills. When Prince Suddhodana ascended the throne and was consecrated after King Sīhahanu, it was also the former royal teacher who again became advisor to King Suddhodana.

After his ascension to the throne and his consecration, King Suddhodana did not show profound respect to his teacher as he had done when he was a young prince. During the court meetings, he merely raised his joined hands in adoration, according to the tradition of the consecrated Sakyan kings.

As he no longer received the king's special reverence as before, his birth as a Brahmin and his pride as a teacher generated displeasure and dissatisfaction. Unhappy and disgusted with his obligations in the palace, he sought the king's permission to become an ascetic.

Knowing his teacher's firm decision, Suddhodana requested: "You may become an ascetic. But after becoming an ascetic, please do not go far away. Kindly always stay in my garden so that I will have the convenience of seeing you." After giving his consent, saying: "Very well, let it be so," and having made himself an ascetic and receiving the king's favourable treatment, he stayed in the royal garden.

Repeatedly engaging himself in meditation on a meditation device (*kasiṇa*) for mental concentration, he gained the five mundane psychic powers. After his acquisition of these powers, he usually had his meal each day at King Suddhodana's palace and visited the Himālayas and the Catumahārājā abode, the Tāvatiṁsa abode and other places, where he spent his daytime.

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[350] [In Pāḷi both *kāla* and *asita* mean black.]

The [230] formless abode of the Brahmas[351] is a plane of existence which is totally devoid of material phenomena, there being only mental consciousness (*citta*) and its concomitants (*cetasika*). In such an abode worldlings with three roots (*ti-hetuka-puthujjana*) of non-greed, non-hate and non-delusion are reborn, and such noble ones as Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*), Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmi*) and Non-returners (*Anāgāmi*) who have attained the formless absorptions (*arūpa-jhāna*).

The Stream-enterers, Once-returners and Non-returners who have reached that formless abode will no longer return to the lower planes of existence. As they are experienced in practising meditation up to the stage of the paths and fruitions while in the sensuous, wholesome abodes (*kāma-sugati*), and in the material (*rūpa*) abodes, they are able to pursue the same insight (*vipassanā*) meditation which they had practised previously. They attain higher stages up to the paths and fruitions and Nibbāna in the same formless abodes, thereby terminating all suffering in Saṁsāra even though they do not hear the Dhamma from anyone.

Worldlings of the three roots, who have attained the formless absorptions in the human world, such as the recluses Kāḷadevila, Āḷāra and Udaka, were reborn in a formless abode upon their death. As this abode, by nature, is devoid of any kind of matter, those who are reborn there have absolutely no eyes (*cakkhu-pasāda*) for seeing the Buddha and no ears (*sota-pasāda*) for hearing his Dhamma. Thus they can neither behold a Buddha nor listen to his discourses even if one comes and teaches it. On their part, Buddhas do not visit or give discourses in the formless abodes. And if worldlings have no chance to listen to the Dhamma from others they will never attain the paths and fruitions.

Kāḷadevila and Udaka, who reached the formless sphere of Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception (*Nevasaññā-nāsaññāyatana-arūpa*) as worldlings, would remain in Saṁsāra for 84,000 aeons. Āḷāra who reached the formless abode of the Sphere of Nothingness (*Ākiñcaññāyatana*) would remain in Saṁsāra for 60,000 great aeons (*mahā-kappa*). Therefore, even if a Buddha were to appear in the human world in the present aeon, they have no chance to realize liberation.

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[351] [This section is brought in here from the end of an earlier account of Kāḷadevila.]

In this connection, it may be asked as to whether Kāḷadevila could not have been reborn in a form abode provided he directed his mind towards that existence. Since he had fully attained the eight mundane absorptions, his rebirth could have taken place in any of the ten form worlds up to the High Divinities of Great Fruit if he were so inclined.

If there was such an opportunity, it may be asked: "Why had Kāḷadevila no inclination to be reborn in one of the ten form abodes of his choice?" The reply should be that he had no such inclination because he was not skilful enough to do so.

An achiever of the eight mundane attainments is likely to be reborn in one of the form or formless abodes which attracts him. Kāḷadevila could have been in a form abode only if he desired to be there. If he were there, he would have been in a position to pay homage as a form Brahma to the Buddha. But his failure to be there was due to his lack of skill in directing his mind towards that particular abode which is lower than the formless abodes.

There arises another argument: "Kāḷadevila, who had kept away grief (*domanassa*) through his attainment of the absorptions, should not have succumbed to that feeling and shed tears." He did so because he was merely skilled in keeping grief away. To make it a little more explicit: Only those mental defilements, which have been completely eliminated by means of the paths, cannot reappear in one's mental continuum. But those defilements, which are just kept away from oneself [231] through the mundane absorptions, are apt to reappear when confronted with a feeling that is strong enough. Kāḷadevila had not eliminated such defilements; he had only kept them away from himself by means of the absorptions, hence he wept.

Still another question may be asked as to how it was possible for Kāḷadevila to be reborn in a formless abode since he slipped from the absorptions through grief when he wept. The answer should be that he could be so reborn because the same absorptions were regained with ease.

The defilements that have been just removed from worldlings through mundane absorptions come back because of a powerful factor and make them slip from their absorptions; but if the defilements do not reach the extreme, the worldlings can readily regain their absorptions as soon as the force of the emotion subsides;

and it cannot be easily known by others that "these are the ones who have fallen from their attainments."

In brief, like Kāḷadevila and others, those who have gained the eight mundane absorptions can be reborn in one of the ten form abodes, which are lower, or in one of the four formless abodes, which are higher, if they have prepared their minds to do so. If they have not, they will be reborn only in the abode that is determined by the highest of their mundane absorptions since that particular absorption alone can cause such a result.

The knowledge that one can reach any abode that one sets the mind on is acquired only through a Buddha's teaching within his Dispensation. Outside the Dispensation, however, there can be no such penetration. Kāḷadevila was not a disciple of a Buddha, thus he did not belong to a Buddha's Dispensation. Therefore, he was ignorant of the means to train his mind. If he had known, he would have done so to be reborn in one of the ten form worlds, of which the Divinities of Great Fruit (*Vehapphala*) is the highest. If he had done so, he could have been reborn there and might get the opportunity of seeing the Buddha.

But now his ignorance had led to the failure of doing what would be proper for him. He would therefore be reborn in the Sphere of Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception (*Neva-saññānāsaññāyatana*) which is the topmost formless abode, and reflecting on his forthcoming rebirth, he became so distressed that he could not help weeping; when he thus wept, he lost the absorptions. But, since he had committed no serious evil deeds whatsoever, he regained the eight mundane attainments by resuming the preliminary exercises on a meditation device (*kasiṇa*) with ease, as soon as his grievous defilements ceased, with nobody knowing his slip from the absorptions. Therefore, it should be understood that the recluse Devila was reborn in the formless abode of the Sphere of Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception on his death through absorption on this level which is the highest of the eight mundane attainments.

The Royal Lineage of the Bodhisatta

In [1675] connection with the Bodhisatta's investigation into his family (*kula-olokana*), a history of Sakyan kings should be noted in brief as follows. Such a note means recognition of the attribute of the Bodhisatta's high birth (*jāti-mahatta-guṇa*).

In the first inclusive period (*antara*) of an incalculably long aeon of evolution (*vivaṭṭaṭṭhāyī-asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*), the first king of the people, in the beginning of the world, was our Bodhisatta. He was originally named Manu.

The Bodhisatta Manu was more handsome, more pleasant to look at, more respectable, glorious and virtuous than other inhabitants of the world of the earliest age.

In that primeval age, people were of very pure morality at first. Later on, there appeared people who committed crimes, such as theft, murder, etc. In order to be able to live free from these dangers and in peace, other early men of the world discussed the matter among themselves and decided unanimously to elect someone who would govern them justly.

They also agreed that the Bodhisatta Manu was the best to govern, for he was endowed with all the required qualifications. Then they approached him and made a request that he be their righteous ruler.

As Manu fulfilled his administrative duties, the people who were under his administration honoured him by paying their taxes, a kind of fee for his ruling, which amounted to one tenth of their crops.

The Acquisition of Three Epithets

The people unanimously recognized the Bodhisatta, showing no objection at all, as one who would govern them with righteousness, for which honour taxes were due. Therefore, he acquired the epithet Mahā Sammata, the Great Elected One. [1676]

He saw to it that there were no disputes, quarrels, etc., over ownership of farmlands. And, if there were any, the noble Manu had the power to decide and pass judgement. This earned him the epithet of being a noble (*khattiya*). As he endeared himself to the people by observing upright kingly duties towards them, he won the third title of king (*rājā*).

In this Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*), it was the Bodhisatta Manu who was the first among monarchs to gain these three titles: the Great Elected One (*Mahā-sammata*), noble (*khattiya*) and king (*rājā*).

As the sun possesses 1,000 radiances and gives beings light, sight and forms, so Bodhisatta Manu, like the eye of these primeval people and endowed with many

noble attributes, came out shiningly, as if he were their second sun, and therefore he was also designated as having the Lineage of the Sun (*Ādicca-vaṁsa*).

Herein, with reference to the Mahā Sammata of the primeval time, and also with reference to the present and fourth intermediate aeon (*antara-kappa*) of the 64 divisions of the evolutionary (*vivaṭṭaṭṭhāyī*) state of incalculable (*asaṅkhyeyya*) aeons, forming one-fourth of this Fortunate Aeon (*Bhadda-kappa*), learned authors write differently. Thus, in "The Glass Palace Chronicle," compiled by well-versed monks and ministers who met and discussed for three years in the Glass Palace during the reign of King Bagyidaw,[352] the fourth founder of the city of Ratanapura, and in the Assistance with the Readings giving an Analysis of the Aeons (*Kappa-vinicchaya-pāṭha-nissaya*), written in settlement of controversies, by the Mohtā Thathanabaing Sayādaw, who held the title "Sujātābhisiri-dhajādhipati-pavarā Mahā-dhamma-Rajādhirāja-guru," at the request of King Mindon,[353] the convenor of the Fifth Council, it has been decided, giving ample and strong evidence from the texts, commentaries and sub-commentaries, that there was only one Bodhisatta Mahā Sammata and that the present inclusive period (*antara-kappa*) is the fourth one.

> Particularly in the Analysis of the Aeons (*Kappa-vinicchaya*), there are special sections (*visesa-kaṇḍa*) which systematically contain questions (*codanā*) and answers (*sodanā*) giving decisions on such topics of controversies as the eleven inclusive periods (*antara-kappa*), eleven Mahā Sammatas, the twelfth inclusive period, the nineteenth inclusive period and the rest, with discussions so elaborate and with evidence so strong that doubtful persons, both monks and laymen, are likely to become free of doubts.
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> In enumerating the kings in succession (*rājakkama*) such as Mahā Sammata, Roca, etc., some commentaries and treatises are slightly different: These are the commentary on the Discourse to Ambaṭṭha (*Ambaṭṭha-sutta*, DN 3), and its new sub-commentary, the commentary on the Birth Story about the King of Cetiya (*Cetiya-jātaka*, Ja 422), the Great

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[352] He reigned from 1819 to 1839.

[353] Bagyidaw's younger nephew and Tharrawaddy's younger son, the second to last King of the Konbaung Dynasty, his regnal years being 1853-78.

Chronicle (*Mahā-vaṁsa*), the Chronicle of the Island (*Dīpa-vaṁsa*) and the Chronicle of the Kings (*Rāja-vaṁsa*). What is shown below is based chiefly on the Great Chronicle and the Great Cause of Learning (*Mahā-suta-kārī*).

1. Manu, the Mahā Sammata, or, the Great Elected One.
2. His son, King Roca.
3. His son, King Vararoca.
4. His son, King Kaḷyāna.
5. His son, King Vara Kaḷyāna.
6. His son, King Uposatha.
7. His son, King Mandhātu, who was also the Bodhisatta.
8. His son, King Vara.
9. His son, King Upavara.
10. His son, King Cetiya.
11. His son, King Mucala. [1677]
12. His son, King Mahā Mucala.
13. His son, King Mucalinda.
14. His son, King Sāgara.
15. His son, King Sāgaradeva.
16. His son, King Bhārata.
17. His son, King Aṅgira.
18. His son, King Ruci.
19. His son, King Suruci, also called Mahā Ruci.
20. His son, King Patāpa.
21. His son, King Mahā Patāpa.
22. His son, King Panāda.
23. His son, King Mahā Panāda.
24. His son, King Sudassana.

25. His son, King Mahā Sudassana.

26. His son, King Neru.

27. His son, King Mahā Neru.

28. His son, King Accima.

1. These 28 kings were of long lives of incalculable (*asaṅkhyeyya*) years. The 27 kings after Mahā Sammata were his descendants. Some of these 28 kings reigned in Kusavatī city, others in Rājagaha and still others in Mithilā.

2. King Accima, son of the last of the 28 kings, founded Kusavatī city and reigned there; his descendants were exactly 100.[354]

> Then the author gives an extract from the Great Cause of Learning (*Mahā-suta-kārī*), enumerating the kings listed in 1 and 2 which makes 128 kings.

3. Of the hundred kings descended from King Accima, the last was named King Arindama. His son founded the city of Ayujjhapura (Ayodhya) and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city numbered 56.

4. The last of these 56 kings was named Duppasaha. His son founded Bārāṇasī and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city were 60.

5. The last of these 60 kings was named Ajita. His son founded Kambala. He and his descendants in that city were 84,000.

6. The last of these 84,000 kings was named Brahmadatta. His son founded Hatthipura and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city were 36.

> Here there is another extract from the same the Great Cause of Learning (*Mahā-suta-kārī*) that enumerates the kings in 3, 4, 5, and 6, amounting to 84,152.

7. The last of these 36 kings was named Kambalavaṁsa. He founded Ekacakkhu and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city were 32.

8. The last of these 32 kings was named Purindeva (Surindeva, or Munindeva in other versions). His son founded Vajiramutti and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city were 28.

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[354] The Chronicle of the Island (*Dīpa-vaṁsa*) says that they lived in Kapilavatthu.

9. The last of these 28 kings was named Sādhina. His son founded Mathura and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city were 22.

10. The last of these 22 kings was named Dhammagutta. His son founded Ariṭṭhapura and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city were eighteen.

11. The last of these eighteen kings was named Sippi. His son founded the city Indapattha [1678] and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city were 22.

Another extract comes here from the same Great Cause of Learning (*Mahā-suta-kārī*), combining the paragraphs 7 to 11 and making 117 kings in all.

12. The last of these 117 kings was named Brahmadeva. His son also reigned in Ekacakkhu. He and his descendants in that city were fifteen.

13. The last of these fifteen kings was named Baladatta. His son founded Kosambī and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city were fourteen.

14. The last of these fourteen kings was named Hatthideva. His son founded Kannagoccha and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city were nine.

15. The last of these nine kings was named Naradeva. His son founded Rocana and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city were seven.

16. The last of these seven kings was named Mahinda. His son founded Campā and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city were twelve.

Another extract is taken from the Great Cause of Learning (*Mahā-suta-kārī*) combining the above five paragraphs and giving the total number of kings which is 57.

17. The last of these 57 kings mentioned in the above five paragraphs was named Nāgadeva. His son founded Mithilā and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city were 25.

18. The last of these 25 kings was named Samuddadatta. His son reigned back in Rājagaha. He and his descendants in that city were 25.

19. The last of these 25 kings was named Tidhaṅkara. His son founded Takkasilā and reigned there; he and his descendants in that city were twelve.

20. The last of these twelve kings was named Tālissara. His son founded Kusinārā and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city were also twelve.

21. The last of these twelve kings was named Purinda. His son founded Tāmalitthiya and reigned there. He and his descendants in that city were twelve.

The author gives another extract from the same Great Cause of Learning (*Mahā-suta-kārī*) counting up the kings in the above five paragraphs and giving 83 as the total number of kings thereof.

22. Of these 83 kings in the above five paragraphs, the last was named Sāgaradeva. His son was Māghadeva (or Magghadeva). He and his descendants reigned in Mithilā until their number became 84,000.

23. The last of these 84,000 kings was named Nimi and he was the Bodhisatta. His son was named Kaḷārajanaka, his son was named Samaṅkara and his son was named Asoca or Asoka. Their descendants, totalling 84,003, again founded Bārāṇasī and reigned there.

24. The last of these 84,003 kings was named Sīhappati.

1. King Sīhappati's son was King Vijitasena.
2. Vijitasena's son was King Dhammasena.
3. Dhammasena's son was King Nāgasena.
4. Nāgasena's son was King Samiddha.
5. Samiddha's son was King Disampati.
6. Disampati's son was King Reṇu.
7. Reṇu's son was King Kusa.
8. Kusa's son was King Mahā Kusa.
9. Mahā Kusa's son was King Navaraṭṭha.
10. Navaraṭṭha's son was King Dasaraṭṭha.
11. Dasaraṭṭha's son was King Rāma. [1679]
12. Rāma's son was King Vilāraṭṭha.
13. Vilāraṭṭha's son was King Cittaraṁsi.
14. Cittaraṁsī's son was King Ambaraṁsī.
15. Ambaraṁsī's son was King Sujāta.
16. Sujātā's son was King Okkāka.

These sixteen kings reigned in Bārāṇasī.

There were thus 252,556 descendants from Mahā Sammata, the Bodhisatta of the earliest aeon, down to King Okkāka.

> The author here gives the final extract from the Great Cause of Learning (*Mahā-suta-kārī*), which sums up the 84,003 kings contained in 23, the sixteen kings contained in 24 and those counted elsewhere, and arrives at the total number of 252,556, beginning with the Mahā Sammata and ending with King Okkāka.

Herein, since the exposition of the commentary on the Discourse to Ambaṭṭha (*Ambaṭṭha-sutta*, DN 3) and that of the Discourse about the Perfected One (*Muni-sutta*, Snp 1.12) state that: "After the 84,000 kings belonging to the lineage of Māghadeva, there occurred three successive rulers, all bearing the name Okkāka," and that "the third Okkāka had five queens, each with 500 lady attendants," it should be taken that the Sakyan princes were the descendants of Okkāka III and that the last of the 252,556 kings was this very person, Okkāka III.

The Story of King Okkāka

The wives of King Okkāka, the last of the 252,556 kings, were five: Hatthā, Cittā, Jantū, Jālinī and Visākhā. Each of them had 500 ladies-in-waiting.

> The exposition of the Discourse to Ambaṭṭha (*Ambaṭṭha-sutta*, DN 3) explains that the king was called Okkāka because when he spoke there emanated from his mouth a light as if from a shooting star. *Okkā* = torch, firebrand in Pāḷi.
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> It is noteworthy that in Myanmar history such remarkable men as King Kyansittha and King Manūhā of Thaton emitted from their mouths the brilliant light of insignia, or a shooting star, or some other particular radiance of light.
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> It should not be taken for certain that King Okkāka's city was Bārāṇasī, as the commentary on the Discourse to Ambaṭṭha says that his daughter, the Princess Piyā, and King Rāma of Bārāṇasī joined in marriage. The third Okkāka's city could be any city but Bārāṇasī.

Of the five queens, the eldest one, Hatthā, gave birth to four sons: Ukkāmukha, Karakaṇḍu, Hatthinika, Sinisūra, and five daughters: Piyā, Suppiyā, Ānandā, Vijitā, Vijitasenā.

When Queen Hatthā died after giving birth to her children, King Okkāka III made a young, pleasant princess of great beauty his Chief Queen; a son named Jantu was born of her. On the fifth day after his birth, he was dressed in pretty ornaments and was shown to the king. The king was so delighted that he granted a boon to the queen, saying: "Take anything you like!"

After discussing with her relatives, the queen asked that the little son Jantu be made king. The king refused to comply and scolded her: "You wicked one, down with you! You just want harm to my sons!" On every favourable occasion the queen tried to please the king and said: "Your majesty, a monarch should not turn a promise into a lie. You should keep your word." So saying she repeatedly demanded that kingship be bestowed upon her son.

The king was then compelled to summon his older sons, Ukkāmukha and others, and said with great sorrow: "Dear sons, I have given Jantu's mother a boon on seeing your little brother. Now, Jantu's mother has a burning desire to have her son made heir to the throne. Leaving aside my state elephant, state horse and state chariot, take as many elephants, horses and chariots as you want and go and stay away from this city until I die. Come back after my death and take back the kingdom." [1680] After saying this, the king sent his sons away together with eight ministers.

Ukkāmukha and his elder brothers felt pained and wept bitterly, but they did obeisance to their royal father and said: "Dear father, please forgive our faults if there are any." They also asked the court ladies for forgiveness. The five sisters requested the king, saying: "Dear father, let us go along with our brothers," he gave permission and together they went out of the city. They were taken along the journey by their brothers, who, being accompanied by the eight ministers and troops of the fourfold army,[355] departed from the city. A large number of men followed the princes, thinking: "These royal sons will definitely come back and reign on the death of their father. We shall start attending upon them even now."

The size of the following grew from one league on the first day to two leagues on the second day and three leagues on the third. This caused them to discuss among themselves: "The strength of our troops is so great. If we only wish to

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[355] An army consisting of four divisions: elephants, chariots, horses and foot soldiers.

fight and occupy the countries around here with such power, no kings or states would dare to put up resistance. But what is the use of taking other kingdoms by force and through violence. There is indeed no profit at all! This Jambudīpa is huge and immense. We shall found a new city in an unihabited forest region." After agreeing like this, they headed for the Himālayas and searched for a site to build a city.

The Founding of Kapilavatthu

At that time, our Bodhisatta was a wealthy Brahmin, born of a family which possessed substantial riches and was named Kapila. Renouncing his wealth, he went forth as an ascetic and stayed in a leaf-hut that be built near a lake of clear waters, in a teak forest by the side of the Himālayas.

Learned in the science of earth, the study of signs of the earth and waters (*bhūmi-jala*), the Bodhisatta Kapila the recluse knew the advantages and disadvantages that were in store throughout the region of 80 cubits underground and 80 cubits above ground. Around the site on which Kapila's leaf-hut was built, the grass, trees and bushes grew, turning in the right direction, with their trunk-like sprouts stemmed from them facing to the east. When beasts of prey, such as lions and tigers, gave chase to deer and pigs, which were their food, or when snakes and cats gave chase to frogs and rats respectively and reached that spot, they could not pursue and catch them; instead, they all turned back and ran away, for they were threatened and shown hostility by their own respective preys. Seeing all this, Kapila came to note that: "This is the best of all sites, where enemies are subdued."

When the princes led by Ukkāmukha were searching for a suitable site for their proposed city, they came to the recluse's leaf-hut. Asked by the recluse about their purpose, they told him of their plan. Knowing of the matter, Bodhisatta Kapila the recluse took pity on them and said: "Princes, the city founded on the site of my hermitage would be the best of all cities throughout Jambudīpa. Among men born in this city, one will emerge able to overwhelm all others, numbering even hundreds or thousands. Therefore, construct a new city on this land of my hermitage. Build a palace on this spot of my residence. If I were to tell you of its pre-eminence, I would say even a low-born son deriving support from this land will become somebody praised for his power, like a Universal Monarch."

When the princes asked: "Venerable recluse, is not this place still used and occupied by you?" Kapila replied: "Do not bother yourselves thinking that this place is still in use by me. Build a hermitage for me somewhere on an outlying spot and set up a city with your residences here as I have pointed out to you, and name the city Kapilavatthu."

As has been directed by Kapila the recluse, the four princes headed by Ukkāmukha, and their ministers and troops established a city together with royal palaces and mansions; they also named the city Kapilavatthu and settled there. [1681]

The Beginning of the Sakyas

While they were thus settling at Kapilavatthu, the princes grew old enough to get married. Then the ministers deliberated among themselves, saying: "Sirs, these princes have come of age. If they were near their father King Okkāka III, he would have made these princes and princesses marry. Now the responsibility has come upon us." After their deliberations, they consulted the princes.

The princes said: "Ministers, there are no princesses here who are equal to us by birth, nor are there princes of matching class for our sisters. If those of unequal birth marry one another, their offspring will become impure either from their paternal side or from their maternal side. This will bring about a destructive mixture of castes (*jāti-sambheda*). Accordingly, let us put the eldest sister of us nine children in the place of our mother, and let the remaining ones, four brothers and four sisters, join in marriage so as to avoid such a corruption of lineage." Thus agreeing among themselves, they selected their eldest sister, Princess Piyā, to be their mother and married their sisters, making four pairs of husband and wife lest their birth should get impure.

In the course of time, each of the four couples of Okkāka's sons and daughters thrived with issue. When the king heard of the founding of Kapilavatthu by his children led by Prince Ukkāmukha, of their marriages, not with members of a different family, but among themselves, and of the prosperity of these brother-and-sister couples born of the same parents, the king was so delighted that he spoke out in praise of his children in the midst of his ministers and others:

> *Sakyā vata bho kumāra!*
> *Paramā sakyā vata bho kumāra!*

> Able, indeed, are my sons and daughters, men! Lofty and able, indeed, are my sons and daughters!"

As the King used the expression *sakyā vata*, "able indeed," in praising them, it was after this very expression *sakyā*, meaning "able," that the name Sakyā or Sākiya was given to the descendants of the brothers and sisters led by Ukkāmukha, and it has come to be well known.

The Founding of Koliya

At one time thereafter, the eldest sister, who was most senior to the brother and sister householders, was afflicted with leprosy. There appeared some ulcers on her body.

Thereupon, the princely brothers considered and discussed among themselves thus: "If we were to stay and eat with our sister, who has been stricken with such a horrible skin disease, we will be infected too." One day, they pretended to go to the garden for amusement, taking their eldest sister Piyā in a chariot. When they came to a forest glade, they had a square ditch dug huge enough to move therein in the different postures of lying, sitting, standing and walking. In the underground chamber of the ditch, they stored all kinds of food and drink and placed their sister in it. They also covered the square ditch with wooden planks to protect her from danger and made grooves along the edges of the planks which served as a roof covered with earth, before they went home to Kapilavatthu.

At about the same time, the King of Bārāṇasī, named Rāma, was suffering from leprosy, too, and his female attendants and other courtiers and retinue became disgusted and horrified. He was, therefore, alarmed and entered a forest after handing over his kingdom to his eldest son. He made a shelter of leaves for himself. Because of his eating fruit and roots, his skin disease soon vanished, and he assumed a golden complexion. While roaming from place to place, he came across a tree with a gigantic trunk with a hollow in it. He created a large room, sixteen cubits in size, in that tree. He had the main door for entrance, windows and a ladder fixed. It was like a small palace chamber such as where he had lived before. [1682]

At night, Rāma made a fire in a huge pan and noted the cries of deer, boar and the like by their direction before he slept. In the morning, he went in that

direction to find pieces of the flesh of deer, boars, etc. They were leftovers from the food of lions, leopards, tigers and so on. He simply collected and cooked them for his food and lived in this manner.

One day, a tiger, getting the odour of the princess's body that came from her underground dwelling, which was not far from Rāma's place, scratched the wooden roof and tried to burst it open. The princess was so frightened that she screamed aloud. It was nearing daybreak and Rāma was then sitting on the ground, after making a fire. On hearing the scream and knowing it was indeed a women's scream, he rushed to the ditch as the day broke and asked: "Who is it that is living in this underground dwelling?" and when he heard the reply: "I am a woman," he asked further: "What is your lineage?" – "Sir, I am a daughter of King Okkāka." – "Come out," said the king. "Sir, I am not able to come out." – "Why?" – "Sir, I have leprosy." The king then asked all about the matter and knowing that the princess did not come out because she was proud of her aristocratic birth, the king let her know of his being a potentate himself by saying: "I too belong to the ruling class." He took the princess out from the underground chamber by means of a ladder and brought her to his place. He gave her the same medicinal drugs that he had taken himself. The princess took them and her affliction abated. She became golden in complexion. By mutual consent, the two lived together as husband and wife.

In due course, the king's consort, Piyā, sixteen times bore twin sons and thus had 32 boys in all. When they grew up, their father, King Rāma, sent them away for a princely education.

One day, a hunter from the king's native Bārāṇasī, while coming to that forest near the Himālaya in search of treasures, encountered Rāma. Recognizing him, the hunter said: "Lord, I know you very well." The king, therefore, enquired all about his kingdom, and while he was doing so, the 32 sons returned. Seeing the boys, the hunter asked: "Great King, who are these boys?" – "They are my sons," said the king. After asking a further question, he came to know of their maternal relatives and thought: "I have now got some information to give the ruler of Bārāṇasī as my gift." So thinking, he returned to the city and told the whole story.

The present King of Bārāṇasī, who was Rāma's own son, was delighted, and in order to bring back his father, visited him accompanied by his fourfold army.

He saluted his father very respectfully and made a request: “Dear father, kindly accept the kingship of Bārāṇasī.” – “Dear son,” replied Rāma, “I have no more desire to become King of Bārāṇasī. I will not return to the city. Instead, remove this tree and build residences and a new city for me here, at this very place of the great jujube (*kola*) tree.” At his command, his son, the King of Bārāṇasī, founded the new city.

As the new city was founded after removing the *kola* tree on his father’s site, it was named Koliya. Since it was founded on the route frequented by tigers, it was also called Tigers’ Way (*Vyaggha-pajja*). Having thus given the city both names, the son, the King of Bārāṇasī, paid respect to his father, King Rāma, and returned home.

As King Rāma and his consort Piyā were residing in the new city of Koliya, Piyā one day told his sons, who had now attained manhood: “Dear sons, your uncles, the Sakyan princes, are reigning in the city of Kapilavatthu. The daughters of your uncles dressed themselves and have their hair made up in this manner; their gait and deportment is like this. When they approach bathing places to bathe, catch hold of the princess you like and bring them back here.”

In accordance with the mother’s instructions, the princes went to the bathing places of the daughters of their uncles, the Sakyan princes, at Kapilavatthu and after observing them and choosing from among them, each brought a princess of his liking, after identifying himself and taking her at the moment she let her hair to dry.

On hearing the matter, the Sakyan princes said among themselves: “Dear folks, let it be so. These Koliya princes are scions of our elder sister, thus they are our nephews, our [1683] close relatives.” So saying, they did not blame them; as they were pleased, they just kept silent.

From the marriages between the Sakyans and the Koliyans, the lineage came down without any break to the lifetime of the Buddha.

In this way, the growth of the Sakyan descendants took place in purity and worthiness, as they mixed with their own relatives. Since there was no interruption from the time of King Okkāka, the founding head of the Sakyans, down to the time of Prince Siddhattha, the Bodhisatta, they went down in history having a good reputation as an unbroken aristocratic lineage (*asambhinna-khattiya*).

The Founding of Devadaha

The Sakyan princes living in Kapilavatthu used to go to a big, pleasant and beautiful lake in order to amuse themselves in the water. Because it was the lake of royal sports, it came to be known as Devadaha, *Deva* implying Sakyan princes as recognized lords, and *daha* meaning a lake for watery games.

Later on, those Sakyan princes who came to the lake for amusements did not return to Kapilavatthu but built royal lodges near the lake. In due course, the area prospered and became a city itself, earning the name Devadaha after the lake. The Sakyans residing in that city were also named Devadaha-Sakyans after the city.[356]

The Descendants of Ukkāmukha the Sakyan King

The rulers belonging to Kapilavatthu are as follows:

1. Its founder, King Ukkāmukha.[357]
2. His son, King Nipuṇa.
3. His son, King Candimā.
4. His son, King Candamukha.
5. His son, King Sivi.
6. His son, King Sañjaya.
7. His son, King Vessantara, the Bodhisatta.
8. His son, King Jāli.
9. His son, King Sīhavāhana.
10. His son, King Sīhassara.

These ten Sakyan kings and King Sīhassara's descendants down to Jeyyasena, 82,000 in all, ruled successively in Kapilavatthu in the Sakyan kingdom.

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[356] This is based on the commentary to the Discourse about Devadaha (*Devadaha-sutta*, MN 101).

[357] He was called thus because when the king spoke a brilliant light, a sign of authority came out from his mouth like his ancestor, King Okkāka.

The last of these 82,010 kings, Jeyyasena, had a son and daughter, Sīhahanu and Yasodharā respectively.

At that time, King Ukkāsakka and Queen Yasavatī of Devadaha also had a son and a daughter, Añjana and Kañcanā respectively.

From the marriage of Prince Sīhahanu, son of King Jeyyasena of Kapilavatthu, and Princess Kañcana, daughter of Ukkāsakka of Devadaha, were five sons and two daughters, totalling seven children. The five sons were:

1. Suddhodana.
2. Amitodana.
3. Dhotodana.
4. Sakkodana.
5. Sukkodana.

According to the commentary to the Discourse on the Correct Way to Wander (*Sammā-paribbājanīya-sutta*, Snp 2.13) the two daughters were:

1. Princess Amittā.
2. Princess Pāḷitā.

From the marriage of Prince Añjana, son of King Ukkāsakka of Devadaha and Princess Yasodharā, daughter of King Jeyyasena of Kapilavatthu, two sons and two daughters were born, totalling four children. The name of King Añjana is also mentioned as Mahā Suppabuddha. The two sons were Prince Suppabuddha and Prince Daṇḍapāni. The [1684] daughters were: 1) Princess Siri Mahā Māyā and 2) Princess Pajāpatī Gotamī.

Prince Suddhodana, son of Sīhahanu, was married to the two daughters of King Añjana: Princess Siri Mahā Māyā and Princess Pajāpatī Gotamī. The elder sister, Siri Mahā Māyā, gave birth to Prince Siddhattha and the younger sister, Pajāpatī Gotamī, gave birth to Princess Rūpanandā and Prince Nanda.

On the authority of this brief statement, there were ten kings descended from King Ukkāmukha, founder of Kapilavatthu.

There were 82,000 kings descended from King Sīhassara, down to Jeyyasena.

Then came King Jeyyasena's son, King Sīhahanu, and

1. Sīhahanu's son, Suddhodana.
2. Suddhodana's son, Prince Siddhattha, the Bodhisatta.

Summing up all these three groups, there were 82,013 rulers, all part of an unbroken lineage of Sakyan kings and reigning in the city of Kapilavatthu.

If the number 82,013 of this line from King Ukkāmukha to Prince Siddhattha the Bodhisatta is added to the aforesaid number 252,556 of the rulers from the primeval Mahā Sammata to Okkāka, the result will be 334,569.

> Here, the author gives an extract from Great Cause of Learning (*Mahā-suta-kārī*, vv. 32-33).

From the marriage of Prince Suppabuddha, son of King Añjana, and Princess Amittā, daughter of King Sīhahanu, were born Princess Bhaddā Kañcanā or Yasodharā and Prince Devadatta.

From the marriage of Prince Siddhattha, the Bodhisatta, and Princess Bhaddā Kañcanā or Yasodharā, daughter of King Suppabuddha of Devadaha and Queen Amittā, was born Prince Rāhula.

> Prince Siddhattha, the Bodhisatta, had only one son, Prince Rāhula. In the minor Chronicles, there is some fabrication that Siddhattha's lesser wives gave birth to other sons. But there is no trace of such a statement in older works of Buddhist literature. Let us all, therefore, hold that there was only one son, and that one son was no one other than Rāhula.

The Abolishing of the Era by King Añjana

King Añjana of Devadaha, the Buddha's grandfather, and Siri Mahā Māyā's father, abolished the Goza Era, which was current in his time. On the new moon, of the month of March (*Phagguṇa*), a Saturday, he abrogated 8,649 years, as required by astrology, and did away with that era, and for its replacement he introduced another era, commencing on the first waxing moon of the month of April (*Citta*), a Sunday, and founded a new era to be used from that time onwards. That era is referred to as the Great or Mahā Era in later times, and started in 631 BCE.

> [Many of the dates in this Chronicle, the author gave according to this era. They have been converted to BCE/CE format in this revised edition.]

Such an account of abrogation of an era is a worldly tradition preserved in historical works. There is neither an occurrence of repeal of an era nor use of such a term as the Sakkarāj era, but such an expression as Koza or Goza in the books is approved in the Buddhist Councils. All this is stated only in secular treatises of astrology and history. These ways of calculation and expression contained in those mundane astrological and historical works have been borrowed in Myanmar by successive learned scholars throughout the Bagan period, Pinya Period, and so on, for the benefit and convenience in recording the number of years and the date of an event.

Orthography of Sakkarāj, Sakarāj and Koza, Goza

Much has been written about the orthography of Sakkarāj, Sakarāj and Koza, Goza by Monywe Zetawun Sayādaw in his Light on the All-Seeing one (*Samanta-cakkhu-dīpanī*, vol. 2).

The Sayādaw's opinion in this connection is as follows: [1685] "Many ways of writing these terms have been met with. They are only useful for recording and calculating years. Any incorrect spelling in no way affects supermundane matters; any correct spelling would not help gain release from Saṁsāra, as it is in no sense an object in acquiring insight and right view. For these reasons, it is rational to hold that each form of orthography has its own merit." Such a decisive statement is very satisfactory.

In short, Sakkarāj is so called because, as a system of chronological notation to be reckoned from a certain date, it is founded by kings who are able to protect the people; Sakarāj is so-called because such a founding was accomplished by a Saka King. Koza or Goza signifies a period of time marked by the movements of the sun and the moon.

> Sakkarāj comes from *sakka* meaning "able" and *rāja*, "king;" hence Sakkarāj, an era founded by a king who is able to give protection to his subjects.
>
> Alternatively, Sakarāj derives from *Sakarājā*, *Saka* being the name of a people and *rāja*, "king;" hence, *Sakarājā* means an era introduced by a Saka king.
>
> As for Koza and Goza, *ko* is a term for the sun and *go* a word for both the sun and the moon; *za* is used in the sense of "going about." The time spent

in making a complete round of the Zodiac by the sun and the moon is called a year of Koza or Goza. It is also written as Gocar.

The Terms Kāḷīyuga and Sakkarāj

In the expression: "Such and such year Kāḷīyuga Sakkarāj," by putting Kāḷīyuga as an adjective before Sakkarāj, Kāḷīyuga and Sakkarāj we can see that they are different in meaning. The expression means: "The year of a certain era, in the length of time beginning with the Kāḷīyuga."

Of the pair of the evolution and devolution periods called inclusive periods (*antara-kappa*), an evolution period consists of four ages: Katayuga, Tretayuga, Dvāparayuga and Kāḷīyuga. There are waxing and waning periods of these four ages (*yuga*). When these periods complete 60 times, an evolution period comes to an end. Mundane treatises say the same is true of a devolving period. Of the four ages, the first one, Katayuga, has 1,728,000 years; then Tretayuga which has 1,296,000 years; it is followed by Dvāparayuga of 864,000 years. Finally follows Kāḷīyuga of 432,000 years. The total number of these four *yugas* is 4,320,000.

Note that if the years of the Kāḷīyuga are doubled, the result is the years of the Dvāparayuga; if tripled, the years of the Tretayuga; if quadrupled, the years of the Katayuga.

During the Katayuga years, all four quarters of beings, the whole people, observe righteousness as though living things stand on four legs. During the Tretayuga, three quarters of them observe righteousness as though they stand on three legs, one quarter does not. During the Dvāparayuga, one half do so, and the other half do not. During the Kāḷīyuga, only one quarter does and three quarters do not.

Our Teacher, Gotama the Buddha, rose in the 2,570th year of the Kāḷīyuga, states the Ancient History of Gotama (*Gotama-purāṇa*). In the first chapter (*kaṇḍa*), it says:

Kāḷerārabbhato suññā, satta pañca-duke gate,
saṁvacchare babhuva ve, Dhamma-vido Gotamābhidho.

2,570 years after the commencement of Kāḷīyuga, there appeared the one named Gotama, who comprehended the Dhamma.

If one desires to know the present Buddhist year and the present Kāḷīyuga, one can take the present year in the Myanmar era, which corresponds to the Sakarāj era and add 1,182 years; the answer is the year of the Buddhist era.

To get the Kāḷīyuga year, take the present Buddhist year and add 2,650;[358] the total is the present Kāḷīyuga year.

In short, when one writes "in the year so and so Kāḷīyuga Sakkarāj," one's idea is the year so and so of Sakkarāj in the age of Kāḷīyuga. The Kāḷīyuga lasts 432,000 years as has been said before. Sakkarāj is the calculation of years as determined by royal [1686] promulgation.

Again, an extract is given by the author from the Great Cause of Learning (*Mahā-suta-kārī*) concerning the four ages and the rise of the Buddha in the year 2,570 of the Kāḷīyuga.

The Voice having Eight Qualities like a Brahma

King Dhammāsoka's wife, Asandhimittā, asked the Saṅgha with reference to the sweetness of the Buddha's voice: "Is there anyone in this world whose voice is similar to the Buddha's?" The answer given by the Saṅgha was: "There is the voice of a cuckoo (*karavika*) bird which is like the Buddha's." Again, the queen asked: "Where do these birds live?" The Saṅgha replied: "They live in the Himavanta."

The queen then said to King Asoka: "I would like to see a cuckoo, lord." The king sent a golden cage with the command: "A cuckoo shall come into this cage!" The cage flew and stopped before a cuckoo. Considering: "This cage came with the command of the king; I am not in a position to remain here against the king's command," the bird entered the cage, which flew back and stood in the king's presence.

Although they now had the bird, nobody was able to make it cry. The king asked: "Men, how could we make it cry?" The ministers replied: "These cuckoos cry,

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[358] [The author(s) gave the date 2,570 here. But as was stated above, after 2,570 years, Gotama appeared, or was born. The Buddhist era begins not at his birth but 80 years later, at his passing. Therefore, the correct date for the *Kāḷī-yuga* is the Buddhist era plus 2,650 years.]

Great King, when they see their fellow birds." Asoka accordingly had mirrors placed around the bird.

When the bird saw its own image in the mirrors, thinking that his relations had come, it uttered a sweet cry, slowly and pleasantly, like the musical note that comes out from a ruby flute. As if intoxicated by the cuckoo king's voice, Queen Asandhimittā and the citizens of Pāṭaliputta were wildly pleased. They revelled as though they were dancing.

Then the queen reflected: "Even the voice of this cuckoo, which is just a bird, is so sweet. What would the voice of the Buddha be like, the highest in glory? There could have been no limit to its sweetness!"

Visualizing the Buddha, the queen became filled with joy (*pīti*). Without giving up that joy, she developed insight (*vipassanā*), stage by stage, and together with her 700 ladies-in-waiting, she attained Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*) fruition.

On 1: The Thirty-Two Major Marks

Explanations of the Marks

[This section on the explanation of the marks has been moved here from the body of the text.]

1. The mark of the level soles of the feet which, when put on the ground, touch it fully and squarely.

When other persons set foot on the ground, the tip of the foot or the heel or the outer part of the sole touches the ground first, but the middle portion of the sole does not. So also when the foot is lifted from the ground, the tip or the heel or the outer part of the sole comes up first.

But when a great man like the Bodhisatta puts down his foot on the ground, the entire sole touches it evenly the way the sole of a soft golden shoe does when placed on the ground. In the same manner, when his foot is raised, the different parts of the foot come up simultaneously.

In case the noble Bodhisatta wants to set his foot on uneven ground, with holes, trenches, deep crevices, ditches, pits, banks and the like, all the concave parts of the earth rise at that very moment, like an inflated leather bag and the ground becomes even, like the face of a drum. [235]

If he lifted his feet with intent to put it down at a distance, even the royal Mount Meru would appear underneath the sole of his feet in a moment.

2. The mark of the figures in the 108 circles on the sole of each foot together with the wheel having 1,000 spokes, the rim, the hub and all other characteristics.

The figures in the 108 circles are:

1. A large spear.
2. A house of splendour (*srivatsa*).
3. A buttercup flower.
4. Three horizontal lines on the throat.
5. A head ornament.
6. A laid out meal.
7. A royal couch.
8. A hook.
9. A palace.
10. An arched gateway.
11. A white umbrella.
12. A double-edged sword.
13. A round fan of toddy palm-leaf.
14. A fan of a peacock's tail.
15. A head-band like forehead.
16. A ruby stone.
17. A lustrous eating bowl.
18. A festoon of jasmine flowers.

19-23. The five kinds of lotus: blue, red, white, *Paduma* and *Puṇḍarīka*.

24. A jar full of mustard seeds, etc.
25. A bowl full of mustard seeds, etc.

26. An ocean.

27. A Cakkavāḷa mountain.

28. The Himālayas.

29. Mount Meru.

30-31. The disc of the sun and the disc of the moon.

32. The planets.

33-36. The four island-continents with 2,000 minor surrounding islands.

37. A Universal Monarch with flowers and seven treasures.

38. A white conch with a clockwise spiral shell.

39. A couple of golden carps.

40. A missile weapon.

41-47. The seven great rivers.

48-54. The seven surrounding mountain ranges.

55-61. The seven rivers between the seven mountain ranges.

62. A Garuḷa king.

63. A crocodile.

64. A banner.

65. A streamer.

66. A golden palanquin.

67. A yak-tail fly-flap.

68. Kelāsa, the silver mountain.

69. A lion king.

70. A tiger king.

71. A *Valāhaka* horse king.

72. An *Uposatha* elephant king or a *Chaddānta* elephant king.

73. Bāsukī, the Nāga king.

74. A golden goose (*haṁsa*) king.

75. A bull king.

76. Erāvaṇa, the elephant king.

77. A golden sea-monster.

78. A golden boat.

79. A Brahma king.

80. A milch cow with her calf.

81. A Kinnara couple, male and female.

82. A Karavīka bird king.

83. A peacock king.

84. A crane king.

85. A ruddy-goose (*cakka-vāka*) king.

86. A pheasant or partridge (*jīvaṁ-jīvaka*) king.

87-92. The six planes of celestial sensual existence.

93-108. The sixteen planes of the form worlds.

These are the figures in the 108 circles on the Bodhisatta's soles.

> Then the author quotes the enumeration of these figures composed in verse form by the Taunggwin Sayādaw, head of the Saṅgha, as it appeared in his Light on the Hidden Meaning (*Guḷhattha-dīpaṁ*, Vol I). We do not translate it, for it will be a repetition.

3. The mark of the projecting heels.

By this is meant all-round developed heels. To elaborate: With ordinary people, the forepart of the foot is long; the calf stands right above the heel; and so the heel looks cut and hewn. This is not the case with the noble Bodhisatta. The sole of his foot may be divided into four equal parts, of which, the two front ones form the foremost sector of the sole. The calf stands on the third part. The heel lies on the fourth, looking like a round top placed on a red rug as though it has been treated on a lathe.

> As for ordinary people, since the calf is situated on the top of the heel, the heel looks ugly, as though it were cut and hewn unsymmetrically. In the case of a Bodhisatta, however, the calf is on the third part of the sole. The rounded heel which occupies the fourth sector and which is conspicuous against the reddish skin is accordingly elongated and graceful.

4. The mark of the long and tapering fingers and toes.

With ordinary people, some fingers and toes are long and others short. Their girths also differ from one another. But this is not so in the case of the Bodhisatta. His fingers and toes are both long and even. They are stout at the base and taper towards the tip, resembling sticks of realgar made by kneading its powder with some thick oil and rolling it into shape.

5. The mark of the soft and tender palms and soles.

The palms and soles of a Bodhisatta are very soft and tender, like a layer of cotton wool ginned 100 times and dipped in clarified butter. Even at an old age they never change but remain soft, tender and youthful as when young. [236]

6. The mark of the regular fingers and toes like finely rounded golden rail posts of a palace window; there is a narrow space between one finger and another as well as between one toe and another.

The four fingers – excluding the thumb – and the five toes of a Bodhisatta are of equal length.[359] The Prince's eight fingers of both left and right hands are of equal length; so are his ten toes of both left and right feet. Accordingly, the somewhat curved lines on the joints taking the shape of barley seeds show no variation in length. In fact, they seem to form a row of curves, one touching another. The marks of these barley seeds are like uniformly and vertically fixed balusters. Therefore his fingers and toes resemble a palace window with a golden lattice created by master carpenters.

7. The mark of the slightly higher and dust-free ankles.

The ankles of ordinary people lie close to the back of the feet. Therefore their soles appear to be fastened with cramps, small nails and snags; they cannot be turned at will. This being the case, the surface of the soles of their feet is not visible when they walk. The ankles of a Bodhisatta are not like this, they are

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[359] Evidently, most people's fingers are not equal in length.

about two or three fingers' length above the soles like the neck of a watering jar. Therefore, the upper part of the body from the navel upwards maintains itself motionlessly, like a golden statue placed on a boat; only the lower part of the body moves, and the soles turn round easily. The onlookers from the four directions, front, back, left and right, can see well the surface of his soles.

> When an elephant walks, the surface of the sole can be seen only from behind. But when the Bodhisatta walks his soles can be seen from all four quarters.

8. The mark of the legs like those of an antelope (*eṇi*).

Let the reader feel his calf and he will find the hardness of his shin bone at the front and see the muscles loosely dangling on the back. But the Bodhisatta's calves are different; like the husk that covers the barley or the paddy seed, the muscles evenly encase the shin bone making the leg round and beautiful; it is thus like that of an antelope.

9. The mark of the long arms which can touch the knees while standing and without stooping.

Ordinary persons may be hunch-backed or bandy-legged or both hunch-backed and bandy-legged. Those who have bent backs have no proper, proportionate frame because the upper part of the body is shorter than the lower part, nor do those with bandy legs, because the lower part of the body is shorter than the upper part. It means that the former are shorter in their upper part and the latter are shorter in the lower part of the body. Because of the improper, disproportionate development of the frames, they can never touch their knees with their palms unless they lean forward. It is not so in the case of a Bodhisatta. Neither the upper part of his body is bent, nor the lower part crooked; both the upper and the lower parts are properly and proportionately formed. And so, even while standing and without stooping, he can touch and feel the knees with both palms of his hands.

10. The mark of the male organ that is concealed in a sheath like that of a Chaddanta elephant.

The male organ of a Bodhisatta is hidden in a lotus-like sheath, bearing resemblance to that of the king of bulls or to that of the king of elephants, and

so forth. It is the organ that has a cover as if it were placed in a felt, velvet or thick-cloth pouch that is made to measure.

11. The mark of the yellow and bright complexion which is like pure gold (*siṅgī-nikkha*).

Bodhisattas naturally have a complexion of smooth solid gold, like a golden statue which has been polished with the powder of red oxide of lead and rubbed with the canine tooth of a leopard and treated with red ochre.

> With reference to this characteristic, even though the Pāḷi texts and their commentaries state: … *suvaṇṇa-vaṇṇo kañcana-sannibhattaco* … in which *suvaṇṇa* and *kañcana* mean ordinary gold, the translation by noble teachers into Myanmar [237] of these words is: "… like pure gold (*siṅgī-nikkha*) …." This is due to the fact that the words: *Siṅgī-nikkha-suvaṇṇo* meaning: "Having the colour of pure gold," is contained in the verses uttered by Sakka in the guise of a youth when the Bodhisatta entered the city of Rājagaha for alms food, and also due to the fact that *siṅgī* stands out as the best kind of gold. Among the different kinds of gold used by people, *rasa-viddha* gold is superior to *yuttika* gold, *ākaruppaññā* gold is superior to *rasa-viddha* gold, the gold used by Devas is superior to *ākaruppaññā* gold, among the variety of gold used by Devas, *sāta-kumbha* gold is superior to *cāmī-kara* gold; *jambu-nada* gold is superior to *sāta-kumbha* gold; and finally *siṅgī* gold is superior to that *jambu-nada* gold. So it is said in the commentary of the Stories about Heavenly Mansions (*Vimāna-vatthu*, PvA 1.1, PTS 8), and the sub-commentary of the chapter in the Great Chapter (*Mahā-khandhaka*) of the Vinaya.

12. The mark of the smooth skin that is so smooth that no dust can cling to it.

The skin of the noble one is so soft and smooth in texture that both fine and gross dust cannot cling to it. Just as a drop of water, which falls on a lotus leaf, cannot remain on it but falls away, even so all the dust that touches a Bodhisatta slips off instantly.

If he is thus dust-free and clean, why does he wash his legs and hands or bathe? He does so for the purpose of adjusting himself to the temperature of the moment, for the purpose of enhancing the merit of the supporters, and for the purpose of setting an example by entering the monastery after cleansing himself

as required by the disciplinary rules so that his disciples might follow his example.

13. The mark of the body-hairs, one in each pore of the skin.

Other people have two, three or more body-hairs growing in each pore. But this is different in the case of a Bodhisatta, only a single hair grows in each pore.

14. The mark of the body-hairs with their tips curling upwards, as if they were looking up at the Bodhisatta's face in devotion.

The Bodhisatta's body-hairs, one in each pore, are blue like the colour of a collyrium stone. These hairs curl upwards clockwise three times as if they were paying homage by looking up at the Bodhisatta's face, fresh and graceful like a new lotus bloom.

15. The mark of the upright body like a Brahma's.

Just as a Brahma's body which never inclines forward or backward or sideways even slightly but assumes an upright attitude, so is the Bodhisatta's body which is perfectly straight upwards. He has a body which is tender and beautiful, as though it were cast in pure gold.

As for ordinary people, their bodies generally lean or bend in one way or the other at one of these three positions: the nape, the waist and the knees. If bent at the waist, the body leans backwards and if bent at the nape and the knees, the body stoops forwards. Some very tall people tend to lean sideways, either left or right. Those who lean backwards, have their faces turned upwards, as if they were observing and counting the constellations in the sky; those who bend down, have their faces turned downwards, as if they were studying the characteristics of the earth. Some people are lean and emaciated like spikes or sticks because they don't have sufficient flesh and blood.

Bodhisattas, however, are not like this, as they have upright bodies, they resemble a golden post of the arched gateway erected at the entrance to a celestial city.

> In this matter, such features as an upright body like a Brahma's and some other characteristics of a Great Man are not yet fully manifest during infancy to an ordinary person of average intelligence. But, by examining the marks, features, and conditions as they existed at the time of his birth, the learned Brahmins, because of their expert knowledge in the Vedic

> mantras of the Suddhāvāsa Brahmas, have come to believe: "When the prince grows older and gains great intelligence, the characteristics of his body, such as being upright like a Brahma's and so forth, will [238] become manifest and seen by all." Therefore they pondered and reckoned and offered their readings as though the marks were then already fully visible to them.

16. The mark of the fullness of flesh in seven places of the body: the upper parts of the feet, the backs of the hands, the shoulders and the neck.

Ordinary persons have their insteps, backs of the palms, etc., where the arteries manifest, swollen and distinct in wavy patterns and like a network. The bone-joints are also visible at the edges of the shoulders and also in the neck. On seeing them, therefore other people would think that they are like Petas, who dwell in the cemetery and have ugly shoulders, protruding neck-bones and swollen arteries.

It is not so in the case of the noble Bodhisatta. There is fullness of the flesh in the aforesaid seven places. Fullness of flesh does not mean that the flesh has puffed up to the point of ugliness. It is the fullness which is just elegant, which just makes the arteries not conspicuous and the bones not protruding. Therefore, the Bodhisatta has no arteries puffed up in the insteps of the feet and on the backs of the palms, and also no bones thrusting out at the edges of the shoulders and in the neck. He has a neck that is like a small well-polished golden drum. Because of the fullness and elegance in the said seven places of the body, he appears in the eyes of the onlookers like a wonderfully carved stone image or like an exquisitely painted portrait.

17. The mark of the full and well-developed body like a lion's front portion.

The front portion of the lion is fully developed but its back part is not. Thus, the back part is not given as an example here, and the comparison is only with the forepart. Though this example is given, it is not that there are such unseemly features in the Bodhisatta's body as are found in the lion's: bending, rising, sinking, and protruding and so on in certain parts of the body. In fact, the limbs of the Bodhisatta are as they should be, long where they should be long, short where they should be short, stout where they should be stout, lean where they should be lean, broad where they should be broad, round where they should be round; and thus his limbs are the most becoming and the most beautiful. The

likeness of the Bodhisatta's body cannot be created by any master craftsmen or even by renowned artists.

18. The mark of the full and well-developed back of the body, extending from the waist to the neck like a golden plank, without any trace of the spinal furrow in the middle.

This briefly means that the back of a Bodhisatta is particularly developed and magnificent. The flesh over the ribs, the flesh on both left and right sides of the back and the flesh in the middle of the back are well formed and graceful from the waist up to the neck.

The surface of the back of ordinary people appears split into two sections. The spine and its flesh in the middle remain sunk and depressed or curved; or it comes out and becomes bulging. The flesh on either side of the backbone appears convex and straight, like a split bamboo placed in a prone position. The flesh at the edges of the back is thin and slight.

As for the Bodhisatta, the flesh on either side and at the end of his spine, on his ribs, on the portion underneath his shoulders and along the middle of his spine, are all fully developed from his waist to the neck, without any traces of a long cut in the middle. And so, the surface of his back is full with layers of flesh, like an erected plank of gold.

19. The mark of the symmetrically proportioned body like the circular spread of a banyan tree, for his height and the compass of his arms are of equal measurement.

Just as a banyan tree with its trunk and branches measuring 50 or 100 cubits has its vertical length and its horizontal length equal, even so the Bodhisatta's height and the length of his arms when stretched out sideways are of equal measurement which is four [239] cubits. The height and the length of the two arms of other people are generally not equal.

20. The mark of the proportionate and rounded throat.

Some people have necks, which are long like that of a crane; others have necks which are curved like that of a paddy-bird; still others have necks which are pudgy, swollen and large like that of a pig. When they speak, veins around the necks puff up, looking like netting, and their voices come out feebly and faintly. The neck of a Bodhisatta is like a well-rounded small drum. When he speaks, the

network of veins is not visible. His voice is loud and booming like the sound of thunder or a drum.

21. The mark of 7,000 capillaries with their tips touching one another at the throat and diffusing throughout the body the taste of food, even if it is as small as a sesame seed.

The Bodhisatta's 7,000 capillaries, whose upper ends interconnect forming a group, lie at his throat. They appear as though they are waiting to send down the taste of all the swallowed food throughout his body. When the food, even as small as the size of a sesame seed, is placed on the tip of his tongue and then eaten, its taste diffuses all over his body. That was why the Bodhisatta was able to sustain his body with a mere grain of rice or with just a palmful of bean soup, etc., during his six-year long practice of austerities (*dukkara-cariyā*). Since it is not so in the case of ordinary people, the nutritious essence of all the food eaten by them cannot spread all over their bodies. For this reason, they are much exposed to diseases.

22. The mark of the lion-like chin somewhat like that of one who is about to smile.

This mainly means to draw a comparison only with the lower chin of the lion. Only the lower jaws of a lion have fullness, his upper jaw is not so well formed. Both the upper and lower jaws of a Bodhisatta, however, are full like the lion's lower jaw. They are also comparable to the moon which rises on the twelfth of the bright fortnight.

23. The mark of the teeth numbering exactly 40.

What is meant is that the Bodhisatta has 20 upper teeth and 20 lower teeth, making a complete set of 40 teeth. As for ordinary people, those who are said to have a complete set of teeth possess only 32 in all. The Bodhisatta, however, excels others by having 40 teeth, 20 upper and 20 lower.

24. The mark of the teeth set proportionately in a row.

Ordinary people have some teeth protruding and some short and depressed, thus forming an irregular set. On the contrary, the Bodhisatta has even teeth, like pieces of mother-of-pearl uniformly cut by a saw.

25. The mark of the teeth touching one another with no space in between.

Ordinary people have teeth which are separated from one another, or which have gaps between one another, like those of a crocodile. Therefore, when they eat and chew fish, meat, etc., the gaps are filled with particles of food that get stuck in them. This is not so in the case of the Bodhisatta. His teeth stand like diamonds properly fixed in a series on a plank of gold or on coral.

26. The mark of the four canine teeth white and brilliant as the morning star.

Some canine teeth of ordinary people are in a decaying state, thus they are blackened or discoloured. But the Bodhisatta's four canine teeth are extremely white, and are endowed with the kind of brilliance which surpasses that of the morning star.

> In this connection, it may be asked as to how the learned Brahmins knew the characteristics relating to these teeth, when in fact the teeth had not appeared yet in the new-born Bodhisatta. The answer is: The learned Brahmins, who read the body-marks on the authority of their brahmanical books, observed the likely place where the teeth would grow, and in anticipation of what would certainly take place [240] on the Bodhisatta's coming of age, they made their prediction as though the teeth had already grown.
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> Here something about the treatise on the marks of a great man will again be told as given in the commentary on the Discourse to Ambaṭṭha (*Ambaṭṭha-sutta*, DN 3) and others. On the eve of the appearance of a Buddha, the Brahmas of the Suddhāvāsa abode inserted the science of the prediction in the Vedic books, proclaiming that "these form the predictions about the Buddhas," they gave instructions in the Vedas under the guise of Brahmins.
>
> In the work on the marks of a Great Man that contain the predictions about the Buddhas, the physical marks of those who would become Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas, chief disciples, the great disciples, the mother and father of a Buddha, his noble attendants and a Universal Monarch are mentioned completely. Therefore, the description of the marks of a great man directly occurs in these ancient Vedic texts.
>
> But after the Buddha's attainment of Parinibbāna, the treatise on the marks of a Great Man that came into existence by virtue of the Buddha's glory gradually disappeared, starting with one or two verses, in the same way as the light generated by the sun gradually disappears after sunset.

27. The mark of the long, flat and tender tongue.

The tongues of other people may be thick; they may be small, short, rough or uneven. Contrasting with them, the Bodhisatta's tongue is very soft, long, broad and beautiful. The characteristics of the Buddha's tongue could not be seen easily by those wishing to study them after his becoming a Buddha. So, in order to dispel the doubts of the youths, Ambaṭṭha, Uttara and others, who had come to investigate them, the Buddha demonstrated the softness of his tongue by curling and rolling it round to look like a hard pin, or to look like a rolled food coupon, and then by stroking with it the two sides of the nose; he demonstrated its great length by stroking with it the passage of the two ears; he demonstrated its breath by covering with it the whole surface of the forehead right up to the edge of the hair. The tongues of ordinary people cannot come out from the mouth more than one inch.

28. The mark of the voice having eight qualities as a Brahma's.

Other people have voices which are intermittent, cracked and unpleasant like the caw of a crow. In contrast with them, the Bodhisatta is endowed with a Brahma-like voice. The Brahma's voice is pure and clear because it is not affected by bile or phlegm. So also the Bodhisatta's organs of articulation, such as the throat, palate, etc., are purified and cleansed by virtue of his accumulated deeds of merit. Because of such purity and cleanliness, the sound that originates at the navel emerges with clarity, and possesses eight qualities, which are:

1. Distinctness.
2. Intelligibility.
3. Sweetness.
4. Pleasantness.
5. Roundedness.
6. Compactness, it does not go beyond the audience.
7. Deepness, it is not shallow but forceful.
8. Resonance.

What is in fact extraordinary, marvellous and astonishing about this voice is that it is 100 times, maybe, 1,000 times sweeter and more pleasant than the extremely

melodious voice of a cuckoo (*karavīka*). To elaborate: The cry of the cuckoo is slow, drawling, long-protracted and pleasant; it is full, compact and sweet. While sitting on an upper branch of a tree, it warbles, and then it moves onto a lower branch; yet it is able to hear the sound it has made while on the upper branch: so slow and pleasant is its cry.

Having cut open a luscious ripe mango by biting with its beak and drinking the juice that [241] flows out, the cuckoo warbles; then the four legged animals get intoxicated with the cuckoo's sound, as though they were rendered unconscious by drunkenness, and begin to gambol with great delight. Other quadrupeds too, that have gone to the grazing ground and are eating and chewing the grass, forget the food in their mouth and stand still, listening to the sound from the cuckoo.

Small animals, such as deer, antelopes, etc., who are on the run in fear, fleeing for life as they are chased in great haste by beasts of prey, such as lions, leopards and tigers, having forgotten the danger to their lives, stop running only to listen to the cuckoo's voice without lifting up the foot that has been put down and without putting down the foot that has been lifted up. In the same way, the wild beasts who have been chasing to pounce on their prey become unaware of the food which they are about to eat, stop chasing and listen only to the cuckoo's cry. Birds flying in the sky spread their wings and stop flying to listen. Fish in the water also keep their hearing organs steady and stop to listen to the song of the cuckoo (see the commentary to Bv 78; PTS 60).[360]

29. The mark of the very clear blue eyes.

This does not mean to say that both eyes of a Bodhisatta are blue all over. The expression is made as a general statement. In fact, where they should be blue, they have the colour of a blue pea (*aparājita*) flower; where they should be yellow and golden, they are like the colour of the champa (*kaṇikāra*) flower; where they should be red, they are like the colour of the noon (*bandhuka*) flower; where they should be white, they are like the colour of the morning star; where they should be black, they are like the colour of black beads. The eyes of a Bodhisatta bear resemblance to an open window in a golden mansion – the window that has the motif of a lion made of rubies at its base. Or, according to

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[360] Also see the story of the Karavīka's sound and Queen Asandhimittā above.

the sub-commentary on the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*), the likeness is that of a palace window that has a lion's figure made of rubies and fixed at its bottom on the golden wall.

30. The mark of the very soft and tender eyelashes like a new-born calf's.

This particular mark is termed eyelashes like a cow (*gopakhuma-lakkhaṇa*) in the texts. The soft and tender eyelashes refer to the whole eye comprising the eye lashes and other parts of the eye. As with all kinds of calves, the eye of a black calf is thick and turbid. That of a red calf is particularly clear and bright. Here in the case of the soft and tender eyelashes, it signifies the eyes of the new born red calf. The eyes of ordinary people are not perfect. Like the eyes of elephants, rats or crows some have protruding eyes, and others have eyes with deep sunken eye-sockets. The Bodhisatta's eyes are different. They are like thoroughly washed and polished ruby stones and have soft and smooth tender, fresh, bluish eyelashes growing in a row. This mark of the entire eye is characterized by the eyelashes.

> This mark is in effect a description of the whole eye with reference to the eyelashes which form only a part of the eye. What is meant is that the Bodhisatta had the eyes which are not protruding, nor sunken but are clear like ruby stones kept well-washed and polished, with eyelashes which are soft, smooth, tender, fresh and bluish, growing in a row like those of a newly-born red-coloured calf.

31. The mark of the hair between the two eyebrows (*uṇṇa-loma*).

This hair grows gracefully in the middle of the two eyebrows, directly above the ridge of the nose and at the centre of the forehead. It is pure all over, like the morning star. It is as soft as the cotton wool ginned and refined 100 times and dipped in clarified butter. It is white as the colour of silk-cotton (*simbalī*). When it is stretched from the tip with one's hand, it is two cubits long. When it is released from the hand, it coils back clockwise with the tip curling upwards. It is of a beauty that attracts and commands veneration of every onlooker, like a silver star studded on a pure gold plate, or like pure milk flowing out of a golden vessel, or the morning star in the sky that reflects by the sunlight at dawn.

32. The mark of the thin layer of flesh that appears by nature like a gold headband on the forehead.

What is meant is that the Bodhisatta has a perfect forehead as well as a perfect head. [242] The thin layer of the flesh on the forehead of the Bodhisatta covers the whole of it, rising from end to end, from the top part of the right ear to the left. This particular layer of flesh being soft, golden in colour, lustrous and extensive on the entire forehead is graceful like a gold band fastened to a royal forehead. In fact, the gold band on a king's forehead, or the royal insignia, is an imitation of the forehead of a Bodhisatta which is used as a sign of royalty by kings who have no such natural feature.

The head of the Bodhisatta is perfect in all aspects. Unlike the Bodhisatta's, the heads of ordinary people are imperfect. Some look like a monkey's, as though they were broken in two parts. Others seem to have cracks. Still others have so little flesh that they appear as skulls just covered by the skin. There are also heads disproportionately like a gourd, and there are still others which are curved at the back or protruding with the back of the head bulging. In contrast with them, the Bodhisatta has a head of perfect fullness like a golden baluster, as if it had been carved out with a round chisel to make it round, smooth and beautiful.

> This 32nd mark is mentioned in the text as *uṇhīsa-sīsa*. Its meaning can be taken in two ways: having a head which looks as though it were wrapped by a thin layer of flesh on the forehead; or having a round splendid head like a headband made by an expert. Because of its dual meaning, the explanations of both the perfect forehead and the perfect head are given here. The deeds (*kamma*) and other factors that bring about these 32 major marks are separately discussed next.

The Deeds that caused the Thirty-Two Marks

Since it is said in the sub-commentary to the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) that only the explanation that deals with the four points, namely: 1) The meritorious deed (*kamma*); 2) the power of the deed (*kamma-sarikkhaka*); 3) the mark (*lakkhaṇa*); and 4) the advantages of the mark (*lakkhaṇānisaṁsa*), of each of the 32 marks of a Great Man is a well-defined one, the meaning of each of these four points will be briefly given first. Of these four points:

1. The meritorious deed (*kamma*) means the meritorious deed done in the past with an intention to attain Buddhahood, bringing about the major mark concerned.

2. The power of the deed (*kamma-sarikkhaka*) means the power or ability of the mark that appears in accordance with the deed.

3. The mark (*lakkhaṇa*) means any of the 32 major marks, such as level soles, the 108 sole-figures, etc., acquired in the present life on account of the past meritorious deeds.

4. The advantages of the mark (*lakkhaṇānisaṁsa*) means the remote or subsequent effect of the past meritorious deeds which cause the appearance of the mark.

For example, the Bodhisatta accumulates merit during his former lives, so firmly and resolutely that nobody else can hold them back or destroy them. On account of that accumulation of merit, he also enjoys divine bliss which excels others in ten respects. When he is reborn as a human being, he wins the mark of his level feet, resembling golden footwear. As he has won that mark, he is able to stand up and walk steadfastly; nobody else, whether a human, a Deva or Brahma, can move him or make him unsteady. The merits also give him this subsequent effect: He is unshaken by such internal defiling enemies as greed, hate [1687] and delusion and also by two external kinds, those who oppose him openly and those who do so but not openly.

Just as carrying a vessel full of water means carrying the water in it, even so, speaking of a sign with power signifies speaking of that very power. Therefore, the exposition of the marks (*lakkhaṇa*) and the exposition of the subsequent power of the marks (*kamma-sarikkhaka*) are found similar to each other in the commentary on the Discourse about the 32 Characteristics (*Lakkhaṇa-sutta*, DN 30).

The undisturbed and determined effort, put into performing good works in past existences, brings the Bodhisatta not only the mark of the level soles but, as if it were not enough, also brings him the remote and subsequent effect, which is the ability to remain unharmed and undisturbed by his foes within and without; this subsequent and remote effect is the advantages of the mark (*lakkhaṇānisaṁsa*).

Now with reference to the Bodhisatta's major signs, those causal deeds of the past and other things will be described briefly as stated in the Discourse about the 32 Characteristics, in a language easy to read and understand.

The Level Soles

The Bodhisatta performed extraordinary deeds of merit in his numerous past existences, so firmly and resolutely that nobody else could hold them back or destroy them. On account of those meritorious deeds, he enjoyed divine bliss in the Deva realm, excelling other Devas in ten respects: longevity, beauty, happiness, authority, retinue and an abundance of divine sense objects: sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Reborn again in the human world, he acquired the major mark of "the level soles like golden footwear." Because he was endowed with that mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch (*Cakka-vatti*), possessing the seven treasures and ruling the four continents as he did in the life of the Universal Monarch Mahā Sudassana. As the subsequent effect, he would also have enjoyed immunity from harm done to him by any human foes. After renouncing the world in his last existence as Prince Siddhattha, he attained omniscience and became a Perfectly Self-Awakened One, Lord of the Three Worlds.

As the subsequent effect, his benefits could not be stopped, harmed or endangered by the hostilities brought about by the internal defiling enemies, such as greed, hate and delusion, or by external ones, be he an ascetic, Brahmin, Deva, Māra or Brahma, who opposed him openly or not openly.

Herein, the aggregate of his past meritorious deeds done so firmly and resolutely that nobody else can check and destroy them is 1) the meritorious deed (*kamma*). The state of the level soles of the feet marking his deeds of merit is 3) the mark (*lakkhaṇa*). His ability to stand up and walk steadfastly as the immediate effect of his meritorious deeds is 2) the power of the deed (*kamma-sarikkhaka*). The ability inherent in the mark, forming the effect, agrees thus with the power inherent in the meritorious act serving as the cause; such a corresponding nature is called the power of the deed (*kamma-sarikkhaka*), the nature of which is in agreement with the meritorious deed (*kamma*).

> Here, the author reproduces, for the readers to learn by heart, the verses composed by one Sayādaw U Ghosita of Mandalay South. The theme is the 32 signs of a Great Man. Here, the verses describe the first sign, and each of the remaining verses similarly follows a paragraph in prose by the author.

The 108 Circles with Figures on the Soles

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta rendered service for the welfare of beings. He had driven away fear from those who were frightened. He had given alms (*dāna*) together with supplementary gifts.

For example, when he gave away robes and garments in particular, he also offered alms food as supplementary gifts to the recipients; he also gave them seats, honoured them with flowers and perfumes and provided them with drink. Thereafter, he took upon himself the precepts and expressed his wish to attain the boon of omniscience. Then only did he distribute the robes and garments most respectfully. In this way the Bodhisatta gave the main gift with extra ones.

As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss which surpassed other Devas in the ten respects, as has been mentioned above. Reborn a human being, he acquired the 2nd major mark of "the figures in circles on the soles of his feet." Because he was endowed with that mark, [1688] had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and would also have won a great suite of retinues consisting of Brahmins, men of wealth, etc. On renouncing the world in his last birth as Prince Siddhattha, he became an omniscient Buddha, and his great retinue was composed of monks, nuns, male and female lay devotees, Devas, humans, Asuras, Nāgas and Gandhabbas.

Herein, such meritorious deeds of alms giving completed with additional gifts in his numerous past existences was 1) the meritorious deed. The perfection in all respects of the sole-figures as if they were indicating: "Let Devas and humans know that the Bodhisatta had performed meritorious deeds of alms giving completed with additional gifts," was 2) the power of the deed. The sole mark was 3) the mark. The great retinue was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The Projecting Heels, Long Fingers and Toes and the Upright Body

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from taking life. Never had he caught hold of a weapon with intent to kill. He had lived with loving-kindness and compassion, providing safeguard for the well-being of all others.

As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss, which surpassed that of other Devas in ten respects. Reborn a human being, he acquired these three major marks: The 3th mark of "the projecting heels," the 4th

mark of "the long and tapering fingers and toes" and the 15th mark of "the upright body" like that of a Brahma.

Because he was endowed with these three marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch, and he would have lived long till the end of his lifespan, as no one could do harm to his life or kill him. On renouncing the world in his last birth as Prince Siddhattha, he became an omniscient Buddha, and he lived long until he had covered four-fifths of his lifespan, as no one, be he an ascetic, Brahmin, Deva, Māra or Brahma could threaten his life or could kill him.

There are four assets of a Buddha that cannot be violated by others. They are, according to the commentary on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*):

1. The four requisites meant for and brought to him.
2. His life.
3. His marks.
4. His radiance.

Or, according to the commentary on the Vinaya Section about Expulsion (*Pārājika-kaṇḍa*):

1. The material gain of the four requisites brought to him.
2. His life.
3. His 80 minor marks and his radiance of his body.[361]
4. His omniscience.

With reference to the above three marks: 1) the meritorious deed was the abstention from the wrong doing of killing; 2) the power of the deed was the ability of the length and shape of the heels, fingers and toes and the uprightness of the body.

Those who are bent on killing approach their victim by tiptoeing lest the sound of their footsteps should be heard. Consequently, when they become human

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[361] The light of the moon, the sun and Devas and Brahmas could not outshine or disturb the radiance from his body.

beings again, some of them have their feet curved inwardly like a bow; some of them have their feet curved outwardly; some of their feet have a curve in each sole; some have bandy toes; and others bandy heels; as if all those deformed shapes were to disclose their meaning, saying: "Let people know about our act of killing that involves tiptoeing." But the Bodhisatta had the mark of long heels as if they were to say: "Let people know about my not killing [1689] in a way that involved tiptoeing."

Similarly, those who desire to kill approach their victim by bending their bodies lest they should be seen by others. Consequently, when they become human beings again, some are hunchbacked; some are squat; some are crippled; as if all these deformed shapes were to disclose their meaning, saying: "Let people know about my commission of killing that involves body bending." The Bodhisatta, however, had an upright body like that of a Brahma, a mark of a Great Man, as if it were saying: "Let people know about my not killing in a way that involved body-bending."

Similarly, those who desire to kill catch hold of a weapon, say a club, and put their victim to death. Consequently, when they become human beings again, they have shorts hands, curved fingers or have no visible fingers, as they look conjoined with one another and level with the palms as if they were saying: "Let people know about my evil deeds." In contrast with them, the Bodhisatta had long and beautiful fingers, a mark of a Great Man, as if it were saying: "Let Devas and humans know" that he had no experience of killing with a club in the grip of his hand. The ability of those marks to assure his long life was the power of the deed. These three major marks: the projection of the heels, the length of the fingers and toes and the straightness of the body are 3) the mark. His life lived to the full span was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The Fullness of the Flesh at Seven Places of the Body

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta gave delicious food, such as cakes, meals, butter-oil, milk rice, etc. As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the 16th major mark of "the fullness of the flesh at the seven places of his body," namely, the two insteps, the two backs of the palms, the two shoulders and the neck.

Because he was endowed with that mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became

an omniscient Buddha, and he received plenty of delicious food, both solid and liquid, to eat.

Herein, such a meritorious act of offering choice food over the period of 100,000 aeons was 1) the meritorious deed. The occurrence of the fullness of the flesh at the seven places of the body, as if it were saying: "Let Devas and humans know that the Bodhisatta had done the meritorious deeds of giving choice food, and so forth in his past lives," and its being the cause of abundant gains in that very life was 2) the power of the deed. The fullness of the flesh at the seven places of the body was 3) the mark. The acquisition of much choice food was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The Soft Hands and Feet and their Likeness to a Net

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta helped many with the four objects of support (*saṅgaha-vatthu*).[362] Those who were pleased with a gift he helped by alms giving (*dāna*); those who were pleased with pleasant speech he helped with sweet words (*piya-vācā*), another object of support; those who desired a beneficial talk he helped with a beneficial talk or action (*attha-cariyā*), a third object of support, by advising them: "This should be done," "This should not be done," "A man of this nature should be associated with," "A man of this nature should not be associated with," and so on. Those who were happy to be treated on equal terms whether in weal or in woe, he had helped with a sense of equality (*samānattatā*), which is the fourth object of support.

As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the 5th major mark of "the soft hands and feet" as well as the 6th major mark of "their having the likeness of a golden net."

Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an omniscient Buddha, and he had a suite at his service, as if it were properly held and collectively placed [1690] in his hand.

Herein, such meritorious deeds of helping many through the fourfold objects of support (*saṅgaha-vatthu*) in his numerous past existences were 1) the

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[362] Objects of support (*saṅgaha-vatthu*), see The First Treatise on the Perfections in the Further Explanations.

meritorious deed. Those who used not to do so have rough hands and feet and uneven fingers and toes. The Bodhisatta, however, had soft and tender hands and feet; his fingers and toes were even like those of a golden net, in order to let Devas and humans know of his help given to many through the fourfold objects of support in his past lives. The quality of the softness of the hands and feet and also of the evenness of the fingers and toes was 2) the power of the deed. The quality of the soft hands and feet and of the even fingers and toes was 3) the mark. The gain of the suite properly held and collectively placed in his hand, so to speak, was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The High Ankles and the Curling Body Hair

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from frivolous talk. He gave religious talks which are beneficial for the here and now as well as the hereafter. He had spoken only on Dhamma concerning the ten deeds of merit leading to emancipation from Saṁsāra. By delivering to a large number of people sermons that would raise them up, by means of the ten deeds of merit, to higher stages of prosperity, he gave the gift of Dhamma.

As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn as a human being, he acquired the 7th major mark of "the slightly higher, dust-free ankles" and the 4th major mark of "the body-hair with its tips curling upwards."

Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and would be superior to others. On renouncing the world in his life as Prince Siddhattha he became an omniscient Buddha and reached the apex, excelling all other beings in pre-eminence.

Herein, such a meritorious deed of delivering Dhamma-sermons that lead to higher stages was 1) the meritorious deed. Those who used not to do so have low ankles and stooping downy hair, as if they were saying: "Let Devas and humans know about their failure to speak of the Dhamma." The Bodhisatta, however, was endowed with these two marks: the high ankles and the curling body-hair, as if they were saying: "Let Devas and humans know" that he had given discourses that would raise them to higher spiritual positions. Therefore, the ability of these two marks to indicate this is 2) the power of the deed. The high

ankles and the curling body-hair were 3) the marks. The Bodhisatta's being above all others in rank was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The Antelope-Like Round Legs

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta seriously and promptly taught his close pupils who had come to him for education. He had taught them in such a way that they might learn and train quickly and without trouble; he had instructed them in different arts and crafts, in various modes of moral conduct (*caraṇa*), such as the five precepts, the ten precepts and the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) as well as the doctrines such as the truth that everybody has productive deeds as his or her own property (*kammassakatā*). In his teaching, he had never held back anything for his own sake.

As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the 8th major mark of "the legs round and full, lengthy and comely, like those of a black antelope (*enī*) or like the husk of paddy."

Because he was endowed with this mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch, and he would have obtained all royal paraphernalia both animate and inanimate. On renouncing the world, he quickly became an omniscient Buddha, and he possessed all the requisites of a monk.

Herein, such a meritorious act of a serious and prompt teaching of the arts and crafts, etc. in his numerous past existences were 1) the meritorious deeds. Those who did not teach their pupils seriously and promptly but used to waste their time by asking them to wait upon them respectfully, or by sending them on errands, and thus making them weary, have their calves which are bulging at the back of the leg as though the muscles were cut off on the other side. In contrast, the Bodhisatta's calves were high and round as if they were [1691] saying: "Let Devas and humans know about my serious and prompt teaching, which doesn't hold anything back for my own sake. The ability of that particular mark to disclose this was 2) the power of the deed. The calves of that beauty were 3) the mark. The quick possession of the appropriate requisites was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The Smooth Skin

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta approached wise ascetics and Brahmins and discussed matters with them, asking: "Venerable sirs, what is merit?" "What is demerit?" "What is faulty?" "What is not faulty?" "What should be followed?" "What should not be followed?" "What, when done, leads to lasting sorrow?" and "What, when done, leads to lasting happiness?"

As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the 12th major mark of "the smooth skin."

Because he was endowed with this mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and a great wise man. Among those who enjoy sensual pleasures, there would have been none equal to him or higher than him in wisdom. On renouncing the world in his last birth as Prince Siddhattha, he became an omniscient Buddha with great wisdom.

He possessed broad wisdom (*puthu-paññā*), wisdom about the aggregates, the sense-spheres, the elements, etc; wisdom born together with zest and joy (*hāsa-paññā*); wisdom of swift occurrence (*javana-paññā*); wisdom that quickly eradicates defilements (*tikkha-paññā*); and wisdom that penetrates the impenetrable mass of greed, hatred and delusion (*nibbedhika-paññā*); as a subsequent effect, he was endowed with intelligence higher than that of others.

His[363] approaching and questioning wise ascetics and Brahmins was 1) the meritorious deed; the ability of that particular mark to disclose this was 2) the power of the deed; the smooth skin was 3) the mark; his possession of broad wisdom was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The Bright Yellow Complexion like Gold

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta showed very little anger. If there was any anger in him at all, he quickly quenched it. He also displayed little anxiety. Though someone should speak to him angrily, he was absolutely free of hatred, anger, aversion, disturbance or having a grudge. Besides, he donated fine clothing, robes and coverlets to people.

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[363] [Here the author's analysis of this particular major mark as to its deed and so on was missing. I have supplied it to complete the text.]

As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn as a human being, he acquired the 11th major mark of "the yellow, bright skin like that of pure gold ornaments (*siṅgī-nikkha*)."

Because he was endowed with that mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an omniscient Buddha, and he quickly obtained fine clothings, robes and coverlets.

Herein, such a state of his being free of anger and such deeds of distributing fine clothing, robes and coverlets in his numerous past existences were 1) the meritorious deeds. The complexion of a person in anger lacks serenity; his or her face is terribly ugly. There is no adornment like clothing in the world. Therefore, those who used to show anger and were not used to give clothing, robes and coverlets are not good looking, as if they were to disclose their former ills. The face of one who does not lose his temper is beautiful; his or her complexion is serene. There are four ways for beings to acquire beauty and splendour:

1. Giving alms food in past existences.
2. Giving clothing in the past existences.
3. Giving service by cleaning with a broom.
4. Showing no anger.

All four requirements the Bodhisatta fulfilled in his countless former lives. He, therefore, acquired the 11th major mark of the yellow skin. Therefore, the bright yellow complexion, comparable to the colour of golden ornaments, which, so to speak, informed Devas and humans of his fulfilment of the four requirements was 2) the power of the deed. The golden skin was 3) the mark. The gain of fine clothing, and so on was 4) the advantage of the mark. [1692]

The Male Organ concealed in a Sheath

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta brought about reconciliation in amity to those relatives and friends who had been long separated; he created harmony between estranged mothers and sons, estranged fathers and sons, estranged brothers, estranged brothers and sisters, and amongst estranged sisters. He rejoiced in the harmony thus caused.

As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the 10th major mark of "the male organ concealed in a sheath," like that of a Chaddanta elephant king.

Because he was endowed with that mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch and would have begot thousands of brave scions who would have been able to crush enemy forces. On renouncing the world, he became an omniscient Buddha and gathered thousands of sons in his noble disciples, who were capable of crushing the enemy forces of the defilements.

Herein, his meritorious performance of bringing about unity among relatives in the numerous past existences was 1) the meritorious deed. When kinsmen are united, one overlooks another's fault. Even when they are quarrelling, they do not like to let others know of the wrong done by a man of their own blood. If one were to say: "This is his fault," they would rise up and protest it, saying: "Who has seen that? Who has heard of that? There is nobody among us who would have done such a misdeed!" In this way, they all would give cover to his fault. It may be said that the Bodhisatta had disregarded such a fault and thereby brought about unity to his kith and kin. Therefore, the male organ is in a sheath and that is indicative to others of his past deeds of bringing unity to his relatives by preventing their fault from being seen so that they may live in happiness, so that was 2) the power of the deed. The male organ thus concealed in a sheath was 3) the mark. The gaining of thousands of son-like noble disciples was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The Symmetrically Proportioned Body and the Long Arms

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta gave honour to members of his retinue after personally scrutinizing their virtues and qualities, and only when he had known their qualifications did he show his appreciation to them according to their merit, deciding: "This man deserves this much of reward." "This man is worthy of this amount of reward." The Bodhisatta honoured a man fairly and honestly according to what he deserved.

As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn as a human being, he acquired the 19th major mark of "the symmetrically proportioned body which was round and beautiful like the

circular spread of a banyan tree," and the 9th major mark of the "long arms which can touch the knees while standing without stooping."

Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch; and he would have had abundance of bliss and wealth, such as gems, gold, silver, useful objects, treasure-houses and granaries. On renouncing the world, he became an omniscient Buddha, and he owned an abundance of the wealth of the pious: faith (*saddhā*), morality (*sīla*), knowledge (*suta*), charity (*cāga*), wisdom (*paññā*), conscience about doing wrong (*hiri*) and concern about doing wrong (*ottappa*).

Herein, his honour shown according to one's value was 1) the meritorious deed. The equal length of his stretched out arms and height and the equal measurement of the upper part and the lower part of his body in accordance with his performance were 2) the power of the deed. His body being like a round banyan tree and its upper and lower parts being of equal measurement were 3) the marks. His abundance of the sevenfold wealth of the pious was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The Well-Developed Body, the Back without the Spinal Furrow

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta wished for the welfare of the multitude. He had wished for the safety of the people, and their four modes of happiness. He had done a lot of contemplation: "How could these beings prosper through faith (*saddhā*)?" "How could they prosper through morality (*sīla*), observing the five or the ten precepts?" "How could they [1693] prosper through learning (*suta*), following the advice of the wise and pious?" "How could they prosper through charity (*cāga*), giving up what they own?" "How could they prosper through wisdom (*paññā*), the truth and knowledge that all beings have their deeds (*kamma*) as their own property?" "How could they progress in terms of wealth and paddy, field and land, bipeds and quadrupeds, children and wives, servants and employees, relatives and friends?"

As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the three major marks: The 17th mark of "the full and well-developed body like a lion's front portion," the 18th mark of "the well-developed back of the body extending from the waist to the neck like a golden plank without any trace of the spinal furrow" and the 20th mark of "the proportionate and round neck."

Because he was endowed with these three major marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch, and he would have obtained royal paraphernalia and his blissful life would never have diminished. On renouncing the world, he became an omniscient Buddha, and his mundane and supermundane virtues, such as faith (*saddhā*), morality (*sīla*), learning (*suta*), relinquishing (*cāga*), wisdom (*paññā*), etc., never decreased.

Herein, his wish for the welfare of the multitude was 1) the meritorious deed. The fullness, roundness and development of the body, the back and the neck, as if they were indicative of his wish for the prosperity of others, was 2) the power of the deed; the fullness, roundness and development of the body, the back and the neck were 3) the mark. The non-decrease of his wealth, both mundane and supermundane, was 4) the advantage of the mark.[364]

The 7,000 Capillaries at the Throat

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta had never hurt other beings with his hands, with a stone, stick, sword or with any other weapon. As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the 21st major mark of "the 7,000 capillaries occurring at the throat and diffusing throughout the body the taste of the food, be it as small as a grain of sesame."

Because he was endowed with this major mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an omniscient Buddha, and his ailments were few and far between.

Herein, his meritorious performance of refraining from hurting beings was 1) the meritorious deed. He who has been hit by another with the hands, sticks, etc. will have bruises and blood clots on the spot his body has been hit, from which more suffering would occur. As for the Bodhisatta, as if they were clearly indicative of his past observance of non-violence towards others, an act of merit that would result in good health, he acquired the mark of the capillaries at the throat. Such an irregularity of the capillaries for taste was 2) the power of the

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[364] [Mistakenly written as *kammānisaṁsa* in the original; the same applies to sections 14 and 15.]

deed. He upright capillaries at his throat were 3) the mark. His good health was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The capillaries distribute the taste all over his body, even if it is of the food as tiny as a grain of sesame. His digestive power was neither too high nor too low but just right to digest whatever is eaten: therefore, the Bodhisatta's health was better than that of others.

The Clear Blue Eyes and the Soft Eyelashes

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta had never angrily looked at others with his eyes protruding like those of a lobster. Never had he, in anger, looked sideways at another person. When that person angrily looked at him, he simply closed his eyes. Only when that person looked the other way round did he glance at him or her with a loving and sober heart but never with a hateful one.

As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the 29th major mark of "the very clear blue eyes" and the 30th mark of "the soft and tender eyelashes, like a newly born calf."

Because he was endowed with these marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an omniscient Buddha, and he was looked upon by beings, such as humans, Devas, and Brahmas, lovingly and trustingly.

Herein, his viewing of other beings with loving eyes in the countless past existences was [1694] 1) the meritorious deed. Those angry ones who look sideways or frown at somebody else have their eyes set in that manner. Those who look at others in an affectionate and respectful manner have eyes that are beautiful in five ways. The Bodhisatta was endowed with the eyes, blue and clear, and the eyelashes, soft and curling up, as if they were indicative of his affectionate, respectful glances in the past; all this was 2) the power of the deed. The extremely clear blue eyes and the extremely soft curling-up eyelashes were 3) the marks. The love and respect shown to him by other beings was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The Thin Layer of Flesh on the Forehead

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta led group performances of good physical, verbal and mental practises, alms giving, moral observances, fasting, service to parents, etc. As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he

enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the 32nd major mark of "the thin layer of flesh that appeared by nature, like a gold headband, on the forehead."

Because he was endowed with this mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an omniscient Buddha, and he gained a large number of beings as his followers or he became leader of them all.

Herein, his meritorious act of giving leadership to others in the group performances of good deeds was 1) the meritorious deed. He who gives leadership to a performance of good deeds, such as giving in generosity, maintaining morality, etc., never wears a sad face in gatherings; instead, he moves about among the people with his head upright without fear but with joy and satisfaction. He also has a large number of followers. The Bodhisatta, in his many previous births, had given guidance in doing all deeds of merit. In order to make Devas and humans know of this, the Bodhisatta was born with the thin layer of flesh on his forehead or a full round head; therefore, the ability of the thin layer of flesh or, the full round head, to let others know of those past meritorious act was 2) the power of the deed. The thin layer of flesh or of the full round head was 3) the mark. The large numbers of beings immediately following after him was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The Body-Hair and the Hair between the Eyebrows

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from telling lies (*musā-vāda*); he told what was true; with no insertion of falsehood, his first truthful words agreed with his last; he was of firm speech; he spoke reliable words which people trusted and referred to. As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the 13th major mark of "the body hair, each in one pore of the skin" and the 31st major mark of "the hair between the two eyebrows."

Because he was endowed with these two major marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an omniscient Buddha, and he had his wishes fulfilled by many.

Herein, his meritorious act of speaking only what was true in his numerous past existences was 1) the meritorious deed. The ability of his body-hair, each growing in one pore of the skin and of his hair that strangely grew between the eyebrows to disclose his acts of speaking the truth was 2) the power of the deed. The body hair and the hair between the eyebrows were 3) the mark. The fulfilment of his wishes by many was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The 40 Teeth Touching One Another

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from any mischievous speech that would end friendships among people; he had brought harmony to those who were separated; helped maintain unity of those who were united; he had taken delight in unity among friends; he had been very pleased to see or hear of those in unity; he had spoken only what would create unity of friends.

As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the 23rd major mark of "the teeth numbering exactly 40" and the 25th major mark of "the teeth touching one another with no space in between."

Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On [1695] renouncing the world, he became an omniscient Buddha, and he gained followers whose unity could not be destroyed by others.

Herein, his abstention, in his numerous past lives, from divisive talk (*pisuṇa-vācā*) and his speech that would create unity were 1) the meritorious deeds. Those who used to speak mischievous words have no complete set of 40 teeth, and they have teeth with gaps, for they destroy the unity of others and separate them. The Bodhisatta, however, had 40 teeth and they were touching one another as if to tell Devas and humans of his abstention from mischievous words in his countless former lives in Saṁsāra. Therefore, the ability of his teeth to be indicative of his said abstention was 2) the power of the deed. The complete set of 40 teeth and the absence of gaps in them possessing this very ability were 3) the mark. His gaining of followers whose unity could not be destroyed by others was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The Long Tongue and the Brahma-Like Voice

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from speaking harsh and abusive words; he spoke only what was polite, faultless, pleasing and appealing to the hearts of many. As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the 27th major mark of "the long, flat and tender tongue" and the 28th major mark of "the voice having eight qualities like a Brahma's."

Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an omniscient Buddha, and his words were effective, influential and authoritative.

Herein, his abstention from harsh and abusive words (*pharusa-vācā*) and his speaking only sweet, pleasant and polite words in his numerous past existences in Saṁsāra were 1) his meritorious deeds. Those who used to indulge in harsh and abusive terms have their tongues faulty in terms of thickness, droopiness and a slit so that others may know of their indulgence in bad language by the twisting of their tongues. The Bodhisatta, however, had the primary benefit of having his tongue long, flat and tender so that Devas and humans might know that he had never uttered such bad language but had spoken what was sweet, pleasant and polite. Those who used to speak abusive language have their voice cracked, rough or faulty in other ways so that many might know of their swearing in a cracked, rough voice. The Bodhisatta had the benefits of having a voice of eight qualities, as if they were to let Devas and humans know of his abstention in his numerous past existences in Saṁsāra from cursing, a cause for a cracked, rough voice. Therefore, the length, flatness and tenderness of the tongue and the completeness of his tongue with the eight qualities were 2) the power of the deed. The long, flat and tender tongue and the voice complete with the eight qualities were 3) the marks. The obedience shown to his word by Devas and humans and his verbal effectiveness, influence and authority were 4) the advantages of the mark.

The Lion-Like Chin

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from frivolous speech that was like unsuccessful paddy, lacking substance. He had spoken what was right and suitable for the occasion; he had talked beneficially, truthfully and

with reference to the Dhamma and advised in accordance with discipline. He had uttered solemnly what was meaningful and with evidence, as in judicial proceedings, worthy of keeping in the casket-like hearts of all hearers.

As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired the 22nd major mark of the "well developed chin suggestive of his imminent smile like that of a lion."

Because he was endowed with this major mark, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an omniscient Buddha, and he was invulnerable to attacks by his enemies within and without.

Herein, his abstention from frivolous speech (*samphappalāpa*) was 1) the meritorious deed. Those who used to talk about foolish things have their chins concave, crooked or in any other unseemly shape so that many might know that they had spoken unsubstantial language with their jaws moving. The Bodhisatta, however, had well developed jaws so that Devas and [1696] humans might know of his abstention from frivolous talk and of his practice of speaking only what was fruitful. Therefore, the ability of the development of the jaws to disclose his practice of speaking, in the past, what was fruitful was 2) the power of the deed. The developed jaws with that ability was 3) the mark. His invulnerability against any of his enemies, within or without, was 4) the advantage of the mark.

The Proportionately Set and Four White Pointed Teeth

In his numerous past existences, the Bodhisatta abstained from wrong livelihood but had earned his living by a proper trade; he had avoided various dishonest methods, such as deceptive scales, baskets and coins; being unethical by taking bribes; being of immoral persuasion by cheating; convincing others with violence by cutting off of hands and legs, by taking life, binding, plundering or destroying towns and villages.

As a result, corresponding to such deeds of merit, he enjoyed divine bliss. Reborn a human being, he acquired these two major marks: the 24th mark of "the proportionate set of teeth" and the 26th mark of "the four pointed teeth as white and brilliant as the morning star."

Because he was endowed with these two marks, had he remained a householder, he would have become a Universal Monarch. On renouncing the world, he became an omniscient Buddha, and he gained hosts of followers and attendants.

Herein, his pure livelihood in his numerous past existences was 1) the meritorious deed. Those, who used to have impure livelihood, possess no proportionately set teeth, upper or lower, inside or outside; and their four pointed teeth are dirty so that many might know of their misdeeds. The Bodhisatta, however, had even teeth and four pointed ones, which were very brilliantly white as if they were saying: "Let the Devas and humans know of his pure livelihood, maintained throughout his countless past existences in Saṁsāra." Therefore, the evenness of his teeth and the brilliant whiteness of the four pointed teeth that disclosed his purity of livelihood in his countless past lives in Saṁsāra were 2) the power of the deed. The even teeth and the white, pointed teeth were 3) the marks. The hosts of followers and attendants were 4) the advantage of the mark. [1697]

> Here was given the Sayādaw U Ghosita's last verse-prayer with reference to the 40 teeth and the four pointed ones, followed by the concluding verse. Also for the benefit of the reader in Myanmar: A shorter poetical composition about the 32 major marks and the Buddha's past deeds (*kamma*) as their causes, by the Mahā Visuddhārāma Sayādaw, was added. These we leave untranslated.

On I-III: Further Explanation of Words and Phrases

> [A section that was placed here on the perfections has been moved to a more suitable position in The First Treatise on the Perfections, at the beginning of 11, and is entitled: What is the Classification of the Perfections?]

Three Types of Bodhisattas

> [Again another important section which describes the three types of Bodhisattas is moved from a remote section to near the top of the Further Explanations.]

Even at the moment of receiving the prophecy, as in the case of the recluse Sumedha, the Bodhisattas are of three types:

1. The Bodhisatta who attains paths and fruitions after hearing a small part of a discourse on the Dhamma (*ugghaṭitaññū*).
2. The Bodhisatta who realizes paths and fruitions after hearing most of a discourse of the Dhamma (*vipañcitaññū*).
3. The Bodhisatta who gradually comes to comprehend the truth after hearing all of a discourse of the Dhamma (*neyya*).

Of these three types, the Bodhisattas who understand after hearing a small part of a discourse (*ugghaṭitaññū*) are those who, if they wish to achieve the Awakening of a disciple (*sāvaka-bodhi*) in the very existence they receive the prophecy, have the special supportive merit to attain the Arahat fruition together with the six super powers (*abhiññā*) and the four kinds of analytical knowledge (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*), understand even before the end of the third line of a verse of four lines delivered by a Buddha. This type of Bodhisatta is also called the Bodhisatta with the factor of predominant wisdom (*paññādhika*). With this type of Bodhisatta, wisdom is the strongest.

The Bodhisattas who understand after hearing most of a discourse (*vipañcitaññū*) are those who, if they wish to achieve the Awakening of a disciple in the very existence they receive the prophecy, have the special supportive merit to become an Arahat together with the six super powers and four kinds of analytical knowledge, understand before the end of the fourth line of a verse of four lines delivered by a Buddha. This type of Bodhisatta is also called the Bodhisatta with the factor of predominant faith (*saddhādhika*). With this type of Bodhisatta, wisdom is medial.

The Bodhisattas who gradually comes to comprehend the truth (*neyya*) are those who, if they wish to achieve the Awakening of a disciple in the very existence they receive the prophecy, have the special supportive merit to become an Arahat together with six super powers and four kinds of analytical knowledge, at the end of the whole verse of four lines delivered by a Buddha. This type of Bodhisatta is also called the Bodhisatta with the factor of predominant energy (*viriyādhika*). With this type of Bodhisatta wisdom is weakest.

All the three types of Bodhisattas make the mental resolution to become a Buddha for immeasurable aeons before receiving the definite prophecy.

However, after receiving the definite prophecy, they fulfil the perfections and attain Awakening according to the necessary time schedule.

The paddy species which flowers, bears seeds and ripens only after a certain period of time even when with utmost effort of watering, etc., will not yield a crop at a date earlier than the natural period of flowering, bearing seeds and ripening. In the same way, all the various types of Bodhisattas, by no means become Buddhas before they have completed the allotted time for fulfilment of the perfections even if they strive daily with more and more energy to fulfil the perfections (*pāramī*), charity (*cāga*) and good conduct (*cariyā*), because their wisdom has not yet reached maturity, and their accumulation of Buddha-making factors is not complete yet.

Therefore, it should be clearly understood that the perfections become fulfilled only after 4 immeasurables and 100,000 aeons for a Bodhisatta with predominant wisdom; 8 immeasurables and 100,000 aeons for a Bodhisatta with predominant faith; and 16 immeasurables and 100,000 aeons for a Bodhisatta with predominant energy.

Aeons

The Cosmic Aeon

It is said in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*, Bv 2.1): *Kappe ca sata-sahasse, caturo ca asaṅkhiye*, "100,000 aeons, and four immeasurable periods." The duration of an aeon (*kappa*) cannot be calculated by the number of years. It is known only by analogy. Suppose there is a big granary which is one league each in length, breath and height and which is full of tiny mustard seeds. You throw out just one seed each century. When all the mustard seeds have been thrown out, the period called an aeon (*kappa*) has not come to an end yet. An immeasurable period (*asaṅkhyeyya*) in this context means an immeasurable amount of great aeons. A great aeon (*mahā-kappa*) is the time it takes for the whole cycle of evolution and devolution.

An aeon/period (*kappa*) has six definitions:

1. A great aeon (*mahā-kappa*).
2. An immeasurable part of an aeon (*asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*).
3. An inclusive period (*antara-kappa*).

4. A lifetime (*āyu-kappa*).

5. A decreasing period (*hāyana-kappa*).

6. An increasing period (*vaddhana-kappa*).

[Because it is confusing indeed to have *kappa* translated by one word when it refers to two different time-scales, I have used aeon (*kappa*) for the time taken by one complete evolution and devolution; and period (*kappa*) for sections within that time-scale.]

One great aeon (*mahā-kappa*) is made up of four immeasurable periods (*asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*): 1) The period in the [1503] process of dissolution (*saṁvaṭṭa-kappa*); 2) the period in the state of dissolution (*saṁvaṭṭaṭṭhāyi-kappa*); 3) the period in the process of evolution (*vivaṭṭa-kappa*); and 4) the period in the state of evolution (*vivaṭṭaṭṭhāyi-kappa*). That is to say, these four immeasurable periods in the process and state of dissolution, and in the process and state of evolution, make one great aeon (*mahā-kappa*).

Of these four immeasurable periods, the period in the process of dissolution (*saṁvaṭṭa-kappa*) is the period beginning from the falling of the great rain, which heralds the dissolution of the aeon till the extinction by flames, if the aeon is to be dissolved by fire; or till the receding of floods, if the aeon is to be dissolved by water; or till the cessation of storms, if the aeon is to be dissolved by the air element.

The period in the state of dissolution (*saṁvaṭṭaṭṭhāyi-kappa*) is the period beginning from the moment of the dissolution of the world by fire, water or the air element till the falling of the great rain which heralds the evolution of a new world.

The period in the process of evolution (*vivaṭṭa-kappa*) is the period beginning from the falling of the great rain which heralds the evolution of the new world till the appearance of the sun, the moon, and the stars and planets.

The period in the state of evolution (*vivaṭṭaṭṭhāyi-kappa*) is the period beginning from the appearance of the sun, moon, stars and planets to the falling of the great rain which heralds the dissolution of the world.

There are two kinds of period-dissolving rain. The first kind is the great rain which falls in any period when it is nearing its dissolution either by fire, water or the air element. First, there is a great downpour of rain all over the universe

which is to be dissolved. Then, taking advantage of the rain, people start cultivation. When plants which are big enough for cattle to feed on appear the rain ceases completely. It is the rain which heralds the dissolution of an aeon.

The second kind is also a great downpour, but it falls when a period is to be dissolved by water. It is not an ordinary rainfall, but a very unusual one, for it has the power to smash even a rocky mountain into smithereens.

> An elaborate description of the dissolution of a period by fire, water or the air element is given in the chapter on the Deep Knowledge about Previous Lives (*Pubbe-nivāsānussati-abhiññā*) in the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*, Vis XIII, 4).

The above-mentioned four immeasurable periods are of the same duration, which cannot be reckoned in terms of years. That is why they are known as periods of incalculable length (*asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*). These four immeasurable periods constitute one great aeon (*mahā-kappa*).

At the beginning of the immeasurable period in the state of evolution (*vivaṭṭaṭṭhāyi-asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*), that is, at the beginning of the world, people live for an incalculable (*asaṅkhyeyya*) number of years. As time goes on, they are overcome by such mental defilements as greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*), etc. and consequently their lifespan gradually decreases until it becomes only ten years. Such a period of decrease is called a decreasing period (*hāyana-kappa*).

On the contrary, owing to the occurrence and uplift of such wholesome principles as the sublime states of mind such as loving-kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), etc., the lifespan of generations of their descendents doubles up gradually until it reaches an incalculable number of years. Such a period of increase in lifespan from ten years to incalculable years is called an increasing period (*vaddhana-kappa*).

> For further details of these two periods of increase and decrease in the human lifespan, refer to the Discourse about the Wheel-Turning Monarch (*Cakka-vatti-sutta*, DN 26).

Thus, the lifespan of human beings goes up and down between ten years and an incalculable number of years [1504] as they develop meritoriousness or are overcome by demeritoriousness. A pair of lifespans, an increasing one and a decreasing one, is called an inclusive period (*antara-kappa*).

At the beginning of the world, when people's lifespan declines from incalculable years to ten years, a change of period takes place. If the decline is due to the particularly overpowering state of greed, then there occurs scarcity of food and all evil persons perish during the last seven days of the period. Such a round of time is called a period of famine (*dubbhikkhantara-kappa*).

If the decline is due to the particularly overpowering state of bewilderment, then there occurs an epidemic of diseases and all evil persons perish during the last seven days of the period. Such a round of time is called a period of diseases (*rogantara-kappa*).

If the decline of lifespan is due to the particularly overpowering state of hatred, then there occur killings of one another with arms, and all evil persons perish during the last seven days of the period. Such a round of time is called a period of weapons (*satthantara-kappa*).

> According to the sub-commentary to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*), however, a period of diseases (*rogantara-kappa*) is brought about by the particularly overpowering state of greed; a period of weapons (*satthantara-kappa*) by the particularly overpowering state of hatred; and a period of famine (*dubbhikkhantara-kappa*) by the particularly overpowering state of bewilderment; either way, evil persons perish.

The naming of each pair of lifespans – one increasing and the other decreasing – as an inclusive period (*antara-kappa*) may be explained thus: Before all is dissolved either by fire, water or the air element at the end of the devolving immeasurable period (*vivaṭṭaṭṭhāyi-asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*) and whenever the lifespan becomes ten years, all evil persons perish through famine, diseases or weapons. In accordance with this statement, here it refers to the inclusive period of decrease between one period of total destruction and another.

After the calamity that happens during the final seven days of each inclusive period (*antara-kappa*), the name: The period ending in disease (*rogantara-kappa*), the period ended by weapons (*satthantara-kappa*) or the period ending in famine (*dubbhikkhantara-kappa*), is given to this period of misfortune, which falls before the ten years lifespan, not in the whole world, but in a limited region, such as a town or a village.

If there appears an epidemic of diseases, we say there is a period ending in disease (*rogantara-kappa*) in that region; if there is an outbreak of war, we say

there is a period ended by weapons (*satthantara-kappa*) in that region; if there occurs starvation, we say there is a period ending in famine (*dubbhikkhantara-kappa*) in that region. Such a saying is just figurative because the regional incident is similar to the cosmic. When in chanting one mentions "three periods" from which one wishes to be free, one is usually referring to these three great disasters.

At the completion of 64 inclusive periods (*antara-kappa*), each inclusive period consisting of a pair of increasing and decreasing periods, an evolving immeasurable period (*vivaṭṭaṭṭhāyi-asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*) comes to an end. Since there are no living beings in human and celestial realms during the immeasurable period in the process of dissolution, the immeasurable period in the state of dissolution and the immeasurable period in the state of evolution, these period are not reckoned in terms of inclusive periods (*antara-kappa*), which consists of a set of increasing and decreasing periods. But it should be noted that each of these immeasurable periods (*asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*), lasting as long as 64 inclusive periods (*antara-kappa*), are of the same duration as an evolving immeasurable period (*vivaṭṭaṭṭhāyi-asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*).

The Life Aeon

A life aeon (*āyu-kappa*) means a period which is reckoned in accordance with the span of life (*āyu*) of that period. If the lifespan is 100, a century is a life aeon; if it is 1,000, a millennium is a life aeon.

When the Buddha said (DN 16): "Ānanda, I have developed the four bases of psychic power (*iddhi-pada*), if I so desire, I can live either a whole period (*kappa*) or a little more than a period," the period therein should be taken as a life period (*āyu-kappa*), which is the duration of the life of people living during that period. It is explained in the commentary to the section on the eights of the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*, AN 8) that when the Buddha made such a declaration he meant to say that he could live 100 years or a little more if he so desired. [1505]

Ven. Mahāsiva, however, said: "The life period (*āyu-kappa*) here is to be taken as the great aeon (*mahā-kappa*) called auspicious (*bhaddaka*)." He said so because he held that the productive deeds (*kamma*) that cause rebirth in the final existence of a Buddha have the power of prolonging his lifespan for incalculable years and because it is mentioned in the Pāḷi texts that the fruition-attainment

that conditions and controls the life-sustaining mental process (*āyu-pālaka-phala-samāpatti*), which is called the life process (*āyu-saṅkhāra*), can ward off all dangers. But Ven. Mahāsiva's view is not accepted by the commentators.

The Section on a Schism in the Saṅgha (*Saṅgha-bhedakakkhandhaka*) of the Vinaya Short Division (*Cūḷa-vagga*, Vin Cv 7) states: "He who causes a schism of the Saṅgha is reborn in Niraya, the realms of continuous suffering, and suffers there for a whole aeon." "That aeon is the lifespan of the Avīci, the lowest realm of continuous suffering," explains the commentary. The lifespan of the Avīci inmates is equal to one eightieth of a great aeon (*mahā-kappa*), according to the sub-commentary in Thirteen Sections (*Terasa-kaṇḍa-ṭīkā*), a voluminous sub-commentary on the Vinaya. In the same work, it is particularly mentioned that one eightieth of that duration should be reckoned as an inclusive period (*antara-kappa*) of Avīci inmates. Therefore, it follows that one great aeon (*mahā-kappa*) is made up of 80 inclusive periods (*antara-kappa*) according to the reckoning of Avīci inmates.

It may be clarified that, as mentioned above, one great aeon (*mahā-kappa*) has four immeasurable periods (*asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*), and one immeasurable aeon (*asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*) has 64 inclusive periods (*antara-kappa*). Therefore, one great aeon is equivalent to 256 inclusive periods (*antara-kappa*) by human calculations.

If 256 is divided by 80, the result is 3.2 therefore, 3.2 inclusive periods (*antara-kappa*) of human beings make one inclusive period of Avīci inmates.

> In Avīci there are no evolving and dissolving aeons as in the human world. Since it is the place that knows suffering at all times the end of each dissolving period is not marked with the three periods of misfortune. One eightieth of a great aeon (*mahā-kappa*), which is the lifespan of the Avīci inmates, is their inclusive period (*antara-kappa*). Therefore, by one inclusive period of Avīci is meant 3.2 inclusive periods of human beings.

In this way, it may be assumed that one immeasurable aeon (*asaṅkhyeyya-kappa*) is equal to 64 inclusive periods (*antara-kappa*) of human beings and 20 inclusive periods of Avīci inmates. Therefore, when some Pāḷi texts such as the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*), the sub-commentary, the Explanation of the Meaning of the Abhidhamma (*Abhidhammattha-vibhāvanī*), etc. say that one immeasurable aeon contains either 64 or 20 inclusive periods (*antara-kappa*),

the figures do not contradict each other. The difference between the numbers lies only in the manner of calculation. It should be noted that the two are of the same length of time.

A particularly noteworthy thing is a statement in the commentary to the Analysis (*Vibhaṅga*). In the Analysis of Knowledge (*Ñāṇa-vibhaṅga*, Vibh 16), it is said: "Only the act of causing schism in the Saṅgha (*Saṅgha-bhedaka-kamma*), results in suffering for a whole period (*kappa*). Should a man, owing to such an act, be reborn in Avīci at the beginning or in the middle of the period (*kappa*), he would gain release only when the period (*kappa*) dissolves. If he were reborn in that realm of suffering today and if the period (*kappa*) dissolves tomorrow he should then suffer just one day and would be free tomorrow. But in fact there is no such possibility."

On account of this statement, there are some who opine that: "The act of causing schism in the Saṅgha (*Saṅgha-bhedaka-kamma*) leads to Niraya for the whole period (*kappa*), in the sense of a great aeon (*mahā-kappa*); he who commits this productive deed (*kamma*) gains freedom only when the aeon dissolves. As a matter of fact, the expression lasting for the whole aeon (*kappaṭṭhitiya*) is explained in the Analyses (*Vibhaṅga*) commentary only in a general manner; it does not emphatically mention the words lasting for the whole great aeon (*mahā-kappaṭṭhitiya*). The expression lasting for the whole aeon is based on a verse in the Vinaya Short Division (*Cūḷa-vagga*, Vin Cv 7, PTS 2.205) which reads: "Having destroyed the unity of the Saṅgha, one suffers in Niraya for the whole period (*kappa*)." Therefore, the period (*kappa*) here should be taken only as a life period (*āyu-kappa*) but not as a great aeon (*mahā-kappa*). In the 13th chapter of the Points for Discussion (*Kathā-vatthu*) commentary, it is said, in dealing with the period (*kappa*) that the verse has been composed with reference to the life aeon (*āyu-kappa*) of the Avīci inmates which is only one eightieth of a great aeon (*mahā-kappa*).

Empty and Non-Empty Aeons

The great aeon is divided into two classes: 1) empty aeon (*suñña-kappa*) and 2) non-empty aeon (*asuñña-kappa*). [1506] Of these two, the aeon in which Buddhas do not appear is an empty aeon (*suñña-kappa*); it means an aeon which is void of a Buddha. The aeon in which Buddhas appear is a non-empty aeon (*asuñña-kappa*); it means the aeon which is not void of a Buddha.

Though Buddhas do not appear in an empty aeon, that there can be the appearance of Independent Buddhas and Universal Monarchs may be inferred from the Traditions about the Edler Upāli (*Upālitthera-apadāna*, Tha-ap 8). In the Traditions about the Edler Upāli and its commentary it is said that two aeons prior to this one, Prince Khattiya, the son of King Añjasa, on his departure from a park, committed an offence against the Paccekabuddha Devala. No text mentions the appearance of a Buddha in that aeon.

In the commentary on the Traditions about the Elder Bhaddaji (*Bhaddajitthera-apādāna*, Tha-ap 560), too, it is stated that the venerable had given alms food to 500 Paccekabuddhas in an empty aeon (*suñña-kappa*). It is clear from these texts that Paccekabuddhas appear in empty aeons.

Again, the Traditions about Kusumāsaniya (*Kusumāsaniya-apādāna*, Tha-ap 128) mentions that the "future Kusumāsaniya was reborn as the Universal Monarch Varadassī in the aeon that immediately followed."

The Traditions about the Supporter Tiṇasanthara (*Tiṇasanthara-dāyakatthera-apadāna*, Tha-ap 78) of the same work, it also says that the "future Tiṇasanthara was reborn as the Universal Monarch Migasammata in the second aeon prior to the present one," suggesting that there is the possibility of the appearance of Universal Monarchs in an empty aeon.

The non-empty aeon in which Buddhas appear is divided into five classes:

1. The essential aeon in which a single Buddha appears (*sāra-kappa*).
2. The fine aeon in which two Buddhas appear (*maṇḍa-kappa*).
3. The noble aeon in which three Buddhas appear (*vara-kappa*).
4. The essential and fine aeon in which four Buddhas appear (*sāra-maṇḍa-kappa*).
5. The Auspicious aeon in which five Buddhas appear (*Bhadda-kappa*).

The aeon that witnessed the existence of Sumedha, as mentioned in the chapter on the Brahmin Sumedha (see chapter III), is an essential and fine aeon in which four Buddhas appear.

Amaravatī

The city of Amaravatī came into existence after the appearance of three Buddhas: Taṇhaṅkara, Medhaṅkara, and Saraṇaṅkara, and before the appearance of Dīpaṅkara. *Amarā* means "god," an immortal being, and *vatī* means "possessing," hence, "the great city possessed by the gods."

It is stated in the Chapter about Medicines (*Bhesajjakkhandhaka*, Vin Mv 6) and other places that, as soon as the Brahmins Sunidha and Vassakāra planned to found the city of Pāṭaliputta, gods arrived first and distributed among themselves plots of land. Those plots of land occupied by gods of great power became residences of princes, ministers and wealthy persons of high rank; those plots of land occupied by gods of medium power became residences of people of medium rank and those plots of land occupied by gods of little power became residences of people of low rank.

From this statement, it may be supposed that gods arrived in hosts to take up residence for themselves and occupied them where a great royal city was to be established. Amaravatī was so named to denote the presence of gods who marked out their own locations in the city and protect them for their habitation.

The Pāḷi ending *-vatī* signifies possession in abundance. In this world, those who have just little wealth are not called wealthy men but those who possess wealth much more than others are called so. Therefore, the name Amaravatī indicates that, as it was a great royal residential city, it was occupied and protected by a large number of highly powerful gods.

Voluntary Passing Away

Voluntary passing away by self-determination (*adhimutti-maraṇa*). It is the kind of death that takes place as soon as one resolves: "May death come upon me." But such a death can happen only to Bodhisattas, and not to others.

Sometimes a Bodhisatta is reborn in a Deva or a Brahma world where the span of life is extremely long. He is aware of the fact that, living in a celestial world, he has no chance whatsoever to fulfil and cultivate the perfections, charity and practices, and, therefore, he feels such that a lengthy life in a celestial abode is boring. Then, after entering his mansion, he shuts his eyes and no sooner has he resolved: "May my life-faculty cease to be," than he experiences the impact of death and passes away from that divine realm. His resolution materialises partly

because he has little attachment to his body, as he has particularly conditioned the continuity of his body by attaining higher knowledge and partly because his resolution, based on an overwhelming compassion for beings, is intense and pure.

As he has control of his mind so has he control of his deeds. Accordingly, when he dies such a voluntary death, he is reborn in the human world as a prince, a Brahmin, etc., so that he can fulfil any of the perfections he wishes to. That is why, though our Bodhisatta Gotama lived in many existences in the Brahma abode without losing his attainment of absorption (*jhāna*), he existed only for a short time in that Brahma world, as he died voluntarily. He passed away from the Brahma existence into the human existence and build up the elements of the perfections.

On IV: The Renunciation of Sumedha

The Five Defects of a Walkway

1. A walkway that is rough and rugged hurts the feet of one who walks on it and blisters appear; consequently, meditation cannot be practised with full mental concentration. On the other hand, comfort and ease provided by a soft and even-surfaced walkway is helpful to complete the practice of meditation. Therefore roughness and ruggedness is the first defect of a walkway.

2. If there is a tree inside, in the middle, or by the side of a walkway, one who walks without due care on that walkway can get hurt on the forehead or on the head by hitting the tree. The presence of a tree is therefore the second defect of a walkway.

3. If a walkway is covered by shrubs and bushes, one who walks on it in the dark can tread on reptiles, and other creatures, and kill them, even though unintentionally. The presence of shrubs and bushes, therefore, is the third defect of a walkway.

4. In making a walkway, it is important that it has three lanes. The middle and main one is straight and of 60 cubits in length and one and a half cubits in breath. On either side of it are two smaller lanes, each a cubit wide. Should the middle lane be too narrow, say, only a cubit or half a

cubit, there is the possibility of hurting one's legs or hands through an accident. Being too narrow, therefore, is the fourth defect of a walkway.

5. Walking on a walkway which is too wide, one may get distracted; one's mind is not composed then. Being too wide, therefore, is the fifth defect of a walkway.

The Eight Comforts of a Recluse

The eight comforts of a recluse (*samaṇa-sukha*) mentioned here are described as the eight blessings of a recluse (*samaṇa-bhadra*) in the Birth Story about Prince Soṇaka (*Soṇaka-jātaka*, Ja 529).

The Story about Soṇaka

The following is the Birth Story (*Jātaka*) in brief: Once upon a time, the Bodhisatta was reborn as Arindama, the son of King Magadha of Rājagaha. On the same day Soṇaka was born, a son of the king's chief adviser.

The two boys were brought up together and when they came of age, they went to Takkasilā to study. After finishing their education, they left Takkasilā together and went on a long tour to acquire a wider and practical knowledge of various arts and crafts and local customs. In due course, they arrived at the royal garden of the King of Bārāṇasī and entered the city the following day.

On that very day, the festival of Veda recitations (*Brāhmaṇa-vācaka*) was to be held, and milk rice was prepared, and seats were arranged for the occasion. On entering the city, Prince Arindama and his friend were invited into a house and given seats. Seeing that the seat for the prince was covered with a white cloth while that for him was covered with red cloth, Soṇaka knew from that omen that: "Today, my friend Arindama will become King of Bārāṇasī, and I will be appointed general."

After the meal, the two friends went back to the royal garden. It was the seventh day after the king's demise, and the ministers were looking for a person who was worthy of kingship by sending the state chariot in search of him. The chariot left the city, made its way to the garden and stopped at the entrance. At that moment, Prince Arindama was lying asleep on an auspicious stone couch with his head covered, and Soṇaka was sitting near him. As soon as Soṇaka heard the sound of music, he thought to himself: "The state chariot has come for

Arindama. Today, he will become king and give me the post of his [1508] commander-in-chief. But I do not want to have such a position. When Arindama leaves the garden, I will renounce the world and become an ascetic," and he went into a corner and hid himself.

The chief adviser and ministers of Bārāṇasī anointed Prince Arindama as king, even on that very stone couch, and with great ceremonial pomp and grandeur took him into the city. Thus Prince Arindama became King of Bārāṇasī. Lost in the sudden turn of events and attended upon by a large number of courtiers and retinue, he totally forgot about his friend Soṇaka.

When King Arindama had left for the city, Soṇaka came out from his hiding place and sat on the stone couch. At that time, he saw a dry leaf of the Sāla (*Shorea robusta*) tree falling right in front of him, and he contemplated: "Like this Sāla leaf, my body will certainly decay and be oppressed by old age. I will definitely die and fall to the ground." With his spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) thus aroused, he at once engaged himself in insight (*vipassanā*) meditation, and, at the very sitting, there arose in him the Awakening of a Paccekabuddha, and he became a Paccekabuddha himself. His lay appearance vanished and he assumed a new appearance as an ascetic. Making an utterance of joy: "Now I have no more rebirth!" he went to the cave of Nandamūlaka, where other Paccekebuddhas lived.

Prince Arindama, on the other hand, remained intoxicated with kingly pleasures. Only after some 40 years, he remembered his childhood friend. Then he yearned to see him and wondered where he would be staying. But, receiving no news or clues about his friend's whereabouts, he uttered repeatedly the following:

> "To whom shall I give 100 coins for hearing and bringing me good news about Soṇaka? To whom shall I give 1,000 pieces of money for seeing Soṇaka in person and telling me how to meet him? I will give to he who, whether young or old, comes and informs me of my friend Soṇaka, my playmate with whom I had played in the dust."

People heard the song and everybody sang the same, believing it to be his favourite.

After 50 years, a number of children had been born to the king, the eldest one being Dīghāvu. At that time, Paccekabuddha Soṇaka thought to himself thus: "King Arindama wants to see me. I will go to him and shower upon him the gift

of thought-provoking sermons on the disadvantages of sensuality and the advantages of renunciation, so that he would incline to lead an ascetic life." Accordingly, by his psychic power, he appeared in the royal gardens. Hearing a boy singing the aforementioned song of King Arindama while chopping wood the Paccekabuddha taught him a verse in response to the king's.

The boy went to the king and recited the responding verse, which gave a clue to his friend's whereabouts. Then, the king marched in military procession to the garden and paid respect to the Paccekabuddha. But, being a man of worldly pleasures, the king looked down upon him and said: "What a destitute you are, living a wretched, lonely life such as this!" The Paccekabuddha rejected the king's censure by replying: "Never is he a destitute who enjoys the bliss of the Dhamma! Only he who dissociates himself from the Dhamma and practises what is not righteous is a destitute! Besides, he is wicked himself and forms a refuge for other wicked persons."

Then he informed the Paccekabuddha that his name was Arindama and that he was known by all as a King of Bārāṇasī, and asked if the holy man was living a happy life.

Then the Paccekabuddha uttered eight verses in praise of the eight blessings of a recluse (*samaṇa-bhadra*):

> 1. Great King, a recluse, who has gone forth from a household life to a homeless state and who is free of the worries of wealth feels happy at all places and at all times, not only in your gardens and at this moment. Great King, such a recluse does not have to keep grain in stores or in jars unlike lay people who hoard, and whose greed grows for a long time. A recluse lives on food prepared in supporter's homes and obtained by going on alms round; he partakes of such food with due contemplation. [1509]
>
> > By this is explained the comfort that comes from the non-hoarding of wealth and grain. There are two kinds of blameworthy food (*sāvajja-piṇḍa*). As mentioned in the Vinaya, the first kind is the food obtained by one of the improper means, such as by healing the sick and so on, or by one of the five wrong means of livelihood. The other blameworthy kind is food taken without due contemplation, although the food may have been properly obtained.

2. Great King, a noble recluse duly contemplates while eating the food that has been obtained blamelessly. He who has thus blamelessly eaten his blameless food is not oppressed by any form of sensuality. Freedom from oppression by sensuality is the second blessing of a recluse who has neither wants nor worries.

By this is explained the comfort that comes from the seeking and taking of blameless food. The food that has been sought properly and eaten with due contemplation by a worldling may be called "peaceful food" (*nibbuta-piṇḍa*), that is to say, the food that does not incite craving. In reality, however, only an Arahat's food is "peaceful," because that truly does not incite craving.

3. Great King, a noble recluse takes peaceful food only. He is thus not oppressed by any form of sensuality. Freedom from oppression by sensuality is the third blessing of a recluse who has no wants or worries.

By this is explained the comfort that comes from taking peaceful food only.

4. Great King, a noble recluse who goes on alms round in towns or villages without attachment to supporters of requisites, does not adhere to greed and hatred. Freedom from such clinging is the fourth blessing of a recluse who has no wants or worries.

Clinging wrongly to sense objects in the manner of a thorn is called faulty adherence (*dosa-saṅga*). By this is explained the comfort that comes from non-attachment to male or female supporters and from non-association with them.

5. Great King, a recluse, who has extra requisites which are not used by him, entrusts them to a supporter for security. Later on, when he hears such and such a supporter's house has been gutted by fire he is greatly distressed and has no peace of mind. On the other hand, another recluse has only those requisites that are on his body or that he carries along with him, just like the wings of a bird that go with it wherever it flies. He suffers no loss when a town or a village is destroyed by fire. Immunity from loss of requisites through fire is the fifth blessing of a recluse.

By this is explained the comfort that comes from not being victimised by fire.

6. Great King, when a town or a village is plundered by robbers, a recluse who, like me, wears or carries along his requisites, loses nothing while others who have extra requisites suffer loss through the plundering by robbers and knows no peace of mind. Freedom from the trouble of looking after one's possessions is the sixth blessing of a recluse.

By this is explained the comfort that comes from feeling secure against robbers.

7. Great King, a recluse, who has only the eight requisites as his possession, moves freely without being stopped, interrogated or arrested on the road where robbers waylay or security officers patrol. This is the seventh blessing of a recluse.

By this is explained the comfort that comes from harmless travelling on the road where robbers or security men are waiting.

8. Great King, a recluse who has only the eight requisites as his possession can go wherever he likes without taking a long look back at his old place. Such possibility of freely moving about is the eighth blessing of a recluse who has no possessions.

By this is explained the comfort that comes from freely going about without yearning for his old place.

King Arindama interrupted Paccekabuddha Soṇaka's discourse on the blessings of a recluse and asked: "Though you are speaking in praise of the blessings of a recluse, I cannot appreciate them as I am always in pursuit of pleasures. I cherish sensual pleasures, both human and divine. In what way can I gain human and divine existence?" Paccekabuddha Soṇaka replied that those who relish sensuality are destined to be reborn in unhappy [1510] abodes, and only those who abandon it are not destined to be reborn there. By way of an illustration, he told the story of a crow that joyously rode on a dead elephant, but floated into the ocean and lost its life. The Paccekabuddha then spoke of the blemishes of sensual pleasures and departed, travelling through the air.

Being immensely moved by spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*) as a result of the Paccekabuddha's exhortation, King Arindama handed over the kingship to his son Dīghāvu and left for the Himālayas. After becoming a recluse, he lived on fruits and cultivated and developed absorption (*jhāna*) through meditation on the four sublime modes of living (*Brahma-vihāra*): loving-kindness (*mettā*),

compassion (*karuṇā*), sympathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*), and was reborn in the Brahma realm.

The Nine Disadvantages of a Layman's Clothes

The nine disadvantages of a layman's clothes are:

1. The costliness of the garment.
2. It is available only through connection with its maker.
3. It gets soiled easily when used.
4. It gets worn out and tattered easily owing to frequent washing and dyeing.
5. It is difficult to find a replacement for the old one.
6. It is unsuitable for a recluse.
7. It must be guarded against loss through theft.
8. It appears to be ostentatious when put on.
9. When taken along without being worn, it is burdensome and makes one appear to be avaricious.

The Twelve Advantages of the Fibre-robe

They twelve advantages of the fibre-robe are:

1. It is inexpensive but of fine quality.
2. There is the possibility of making it by oneself.
3. It is not easily soiled when used and is easily cleaned.
4. It is easily discarded when worn out, without a need for stitching and mending.
5. There is no difficulty in seeking a replacement for the old one.
6. It is suitable for a recluse.
7. It need not be guarded against loss through theft.
8. It does not appear to be ostentatious when putting it on.
9. It is not burdensome when taken along or put on.

10. There is no attachment to the robe as a requisite for the user.
11. It is easily made just by beating the bark from a tree; thus it is righteously and faultlessly gained.
12. There is no regret over its loss or destruction.

The fibre-robe means the robe made of fibre, which is obtained from a kind of grass and fastened together. This is described in the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA).

According to the Poem about Aspiration (*Hsutauṅggan Pyo*), fastening the fibres together itself is not the complete making of such a garment. It must be beaten so as to make it soft and smooth. That is why it is called "beaten fibre" in Myanmar. The "fibre-robe" has the name *vāka-cīra*, *vakkala*, and *tirīṭaka* in Pāḷi. [1511]

Vāka-cīra literally means "a robe made of grass," and, therefore, it should actually be translated as "grass-robe." But traditional teachers translate the word as "fibre-robe."

The remaining two names, *vakkala* and *tirīṭaka*, refer to a robe made of fibres that come from the bark of a tree. Though the word *vakka* of *vakkala* means the "bark of a tree," it does not denote pure, thick, outer crust of the bark, but the inner layers made up of fibres covering the wood-core. It should be noted that, because such fibres are taken off, fastened and beaten for softness and smoothness, the robe is called a fibre-robe. Though *vāka-cīra* has the meaning of "grass-robe," the process of making the robe out of fibres taken from trees is more common than that of making it out of grass, and the name "fibre-robe" is better known than "grass-robes." That is why the word "fibre-robe" is adopted in the Poem about Aspiration (*Hsutauṅggan Pyo*).

The Wooden Tripod

The wooden tripod (*tidaṇḍa*) is a requisite of a recluse. It is a stand with three legs, on which is placed a water jug or pot.

The Water Jug and the Yoke

The water jug (*kuṇḍikā*) is another requisite of a recluse. A yoke (*khāri-kāja*) is taken by traditional teachers as a combination of *khāri* and *kāja*, both meaning the same: a pole which is curved. According to some, *khāri* means a recluse's set

of requisites, which consists of a flint, a needle, a fan, etc. Taking these interpretations together, *khāri-kāja* may be taken as the pole on which are hung the various requisites of a recluse.

The Hide of a Black Antelope

The hide of a black antelope, complete with hoofs, is called *ajina-camma* and is also one of the requisites of a recluse, which may be explained as follows: the Pāḷi *ajina-camma* has been unanimously translated "the hide of a black antelope" by ancient scholars. It is generally thought, therefore, that a beast which is black all over its body is called a "black antelope." In Amara's Dictionary (*Amara-kosa-abhidhāna*, 17.47) the word *ajina* is explained as "hide," which is synonymous with *camma*. This explanation of the Dictionary is worthy of note.

In the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) and other commentaries, there is an expression meaning: "The hide, complete with hoofs, of a black antelope, which was like a bed of Laurel (*punnāga*) flowers." The phrase "complete with hoofs" (*sakhuraṁ*) indicates that it is the hide of a hoofed animal. When it is said to be "like a bed of Laurel flowers," we have to decide whether the likeness to a bed of Laurel flowers refers to its colour or to its softness. That the Laurel flowers are not particularly softer than other flowers is known to many. Therefore, it should be decided that the likeness refers to its colour, which is yellow. This suggests then that the hide could not be that of a black antelope.

Though *ajina* is translated "black leopard" by scholars of old, that it actually means an animal's coat and is synonymous with *camma* is evident from such a statement as *ajinamhi haññate dīpi*, "a leopard is killed for its coat," in the Birth Story about King Mahā Janaka (*Mahā-janaka-jātaka*, Ja 539) and the Birth Story about the Wise Suvaṇṇasāma (*Suvaṇṇasāma-jātaka*, Ja 540). The commentary on the Mahā Janaka also explains *ajina* to be a synonym of *camma* by saying *ajinamhī ti cammatthāya camma-karaṇā*, "for its coat means: for obtaining its hide." There are only two words, *dīpi* and *saddūla*, meaning leopard in Pāḷi, *ajina* in not found in that sense.

The the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) also says: *Kese muñcitvāhaṁ tattha vāka-cīrañ-ca cammakaṁ*. When Sumedha lay prostrate before Buddha Dīpaṅkara, offering himself as a bridge "he loosened his hair-knot and spread his fibre-robe and the animal hide on the mud." The Pāḷi word used here is *cammaka* which is the same as *ajina-camma* discussed above.

All these considerations point to the fact that *ajina-camma* is not the coat of a beast with claws like a tiger, a leopard or a cat, and the adjectival phrase "complete with hoofs" shows that it is the coat of an animal with hoofs like that of cattle or horses. The coat has the colour of a bed of Laurel flowers as mentioned in the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA). It is also very soft to the touch. [1512]

Such animals as the antelope (*eṇī*) are found in the neighbourhood of the Himālayas. Because its coat is smooth and very beautiful and not easily available, people treasure it as a symbol of auspiciousness.

When Bodhisatta Siddhattha was born, the Cātumahārājika Devas of the four quarters received him from the hands of the saintly Brahmas of the Suddhāvāsa abode with a coat of this particular animal, a coat having a soft fur and commonly regarded to be auspicious. This is mentioned in the introduction of the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary and in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) commentary as well.

> The author acknowledges that all that has been discussed regarding the translation of *ajina-camma* as the hide of a black antelope is the view of the great scholar U Lin, the previous compiler of The Great Chronicles of the Buddhas.

Matted Hair and Round Head-Dress made of Hair

The difference between the matted hair (*jaṭā*) and the round headdress made of hair (*jatā-maṇḍala*) should be understood. Matted hair is something that is a part of the recluse. In order to save the trouble of keeping it well groomed, the recluse knots his hair firmly and tightly. This is what is meant by "matted hair."

One of the requisites created and left in the hut by Vissakamma as mentioned in the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) is the round headdress made of hair called *jaṭā-maṇḍala*. This is a thing separate from the recluse's person, and so it is not a part of him. From the sentence: "He put the headdress on his topknot and fastened it with an ivory hairpin," it is clear that the headdress is a thing separate from Sumedha's hair-knot. It evolved into a recluse's headdress in later times and protects the hair from dust and litter.

> The author here mentions the opinions of the Monyway Zetawun Sayādaw and Mahā Sīlavaṁsa who stated that the "matted hair" and "headdress" are the same thing. But the author concludes his discussion by quoting the

Poem about the Brahmin's Son Hatthipāla (*Hatthipāla Pyo*), the Magadha Light on the Dictionary (*Abhidhānappadīpikā*), and certain Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) which say that they are two different things. By quoting the Poem about the Brahmin's Son Hatthipāla and the Great Cause of Learning (*Mahā-suta-kārī*)[365] the author finally says that just as a snare is used to catch a bird, so also the matted hair in the form of a snare is worn by a recluse to catch the great bird of "the eightfold noble path" as soon as it alights in the forest that is "his mind."

The Eight Kinds of Recluses

The word "recluse" refers to those who are outside the Buddha's teaching. Nevertheless, they should be regarded as holy persons of the time.

The commentary on the Discourse to Ambaṭṭha (*Ambaṭṭha-sutta*, DN 3) enumerates eight kinds of recluses as follow:

1. A recluse who piles up wealth and lives a householder's life (*saputta-bhariya*). Here the author mentions Keṇiya[366] of the Buddha's lifetime as an example.

2. A recluse who does not pile up wealth, and who does not live a householder's life, but who collects unhusked grain from lay people at threshing grounds and cooks his own food (*uñchā-cariya*).

3. A recluse who collects husked grain from laymen in villages and cooks his own food (*anaggi-pakkika*). He thinks husking grain by pounding is not worthy of one who lives a recluse's life.

4. A recluse who enters a village and collects cooked rice (*asāmapāka*). He thinks cooking is not worthy of one who lives a recluse's life.

5. A recluse who takes off the bark of a tree for food by means of a metal (*aya-muṭṭhika*) or stone implement (*asma-muṭṭhika*). He thinks to collect food each day is wearisome.

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[365] [The Verses on Magha Deva and the Great Cause of Learning (*Mahā-suta-kārī-magha-deva-laṅkā*) is often referenced in these Further Explanations. I abbreviate it to the Great Cause of Learning (*Mahā-suta-kārī*) from here on.]

[366] [For Keṇiya see Vin Mv 6, the Story about the Matted-Haired Keṇiya (*Keṇiya-jaṭila-vatthu*, PTS 1.245)].

6. A recluse who takes off the bark of a tree with his teeth for food (*danta-vakkalika*). He thinks to carry metal or stone implements is wearisome. [1513]

7. A recluse who lives on the fruits that fall by throwing stones or sticks at them (*pavatta-phala-bhojana*). He thinks to remove the bark is wearisome.

8. A recluse who lives only on leaves, flowers and fruits falling naturally from trees (*paṇḍu-palāsika*).

The last one is divided into three types:

1. He who remains seated without rising and who lives on leaves, flowers and fruits that fall within his reach (*ukkaṭṭha-paṇḍu-palāsika*).

2. He who moves from tree to tree and subsists only on leaves, flowers and fruits that fall from a single tree (*majjha-paṇḍu-palāsika*).

3. He who moves from tree to tree in search of leaves, flowers and fruits that fall naturally from trees, to maintain himself (*mudu-paṇḍu-palāsika*).

In addition, the author gives a somewhat different enumeration that is mentioned in the commentary on the Discourse about Conscience (*Hiri-sutta*) of the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*, Snp 15):

1. A recluse who leads a householder's life earning his living by farming, trading, etc., like Keṇiya and others (*saputta-bhariya*).

2. A recluse who, living near a city gate and teaching children of noble (*khattiya*) and Brahmin families, accepts only grain and crops but not gold and silver (*uñchā-carika*).

3. A recluse who lives only on food that is obtained at the meal time (*sampatta-kālika*).

4. A recluse who lives only on uncooked fruits and vegetables (*anaggi-pakka*).

5. A recluse who wanders from place to place with metal or stone implements in hand to remove the bark from trees for food whenever

he feels hungry, and who observes precepts and cultivates meditation on the four sublime states (*aya-muṭṭhika*).

6. A recluse who wanders from place to place without metal or stone implements in hand and who removes the bark from trees with his teeth whenever he feels hungry and who observes precepts and cultivates meditation on the four sublime states (*danta-luyyaka*).

7. A recluse who lives depending upon a natural pond or a forest and who, going nowhere else, subsists on the lotus stems and stalks from the pond or on the fruits and flowers from the forest grove or even on the bark of trees when other kinds of sustenance are not available and who observes precepts and cultivates meditation on the four sublime states (*pavatta-phalika*).

8. A recluse who subsists on leaves that fall naturally and observes precepts and cultivates meditation on the four sublime states (*vaṇṭa-muttika*).

In these two lists of eight kinds of recluses, each type is nobler than the preceding type. Again, in these lists, excepting the first type: *saputta-bhariya*, all are holy persons, observing precepts and cultivating meditation on the four sublime states.

Sumedha came under the fourth category of the list given in the Chapter on Virtue (*Sīlakkhanda*) commentary for one day, a recluse who collects and lives only on food cooked by others (*asāma-pāka*); for the following days, he remained as a recluse of the eighth type: one who lives only on leaves, flowers and fruits that fall naturally from trees (*paṇḍu-palāsika*). According to the list given in the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*) commentary, he came under the eighth category: a recluse who subsists only on leaves that fall naturally from trees and who observes precepts and cultivates meditation on the four sublime states (*vaṇṭa-muttika*).

The Three Kinds of Going Forth

The Pāḷi word *pabbajjā* has been translated as “the going forth as a recluse” by teachers of old. [1514] That is to say it is the “giving up a worldly life.” It is of three kinds:

1. Giving up of worldly life and becoming a seer (*isi-pabbajjā*).

2. Giving up of worldly life and becoming an ascetic (*samaṇa-pabbajjā*).
3. Giving up of worldly life and becoming a novice (*sāmaṇera-pabbajjā*).

Accordingly, there are three kinds of persons worthy of veneration and addressed as "shin" in Myanmar. They are seers (*isi*), ascetics (*samaṇa*) and novices (*sāmaṇera*).

The Eight Disadvantages of a Leaf-Hut

1. A hut requires the dweller to make efforts to acquire timber and other materials for its construction.
2. It requires the dweller to take constant care and to provide maintenance or reconstruction when the grass roof and mud of the walls decay and fall into ruins.
3. It requires the dweller to make room at any time for a visiting senior elder, who is entitled to suitable accommodation, so that he fails to get concentration of mind.
4. Being sheltered from sun and rain under its cover, the dweller tends to become soft and feeble.
5. With a roof and surrounding wall to provide privacy, it serves as a hiding place for committing blameworthy, evil deeds.
6. It creates attachment for the dweller, who then thinks: "It is my dwelling place."
7. Living in it makes the inhabitant appear to be living a householder's life with family.
8. It requires the inhabitant to deal with nuisances created by domestic pests, such as fleas, bugs, lizards, etc.

These are the disadvantages of a leaf-hut which Sumedha discerned and which prompted him to abandon the hut.

The Ten Advantages of the Foot of a Tree

1. The foot of a tree does not require the dweller to acquire building materials because it is already a dwelling place provided by nature.

2. It does not require the inhabitant to take constant care and to provide maintenance.
3. It does not require the inhabitant to make room for visiting senior elders.
4. It does not provide privacy, nor serve the inhabitant as a hiding place for committing evil deeds.
5. One who lives there is free from stiffness of limbs, unlike those dwelling in the open space, who suffer from such a discomfort.
6. One who lives there does not have to take possession of it as his own property.
7. One who lives there is able to abandon it without any attachment that comes with thinking: "It is my dwelling place."
8. One who lives there does not have to request others to vacate the place for the purpose of cleaning.
9. It makes a pleasant place for the one who lives there.
10. Since One who lives there can easily find similar dwelling places wherever he goes, he does not cling to it as "my dwelling place."

On V: The Prophecy

As has been said, Sumedha reflected: "What is the use of selfishly escaping the cycle of births alone," and this is mentioned in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*, Bv 2.56): *Kiṁ me ekena tiṇṇena*, "why should I cross over by myself?"

Quoting this Pāḷi sentence, people are fond of saying with a tinge of contempt: "One [1515] should not be selfish in this world. A selfish person is one who seeks only his own good. One who seeks only his own welfare is a useless person."

But, if one continues to read the same sentence one would come across: *Purisena thāma-dassinā*, "in spite of the fact that I am a superior person, fully aware of my prowess of wisdom, faith and energy," which explicitly qualifies the foregoing sentence. All this indicates that only those who, despite their ability, are selfish, and not willing to work for others, should be blamed. And those who have no such ability, who say: "I will work for others," and are not true to their

words, should be despised, for they do not know the limits of their own capability. As a matter of fact, those who have no ability to work for others, should look after their own interest. That is why it is taught in the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 166):

> *Atta-d-atthaṁ paratthena bahunā pi na hāpaye.*
> *Atta-d-attham-abhiññāya sadattha-pasuto siyā.*
>
> Let him not sacrifice his own interest by being willing to work too much for others. Knowing full well his own limited ability he should work for his own welfare.

This teaching of the Dhamma Verses means: "He who is incompetent to work for others but speaks as though he were competent cannot do good for others, nor can he do good for himself; thus he suffers a double loss. Therefore, he who is incompetent to work for others should seek his own good and work only for himself. He who knows the true extent of his own capability and works only for himself should not be blamed as a selfish person, but should be spoken of as a good person who works within the limits of his capability. On the contrary, he who is qualified like Sumedha to render service to others but runs only after his own interest, ignoring others' interests should truly be censured as a selfish person. In short, let him work for others, if he is competent. If not, let him look after himself so that he may not miss his interest. He who seeks his own interest but pretends to be working for others' welfare is surely a dishonest, cunning, evil person."

Nerañjarā

Nerañjarā, as the name of a river, is derived from *nela-jala*, *nela* meaning "faultless" and *jala*, meaning water; hence "the river with pure, clean water."

Another derivation is from *nīla-jala*, *nīla* meaning "blue" and *jala* meaning water; "blue water" signifies "clear water," hence: "the river with clear blue water."

Yet another derivation is from *nari-jarā* meaning a hydraulophone, a kind of musical instrument which produces a sound similar to that of the flowing waters in a stream.

Honouring Others

"Stepping out with his right foot," is the translation of the Pāḷi phrase *dakkhiṇaṁ pādam-uddhari* (Bv 2.75). Buddha Dīpaṅkara departed, not only stepping out with his right foot first, but also keeping Sumedha on his right. This mode of departure from the presence of an honourable person is a very ancient Indian way of showing high esteem. [1516]

"Honouring him with eight handfuls of flowers," in Pāḷi is *aṭṭhahi puppha-muṭṭhīhi pūjetvā*, which occurs in the Birth Stories commentary (*Jātaka*, PTS 1.16) and the Chronicles of the Buddhas commentary (*Buddha-vaṁsa*, PTS 94). Over this phrase, there has been a controversy whether a living Buddha should pay respect to a Bodhisatta who would become a Buddha only many aeons later. Even if one argues that Buddha Dīpaṅkara was paying homage not to the person of the recluse Sumedha but only to the omniscient wisdom (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) he would attain, this argument also is unacceptable as it is inappropriate that the present possessor of omniscience should pay respect to the omniscience yet to be attained by a Bodhisatta.

The whole controversy rests on the translation of the word *pūjetvā*, which is connected with *pūjā*. The Supplementary Readings (*Khuddaka-pāṭha*) commentary explains that *pūjā* means *sakkāra*, "treating well," *mānana*, "holding in esteem," and *vandanā*, "salutation, homage, or obeisance." The author gives his view that in honouring the recluse Sumedha with eight handfuls of flowers, the Buddha was not saluting or paying homage or obeisance (*vandanā*), but he was merely giving good treatment (*sakkāra*) to Sumedha and showing the high esteem (*mānana*) in which he held him.

Prophetic Phenomena

"Prophetic phenomena," is the rendering into English of the Pāḷi word *nimitta*, which means a phenomenon foretelling a good or evil event that is likely to take place.

The text mentions the prophetic phenomenon which took place on the day the planet Visākhā conjoined with the full moon. That day is reckoned as the full moon day of May (*Vesākha*). The day is regarded usually to be auspicious, as it is the full moon day of the first month of the year.

All the previous Buddhas received their prophecies of becoming a Buddha on the full moon day of May. So when Sumedha received the prediction on the same auspicious day, Devas and Brahmas were quite positive about the proclamation that Sumedha would definitely become a Buddha.

The author further mentions that the full moon day of May is not only the day on which the prophecy was received, but also the day on which Bodhisattas took their last birth in the human world; it is also the day on which they attained Perfect Self-Awakening and the day on which they passed away into Nibbāna.

The full moon of May (*Vesākha*) is so auspicious that in the traditional customs of Myanmar kings of the past have had themselves anointed and crowned on this particular day.

Thirty-two prophetic phenomena occurred on the day Sumedha received the prediction. These phenomena were different from those that took place on the days of Buddha's conception, birth, Awakening and the teaching of the first discourse.

The Two Kinds of Meditation

Contemplation of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha are various forms of meditation. Meditation is of two kinds: meditation for refreshing the mind and meditation for insight.

1. A yogi, who contemplates loathsomeness of the body through reflecting on the ten stages of the dead body, may feel repulsed by the unpleasant object and his mind may stray like an untamed bull. In such a case, he should shift his object of meditation from the original object of the dead body and contemplate on the Buddha, the Dhamma or the Saṅgha. Then the mind will become refreshed and reinvigorated. The hindrances then fall away. Then he can go back to his original contemplation on the loathsomeness of the body.

It is like the case of a strong man trying to cut down a big tree to build a pinnacle for a shrine. His sword or hatchet might get blunt after cutting off just the branches of the big [1145] tree and he might find it unusable for felling the tree. Then he would go to the blacksmith and get his blunt blade sharpened. After which, equipped with the sharpened blade, he could successfully chop down the whole tree.

The yogi, after refreshing his mind by contemplating on the Buddha, the Dhamma or the Saṅgha resumes his contemplation on the loathsomeness of the body. When he gains concentration and achieves the first absorption (*jhāna*) of the form realm, he meditates on the five factors of the absorption as being impermanent, suffering and insubstantial. And when the mind gains the ten stages of insight into conditioned phenomena, it matures into path-knowledge and fruition. This is the first kind of meditation.

2. A yogi contemplating the Buddha, the Dhamma or the Saṅgha first strives to achieve access concentration (*upacāra-jhāna*). Then he meditates on the very nature of his mental exercise. If he has been contemplating the Buddha, he applies his mind to the question: "Who is it that is meditating? Is it a man or a woman? Is he a human, a Deva, a Māra, or a Brahma?" He views the question objectively to get at the ultimate facts. Then he will come to perceive the fact that, in the ultimate sense, there is no such thing as a man, woman, Deva, Māra or Brahma; and that, in truth and reality, it is just the mind that is mindful of the object under meditation that is recollecting the attribute of the Buddha such as being Worthy (*Arahaṁ*).

Then he comes to understand that the mind that is being mindful of the mind-object is the aggregate of consciousness (*viññāṇakkhandha*); that the sensation that is associated with the consciousness is the aggregate of sensation (*vedanākkhandha*); that the perceiving of the sensation associated with the consciousness is the aggregate of perception (*saññākkhandha*); that the contact (*phassa*) with the sensation that arise together with the consciousness is the aggregate of volitions (*saṅkhārakkhandha*). Thus he understands the nature of mind and the four mental aggregates which are mental phenomena.

Further, he examines through the insight gained so far: On what do the mental aggregates depend? He perceives first, the physical base of mental phenomena (*hadaya-vatthu*). Next he perceives that the physical base is dependent on the four primary elements (*mahā-bhūta-rūpa*). Then he meditates on other corporeality that are dependent on the four primary elements. He exercises his mind diligently and in due course comprehends the nature of corporeality that such is the aggregate of corporeality, which is just physical phenomena devoid of any real person or being, and that, in truth and reality, there is no "I" or "he or she," "man," "woman," etc. apart from the physical phenomena. He now gains insight into the two different kinds of phenomena, that is, mental and

physical, in the last analysis, and understands that these two different phenomena are composed of the five aggregates in a detailed analysis.

Then he understands that these five aggregates are, in truth and reality, unsatisfactory and suffering and thus understands the truth of suffering (*dukkha*). Then he also knows that craving is the cause of suffering; and that cessation of both suffering and the cause of suffering is the truth of cessation; and that the noble path of eight constituents is the practice that is the condition for cessation. Thus having penetrating knowledge of the four truths, the yogi develops the insight, stage by stage, until it culminates in the fruition of the path-knowledge and he becomes a noble one (*ariya*). The meditation thus culminating in him becoming a noble one (*ariya*) is the kind of contemplation directed towards insight.

> These remarks are extracted from the commentary on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) on dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*).

The Method of Contemplating Sensations

> [This section was originally contained in chpater 39b on Sakka's Questions. As it is very elaborate and convoluted I have removed it to these Further Explanations.]

Now we shall deal with the Buddha's elaborate manner of teaching the subject of meditation on the three kinds of sensations. The explanation of them, as contained in the commentary and the sub-commentary, will be condensed as best as we can.

1. The mentally agreeable sensation that tends to increase demeritoriousness and to decrease meritoriousness, and which should not be resorted to. This kind of pleasant sensation is called home-dependent agreeable sensation (*geha-sita-somanassa-vedanā*). Visible objects, sounds, odours, tastes, tangible objects and thoughts, these six sensuous objects serve as a home for craving and are therefore termed as such. This mentally agreeable sensation arises together with craving because of these sensuous objects. If one allows the repeated arising of that kind of sensation, demeritoriousness grows and meritoriousness wanes every day. That is why the Buddha said this home-dependent agreeable sensation is not to be resorted to.

Home-dependent agreeable sensation should not be resorted to, the pleasure of the senses arise together with craving for the six kinds of agreeable sense objects that are cognized at the six sense spheres. As there are six sense objects which constitute the bases of these mentally agreeable sensations, there are six kinds of such sense-pleasure.

The mentally agreeable sensation that tends to decrease demeritoriousness and to increase meritoriousness, and which should be resorted to, means agreeable sensation that relies on renunciation (*nekkhamma-sita-somanassa-vedanā*). Herein, taking up the homeless life of a monastic, the attainment of absorption (*jhāna*), the realization of Nibbāna, insight knowledge, and all meritorious actions that break away from the hindrances are called renunciation or emancipation (*nekkhamma*) from worldliness.

Let's expand this: One sets one's goal of release from the rounds of rebirth and, leaving hearth and home, goes to the monastery, takes up the life of a monastic, establishes oneself in the purity of the four kinds of monastic precepts (*catu-pārisuddhi-sīla*), practises asceticism, meditates for concentration on meditation devices (*kasiṇa*), attains the first fine material meditation (*rūpa-jhāna*), and cultivates insight using that meditation as the foundation, all these practices are called acts of renunciation (*nekkhamma*). Pleasure derived from these activities is called pleasure dependent on renunciation. If one cultivates the repeated arising of this kind of agreeable sensation that relies on renunciation, demeritoriousness decreases and meritoriousness increases. That is why the Buddha said this agreeable sensation that relies on renunciation should be resorted to.

Regarding the naturally agreeable sensations dependent on renunciation (*nekkhamma-sita-somanassa-vedanā*), there are also six kinds based on the agreeable sense objects of six kinds that cause the arising of the agreeable sensation, beginning from the first step of renouncing the householder's life to the attaining of mundane and supermundane meditation up to the third absorption (*jhāna*). In the teaching, the two categories of pleasant sensation, the six home-dependent agreeable sensations and the six agreeable sensations dependent on renunciation occur frequently.

With regard to disagreeable sensations and neutral sensations which will be mentioned in due course, the terms of six home-dependent and six dependent on

renunciation will also appear frequently. It should be noted that these terms are also used with reference to the six sense objects.

In the third paragraph, the type of agreeable sensations dependent on renunciation [963], there is, firstly, the one that arises together with initial application of the mind (*vitakka*) and sustained application of the mind (*vicāra*). This refers to the pleasurable sensation that arises from the time of taking up the monastic life till the attainment of the first absorption (*jhāna*).

Secondly, there is the one that arises without the initial application of the mind (*vitakka*) and sustained application of the mind (*vicāra*). This refers to the pleasurable sensation that arises at the attainment of the second and the third absorptions (*jhāna*). The second is superior to the first. In this third paragraph, the Buddha compares the two ways in which monastics many attain the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*).

To expand this statement: The first monastic, in contemplating the pleasant sensation that arises together with an initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, that is, pleasant sensation pertaining to the sense sphere (*kāmāvacara-somanassa-vedanā*) and pleasant sensation pertaining to the first meditation of the fine material sphere (*rūpāvacara-paṭhama-jhāna-somanassa-vedanā*) contemplate: "On what does the pleasant sensation depend?" And he perceives that it depends on the physical body. Then he proceeds to contemplate the three characteristics of impermanance (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and unsubstantiality (*anatta*) of mental phenomena, as has been described above. And in due course he attains the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*).

The second monastic, in contemplating the pleasant sensation that arises without initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, that is, the second and the third meditations (*jhāna*) of the fine material sphere (*dutiya-tatiya-jhāna-somanassa-vedanā*) through developing insight as mentioned earlier on, attains the Arahat fruition.

In the above two cases, the object of meditation of the second monastic which is the pleasant sensation not in association with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, is superior to the object of meditation of the first monastic which is the pleasant sensation associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. The thoughts of the second

monastic that contemplate on the mind-object or sensation in its three characteristics, being not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, are superior to the thought of the first monastic which are associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. In the matter of attainment of the fruition consciousness also, that of the second monastic which is not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, is superior to that of the first monastic which is associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind.

2. The unpleasant sensation which tends to increase demeritoriousness and decrease meritoriousness, and is therefore not to be resorted to, refers to home-dependent disagreeable sensation (*geha-sita-domanassa-vedanā*). When one does not get some desirable visible object, sound, odour, taste, tangible object, or thought cognized through or by the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, one feels miserable. When these six kinds of sense objects that one has enjoyed do not last, they are painfully missed by the one who cherishes them. Thus unpleasant sensation (*domanassa-vedanā*) arises in one on account of the six sense objects. If these unpleasant sensations are allowed to arise repeatedly, demeritoriousness increases, and meritoriousness decreases. That is why the Buddha said that unpleasant sensation arising out of the six sense objects should not be resorted to.

The unpleasant sensation which tend to decrease demeritoriousness and increase meritoriousness, and should therefore be resorted to means disagreeable sensations dependent on renunciation (*nekkhamma-sita-domanassa-vedanā*). To the monastic who has renounced the worldly life and taken the practice of insight-development through various methods of contemplation, then visible objects, sounds, odours, tastes, tangible objects, and thoughts are perceived as impermanent and subject to change. Further, there comes the realization that [964] in truth and reality, the six sense objects in the past as well as at present are impermanent, subject to change, and are suffering. This realization is insight knowledge. Once the true nature of the six sense objects is understood, the mind of that monastic yearns for release from the six sense objects which arise in the conditioned phenomena of mind and matter. Directing his mind to Nibbāna, he has a longing (*pihā*), a mild form of greed (*lobha*) in the ultimate sense, to attain the supermundane.

> In this connection, the Pāḷi term longing (*pihā*) needs some explaining. The expression: "The longing to attain the supermundane," does not mean that longing takes the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) as its object, because longing is a mild form of greed which primarily is a demeritorious factor. Not to speak of a demeritorious factor, even meritorious factors divested of wisdom do not take Nibbāna as their object. Hence longing does not take Nibbāna as its object.
>
> The fact is that the yogi has hearsay knowledge of Nibbāna. The sublime attributes of Nibbāna have not only been learnt about from other people, they have become imbued in the yogi's mind through book learning, meditation and insight development, and a yearning towards Nibbāna has thus already been formed. This knowledge, of course, still remains in the province of concept (*paññatti*) only, but a fairly close idea of Nibbāna is obtained by intelligent reasoning. As a matter of fact, the absorption, paths, fruitions and Nibbāna, belong to the province of the supermundane; they are, therefore, as subtle as they are profound, and it is not easy for a yogi who has not become a noble one (*ariya*) to get a true idea of them. At best, he can only visualise the supermundane and wish to attain it with longing (*pihā*).

After the arising of the longing to attain the supermundane, the yogi drives towards his goal by cultivating insight. If, in spite of these earnest efforts, the goal is still not reached, the yogi gets frustrated: "Alas, how success evades me for all my efforts over such a long period," he says to himself. The unpleasant sensation he now experiences is called disagreeable sensation dependent on renunciation. The repeated arising of this kind of unpleasant sensation is conducive to success.

The more disappointed he is, the greater his resolution to attain his objective, which turns into a sufficing condition (*upanissa-paccaya*) for success. Demeritoriousness decreases in him and meritoriousness increases. That is why the Buddha said that disagreeable sensations dependent on renunciation should be resorted to.

Although unpleasant sensation (*domanassa-vedanā*) is a mental factor definitely accompanied by initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind (*savitakka-savicāra*), the yogi is apt to take home-dependent disagreeable sensation (*geha-sita-domanassa-vedanā*) as the unpleasant sensation that arises together with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the

mind (*savitakka-savicāra*) and disagreeable sensation dependent on renunciation (*nekkhamma-sita-domanassa-vedanā*) as the unpleasant sensation that arises without initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind (*avitakka-avicāra*). Therefore, unpleasant sensation is mentioned in these two ways.

To further explain: In this teaching, a monastic cultivates insight (*vipassanā*) meditation after getting established in absorption (*jhāna*), whether threshold meditation (*upacāra-jhāna*) or first absorption (*paṭhama-jhāna*), and if he cannot attain path and fruition he feels dejected and has disagreeable sensations (*domanassa-vedanā*). In such a case, the absorption (*jhāna*) which was used for development of the paths and fruitions are called unpleasant or disagreeable (*domanassa*), by way of a figure of speech because the meditation as preliminary steps in the course of his path of practice are to him something he does not want. If, in spite of the disappointment, he perseveres and ultimately attains the paths and fruitions, the supermundane Dhamma that he realizes is also called disagreeable in a figurative sense since it is the outcome of, or is caused by, the disagreeable sensation.

The yogi or meditator regarding his own thoughts associated with the initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind which cause unpleasant sensation, or regarding his own thoughts which are not associated with initial application of the mind or sustained application of the mind which causes his unpleasant sensation as unpleasant sensation itself, associated with or dissociated with, initial application of the mind, as the case may be, then reflects: "Oh, how long will it be before I can successfully gain insight into unpleasant sensation which arises together with initial application of the mind [965] and sustained application of the mind?" or "How long will it be before I can successfully gain insight into unpleasant sensation which arises without initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind?"

Furthermore, he considers the fruition-knowledge that is caused by unpleasant sensation associated with, or arising together with, initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, as attainment of fruition (*phala-samāpatti*), through unpleasant sensation associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind; and the fruition-knowledge, that is caused by unpleasant sensation not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind, as attainment of fruition

through unpleasant sensation which is not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind. Thinking thus, he reflects: "How long will it be before I can attain fruition which is caused by unpleasant sensation associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind? Or, fruition which is caused by unpleasant sensation not associated with initial application of the mind and sustained application of the mind?" He then enters upon a series of rigorous practices extending from three months to six months, and then to nine months.

First of all, he commits himself to a three-month training schedule. During the first month, he allows himself to sleep two out of the three watches of a night, meditating during one watch of the night. In the middle period; the second month, he allows himself to sleep only one watch of the might, meditating during two watches of the night. In the third month, he allows himself no sleep but meditates during the three watches of the night, alternating between walking and sitting. It may well be this training ends up in the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*). Otherwise, he does not relent but takes upon himself an additional six months of rigorous training.

In these six months, three periods of two months each are marked out as waking portions and sleeping portions of the night, as in the three-month training. After the six-month training, if he still does not attain the Arahat fruition, the monastic does not relent, but takes an additional nine months of rigorous training.

This nine-month training is made up of three periods of three months each. During the first period, the yogi allows himself to sleep two out of the three watches of the night and meditates during one watch. In the middle period, he allows himself to sleep only one watch of the night, meditating during two watches. In the third period, he allows himself no sleep but spends the whole night meditating, in alternating postures of walking and sitting.

Dependent Origination

We shall now explain dependent origination in a manner neither too brief nor too detailed. This verse from the commentary on the Analysis of Dependent Origination is a summary (Vibh 6, PTS 130).

Saccaṁ satto paṭisandhi, paccayākāram-eva ca,
duddassā caturo dhammā, desetuñ-ca sudukkarā.

The veracity of the four truths, the illusion of a "being" as regards [1146] the five aggregates, the process of rebirth that links up existences, the conditionality of all things such as ignorance, these four subjects are difficult for one to understand and, having understood, are difficult to explain to others.

Dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), being one of the difficult subjects to understand, will now be explained using the brief exposition in the text, based on the late Ledi Sayādaw's 13 expository verses on dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*). The synoptic text of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) is:

Avijjā-paccayā saṅkhārā,
saṅkhāra-paccayā viññāṇaṁ,
viññāṇa-paccayā nāma-rūpaṁ,
nāma-rūpa-paccayā saḷāyatanaṁ,
saḷāyatana-paccayā phasso,
phassa-paccayā vedanā,
vedanā-paccayā taṇhā,
taṇhā-paccayā upādānaṁ,
upādāna-paccayā bhavo,
bhava-paccayā jāti,
jāti-paccayā jarā-maraṇaṁ, soka-parideva-dukkha-
domanassupāyāsā sambhavanti,
evam-etassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa samudayo hoti.

With ignorance of the truth as the condition, due to the inability to see things as they truly are, volitions that pertain to present and future existences come about (*avijjā-paccayā saṅkhārā*).

With volitions pertaining to the present and future existences as condition rebirth-linking consciousness comes about (*saṅkhāra-paccayā viññāṇaṁ*).

With rebirth-linking consciousness as condition mind and matter comes about (*viññāṇa-paccayā nāma-rūpaṁ*).

With mind and body as condition the six kinds of sensitive corporeality, called the six sense spheres, come about (*nāma-rūpa-paccayā saḷāyatanaṁ*).

With the six sense spheres as condition the six kinds of contact, with their respective sense objects, come about (*saḷāyatana-paccayā phasso*).

With the six kinds of contact as condition the six kinds of sensation, that cognize or experience the sense objects, come about (*phassa-paccayā vedanā*).

With the six kinds of sensation as condition the six kinds of craving for the six sense objects come about (*vedanā-paccayā taṇhā*).

With the six kinds of craving as condition, clinging or deep-rooted attachment comes about (*taṇhā-paccayā upādānaṁ*).

With clinging as condition, the causal process of ones' own actions, with their results in the present and in future existences, comes about (*upādāna-paccayā bhavo*).

With the causal process of one's own actions as condition, recurrence of fresh existences or rebirth comes about (*bhava-paccayā jāti*).

With rebirth as condition, ageing-and-death, grief, lamentation, bodily pain, distress of mind, and agony, come about (*jāti-paccayā jarāmaraṇaṁ soka-parideva-dukkha-domanassūpayāsā sambhavanti*).

Homage to the peerless lord of all Devas, who has the penetrative knowledge of the four truths! I shall now explain the causal law that governs the ceaseless rounds of existences in the three spheres: the sensuous sphere, the form realm and the formless realm. Not knowing the four truths on account of the great darkness of ignorance, the worldling does not understand the fires of defilements in him and so, being deeply attached to the five aggregates that are merely fuel to the burning defilements, and he commits demeritorious deeds with heart and soul every day. Thinking of the glorious existences in the human world and the [1147] Deva realm as real happiness, he also performs meritorious deeds of the ten kinds which tend to rebirth in the sensuous sphere and the form realm on the one hand or to the formless realm on the other hand. Thus he does volitional actions that result in endless rebirth in the three spheres.

1. With ignorance as condition there are volitions (*avijjā-paccayā saṅkhārā*). Dependent on ignorance, volitions arise, i.e. thoughts, words and deeds are

caused by a certain motive or volition that are conditioned by ignorance. There are an infinite number of beings that live in the infinite world-elements but all of them, in the ultimate sense, are representations of just the twelve factors of dependent origination: ignorance, volitions, rebirth-linking consciousness, mind and matter, the six sense spheres, contact, sensation, craving, clinging, rebirth and ageing-and-death. *Paṭicca* means being dependent on, or conditioned by; *samuppāda* means the arising of the following items, like volitions, rebirth-linking consciousness, etc.

Of these twelve factors, ignorance is the root condition of the earlier part of Saṁsāra. Hence it is mentioned first, as between ignorance (*avijjā*) and volitions (*saṅkhāra*), the former is the cause and the latter is the result. Volitions means volitional thoughts, words and deeds.

Ignorance (*avijjā*) is one of the 52 mental concomitants (*cetasika*). It is essentially delusion (*moha*), a demeritorious state of mind. Delusion (*moha*) is variously rendered as "not knowing," "unskilled," "unknowing," "ignorance" and "delusion."

Ignorance means: 1) Not knowing the truth of suffering (*dukkha*), not perceiving the truth that the five mundane aggregates pertaining to the three spheres are suffering; 2) not knowing the origin of suffering, not perceiving the truth that craving (*taṇhā*) is the cause of suffering; 3) not knowing the truth of cessation, not perceiving the truth that Nibbāna is the cessation of suffering; 4) not knowing the truth of the path, not perceiving the truth that the noble path of eight constituents is the way that leads to Nibbāna.

The fourfold ignorance of the four truths are the conditions whereby all worldlings, blinded by their own ignorance, commit evil deeds that send them down to the four lower worlds (*apāya*); or perform good deeds that send them to the seven fortunate existences and the sixteen fine-material realms of Brahmas, or to the four non-material realms of Brahmas. The evil deeds are motivated by demeritorious volitions (*apuññābhisaṅkhārā*). The good deeds that tend to the seven fortunate existences and the fine-material realms are motivated by meritorious volitions (*puññābhisaṅkhārā*). The volitions in the four types of meritorious deeds leading to the four Brahma realms of the formless realm are called unshakeable volitions (*āneñjābhisaṅkhārā*). Therefore the Buddha

declares that with ignorance as condition, three types of volitions of the mundane meritoriousness and mundane demeritoriousness come to be.

In the eulogistic reference to the Buddha at the beginning of this verse: the penetrative knowledge is compared to the wish-fulfilling gem (*joti-rasa*), one of the seven boons of a Universal Monarch; the four truths is symbolised by the four island continents over which a Universal Monarch reigns; the analytical exposition of the four truths is symbolised by the roaming over the four island continents by the Universal Monarch. And the act of reverence is performed by the poet, Ledi Sayādaw, mentally, verbally and physically.

In Buddhist literature there are recognised three kinds of worthy persons or Devas: the Devas who are born instantly as mature individuals are Devas arisen in the heavens; the rulers who have sovereignty over a country are conventionally called Devas; and Arahats, the Worthy Ones, are Devas through purity; and amongst the Arahats the Buddha is peerless. [1148]

The poet calls his subject matter "the train of Saṁsāra that speeds along the three spheres,' because dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*) is the ceaseless round of causal factors that gives rise to the aggregates, sense spheres and elements pertaining to the three spheres of existence.

Ignorance (*avijjā*) is called the great darkness of delusion (*mahā-tama*). The darkness of ignorance is usually described as having four contributory factors: the darkness that prevails on a first-moon night where no moon shines; at midnight; in the heart of a deep forest; and shrouded with rain clouds. The fourfold ignorance of the worldling is comparable to the four factored darkness.

The worldling shrouded by ignorance commits evil deeds for his immediate welfare through twelve demeritorious thoughts; these volitions are the demeritorious volitions (*apuññābhisaṅkhārā*) that tend to the miserable existences.

Ignorance not only drives the blinded worldling to commit evil actions, it also drives him to perform good actions that send him to the high existences of the Deva and Brahma worlds. This is because whereas the first two truths of the four truths, the truth of suffering (*dukkha*) and the truth of the cause of suffering are mundane truths which are of a burning nature; the latter two truths, the truth of cessation and the truth of the path, are supermundane truths which have a cool and tranquil nature. The worldling, especially a worldling who

cherishes rebirth, whose mental makeup is shrouded by ignorance, does not understand that the two mundane truths are of a burning nature and so he resorts to them and becomes a slave to his own craving.

When craving overpowers the worldling, particularly those with a natural inclination to the annihilist view, rejecting the afterlife, he sets his sights on the present life only. He is prepared to perpetrate any vicious act for his immediate welfare. He would kill or steal or commit any deed as his demeritorious volition (*apuññābhisaṅkhārā*) urges him. The worldlings who believe in continued existence or the eternity view, on the other hand, would aspire to higher existences in the future. They would perform meritorious deeds to go to fortunate existences or to be reborn in the formless realm according to their hearts' desire, all of which are not conducive to gaining paths, fruitions and Nibbāna. These deeds are, as the case may be, either meritorious volitions (*puññābhisaṅkhārā*) that lead to the sensuous sphere and the form realm, or unshakable volitions (*aneñjābhisaṅkhārā*) that lead to the formless realm.

As the result of such volitions, fresh existences occur and there is an endless recurrence of suffering.

2. With volitions as condition: rebirth-linking consciousness (*saṅkhāra-paccayā viññāṇaṁ*). As the result of volitional actions of the three types, rebirth in the appropriate realms of existence, in the lower worlds (*apāya*), the human realm or the Deva or Brahma realms takes place. In the new existence, consciousness, which is the key mental factor, arises. Consciousness is of six kinds according to the six sense doors: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. The six kinds of consciousness each of which arises together with mental concomitants take cognisance of their respective sense objects and enjoy sense pleasures. In so enjoying, a mistaken view of personal identity such as "I see it," "I hear it," "I smell it," etc. arises, and so also the wrong concept of a man or Deva, he or she, etc., arises. All these misconceptions are due to the six kinds of consciousness. And so rebirth in all forms of existence, mostly in the lower worlds (*apāya*) is perpetuated.

Demeritorious volitions lead to the lower worlds of the downfall (*apāya*) with the appropriate rebirth-linking consciousness in the sensuous sphere and in the form realm, followed by appropriate resultant consciousness. Meritorious volitions lead to the seven fortunate planes of existence, the human plane and

the six Deva realms. These nine types of rebirth-linking [1149] consciousness arise at the moment of rebirth, and at the manifested stage of rebirth, sixteen types of meritorious resultant consciousnesses arise in the sensuous sphere and in the form realm. The meritorious consciousnesses pertaining to the form realm leads to fifteen realms of the form realm where rebirth-linking consciousness followed by the resultant consciousness of the form realm arises. The meritorious volitions pertaining to the formless realm, the unshakable type of volitions, leads to the four realms of the formless realm where rebirth-linking consciousness followed by resultant consciousness of the formless realm arises.

In the matter of good or bad volitions giving rise to resultant consciousness which are appropriate to them, the four stages of endowment (*samaṅgitā*) should be briefly understood thus:

1. When an action, good or bad, is done, the appropriate volition arises to give effect to it, as good volition or bad volition. That is the endowment of volition at the moment of its arising. The act is being endowed with its appropriate volition (*cetanā-samaṅgitā*).

2. After a lapse of three phases of consciousness, or three thought-moments, the volition vanishes. However, it does not, like other resultant consciousnesses, disappear completely; it leaves behind the potential that will arise later when circumstances permit as a resultant consciousness. This potential is potent throughout the successive existences unless it becomes inoperative. This mental phenomenon of being endowed with potential is called the endowment of productive deeds (*kamma-samaṅgitā*).

3. When the time is ripe for the potential of a past deed to arise, whether good or bad, there appear before the appropriate sense sphere of the doer the very act he or she has done, or something connected with the act, such as buildings or tools, etc., or a sign of the oncoming existence. The presentation of any of these three signs at the moment of death is called the endowment of the upcoming existence (*upaṭṭhāna-samaṅgītā*). Except for Arahats this form of prescience always presents itself to the dying person in sufficient vividness that makes him or her take cognisance of it.

4. After that, one passes away and there arises the rebirth-linking consciousness, followed in the manifestation stage of the fresh existence the resultant consciousness befitting the past deed. This resultant consciousness functions as the life continuum (*bhavaṅga*) and is always present throughout that existence when no other thought-process occurs. This arising of rebirth consciousness and resultant consciousness is called the endowment of the resultant (*vipāka-samaṅgitā*).

The resultant (*vipāka*) is nothing but the maturity of the potential or the endowment of productive deeds (*kamma-samaṅgitā*) into a specific consciousness in the ultimate sense. It will be seen that resultant consciousness begins as volitional activity or endowment of volition. Therefore, the Buddha declares in brief that "dependent on volitions, the six kinds of consciousness arise."

The three types of volitions are the cause of renewed existence. As the poet puts it, they are the capital, out of which renewed existence takes shape. Through the natural process of endowments, the four endowments (*samaṅgitā*), outlined above, a volitional act is possessed of its appropriate resultant. In the renewed existence where the resultant consciousness arises, this consciousness reigns supreme throughout that particular existence. The poet calls it his lordship, for it is the key factor of all mental phenomena, just as the element of heat is the key factor in all physical phenomena.[367]

Resultant consciousness, function-wise, is of six kinds: eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness and mind-consciousness. As there are six sense spheres: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, eye-consciousness is the supreme consciousness at the eye-door; ear consciousness is the supreme consciousness at the ear-door; nose consciousness is the supreme consciousness at the nose-door; tongue-consciousness is the supreme consciousness at the tongue-door; [1150] body-consciousness is the supreme consciousness at the body-door; and mind-consciousness is the supreme consciousness at the mind-door.

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[367] For details the reader should consult Ledi Sayadaw's Light on Dependent Origination (*Paṭicca-samuppāda-dīpanī*).

The supremacy of the six kinds of consciousness may be understood thus if we take eye-consciousness, for example. Just as when a powerful prince arises, he has the retinue, the throne and the regal paraphernalia at his command, so also whenever a certain consciousness arises, seven mental concomitants arise together with it that enable it to function properly, serving it like the retinue of the prince. The eye-base or eye door is like the throne of the prince. The eye-sensitivity is like the paraphernalia of the prince. Just as the prince reigns supreme amidst these retinue and regal paraphernalia, so also eye-consciousness enjoys visible objects fully and completely, having dominance over the eye-decad and associated forms of corporeality. The same principle holds true in respect of the other five kinds of consciousness.

The daily activities of a person, when analyzed in the ultimate sense, consist of just these six kinds of sense-consciousness: seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and cognizing. That is why all the physical, verbal and mental activities that are carried out day in and day out fall within the six kinds of consciousness.

Since all human activity is dominated by the six kinds of consciousness for all the days, months and years of a person's life, there comes to be the misconception of a personal identity such as, "I," "he," "she," "man," "Deva;" and personalised ideas of "I see it," "I hear it," "I smell it," "I eat it," "I touch it," "I take cognizance of it," or "he sees it," "he hears it," etc. When this misconception arises, then that person is heading for further existences such as the four lower worlds of the downfall (*apāya*). All this is due to the six kinds of consciousness.

3. With rebirth-linking consciousness as condition: mind and body (*viññāṇa-paccayā nāma-rūpaṁ*). Due to the workings of the six kinds of consciousness, a wonderfully intricate body of mental phenomena, such as contact, volition, perception, initial application of the mind, etc. appear, as smoke that accompanies fire; and also, arising together with the body of mental phenomena there is the body of physical phenomena with the four primary elements as the basis, on which 24 types of corporeality depend, thus making 28 types of corporeality. A combination of mental phenomena and physical phenomena, or mind and body arise, manifesting itself in an infinite variety of shapes, forms and sizes. Thus, in the various places of existence, various beings, such as Devas, humans and animals, that live in water, that live on land, etc., noble beings,

lowly beings, having various characteristics, all of them a compound of mind and matter, appear in the world.

The six kinds of consciousness give rise to their respective mental concomitants like the retinue of a powerful prince and also an endless variety of corporeality like the regal paraphernalia of the prince.

As fire always arises with smoke, so also consciousness always arises with its mental concomitants like the multi-coloured strand inside the gem called a cat's-eye. Mental states function wonderfully well to enable the consciousness to accomplish whatever end it is directed to. For instance, there is contact that joins up the sense-organ and its respective sense object; sensation that makes the experiencing of sense objects possible; volition that motivates all the co-arising mental concomitants to carry out their respective tasks, and so on. Together with the mental phenomena, there also arise simultaneously the four primary elements and the 24 types of corporeality that arise dependent on them.

The mind and matter, arising due to the six kinds of consciousness, takes an infinite variety of shapes and forms in various places of existence, ranging from noble beings to lowly beings.

No two individuals have the same appearance or the same type of mentality. This [1151] diversity is due to the diversity of wishes of individuals that are associated with craving. As one's craving fancies, so will a person wish for this or that kind of appearance and this or that type of mentality, and commit acts, good or bad, towards that end. Thus a diversity of craving determines a diversity of action. The diversity of one's past volitional acts produce a diversity of existences with a diversity of individual characters, even within the same plane of existence. Thus, diversity of action determines the diversity of destinations of beings.

4. With mind and matter as condition: the six sense spheres (*nāma-rūpa-paccayā saḷāyatanaṁ*). The mind and matter complex arises due to consciousness, the body of physical phenomena (*rūpa-kāya*) gives rise to the five types of sensitive corporeality, such as eye-sensitivity, ear-sensitivity, nose-sensitivity, tongue-sensitivity, and body-sensitivity. And the body of mental phenomena (*nāma-kāya*) gives rise to mind, which is mind-sensitivity. Each of the sensitivities has its own separate function. Eye-sensitivity cognizes visible objects; ear-sensitivity cognizes sounds; nose-sensitivity cognizes smells; tongue-sensitivity cognizes

tastes; body-sensitivity cognizes tangible objects; mind-sensitivity cognizes thoughts and ideas besides doing its own thinking. As the seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching and thinking occur ceaselessly, the worldling considers all these events as, “I see it,” “I hear it,” “I smell it,” “I taste it,” “I touch it,” “I know it,” “I think it,” “I am stupid,” “I am wise,” etc. all from an egocentric view. Thus the six kinds of sensitivity give rise to the fire of false view regarding the five aggregates.

From this verse onwards the elucidations will be mostly based on the verses.

There are four types of beings:

1. There are beings that take birth in an egg.
2. There are beings that are conceived in the mother’s womb.
3. There are beings that spring from moisture, such as moss or lotus flower, etc.
4. There are beings that appear as adults at birth.

Just as a fruit acquires its seed at the appropriate stage of its development, so also the egg-born beings and the womb-born beings acquire their eye-sensitivity, ear-sensitivity, nose-sensitivity and tongue-sensitivity at the appropriate stage of development, at the respective sense-organs, such as eye, ear, nose and tongue. Body-sensitivity arises simultaneously with rebirth-linking consciousness. With the instant-adult type of birth and moisture-sprung type of birth, all the five kinds of sensitive corporality arise simultaneously with rebirth-linking consciousness. But in the case of Brahmas, there are no nose-sensitivity, tongue-sensitivity and body-sensitivity.

Beings are endowed with past merit to acquire a pair of eyes. Due to that merit corporeality born of productive deeds arises in the present existence. The four primary elements that are produced by the productive deeds of corporeality born of productive deeds is the base on which eye-sensitivity, a kind of dependent corporeality, arises. Likewise, ear-sensitivity, nose-sensitivity, tongue-sensitivity and body-sensitivity are kinds of dependent corporeality that arise dependent on the four primary elements. All of them are corporeality born of productive deeds. This is how the body of physical phenomena (*rūpa-kāya*) gives rise to the five kinds of sensitive corporeality.

The body of mental phenomena (*nāma-kāya*) comprising contact, sensation and volition, gives rise to mind or mind-sensitivity that causes the arising of mind-consciousness. Mind-sensitivity is mind-consciousness itself. Here, it has been stated previously that "dependent on consciousness, mind and matter arises." Now this mind-sensitivity becomes mind-consciousness. Does it amount to saying that "from the offspring, the mother comes to be?" Here, consider the analogy of a tree. A tree grows from the seed. The tree again produces the seed. The first seed is quite distinct from the seed produced by the tree. Similarly, out of 52 mental concomitants, consciousness may at times be dominated by initial [1152] application of the mind and sustained application of the mind; it may at times be dominated by energy (*viriya*); it may at times be dominated by delightful satisfaction; it may at times be dominated by desire, greed, or anger, etc.

When initial application of the mind is dominant, consciousness obeys the dictates of initial application of the mind. Similarly, consciousness arises under the dominant influence of a sustained application of the mind, or greed, or anger, as the case may be. Thus mental concomitants give rise to mind-sensitivity. Or, take another analogy: fire gives rise to wind, and wind helps fire to grow. Consciousness is like fire; mental concomitants are like wind. Mental concomitants arise due to consciousness, and consciousness is also conditioned by the mental concomitants.

Or take another analogy. The four primary elements are interdependent. Wherever one of them arises, the three others also arise. Similarly, whenever consciousness arises, the appropriate mental concomitants arise together. Whenever mental concomitants arise, there is also consciousness that arises together with them. This is how the body of mental phenomena gives rise to mind or mind-sensitivity.

A living being is able to function only due to the presence of the six sense-spheres; otherwise, he or she would be inert as a log. The sense-spheres are also called six sense doors. They are not doors in the sense that they are opening, but in that they are sensitive to sense-stimuli, like a glass pane window through which light can enter. Eye sensitivity arises at the eye; ear-sensitivity arises at the ear; nose sensitivity arises at the nose; tongue sensitivity arises at the tongue; body sensitivity arises at the whole body, both internally and externally. Mind-

consciousness or mind-sensitivity arises at the heart-base. Thus the whole body is provided with the six kinds of sensitivity.

Just as when a bird alights on a branch, the shaking of the branch and the casting of the bird's shadow on the ground below happen simultaneously, so also when a visible object is taken cognizance of by the eye-sensitivity, it is simultaneously taken cognizance of by mind-sensitivity also. Thus with eye-consciousness taking the leading role, an appropriate thought-process arises, making complete the knowing about the event, and one knows: "Ah, this is the sun," "this is the moon," or "ah, this is a man, or a cow, or a buffalo," as it may be.

When a sound is taken cognizance of by ear-sensitivity, it is simultaneously taken cognizance of by mind-sensitivity also; and after due thought processes, a complete knowledge of the sound is made aware, such as: "This is the sound of thunder, or of wind, or of a drum, or of a lute, or a human voice, or the bellowing of a cow," etc., as the case may be.

When an odour is taken cognizance of by nose-sensitivity, or when a taste is taken cognizance of by tongue-sensitivity, or when a tangible object is taken cognizance of by body-sensitivity, it is simultaneously taken cognizance of by mind-sensitivity also.

Mind-sensitivity takes cognizance of the five kinds of sense-data cognized by their respective sense spheres besides other mind-objects covering all sorts of physical and mental phenomena. Then an appropriate thought process arises at the mind-door; and one is fully aware of whatever mind-objects are taken cognizance of. This is the natural process of how sense data is received by the respective sense spheres and a full consciousness about them arises.

As these sense experiences occur ceaselessly to a worldling, and full consciousness about them arises in him, he considers these events as: "I see it," "I hear it," "I smell it," "I taste it," "I feel it," "I know it," "I think it," "I am stupid," or, "I am wise," etc. This misconception about the five aggregates, which is a veritable cauldron of the realm of continuous intense suffering burns furiously with the flames of greed, hatred, delusion, conceit, jealousy, stinginess, etc. Thus all the six sense spheres are glowing with these fires of demeritoriousness. All this is due to the presence of the six sense spheres.

5. With the six sense spheres as condition: contact (*saḷāyatana-paccayā phasso*). Due to the six sense spheres in their respective places in the body, sense objects corresponding to each of them are clearly reflected as if on a mirror. Visible objects are reflected on the eye-sensitivity; sounds are reflected on the ear-sensitivity; smells are [1153] reflected on the nose-sensitivity; tastes are reflected on the tongue-sensitivity; tangible objects are reflected on the body-sensitivity; the six kinds of mind-objects are reflected on mind-sensitivity of the mind-consciousness, according to the occurrence of events at the five other sense spheres.

When these sense objects are reflected on the respective sense sphere, each with its special sensitivity of its own, there arises contact at each sense sphere as if a flint is struck against the striker in a matchbox.

Due to the coming together of sense sphere, sense object and sense-consciousness, e.g. at the eye-door, due to the conjunction of eye-sensitivity, visual object and eye-consciousness, eye-contact arises very vividly.

Likewise, at the ear-door, due to the conjunction of ear-sensitivity, sound and ear-consciousness, ear-contact arises very vividly. At the nose-door, due to the conjunction of nose-sensitivity, odour and nose-consciousness, nose-contact arises very vividly. At the tongue-door, due to the conjunction of tongue-sensitivity, taste and tongue-consciousness, tongue-contact arises very vividly. At the body-door, due to the conjunction of body-sensitivity, tangible object and body-consciousness, body-contact arises very vividly. At the mind-door, due to the conjunction of mind-sensitivity, the respective sense object reflected through the six sense spheres, and mind-consciousness, mind-contact arises very vividly.

The six kinds of contact are very powerful, like Sakka's Vajira weapon, in translating the sense-experience as agreeable or disagreeable. A visible object reflected on the eye-door that has become eye-contact is distinguished as agreeable or disagreeable, thanks to contact. The same principle holds in respect of the five other sense spheres, where the respective contact sorts out the respective sense objects as agreeable or disagreeable. In describing the function of contact, the poet uses the metaphor of pressing a juicy fruit to yield its flavour. Sweet fruit would yield sweet juice, sour fruit would yield sour juice. Similarly, an agreeable visible object will, through the working of contact, present itself as an agreeable thing to the individual, and a disagreeable object as

a disagreeable thing, and so also with the remaining sense-contacts. Agreeable things are looked upon as good things, attractive or pleasant things. Disagreeable things are looked upon as bad things, unattractive or unpleasant things. This differentiation between agreeable or pleasant things and disagreeable or unpleasant things is brought out by contact.

6. With contact as condition: feeling (*phassa-paccayā vedanā*). The six sense objects are considered by a worldling as agreeable or disagreeable through the functioning of contact. If we review the process of sense cognition we find that the six kinds of consciousness merely know a sense object through the respective sense sphere. It merely sees something, hears something, smells something, tastes something, touches or feels something, and thinks a thought or forms an idea. Contact translates these sense experiences into agreeable things or disagreeable things. When agreeable things are experienced through their respective sense spheres, one feels pleased, or experiences a pleasant sensation. When disagreeable things are experienced one feels displeased, or experiences an unpleasant sensation. Thus the six kinds of contact bring about six kinds of sensation.

Pleasant sensation (*sukha-vedanā*) is of two aspects, physical and mental, the former is physical ease and comfort, the latter ease of mind. Unpleasant sensation (*dukkha-vedanā*) is also of two aspects, physical and mental. The former is physical pain, the latter distress of mind.

Sometimes pleasant sensation is used in a combined sense of physical and mental well-being; and unpleasant sensation is used in a combined sense of physical and mental suffering.

Sensation (*vedanā*) is of three kinds: pleasant sensation, unpleasant sensation, and neither-pleasant-nor-unpleasant sensation. However, in this verse, the neither-pleasant-nor-unpleasant sensation pertaining to demeritoriousness is included in the unpleasant [1154] sensation, while the neither-pleasant-nor-unpleasant sensation pertaining to meritoriousness is included in the pleasant sensation. This point should be noted.

The reader is strongly advised to consult Ledi Sayadaw's Light on Dependent Origination (*Paṭicca-samuppāda-dīpanī*) to have a fuller understanding of these verses. In the present work a bare paraphrase of the verses is given. The six kinds or elements of sensation:

1. Sensation born of eye-contact.
2. Sensation born of ear-contact.
3. Sensation born of nose-contact.
4. Sensation born of tongue-contact.
5. Sensation born of body-contact.
6. Sensation born of mind-contact (*mano-samphassajā-vedanā*).

They are called elements because sensations primarily arise only through them. When sensation is discriminated through each of the six kinds of contact, concepts about them – whether pleasant or unpleasant, agreeable or disagreeable, good or bad – are formed in the mind of the person experiencing these various sensations. When an agreeable sensation is experienced, one feels happy and is physically at ease. When a disagreeable sensation is experienced one feels unhappy, distressed, and physically agitated.

Everyone in the world has a single objective of enjoying the element of pleasant sensation. All human activity is earnestly directed towards achieving that objective. But this so-called element of pleasant sensation only brings suffering to worldlings; noble ones (*ariya*) alone are immune from its evil consequences. Worldlings strive hard in search of pleasant sensation. In extreme cases, this search after pleasant sensation takes the form of even committing suicide, for a person committing suicide decides that death alone is the way he can get peace.

7. With sensation as condition: craving (*vedanā-paccayā taṇhā*). When one sees an agreeable visible object, through the workings of eye-contact, that object gives a pleasant sensation to the viewer. One is very pleased with it, thinking: "It's nice! It's lovely!" The pleasant sensation causes elation and happiness. Just as when dry rice is sprinkled with butter, it permeates it, so the viewer's mental process is permeated with joy. Just as a withered lotus when sprinkled with cool water re-awakens, so does he feel refreshed, and his face brightens. This reaction, which arises due to pleasant sensation, is the enjoyment of that sensation. The reaction due to the remaining five sense-pleasures, such as on hearing an agreeable sound, on smelling an agreeable odour, etc., should be understood likewise.

The enjoyment of pleasurable sensations through the six sense spheres whets the appetite to enjoy more and more. Craving arises for pleasant sensation. So, six kinds of pleasant sensation give rise to six kinds of craving: the craving for visible objects, sounds, odours, tastes, tangible objects and for thoughts and ideas.

All beings are attached to their own bodies, in the sense that they want to remain alive. So they are naturally attached to food so as to remain alive. Thence their attachment stretches to paddy as the staple food, and thence to the means of production of paddy such as land, draught animals, and good rains, etc., all connected with paddy. This is a practical example of how craving multiplies itself starting with a certain object of one's fancy. If one has a fancy for a certain visible object, then things possessing it, connected with it, whether animate or inanimate, are craved for, and it is the same with pleasant sounds, odours, tangible objects, and thoughts.

All the endless objects that are craved for have numerous names. But, from the viewpoint of ultimate reality, they come under six sense objects only, i.e. craving for visual objects, craving for sounds, etc. Here the poet compares the six sense objects to the treasurer of a Universal Monarch who is capable of providing whatever is asked of him.

As all beings are always hankering after the six sense objects, trying to satisfy their sense-desires, they become obsessed with craving which is essentially greed. Therefore, they cannot even dream of the profound truth about craving as the real source of all [1155] suffering. They are prisoners of their own greed and they live and die there.

8. With craving as condition: clinging (*taṇhā-paccayā upādānaṁ*). It is all well and good if craving for the six sense objects can be given up before they become an obsession. If the indulgence in craving is prolonged over a long period, craving outgrows itself into clinging which is rooted either in craving itself or in wrong view. One clings tenaciously to oneself internally and to external sense objects. Clinging is of four kinds:

1. Clinging to sense-pleasures (*kāmupādāna*).
2. Clinging to wrong views (*diṭṭhupādāna*).
3. Clinging to wrong practices as a means to purity (*sīlabbatupādāna*).
4. Clinging to an illusory self (*atta-vādupādāna*).

1. Clinging to sense pleasures (*kāmupādāna*). It is the obsession with sense objects of the six kinds which begins as craving and outgrows itself, like the Myanmar saying: "When an iguana grows too big it becomes an alligator; when a snake grows too big it becomes a serpent." Clinging therefore is intensified craving.

2. Clinging to wrong view (*diṭṭhupādāna*). Wrong views are of 62 kinds as described by the Buddha in the Discourse on the Supreme Net (*Brahmajāla-sutta*, DN 1). Tenacious belief in any wrong view is a form of clinging. The three worst wrong views that send one down to the lower realms are included in the 62 kinds of wrong view mentioned in this verse.

3. Clinging to wrong practices as a means to purity (*sīlabbatupādāna*). Some ascetics, during the Buddha's time, resorted to behaving like cows or dogs in the mistaken belief that such practices would purify their hearts and bring salvation. Puṇṇa and Seniya are two ascetics who followed such practices (*Kukkura-vatika-sutta*, MN 57).

The cow-practice (*go-vatika*) ascetics were those who believed that all past evil could be obliterated if one took up a stringent ascetic life by living like a cow. Their reasoning was this: Living a stringent life for the whole of the present life makes retribution for all past evil deeds; the present life of asceticism also does not involve any fresh evil deeds. Therefore, all past evil deeds and future evil deeds are eliminated, and this brings eternal happiness. A follower of this creed moves about on all fours like a cow, sleeps like a cow, eats like a cow, without using the hands and generally imitates all bovine behaviour. Interestingly enough one who takes up the bovine practice in a slack manner, will be reborn as a cow; one who takes up the practice too stringently will go to hell after death.

The dog-practice (*kukkura-vatika*) ascetics were believers in the dog-practice. They believed that, if one could adopt the life and habits of a dog, one would be liberated. A follower of this creed moves about, eats and sleeps like a dog, imitating all the habits of a dog. If one takes up this practice in a slack manner, one will be reborn as a dog. If one takes up the practice too stringently, one will go to hell.

4. Clinging to an illusory self (*atta-vādupādāna*). The mistaken belief in self (*atta*) is another tenacious form of clinging. It is based on the five aggregates which are considered erroneously, each in four ways, namely:

1. With regard to corporeality: 1) That corporeality is self, and not being able to perceive corporeality apart from oneself; 2) that mental phenomena are self, and erroneously holding that self has corporeality just like a tree has shade; 3) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that corporeality exists in self just like the scent existing in a flower; 4) that mental phenomena is self and erroneously holding that self exists in corporeality just like a ruby kept in a casket.

2. With regard to sensation: 1) That sensation is self and not being able to perceive sensation apart from oneself; 2) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that self has sensation just like a tree has shade; 3) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that sensation exists in self just like the scent existing in a flower; 4) that mental phenomena is self and erroneously holding that self exists in sensation just like a ruby kept in a casket.

3. With regard to perception: 1) That perception is self and not being able to perceive [1156] perception apart from oneself; 2) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that self has perception just like a tree has shade; 3) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that perception exists in self just like the scent existing in flower; 4) that mental phenomena is self and erroneously holding that self exists in perception just like a ruby kept in a casket.

4. With regard to volitions: 1) That volitions are self and not being able to perceive volitions apart from oneself; 2) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that self has volitions just like a tree has shade; 3) that mental phenomena are self and erroneously holding that volitions exist in self just like the scent existing in a flower; 4) that mental phenomena is self and erroneously holding that self exists in volitions just like a ruby kept in a casket.

v. With regard to consciousness: 1) That consciousness is self and not being able to perceive consciousness apart from oneself; 2) that mental phenomena is self and erroneously holding that self has consciousness just like a tree has shade; 3) that mental phenomena is self and erroneously holding that consciousness exists in self just like the scent

existing in a flower; 4) that mental phenomena is self and erroneously holding that self exists in consciousness just like a ruby kept in a casket.

Therefore, 20 wrong views about the five aggregates give rise to 20 different kinds of wrong view. This view which persists throughout Saṁsāra is called clinging to an illusory self (*atta-vādupādāna*). So long as the above four kinds of clinging arise in one, there is no escape from the suffering round of existences.

9. With clinging as condition: rebirth (*upādāna-paccayā bhavo*). Holding fast to the four kinds of clinging, a worldling believes that the body of five aggregates is his own self, his own person. Due to the wrong view of the existence of a self or a person, one seeks immediate gain or satisfaction through wrongful conduct, such as killing or stealing, etc., and thereby resorts to the ten courses of demeritoriousness. This means an accumulation of demeritorious actions that leads to rebirth.

Being desirous of future well-being that is in no way inferior to the present well-being, one performs meritorious deeds after the manner of virtuous ones, such as giving, observing moral precepts and cultivating the mind. All of these acts are mundane merit tending to renewed existence. They take the form of meritoriousness pertaining to the sensuous sphere, or meritoriousness pertaining to the form realm, or meritoriousness pertaining to the formless realm. In these ways one resorts to the ten courses of meritoriousness.

The ten courses of demeritoriousness and the ten courses of meritoriousness tending to renewed existence – these two categories of committed actions are called the process caused by productive deeds (*kamma-bhava*). This process or potential leads to the arising of resultant mental aggregates and corporeality born of productive deeds in the appropriate sphere of existence, either in the sensuous sphere, or in the form realm, or in formless realm. These resultant mental aggregates and corporeality born of productive deeds are called the arising of rebirth (*upapatti-bhava*). Mundane meritorious and demeritorious courses of conduct lead to the arising of rebirth and therefore the two together are called simply rebirth (*bhava*). Resultant mental aggregates and corporeality born of productive deeds are the results of the process caused by productive deeds (*kamma-bhava*).

In this matter, the arising of the process caused by productive deeds and the arising of rebirth dependent on the four kinds of clinging as discussed in detail in the commentary on the Vibhaṅga (*Sammoha-vinodhanī*) will be stated briefly.

"What type of rebirth (*bhava*) is conditioned by what particular kind of clinging?" The answer to this question is: "All the four kinds of clinging may be the condition for [1157] both types of rebirth (*bhava*)."

The explanation is this: A worldling is like a lunatic; that being so, he cannot discriminate what is proper and fitting, and what is not. Therefore, under the influence of all four kinds of clinging, he commits all sorts of actions, that are of mundane merit and demerit and that tend to renewed existence. How these various actions are committed will be considered here.

A worldling may know or hear that sense pleasures abound with the ruling class or higher classes of the human world and in the six realms. He may get bad advice from others that to gain what one wants, one should do anything, if needs be, one should kill or steal. So under the evil influence of clinging to sense pleasures, he commits evil deeds such as killing to gratify his strong desire for sense pleasures. These evil deeds lead to rebirth in the lower worlds (*apāya*).

Or a worldling may have an irresistible temptation to get some sense object that he sees before him; or he may wish to preserve and protect his property, and to achieve this, he would do anything whether it is morally right or wrong. This is a more common case of committing evil being driven by clinging to sense pleasures. Evil deeds cause rebirth in the lower worlds. In these cases, the evil deeds that send him to the lower worlds is called the process caused by productive deeds (*kamma-bhava*) and the result and mental aggregates and corporeality born of productive deeds pertaining to the lower worlds are called the arising of rebirth (*upapatti-bhava*). This is how clinging to sense pleasures leads to a demeritorious process caused by productive deeds and the result thereof.

Another worldling is fortunate in having wiser counsel. His friends are virtuous by example as well as by precept. He gains some knowledge of the truth. He knows truly that by doing meritorious deeds he can gain fortunate destinations. He performs meritorious deeds, and, as a result of which, he is reborn in the human world or in the world of the Devas. In this case the meritorious deeds that send him to the fortunate destinations is called the process caused by

productive deeds (*kamma-bhava*) and the resultant mental aggregates and corporeality born of productive deeds pertaining to the fortunate existences are called the arising of rebirth (*upapatti-bhava*). This is how clinging to sense pleasures leads to a meritorious process caused by productive deeds and the result thereof.

Another worldling may have heard or have the idea that the Brahma world of the form realm or formless realm has higher sense pleasures than those of the sensuous sphere. And, being obsessed by the allurement of superior sense pleasures of the Brahma world, he practises absorption (*jhāna*) of the form realm or the formless realm, and achieves it, and, as the result, he is reborn in the form realm or the formless realm.

In this case the meritorious deeds of that worldling pertaining to the form realm or formless realm that send him to the form realm and the formless realm are called the process caused by productive deeds (*kamma-bhava*) and the resultant mental aggregates and the corporeality born of productive deeds of the form realm and the resultant mental aggregates of the formless realm are called the arising of rebirth (*upapatti-bhava*). This is how clinging to sense pleasures gives rise to a process caused by productive deeds and the result thereof.

Another worldling, clinging to the wrong view of annihilation or extinction, believes firmly that the self becomes fully extinct only in a fortunate existence of the sensuous sphere, or in the form realm, or in the formless realm, and accordingly acquires merit pertaining to the sensuous sphere that leads to a fortunate existence in the sensuous sphere, or the exalted type of merit (*mahaggata*) which is sublimated due to absence of the hindrances. The merit of this worldling pertaining to the sensuous sphere and the Brahma realms of the form realm and the formless realm are called the process caused by productive deeds (*kamma-bhava*), and the resultant mental aggregate and the corporeality born of productive deeds are called the arising of rebirth (*upapatti-bhava*). This is how clinging to wrong view gives rise to a process caused by productive deeds and the resultant thereof.

Another worldling, under the influence of clinging to an illusory self (*atta*), firmly believes that the self attains real happiness in a fortunate existence of the sensuous sphere, or in the form realm, or in the formless realm, and accordingly acquires merit pertaining to the sensuous sphere, that leads to a fortunate

existence in the sensuous sphere, or the exalted type of merit which is sublimated due to an absence of the hindrances. The merit of that worldling pertaining to the sensuous sphere and the Brahma realms of the [1158] form realm and the formless realm are called the process caused by productive deeds (*kamma-bhava*) and the resultant mental aggregates and the corporeality born of productive deeds are called the arising of rebirth (*upapatti-bhava*). This is how clinging to an illusory self gives rise to a process caused by productive deeds and the result thereof.

Another worldling, under the influence of clinging to wrong practices as a means to purity, firmly believes that this good practice can be fulfilled with facility only in one who takes it up either in some fortunate existence of the sensuous sphere, or in the form realm or in the formless realm, accordingly acquires merit pertaining to the sensuous sphere, or to the form realm, or to the formless realm. The merit of this worldling pertaining to a fortunate existence in the sensuous sphere and the exalted type of merit pertaining to the Brahma realms are called the process caused by productive deeds (*kamma-bhava*), and the resultant mental aggregates and the corporeality born of productive deeds are called the arising of rebirth (*upapatti-bhava*). This is how clinging to wrong practices as a means to purity gives rise to a process caused by productive deeds and the result thereof.

10. With the process caused by productive deeds as condition: rebirth (*bhava-paccayā jāti*). With the process caused by productive deeds (*kamma-bhava*) as condition, rebirth occurs. Meritorious process caused by productive deeds and demeritorious process caused by productive deeds are the causes of rebirth.

Rebirth means the arising of resultant mental aggregates and corporeality born of productive deeds caused by meritorious deeds; and resultant mental aggregate and corporeality born of productive deeds caused by demeritorious deeds.

Earleir, in with volitions as condition: rebirth-linking consciousness, (*saṅkhāra-paccayā viññāṇaṁ*), it has been shown that due to volitions, good and bad consciousnesses arises. This refers to past volitions giving rise to resultant consciousness at the moment of rebirth in the present existence, as well as the consciousness that follows rebirth consciousness (*pavatti-viññāṇa*).

In the present verse, with process caused by productive deeds as condition: rebirth (*bhava-paccayā-jāti*), refers to the process caused by productive deeds,

acts committed in the present existence give rise to rebirth in a future existence, the resultant mental aggregates and corporeality born of productive deeds that arise in the future. This will become clearer later.

When we discussed: "With volitions as condition: rebirth-linking consciousness," we have seen how volitions become endowed with the requisite potentialities at the four stages (*samaṅgitā*) giving rise to consciousness. That is the detailed explanation of how volitions, i.e. meritorious actions and demeritorious actions of the past, cause consciousness at the moment of conception and the developed consciousness that immediately follows it.

The same process is at work again in the present existence. The deeds committed in the present existence, both good and bad, acquire the endowment at the four stages, give rise to the resultant mental aggregates and corporeality born of productive deeds in a future existence. This process of present actions that condition future rebirth is taught by the Buddha in with the process caused by productive deeds as condition: rebirth (*bhava-paccayā-jāti*). This is stating the cause-effect relationship in strictly Abhidhamma terms. In the present verse, the poet describes this relationship in a mixture of Abhidhamma terms or ultimate usage with conventional usage for easier reading.

The gist of the verse is that dependent on the actions committed in the present existence, both good and bad, all beings, at their death, are reborn according to these actions. Hence some are reborn in the Asaññasatta realm where the existence is characterized by the presence of only the aggregate of corporeality with no mental aggregates; some are reborn in the realms of existence with five aggregates such as the human world and the fine-material world other than the Asaññasatta realm, and their rebirth is characterized by the moral order or the law of productive deeds (*kamma-niyāma*). There is an arising, at conception and at a latter stage, of the resultant mental aggregates and corporeality born of productive deeds that are appropriate to the process caused by the productive deeds of each individual. This fresh arising of mind and matter is termed rebirth (*jāti*).

> From this point onwards, the term: the arising of rebirth (*upapatti-bhava*) will be used for brevity's sake, in describing "the resultant mental aggregates and corporeality born of productive deeds."

When the arising of the resultant mental aggregate and corporeality born of productive deeds takes place, [1159] that is, when there occurs the arising of rebirth, there are, as a rule, three phases: the moment of their arising (*uppāda-khaṇa*), the moment of their persisting (*ṭhiti-khaṇa*), and the moment of their dissolution (*bhaṅga-khaṇa*). Of these phases, the first, the moment of their arising, is called rebirth (*jāti*); the second, the moment of their persisting, is called ageing (*jarā*); and the third, the moment of their dissolution, is called death (*maraṇa*).

So it will be seen that dependent on the arising of rebirth or the process caused by productive deeds, there is birth which is the initial phase of the arising of rebirth. In other words, the process caused by productive deeds conditions birth. This is described in this verse as "the usual rebirth-linking process (*jāti*)."

This birth, the initial arising of mind and matter, occurs not only once at the moment of rebirth but occurs repeatedly so that the compounded phenomena of mind and matter, usually regarded as this body, develops into various shapes, forms and sizes according to the causal order formed by productive deeds (*kamma*). Thus, there appear in the world castes, such as the ruling caste, the Brahmin caste, etc., and people who have power and influence, who are lowly, who are noble, who are wicked, who are virtuous, an infinite variety of personalities, an infinite variety of beings in the three spheres of existence.

All these varieties of beings are possible because there are four main categories of rebirth, namely:

1. Rebirth beginning as an egg or "egg-born birth."
2. Rebirth beginning as an embryo in the mother's womb or "womb-born birth."
3. Rebirth from moisturous matter, such as moss or lotus flower etc., "moisture-born birth."
4. Rebirth as already grown up, i.e. about an age of sixteen years for a female and 20 or 25 for a male "already grown-up birth."

Note that no two individuals are exactly alike in personality, not even offspring of the same mother, some are superior and some are inferior. This is due to the workings of the process caused by productive deeds. The Buddha proclaims this in the Short Discourse giving an Analysis of

> Productive Deeds (*Cūḷa-kamma-vibhaṅga-sutta*, MN 135), wherein it is stated: deeds condition beings to be either inferior or superior (*kammaṁ satte vibhajati yad-idaṁ hīnappaṇītatāya*).

11. With birth as condition: old age, death (*jāti-paccayā jarāmaraṇaṁ*). The process caused by productive deeds conditions the arising of rebirth. The initial phase of the arising of rebirth is called birth (*jāti*). After the initial phase of the moment of their arising (*uppāda-khaṇa*) there follows the developing stage (*ṭhiti-khaṇa*), which is ageing (*jarā*), and then it goes into dissolution at the third stage, dissolution (*bhaṅga-khaṇa*), which is death (*maraṇa*). This is the inexorable process of all mind and matter conditioned by productive deeds (*kamma*).

> The process caused by productive deeds conditions just the initial phase (*uppāda-khaṇa*) of the arising of rebirth, but not the latter two phases of the moment of their developing (*ṭhiti-khaṇa*) and the moment of their dissolution (*bhaṅga-khaṇa*). When rebirth (*uppāda*) arises, ageing (*ṭhiti*) and death (*bhaṅga*) follow suit just as a rising tide brings water along with it.

Since rebirth (*jāti*) is the condition that gives rise to ageing and death (*jarā-maraṇa*), without rebirth there can be no ageing and death, and so the Buddha declares: With birth as condition: old age, death (*jāti-paccayā jarā-maraṇaṁ*).

> Considering what has been said above, it should be carefully noted that rebirth refers to the moments of the arising of the stream of the five aggregates; ageing refers to the moments of the ageing of these aggregates; and death refers to the moment of dissolution of these aggregates that take place in all the existences. This is stated about the conditioned phenomena as they occur.

As rebirth takes place in a fresh existence, there arises the initial mind-matter complex which occurs in repeated succession, bringing about development of the five aggregates. Appearance of shapes and forms as Deva or human or other types of the various beings enable the worldling to consider them as real beings or persons or individual entities. [1160]

Assuming 100 years of lifespan for the present era, a person's lifetime may be viewed as having three phases: The first phase of youth; the second phase of middle age; and the third phase of old age, with each phase lasting for 33 years and four months. Just as these three phases are the natural process of a human's

lifetime, the ceaseless occurrence of the aggregates in all the forms of existence are marked by the natural process of moments of arising, moments of ageing and moments of dissolution that rigorously follow each other. Ageing is of a self-consuming nature so that it is called "the fire of ageing."

The fire of ageing is of two kinds: The moments of ageing of mind and matter (*khaṇa-jarā*) and the changing process such as the corporeality that has a cool character changing into the corporeality that has a hot character, and so on (*santati-jarā*). Both these two kinds burn relentlessly in all sentient beings.

It is an interesting question to ask: Whereas all living beings are subject to the two kinds of fire of ageing, why is this fact not evident in young people whose hair does not turn grey, whose teeth do not fall out, or whose skin does not have wrinkles as is the case with elderly persons?

The answer is that elderly persons show these signs of ageing, such as greying of hair, falling out of teeth, wrinkling skin, because they have sustained the relentless onslaught of ageing for so long.

This statement will be further substantiated thus: Beginning from the moment of conception as an invisible embryo, corporeality that has arisen ages and dissolves. By the moment the corporeality that has arisen, reaches the stage of ageing, fresh corporeality arises and in turn ages to go into dissolution. Thus, the corporeality that ages later than its preceding one, that has gone into ageing naturally, is of a more mature ageing. It is succeeded by corporeality that rises and goes into ageing itself, whose ageing is yet of a more mature ageing than its predecessor. In this way, successive arisings of corporeality go into ageing with greater and greater maturity. When days come to pass and months and years of the ceaseless process of ageing takes place at every moment, after the life periods lapse, the signs of the matured ageing inevitably become visible: greying of hair, falling out of teeth, wrinkling of skin, etc. are more and more apparent.

Whereas the physical signs of ageing, such as greying of hair, falling out of teeth and wrinkling of the skin are visible, cognizable by the eye, they are not ageing in its ultimate sense but are merely the scars of ageing. For ageing, in its ultimate sense is not a physical phenomenon but is a mental phenomenon which is cognizable by the mind only.

Let us take an analogy here: After a devastating flood, the roads, bridges, trees, grass, etc., are left in a visibly ravaged state. They are the signs of the flood that

has taken place. One who has not seen the flood can know the intensity of the flood from the damage done by it. Likewise, the burnt up area of a fire accident testifies to the scale of the fire that has caused it. Similarly, the fire of ageing has left its scars on the elderly person in a more pronounced manner. The workings of ageing (*jarā*) should be perceived from the state of the physical deterioration on a person.

The two kinds of ageing, the moment of ageing and the changing process, are taking place relentlessly and due to their working life periods such as youth, middle age, old age; or a person as a ten-year old, a twenty-year old, or a thirty-year old, etc. come to be so-called. All these changes in the life periods are taking place under the driving force of ageing.

The moment of ageing is immediately followed by the moment of dissolution so that each individual has myriads of moments of dissolution, which is death, taking place from moment-to-moment (*khaṇika-maraṇa*). However, only conventional death is understood by the average person, and the moment-to-moment deaths pass by unnoticed. [1161]

Death or dissolution (*maraṇa*) is of three kinds: momentary death (*khaṇika-maraṇa*), death through cutting off (*samuccheda-maraṇa*) and conventional death (*sammuti-maraṇa*).

1. The moment of death (*khaṇika-maraṇa*) means the dissolution of the conditioned mental and physical phenomena when they reach the moment of dissolution, that is, the third phase in the coming into being of mind and matter. A unit of mind and mental concomitants has an ephemeral existence which is characterized by three phases: The moment of arising, the moment of ageing and the moment of dissolution. The life of each unit of mind and mental concomitants, called thought (*citta*) lasts just these three fleeting moments, and each such unit is called one thought-moment (*cittakkhaṇa*).

Over one million million thought moments arise and vanish in a wink of an eye or in a flash of lightning. Of the 28 types of corporeality, 22 of them, i.e. leaving aside the four corporeal types of salient features (*lakkhaṇa*) and two corporeal types of intimation (*viññati*) have each a life of 17 thought-moments. The two corporeal types of intimation arise together with a thought, and cease together with the mind, they are followers of mind. Of the four corporeal types of salient features, corporeality that arises at conception comprising corporeality which

arises at the moment of conception (*upacaya-rūpa*) and corporeality which is the continued development of the corporeality which arose at conception (*santati-rūpa*), occur only at the moment of arising and lasts only one thought instant, which is a subdivision of one thought moment. The corporeality which arises at the stage of ageing and decay (*jaratā-rūpa*) lasts 49 thought instants. The corporeality which arises at the stage of dissolution (*aniccatā*) lasts for just one thought instant. Thus, a living being is subject to a million million times of dissolutions which are called momentary death (*khaṇika-maraṇa*).

2. Death through cutting off (*samuccheda-maraṇa*) means complete cutting off of the process of rise and fall which is the end of all suffering (*dukkha*), that is the intrinsic nature of conditioned phenomena; it is attained only by an Arahat. It is called cutting off because, after the death of an Arahat which is the ultimate realisation of Nibbāna without leaving behind any substrate of existence, no fresh aggregates of mind and matter arise. Just like a flame that is exhausted, the suffering round of rebirth is totally destroyed. Hence the death of an Arahat is called death through cutting off (*samuccheda-maraṇa*).

3. Conventional death (*sammuti-maraṇa*) means the conventional death of all living beings except the Buddha and the Arahats. It is the ceasing of one series of the life process that belongs to one existence, called the end of the life faculty.

Conventional death (*sammuti-maraṇa*) is of four kinds:

1. Death due to the end of the lifespan where the potential of productive deeds is still present (*āyukkhaya-maraṇa*).
2. Death due to the exhaustion or end of the potential of productive deeds even though the lifespan is not ended yet (*kammakkhaya-maraṇa*).
3. Death due to the end of both 1 and 2 above (*ubhayakkhaya-maraṇa*).
4. Death due to an abrupt intervention of some bad resultant (*kamma*), although the lifespan and the potential of productive deeds above are still present (*upacchedaka-maraṇa*).

The probability of death is ever present with all living beings regardless of realm or station in life. Any one of the four kinds of death may happen to a living being at any moment because there are all sorts of hazards that lurk around all of us. And, of course, when death claims anyone, there is no way of refusal or escape.

Note carefully that rebirth, ageing and death are like assassins that roam about the world, watching for an opportunity to strike any living being. Let us say someone is under the vigilance of three enemies who are out to kill him. Between the three of them, the first murderer says to his accomplices: "Friends, I shall lure him into some jungle, after telling him about the attraction of the jungle. There is no problem for me to do that." The second murderer says to [1162] the first accomplice: "Friend, after you have lured him into the jungle, I shall molest him and make him weak. There is no problem for me to do that." And the third murderer says to the second accomplice: "Friend, after you have molested him and made him weak, let it be my duty to cut off his head with my sword." Then the three accomplices carry out their plan successfully.

In the above simile, the moment when the first accomplice lures someone from amidst the circle of dear ones into any of the five new destinations is the work of birth (*jāti*). The molestation and weakening of the victim, rendering him quite helpless by the second accomplice is the work of ageing (*jarā*). The cutting off of his head with the sword by the third accomplice is the work of death (*maraṇa*).

Or in another simile: Birth (*jāti*) is like someone taking a hazardous journey; ageing (*jarā*) is like the weakening of that traveller from starvation on the journey; death (*maraṇa*) is like the enfeebled traveller, alone and helpless, falling victim to the beasts of prey that infest the forest.

12. Grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair all arise (*soka-parideva-dukkha-domanassupāyāsā sambhavanti*). Just as ageing and death must follow rebirth, so also when rebirth occurs in any of the four kinds of rebirth, the five kinds of loss occur as consequence: loss of relatives, wealth, health, morality and right view. When any of these losses happen, there is much grief, lamentation, pain, distress and anguish, which are the suffering in brief consequent to rebirth. There is of course untold misery that arises due to rebirth.

13. And so there is an origination of this whole mass of suffering (*evam-etassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandassa samudayo hoti*). In the long, long course of Saṁsāra, the truth that needs to be perceived is that, apart from mind and matter, there is, in reality, no person or being, no individual entity. It is a mere causal chain rooted in ignorance, dependent on which twelve causal factors arise, ending up in death; and yet the occurrence of these twelve factors is considered

good by the worldling as a human or Deva or Brahma, thus binding them to the chain of rebirth endlessly, but the whole thing is just an unalloyed mass of recurrent suffering (*dukkha*). This is the stark truth about existence that is generally cherished as one's life. This verse being straightforward, it is not paraphrased by the author. This is the doctrine of dependent origination.

The 108 Classes of Noble Ones

[This was originally inserted into the translation of the Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*, Khp 6; Snp 2:1), now in chapter 22 above. I have removed it to the Further Explanations, as that is more suitable.]

The way the number 108 is obtained is explained here. Leaving aside the four noble ones (*ariya*) who have attained the four paths, there are the four noble ones (*ariya*) who have attained the four fruits. Of these four, there are three kinds of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) attainers: 1) The one who has just one rebirth to undergo; 2) the one who has to undergo from two, three to six rebirths; 3) the one who has no possibility of rebirth beyond the seventh existence. Now, the four Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) attainers are of four categories according to the way of practice by which they have attained it. Dividing the three kinds above into the four modes of practice makes twelve classes of Stream-enterers (*Sotāpatti*) at the fruition stage.

There are two distinct phases in meditation for insight: up to the dispelling of the hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) is the period of practice (*paṭipadā-khetta*); from that stage upwards till the attainment of path-knowledge is the period of the super knowledges (*abhiññā-khetta*), after having gained insight.

In the period of practice, a yogi, who can dispel the hindrances without trouble, is called "one who has facile practice;" a yogi, who can dispel the hindrances with difficulty, is called "one who has difficult practice." In "the period of the super knowledges," a yogi with insight, who attains path-knowledge quickly, is called "a quick attainer;" a yogi with insight, who attains path-knowledge tardily, is called "a slow attainer." Thus there are these four modes of practice for each of the three kinds of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*) attainers, making 12 classes of Stream-enterers (*Sotāpatti*).

With the Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmī-puggala*), there are three kinds: Once-returning to the Sense Realms, Once-returning to the Form Realms, and Once-

returning to the Formless Realms. These three kinds multiplied by the four modes of practice makes twelve classes of Once-returners.

With the Non-returners (*Anāgāmī-puggala*), there are five kinds: Non-returners extinguished in between (*antarā parinibbāyī-anāgāmī*); Non-returners who cut the time short (*upahacca-parinibbāyī-anāgāmī*); Non-returners who extinguish with an intention (*sasaṅkhāra-parinibbāyī-anāgāmī*); Non-returners who extinguish without an intention (*asaṅkhāra-parinibbāyī-anāgāmī*); Non-returners who flow upstream to to the highest Brahma realm (*uddhaṁsota-akaniṭṭha-gāmi-anāgāmī*).

The Non-returners dwell in the five Pure Abodes (*Suddhāvāsa*), out of which five classes of Non-returners (*Anāgāmī*) dwell in Aviha realm, five in Atappā realm, five in Sudassa realm, five in Sudassī realm, and four, those other than Non-returners who flow upstream to to the highest Brahma realm, thus making 24 classes of Non-returner (*Anāgāmī-puggala*).

The Arahats are of two kinds: the dry-insight (*sukkha-vipassaka*) Arahat and the coupled with tranquillity (*samatha-yānika*) Arahat. The former refers to those noble ones (*ariya*) who attain the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) without achieving absorption (*jhāna*) but through insight development alone; the latter to those noble ones (*ariya*) who use absorption (*jhāna*) and consequent psychic powers as the vehicle of attaining the Arahat fruition. Adding up the four types of noble ones (*ariya*), we have: Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), 12 kinds; Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmī*), 12 kinds; Non-returners (*Anāgāmī*), 24 kinds; Arahat, 2 kinds of attainers, 54 in total.

In gaining path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*), a noble one (*ariya*) may, at the moment of the arising of path-knowledge (*magga-ñāṇa*), either have his consciousness led by faith (*saddhā*) or wisdom (*paññā*). Thus there are two basic categories of noble ones (*ariya*), either of whom make up the above 54 classes. That is why it is said that there are altogether 108 classes of noble ones (*ariya*).

The Frightful Nature of Sensual Desires

The following account of how detachment from sensual pleasures takes place (*kāmādīnava-kathā*) is based on the Discourse concerning Potaliya (*Potaliya-sutta*, MN 54):

1. The five objects of sensual pleasures are less of enjoyment, and more of suffering and grief (*appassāda-kāmā*).

The faults and defects of the five objects of sensual pleasures are, in fact, quite numerous.

2. The five objects of sensual pleasures are like a piece of fleshless bone (*aṭṭhi-kaṅkalūpama-kāmā*).

When a lean and hungry dog finds a piece of bone completely stripped bare of any flesh, with saliva trickling down from its mouth, it bites the bone but it cannot get satisfaction. Because of the rank smell of the bone, the dog cannot leave it and go elsewhere but continues biting the bone from the top to the bottom, from the bottom to the top and again in the middle, with the ardent expectation of relishing the meat and getting satisfied, but this dog may meet with its death without finding any meat on the bone.

In the same way, men and women, all sentient beings, cling to the bone-like material objects of sensual pleasures, both animate and inanimate, such as gold, silver, land and estates, wives and children, etc., just like the lean hungry dog. Although they enjoy having these objects for a long time with much longing and craving, they never become satisfied. They remain in great hope of finding relish and satisfaction. Being attracted and overwhelmed by the sense desires which were aroused in them by the objects of sensual pleasures, sentient beings cannot abandon these objects. Without any thought of renouncing the world to free themselves from the bonds of the pleasures of the senses, they fondly cling to them, eventually to meet their death at the feet of their wives and children while fulfilling their obligations of the household life.

Therefore, the five material objects of sensual pleasures are very much like a piece of fleshless bone as they are full of pain and suffering. Indeed, the desires for sensual pleasures are utterly undependable and full of faults and defects!

3. The five sensual pleasures are like a chunk of meat (*maṁsa-pesūpama-kāmā*).

Take, for example, an eagle that flies away after snatching a chunk of meat, it is chased by a number of other birds which gather round and attack it. As long as the eagle holds the meat, it is subject to relentless attack and has to endure much suffering. But, as soon as he discards the piece of meat, he is relieved of such

woe. Another eagle, which, in turn, picks up this piece of meat and flies away, is also being chased, surrounded and attacked by other birds. Thus each eagle which becomes attached to the meat, which snatches it and flies away, faces the same predicament.

In a similar manner, he who clings to the objects of sensual pleasures as "mine," "my own," is subject to the constant dangers of robbery, looting, and cheating, by the five enemies: water, fire, kings, thieves and unloved heirs, who will wreak havoc and misery at every opportunity.

If, on encountering these enemies, he puts up a defence against them to the best of his ability, he is likely to lose his life under unfavourable circumstances. As long as he keeps on clinging to these [269] objects of sensual pleasures, he remains surrounded by all kinds of dangers, and lives a life of restriction. Only through discarding them all will he get the opportunity to live in peace. Therefore, the five material objects of sensual pleasures are very much like a chunk of meat; they are full of pain and suffering. Indeed, the desires for sensual pleasures are utterly undependable and full of faults and defects!

4. The five objects of sensual pleasures are like a firebrand of grass (*tiṇukkūpama-kāmā*).

When a large bundle of grass is lighted and carried against the wind, it will burn from the tip downwards, and unless it is thrown away, it will burn parts of the carrier's limbs such as his hands and legs, etc. He would perhaps meet death or suffer intense pain bordering on death.

In the same manner, the material objects of sensual pleasure, when grasped and taken hold of with the hands of craving as "my own," "mine," "my property," would burn all those, who rejoice in their possessions, with the fires of anxieties for their safekeeping. In spite of endearing care and attention, if these material objects of sensual pleasures, through the natural course of things, become despoiled and wasted, they would develop into a big fire of suffering through anxiety and worry. At times, these raging fires of the material objects of sensual pleasures will develop into the fires of death (*maraṇa*).

Therefore, to take possession of these material objects, both animate and inanimate, such as wives and children, land and estates, etc., is just like taking possession of the blazing flames and fires. The five material objects of sensual pleasures are very much like burning bundles of grass, they are full of pain and

suffering. Indeed, the desires for sensual pleasures are utterly undependable and full of faults and defects!

5. The five objects of sensual pleasures are like a pit of embers (*aṅgārakāsūpama-kāmā*).

Being covered by ashes with no visible smoke or flame, the pit of acacia wood embers looks deceptive as if it were not on fire. Anyone who descends into the pit, which has no recognizable signs of fire, would get burnt more severely than being scorched by a blazing flame. He may even lose his life.

In a similar manner, the five material objects of sensual pleasures appear superficially to be pleasant, as manifested through sight, sound, smell, taste and touch, and do not seem to be burning hot. By craving for and taking into possession these objects, when one descends into the ember pit of sensual pleasures, one suffers great pain and misery. Burning with visible blazing flames is apparent to all, but the burning of various tubers, such as arum, yam, etc., which are kept buried in a heap of embers, is not apparent, though the intensity of heat there is much greater than that of a blazing fire.

In the same way, those who descend into and sink into the ember-pit of sensual pleasures, are burnt, not with flames visible to all, but with an intense internal heat. Even as the various tubers, such as arum, yam, etc., kept buried in the ember-pit get burnt, so they are burnt internally by latent heat generated by various thoughts of sensual pleasures, by various difficulties encountered in earning their livelihood, and by all kinds of worry involved in maintaining and feeding their families, they suffer a great anguish unknown to others. This sensual world, which is replete with material objects of sensual pleasure, is like a large pit of embers; the bigger the number of the material objects of sensual pleasures, the greater the mass of burning embers in the pit. Sentient beings of the sensual world are like the tubers, such as arum, yam, etc., which are kept buried inside the burning embers.

Therefore, the five objects of sensual pleasures are very much like a pit of embers; they are full of pain and suffering. Indeed, the desires for sensual pleasures are utterly undependable and full of faults and defects!

6. The five objects of sensual pleasures are indeed like a dream (*supinakūpama-kāmā*).

A person, while in slumber, may dream of himself being a wealthy man, a provincial governor (*padesa-rājā*) or an emperor (*eka-rājā*), enjoying to his heart's content whatever pleasure of the senses he wishes, thus leading a life of luxury. In his dream, everything seems so real. It appears as if there would be no end of this luxurious living, but when he suddenly wakes up before completely enjoying the luxurious pleasures in the dream, he finds them untraceable, intangible, and of no avail.

In the same way, men and Devas of the sensual world are indulging themselves in their respective [270] mundane and celestial pleasures, being led on by craving, and being deluded by craving (*taṇhā*), pride (*māna*) and wrong view (*diṭṭhi*) into thinking that their life of pleasure is real, permanent and enduring. They are just dreaming. During the infinitesimally short duration of the present life time, while in the course of enjoying the dream-like sensual pleasures, one has to pass into another existence, leaving behind all these sensual pleasures one is so attached to. Then, just as all those pleasurable things, which one encounters in one's dream, vanish without any trace the moment one wakes up, so also all the material objects of sensual pleasures which one has clung to as "my own," "mine," "my property," during the short duration of the present life, all of them without exception, turn out to be things which have nothing to do with oneself.

Therefore, the five objects of sensual pleasures are very much like things in a dream, they are full of pain and suffering. Indeed, the desires for sensual pleasures are utterly undependable and full of faults and defects!

7. The five objects of sensual pleasures are like articles taken for use on a temporary loan (*yācitakūpama-kāmā*).

For example, there are those people, who, having no possessions of their own, have to hire jewellery, such as precious stones, gold and silver, to wear on festive occasions. While they enjoy wearing them as their own with all the happiness that brings, they are asked by the owners to return them, and then they feel sad and dejected because they have none of the borrowed treasures in their hands after returning them to the owners.

In a similar manner, when their past meritorious deeds produce beneficial results in the way of enjoyment of sensual pleasures, they are liable to be deluded into thinking that such pleasures would last forever. When these objects are lost or destroyed as a result of one's past evil deeds, or when one passes away,

they turn out to be things of no use to oneself. Taking his course in life according to circumstances, he who had thought of himself as the real possessor of such sensual pleasures, is left with nothing in hand.

Therefore, the five objects of sensual pleasures are very much like articles taken on loan for temporary use, they are full of pain and suffering. Indeed, the desires for sensual pleasures are utterly undependable and full of faults and defects!

8. The five sensual pleasures are like a tree laden with fruit (*rukkha-phalūpama-kāmā*).

For example, there is a big tree bearing fruit in a big grove near a village. A certain man, roaming about in the grove in search of some fruit to eat, sees the tree and reasons: "This tree is full of tasty fruit but there is not a single fruit which has fallen on the ground. I'm skilful in climbing trees, so I will climb the tree and eat the fruit to my heart's content. I will also pluck them until the fold of my waist-cloth is full." With such thoughts, the man climbs the tree, and eats the fruit until he is full; he also plucks enough fruit to fill the fold of his waist-cloth. In the meantime, a second man with a knife in hand enters the grove also in search of fruit to eat. He sees the same tree laden with fruit and thinks: "This tree is full of sweet-tasting fruit. There is no fruit on the ground. I am not skilful in climbing trees. Therefore, I will cut and fell the tree from the base and eat the fruit till I am satisfied. I will also collect them until the fold of my waist cloth is full." Then the man cuts down the tree. The first man already up in the tree is unable to descend before it is felled by the second man; he will either be maimed or may even lose his life.

Similarly, a wealthy man, enjoying fully the pleasures of the senses, could be approached by another person, who would beat him up and rob him of his material objects or sensual pleasures unless he disposed of them speedily. He would be severely beaten and injured or even meet with death on account of them. If he passed away with an obsession for, or a strong attachment to, sensual pleasures, he would meet with all kinds of suffering such as rebirth in the lower realm (*apāya*).

Therefore, the five objects of sensual pleasures are very much like the tree fully laden with fruit, they are full of pain and suffering. Indeed, the desires for sensual pleasures are utterly undependable and full of faults and defects!

Or, the five objects of sensual pleasures are like a ripe poison fruit. For example, there is a poison fruit called Kimpakka or Kimphala, which resembles the most [271] relishing ripe mango fruit, pleasing to the eye with alluring aroma and taste; but it causes those eating it to suffer untold pain even leading to death. Those who happen to eat this fruit just because of its colour, smell and taste writhe with pain, with their intestines breaking up and ultimately die in agony like one who has taken arsenic mixed with lime juice.

In a similar manner, the five objects of sensual pleasures are deceptive in outward appearance, deluding those without the eye of wisdom into thinking that they are indeed various delightful, pleasurable materials. Allured by their attractive outward appearance, those who take delight and indulge in them become suffocated with the unwholesome (*akusala*) poisons of greed, hatred and delusion and after going through all kinds of writhing pains and suffering through worry, anxiety, etc., they helplessly meet with death. Even after death, on account of the poison of sensual pleasures, they do not attain a happy existence, instead they encounter further miseries and difficulties such as rebirth in the downfall (*apāya*).

Therefore, the five objects of sensual pleasures are very much like a ripe poison fruit, they are full of pain and suffering. Therefore, the desires for sensual pleasures are utterly undependable and full of faults and defects!

9. The five objects of sensual pleasures are like a chopping block on which chopping was done with knives and axes (*asi-sūnūpama-kāmā*).

For example, it is on the chopping block that criminals and hunted animals, such as deer, etc., are slaughtered; the meat of such game is also cut up and minced on the chopping block. The chopping block is where sentient beings are killed and minced.

In a similar manner, the five objects of sensual pleasures destroy all beings who take delight and indulge in them by cutting up and mincing them with the knife and axe of their own craving for sensual pleasures. All those, who happen to place their necks on the chopping block of sensual pleasures cannot develop the elements of renunciation (*nekkhamma-dhātu*) to escape to the open space and broad highway of concentration meditation and insight meditation, are destroyed and cut up into pieces with the knife and axe of craving on that very

chopping block of sensual pleasures. They come to the end of their lives in a terrible manner.

Therefore, the five objects of sensual pleasures are very much like the chopping block on which the chopping or mincing of meat is carried out, they are full of pain and suffering. Indeed, the desires for sensual pleasures are utterly undependable and full of faults and defects!

10. The five objects of sensual pleasures are indeed like the sharp edge of a sword or a spear (*satti-sūlūpama-kāmā*).

For example, the exceedingly sharp edge of a sword or a spear cuts deep and pierces anything that comes into contact with it; they are only weapons for killing and destroying enemies, etc. So also, the five objects of sensual pleasures, possessing the quality of sharpness, cut deep and pierce anyone coming into contact or becoming entangled with them. For example, anyone pierced by the edge of the sword or the spear of a visible object (*rūpārammaṇa*) is like the fish caught by a baited hook in its intestines; he cannot extricate himself from it all at once, but follows its dictates with passive obedience. Being thus inflicted by the sharp edge of the sword or the spear of a visible object, he becomes forgetful and can no longer pay attention to the practice of morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*) which he has formerly cultivated. Thus he ends up in ruin. This example applies equally to the objects of hearing (*saddārammaṇa*), and the others.

Thus, the five objects of sensual pleasures, resembling the sharp edges of five swords or spears, are only weapons for killing and destroying beings. All beings, who have not yet discarded craving for sensual pleasures, have to remain like prisoners amidst the swords or spears of the five sensual objects aiming straight at them in whichever existence they might find themselves. The said five objects of sensual pleasures would automatically get themselves embedded in all beings coming into contact with them, without sparing anyone.

Therefore, the five objects of sensual pleasures are very much like the sharp edge of a sword or a spear, they are full of pain and suffering. Indeed, the desires for sensual pleasures are utterly undependable and full of faults and defects!

11. The five objects of sensual pleasures are indeed like the head of [272] a poisonous snake (*sappa-sirūpama-kāmā*).

The head of a poisonous snake, being filled with potent, deadly venom, is loathsome and frightful. Just as the head of a poisonous snake would cause untold harm to all who happen to come into contact with it, so also the five objects of sensual pleasures are loathsome and frightful since they are filled with a kind of potent poison which could generate the bad blood of the defilements (*kilesa*), in those who happen to come into contact with them or who are bitten by them.

Just as the head of a poisonous snake would bring only harm but no benefit to the world, so the five objects of sensual pleasures would bring all kinds of frightful danger to the people of the world. Just as one who happens to come into contact with or step on the head of a poisonous snake, so one who happens to come into contact with, or step on the head of, the poisonous snake of the five objects of sensual pleasures, would be exposed to a great danger.

Therefore, the five objects of sensual pleasures are very much like the head of a poisonous snake, they are full of pain and suffering. Indeed, the desires for sensual pleasures are utterly undependable and full of faults and defects!

Or, as is said in the Discourse about the Dangers (*Bhaya-sutta*, AN 6.23): Indeed, great, frightful danger is the real name for the five sensual pleasures! Suffering is the real name for the five sensual pleasures! Disease is the real name for the five sensual pleasures! Big abscess is the real name for the five sensual pleasures! Tight fastening is the real name for the five sensual pleasures! Inescapable bog is the real name for the five sensual pleasures.

More Reflections

Ten Important Rules of Enunciation

The noble practice is expounded in words and phrases that are perfect. In this matter there are ten important rules of enunciation of words. They are:

1. Unstressed syllables (*sithila-akkhara*), e.g. ka, ga, ca, ja, ṭa, ḍa, ta, da, pa, ba.

2. Stressed syllables (*dhanita-akkhara*), e.g. kha, gha, cha, jha, ṭha, ḍha, tha, dha, pha, bha.

3. Syllables associated with long vowels (*dīgha-akkhara*), e.g. kā, kī, kū, ke, ko, etc.

4. Syllables associated with short vowels (*rassa-akkhara*), e.g. ka, ki, ku, etc.

5. Weighty syllables (*garu-akkhara*), all the long syllables and short syllables with conjunct-consonants trailing behind belong to this class, e.g. in *santa* (*sa-anta*): the short-sounding syllable, *sa*, becomes *san* here, which is then a weighty syllable (*garu-akkhara*).

6. All other short-sounding syllables (*lahu-akkhara* or *rassa-akkhara*) with no conjunct-consonants following.

7. Nasal sounds uttered with a closed mouth (*niggahīta-akkhara*): the sound being produced by closing the mouth letting the sound escape through the nose is called *niggahīta*, and is represented by ṁ.

8. Sounds uttered with the mouth opened (*vimutta-akkhara*): e.g. kā, gā, etc.

9. Two successive sounds with a connected sound (*sambandha-akkhara*): e.g. in *upasampadāpekkho*, no pause is to intervene between *dā-* and *-pek*, but the whole word is to be uttered without a break in between.

10. Separated sounds (*vavatthita-akkhara*): e.g. in *suṇātu me*, there must be a pause between *suṇātu* and *me*.

The above ten rules are called the ten discernments of syllables (*vyañjana-buddhi*). They are summarized in a verse in a Vinaya commentary:[368]

Sithila-dhanitañ-ca dīgha-rassaṁ,
lahuka-garukañ-ca niggahītaṁ;
sambaddhaṁ vavatthitaṁ vimuttaṁ:
dasadhā vyañjana-buddhiyā pabhedo.

Unstressed, stressed, long, short, light, heavy and nasal; connected, separated, open: this is the analysis of the tenfold discernment of syllables.

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[368] [I have been unable to find the verse. I have included a translation for ease of understanding.]

Syllables (*vyañjana*) means the words that are uttered as vocal expressions of the mind. Discernment of syllables (*vyañjana-buddhi*) means the mind and mental concomitants that cause the utterance of words. The words thus uttered also are called discernments of syllables (*vyañjana-buddhi*) in a metaphorical sense.

It is not all the languages that conform to the above ten rules of enunciation. For instance, in Tamil only one or two of the rules are met with. In Kirāta, the language of a mountain people, there are no labial sounds. In Yun (?) every word is pronounced heavily. In Persian (*Pārasika*) all words are pronounced as nasal (*niggahīta*). A discourse made by anyone in those tongues is therefore deficient in the linguistic aspect.

The Buddha expounds the doctrine (*pariyatti*) in accordance with the ten rules of enunciation. Hence in the doctrine the noble practice is perfect in words and phrases.

The perfection of the words and phrases is discussed along with the grammatical rules, such as conduit (*netti*), etc., in The Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) and its great sub-commentary (*mahā-ṭīkā*), other commentaries and sub-commentaries. Here we are not going into these details.

The Cosmos

A world-element[369] [1119] is called a *cakka-vāḷa* or *loka-dhātu* and is bounded on four sides with tall mountains like a stone fencing. *Cakka* means circular; *vāḷa* means ring of mountains. The term *Cakka-vāḷa* comes to be so-called because it is a world-element encircled by rocky mountains. A world-element is 1,203,450 leagues from east to west, and from south to north. The circumference of this world-element is 3,610,350 leagues.

In a world-element, the earth's thickness is 240,000 leagues, the upper half of it being earth and the lower half being rock in structure.

The earth is supported by a mass of water which is 480,000 leagues in thickness. Beneath the mass of water there is the mass of air which is 960,000 leagues supporting it. And beneath the mass of air is the infinite expanse of space. This is the foundational structure of a world-element.

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[369] [This is moved out of the text and into the Further Explanations.]

At the centre of the earth's surface, there arises Mount Sineru. The lower part of which is submerged in the ocean that is 84,000 leagues deep and rises 84,000 leagues above the water.

1. Encircling Mount Sineru, there is the first ring of mountains called Yugandhara, half of which, 42,000 leagues is submerged in the ocean and half of which, 42,000 leagues rise up above the water.
2. Beyond the first ring of Yugandhara mountains there is the second ring of mountains called Īsadhara of which 21,000 leagues is submerged in the ocean and 21,000 leagues rise up above the water.
3. Beyond the second ring of Īsadhara mountains there is the third ring of mountains called Karavīka of which 10,500 leagues is submerged in the ocean and 10,500 leagues rise up above the water.
4. Beyond the third ring of Karavīka mountains there is the fourth ring of mountains called Sudassana of which 5,250 leagues is submerged in the water and 5,250 leagues rise up above the water.
5. Beyond the fourth ring of Sudassana mountains there is the fifth ring of mountains called Nemindhara of which 2,625 leagues is submerged in the ocean and 2,625 leagues rise up above the water.
6. Beyond the fifth ring of Nemindhara mountains there is the sixth ring of mountains called Vinataka of which 1,312 leagues is submerged in the ocean and 1,312 leagues rise up above the water. [1120]
7. Beyond the sixth ring of Vinataka mountains there is the seventh ring of mountains called Assakaṇṇa of which 656 leagues is submerged in the ocean and 656 leagues rise up above the water.

Between Mount Sineru and the encircling rings of mountains, there are seven rings of rivers called Sīdā.

In the ocean, lying to the southern side of Mount Sineru, there is the southern island continent called Jambudīpa, called after the Rose Apple tree growing at the forefront of the island, and this island is surrounded by 500 lesser islands.

Similarly, in the ocean, lying to the western side of Mount Sineru, there is the western island continent called Aparagoyāna; on the northern side, the northern

island continent of Uttarakuru; add on the eastern side, the eastern island continent called Pubbavideha, each of them surrounded by 500 lesser islands.

In the southern island continent of Jambūdīpa, the Himavanta mountains are 500 leagues high and 3,000 leagues broad, lengthwise and breathwise. It is graced by 84,000 peaks.

The Rose Apple tree growing at the forefront of Jambūdīpa island continent is of these dimensions: Its crown is fifteen leagues across; from the ground up to the trunk where the big boughs branch out, the height of the trunk is 50 leagues, the big boughs are each 50 leagues long, each with a foliage 100 leagues across, and 100 leagues high.

Of the same dimensions, there are the following six great trees which last till the end of the world-element: The Trumpet flower tree in the realm of the Asuras at the old site of the Tāvatiṁsa Devas, at the foot of Mount Sineru; the Silk Cotton tree in the realm of Garuḍas; the Kadamba tree in the western island continent; the Wishing tree in the northern island continent; the Rain tree in the eastern island continent; and the Indian Coral tree in the Tāvatiṁsa Realm.

The circular ring of mountains that marks the limit of the universe has 82,000 leagues submerged under the ocean and 82,000 leagues rising up above the water.

The shape of the Jambūdīpa island continent is a trapezium, the shape of the front purl of a bullock-cart; the western island continent is of the shape of a circular brass mirror; the eastern island continent is a crescent; and the northern island continent is a square. The inhabitants of those island continents are said to have faces that have the same shape as that of the respective island continents.[370]

In each world-element there is a mansion of the moon which has a diameter of 49 leagues; and a mansion of the sun which has a diameter of 50 leagues.

The realm of the Tāvatiṁsa Devas, the realm of the Asuras, the Avīci Niraya, the Jambūdīpa island continent, each of these four places is 10,000 leagues wide. They are called the four areas of 10,000 leagues width.

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[370] This information is from the sub-commentary to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*), Vol. I.

The northern island continent is 7,000 leagues wide; the eastern island continent is of the same size; the western island continent is 8,000 leagues wide.

All the above features constitute one world-element. The void spaces where three of the world-elements touch one another are the desolate regions between the worlds (*lokantarika*).

In each world-element, the three lower worlds: the animal world, the Petas' realm and the realm of the Asuras, have their abodes on the earth, side by side with the human world. Underneath the layer of earth lie the eight Niraya realms, each below the other, and each surrounded by lesser realms of continuous suffering called auxiliary (*ussada*) Nirayas. The Niraya realms, the animal world, the Petas realm and the realm of the Asuras are called the four lower worlds (*apāya*).

The human world is located on the earth. The Deva realm of the Four Great Kings is located on the summit of Mount Yugandhara, at half the height of Mount Sineru. The [1121] Tāvatiṁsa Realm is located on the summit of Mount Sineru. These two Deva realms are, therefore, terrestrial. Above the Tāvatiṁsa Realm lies the Yāma Deva realm; above that realm, the Tusita Realm; above that realm lies the Nimmānarati Deva realm; above that realm lies the Paranimmitavasavatti Deva realm. These six Deva realms, together with the human world, are called the seven fortunate sensuous realms (*kāma-sugati-bhūmi*). These seven fortunate realms and the four lower worlds of Apāya together are called the eleven sensuous realms (*kāma-bhūmi*).

Above the six Deva realms pertaining to the sensuous sphere, there are three Brahma realms of Brahmas' retinue (*Brahma-pārisajjā*), Brahmas' ministers (*Brahma-purohitā*) and Great Brahmas (*Mahā-brahma*) which are the three Brahma realms pertaining to the first absorption (*jhāna*) of the form realm (*rūpāvacara*). They are on the same plane.

Above the three Brahma realms pertaining to the first absorption (*jhāna*) of the form realms, there are the three Brahma realms pertaining to the second absorption (*jhāna*) of the form realm on the same plane: Brahmas of limited radiance (*Parittābhā*), Brahmas of measureless radiance (*Appamāṇābhā*), and Brahmas of streaming radiance (*Abhassarā*).

Above the three Brahma realms pertaining to the second absorption (*jhāna*) of the form realm, there are the three Brahma realms pertaining to the third absorption (*jhāna*) of the form realm on the same plane: Brahmas of limited glory (*Paritta-subhā*), Brahmas of measureless glory (*Appamāṇa-subha*), and Brahmas of refulgent glory (*Subha-kiṇṇa*).

Above these realms there are two Brahma realms also pertaining to the form realm on the same level: Very Fruitful (*Vehapphala*) and Non-percipient beings (*Asaññā-satta*). Above these are the Bathed in their own Prosperity (*Avihā*), the Untormenting (*Atappā*), the Fair-to-see (*Sudassā*), the Clear-sighted (*Sudassī*) and the Supreme (*Akaniṭṭha*); five pure Abodes, lying one above the other successively. The Very Fruitful, Non-percipient and the Five Pure Abodes pertain to the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) of the form realm. Thus there are altogether sixteen Brahma realms pertaining to the form realm.

Above the sixteen Brahma realms pertaining to the form realm, there are the four Brahma realms pertaining to the formless realm: Infinity of Space (*Ākāsānañcāyatana*), Infinity of Consciousness (*Viññāṇañcāyatana*), Nothingness (*Ākiñcaññāyatana*), and Neither-Consciousness-nor-Non-Consciousness (*Nevasaññānāsaññāyatana*), lying one above the other successively.

Thus, there are sixteen Brahma realms of the form realm and four Brahma realms of formless realm, altogether making 20 Brahma realms. When the eleven realms of the sensuous sphere are added to them, there are the 31 realms in a world-element. This is a brief description of their location.

The Eight Causes of Pregnancy

Possible [736] causes of pregnancy:[371]

1. By copulating.
2. By coming into physical contact.
3. By inserting a man's loin cloth into the vagina.
4. By swallowing the semen.

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[371] [This section was originally in the story about Ven. Sudiṇṇa, whose misdeed caused the laying down of the first of the Exclusion Rules.]

5. By stroking the navel.
6. By seeing the male's appearance.
7. By hearing the male's sound.
8. By getting the male's odour.

Of these,

1. Pregnancy through copulation is explicit.

2. Some women develop strong sexual feeling when the monthly period comes, pull men's hands and hair-knot, and stroke their limbs, big and small, and take pleasure thereby, which makes her pregnant. Thus, through physical contact pregnancy happens.

3. During the lifetime of the Buddha, the monk Udāyī gazed at the private parts of his ex-wife and had a discharge of semen; he asked her to wash the soiled robe. She swallowed part of the semen and put part of it together with the robe into her vagina. By so doing, she became pregnant. Thus, through the insertion of men's loin cloth into the vagina, pregnancy takes place.

4. A Birth Story (*Jātaka*) tells of a doe, the mother of Migasiṅga the recluse. When she was in heat she came to the place where the old recluse, Migasiṅga's father, urinated, and took the urine together with the semen. By so doing she became pregnant and gave birth to the baby Migasiṅga. Thus, through the swallowing of semen pregnancy occurs.

5. In the Birth Story about the Wise Suvaṇṇasāma (*Suvaṇṇasāma-jātaka*, Ja 540), Sakka, foreseeing that the Bodhisatta's parents would become blind, and wanting them to have a son, asked the wise recluse Dukūla whether sexual intercourse was permissible to recluses. When the reply was: "Whether it is permissible or not, we became ascetics because we do not want to do that," Sakka told him to stroke Pārikā's navel during menstruation. Dukūla did as he was told and Pārikā became pregnant and gave birth to Bodhisatta Suvaṇṇasāma. Thus, stroking a [737] women's navel is another cause for pregnancy. Similarly, while menstruation was occurring to a rich man's daughter, Diṭṭhamaṅgalika, the Bodhisatta recluse, Mātaṅga, stroked her navel which made her pregnant and her son, Maṇḍavya, was born. The mother of Prince Caṇḍa Pajjota, during

the menses, felt a scorpion walking across her navel, and she also became pregnant and gave birth to the prince.

6. Being deprived of copulation with men, some women in this world who eye men lustfully while on their periods and even staying at home can become pregnant. In Ceylon there was a court lady, to whom the same thing happened. Thus, through the sight of the male's appearance pregnancy happens.

7. No male is known among the pond herons. When they hear thunder and are in heat, they become pregnant. Sometimes pregnancy occurs to hens on hearing the crowing of a cock. Similarly, pregnancy happens to cows as they hear the bellowing of a bull. Thus, through the hearing of the male's sound pregnancy takes place.

8. Sometimes, cows conceive when they get the smell of a bull. Thus, through the male's odour, pregnancy takes place.

These eight causes for pregnancy should particularly be noted.

The First Treatise on the Perfections

[Previously this was chapter VII, entitled On Miscellany, but the whole chapter is only about one subject, the perfections (*pāramī*), hence I have retitled it. And as its content fits better with the Further Explanations I have included it here.]

Homage to the Fortunate One, the Worthy One,
the Perfectly Self-Awakened One

What follows are miscellaneous notes on the perfections for the benefit of those who aspire to Buddhahood. Here we furnish miscellaneous notes on the ten perfections (*pāramī*) as mentioned in the commentary on the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*) for the benefit of those who aspire to the supreme goal of Perfect Self-Awakening and omniscience, and to enable them to acquire skill in comprehending, practising and accumulating the requisites for Awakening.

This chapter will deal with the following pertinent features of the perfections in the form of 16 questions and answers.

1. What are the perfections?
2. Why are they called perfections?
3. How many perfections are there?
4. In what sequence are the perfections arranged?
5. What are the characteristics, functions, etc. of the perfections?
6. What are the basic conditions of the perfections?
7. What are the factors which defile the perfections?
8. What are the factors which purify the perfections?
9. What are the factors which oppose the perfections?
10. What is the method for practising the perfections?
11. What is the complete analysis of the perfections?
12. What is the synopsis of the perfections?
13. What factors accomplish the perfections?
14. How long does it take to accomplish the perfections?

15. What advantages accrue from the perfections?

16. What is the fruit of the perfections?

1. What are the Perfections?

The answer to the question is: The noble qualities, such as generosity, morality, etc., not spoiled by craving, pride or wrong view, but founded on great compassion and wisdom which is skill in seeking merit, are to be named perfections (*pāramī*).

When giving alms (*dāna*), if it is tainted with craving, thinking: "This is my alms giving;" if it is tainted with pride, thinking: "This alms giving is mine;" if it is tainted with wrong view, thinking: "This alms giving is myself," such alms giving is said to be spoiled by craving, pride or wrong view. It is only the kind of alms giving not spoiled by craving, pride or wrong view which could be termed a perfection. The same applies to the observance of morality, renunciation, etc.

To be qualified as a perfection, deeds of merit, such as generosity, morality, etc., should not only be free from the taints of craving, pride or wrong view, but should be founded on great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā*) and wisdom which is skill in seeking merit (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*). [50]

A Bodhisatta should be able to develop immense sympathy for all beings, close or distant, as if they were all his own children, this is great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā*). Without discriminating between friend and foe, he should look upon all sentient beings as poor sufferers in Saṁsāra, where they are burning with the fires of craving, hatred and delusion, and also with the fires of birth, ageing, death, grief, lamentation, pain, distress and despair. Contemplating thus, he should develop vigorous compassion for them. His compassion should be so great as to enable him to go to the rescue of all beings from Saṁsāra, even sacrificing his life. Such compassion is called great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā*) which forms the basis of all the perfections.

The Bodhisatta, in his life as the recluse Sumedha, was so accomplished in spiritual attainments at the time he met Buddha Dīpaṅkara that he could achieve his own liberation right there and then had he so desired. But as a great being endowed with supreme compassion, he bore personal suffering in Saṁsāra for the long duration of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons to fulfil the perfections in order to liberate suffering beings.

The wisdom which is skill in doing deeds of merit, such as generosity, morality, etc., so that they become basic means and support for the attainment of omniscience is called skill in seeking merit (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*). A man of good family, who aspires to Buddhahood, should engage in meritorious deeds such as generosity, morality, etc., with the sole aim of attaining omniscience.[372] The wisdom that enables him to aim at, and wish for, omniscience as the only fruit of his good deeds, is called skill in seeking merit.

The aforesaid great compassion and skill in seeking merit are the fundamentals for his becoming a Buddha and for the practice of the perfections. One who aspires to Buddhahood should, first of all, endeavour to become accomplished in these two fundamentals. Only the qualities, such as generosity, morality, etc., developed on the basis of these two principles can become true perfections.

2. Why are they called Perfections?

It may be asked why the ten virtues, such as generosity, morality, etc., are called perfections. The Pāḷi word "*pāramī*" is the combination of "*parama*" and "*ī*." "*Parama*" means "supreme" and is used here as a designation of Bodhisattas, because they are the highest of beings endowed with the extraordinary virtues of generosity, morality, etc. they are supreme.

Or, because they fulfil and protect such special virtues as generosity, morality, etc.; because they behave as though they bind on and attract other beings to them by means of these virtues; because they purify others by removing their defilements in a most ardent manner; because they proceed to the supreme Nibbāna; because they know their next existence as they comprehend the present life; because they practise virtues, such as generosity, morality, etc., in an incomparable manner, as if these virtues were ingrained in their mental continuum; because they dispel and destroy all alien hordes of defilements which threaten them the Bodhisattas are called supreme (*parama*).

A Bodhisatta is incomparably endowed with special virtues, such as generosity, morality, etc. This accounts for the emergence of the utterance and the knowledge: "This person is a Bodhisatta; he is a *parama*, a supreme being." Thus,

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[372] He should not wish for benefits that really lead to suffering in Saṁsāra.

the special virtues of generosity, morality, etc., come to be known as what belongs to a supreme being, the perfections (*pāramī*).

Again, only Bodhisattas are able to perform deeds of merit, such as generosity, morality, etc., in an unparalleled manner. Hence, these deeds of merit are called the perfections (*pāramī*), meaning the duties of Bodhisattas (*paramānaṁ kammaṁ pāramī*), or the properties of Bodhisattas (*paramānaṁ ayaṁ pāramī*).

The set of ten virtues[373] including alms giving (*dāna*), morality (*sīla*), etc. are called perfections (*pāramī*). A Bodhisatta, being endowed with these ten virtues, such as generosity, morality, etc. is known as a *parama* or extraordinary personality. On this basis, therefore, the etymology of the perfections (*pāramī*) is: *paramānaṁ bhāvo*, the state of extraordinary personalities, which is derived from two things: the knowledge of those who see and know them as such, and the sayings of those who see and know them as they really are. An alternative etymology is *paramānaṁ kammaṁ*, the work of extraordinary personalities; hence their course of conduct, which consists of generosity, morality, etc., is called the perfections (*pāramī*).

3. How many Perfections are There?

In accordance with the teaching (Bv 1.76):

> *Dānaṁ sīlañ-ca nekkhamaṁ, paññā viriyena pañcamaṁ,*
> *khantī saccam-adhiṭṭhānaṁ, mettupekkhā ti te dasa.* [51]
>
> There are ten perfections (*pāramī*): generosity, morality, renunciation, wisdom, energy, forbearance, truthfulness, resolution, loving-kindness and equanimity.

4. In what Sequence are the Perfections Arranged?

There are five ways of arranging doctrinal points in sequential order:

1. The sequence of actual happening (*pavattikkama*).

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[373] [This section originally stood alone, as a short piece in the Further Explanation of Words and Phrases above. I have moved it here, as it helps to explain the perfections, which is the subject of this Treatise.]

For example, with reference to conception, it is stated in the texts (SN 10.1), *passim*: For womb-born creatures, the first stage is the fluid stage of *kalala* for seven days, the second is the frothy stage of *abbuda* for seven days (*Paṭhamaṁ kalalaṁ hoti, kalalā hoti abbudaṁ*), etc. the third stage of *pesi* takes the form of a lump of flesh, and so on. This form of teaching, in sequence of events as they actually take place, is known as the order of actual happening.

2. The sequence of abandoning (*pahānakkama*).

For example, with reference to defilements, it is stated in the text (Ds 1, 8. PTS 1): Here are phenomena which are to be abandoned through the first stage of the path; and there are phenomena which are to be abandoned through the three higher stages of the path (*dassanena pahātabbā dhammā, bhāvanāya pahātabbā dhammā*, etc.)." This form of teaching, in serial order according to te steps of abandoning, is known as the order of abandoning.

3. The order of practising (*paṭipattikkama*).

For example, the seven stages of purification of morality, mind, view, etc. The first practice is to purify morality; this is followed by the practice for purification of the mind. In this way, the stages of purification should proceed in their due order. Such teaching, in sequential order of practice, is known as the order of practising.

4. The order of planes of existence (*bhūmikkama*).

The first, in order of teaching Dhamma, is the sensuous plane (*kāmāvacara*) followed by the material plane (*rūpāvacara*) and then by the non-material plane (*arūpāvacara*). Such an arrangement in teaching is known as the order of planes of existences.

5. The order of the teaching by the Buddha (*desanakkama*).

In addition to the aforesaid four serial arrangements of teaching, there is the fifth kind in which phenomena, such as the aggregates of matter (*rūpakkhandha*), feelings (*vedanākkhandha*), perceptions (*saññākkhandha*), etc., are taught by the Buddha in a particular order, for some specific reasons. Such an arrangement of the teaching is known as the order of the teaching by the Buddha (*desanākkama*).

In the first four orders of arrangement, each has its own reason for following a particular sequence, because conceptional stages actually happen in that order; because defilements are abandoned in that order; because the acts of purification are experienced in that order, or because the planes of existences exist in that order. But in the fifth method of teaching, *desanākkama*, the Buddha has a special reason for adopting a particular sequence in teaching each set of such phenomena as the five aggregates (*khandha*), the twelve bases (*āyatana*), etc.

In the chapter on the perfections, the perfections are arranged not in their order of happening, of abandoning, of practice, or of the planes of existence, as in the first four methods, but in accordance with this fifth method, *desanākkama*, taught by the Buddha for a special reason.

It might be asked why the Buddha adopted this particular sequence, e.g. generosity, morality, renunciation etc., and not any other in teaching the ten perfections? The answer is that when the Bodhisatta, the recluse Sumedha, first investigated the perfections to be fulfilled just after receiving the prophecy, he discovered them in a particular sequence; he therefore fulfilled them in that order; and after his Awakening, he taught the perfections in the same sequence he had practised.

To give a more detailed explanation: Of the ten perfections, generosity helps develop morality in a special way; even an immoral person, for example, a supporter on the occasion of his son's ordination, is likely to observe precepts without difficulty; and generosity is easier to practise. Though it may be difficult for one to keep the precepts, one can find it easy to [52] give alms. Hence, the perfection of generosity is mentioned first.

Only generosity based on morality is most beneficial; so morality follows generosity. Only morality based on renunciation is most beneficial; so renunciation is taught immediately after morality.

Similarly, renunciation based on wisdom, wisdom on energy, energy on forbearance, forbearance on truthfulness, truthfulness on resolution, resolution on loving-kindness, loving-kindness based on equanimity is most beneficial; thus equanimity is taught after loving-kindness.

Equanimity can be beneficial only when it is based on compassion. Bodhisattas are great beings who had already been endowed with the basic quality of compassion.

How could Bodhisattas, the great compassionate ones, look upon sentient beings with equanimity or indifference? Some teachers say: It is not in all cases and at all times that Bodhisattas show indifference towards sentient beings; they do so only when it is necessary. Other teachers say: They do not show indifference towards beings, but only towards offensive deeds done by them. Thus, great compassion and the perfection of equanimity are not opposed to each other.

Another way of explaining the order:

1. Generosity (*dāna*) is taught initially 1) because generosity is likely to occur among many people and thus belongs to all beings; 2) because it is not so fruitful as morality, etc., and 3) because it is easy to practise.

2. Morality (*sīla*) is stated immediately after generosity 1) because morality purifies both the supporter and the recipient; 2) because after teaching the rendering of service to others such as alms giving, the Buddha wishes to teach abstention from causing affliction to others, such as killing; 3) because alms giving involves some positive action whereas morality involves some practice of restraint, and the Buddha wishes to teach restraint after teaching positive action, such as giving of alms; 4) because alms giving leads to attainment of wealth, and morality leads to the attainment of a human or Deva existence; and 5) because the Buddha wishes to teach the attainment of a human or Deva existence after teaching attainment of wealth.

3. Renunciation is mentioned immediately after morality 1) because through renunciation perfect morality may be observed; 2) because the Buddha wishes to teach good mental conduct through renunciation of both material things and the defilements immediately after teaching good physical and verbal conduct through morality; 3) because the attainment of the absorptions (*jhāna*) comes easily to one whose morality is pure; 4) because the fault arising from demeritorious deeds (*kamma-paradha*) is eradicated through observance of morality; by so doing, purity of physical or verbal exertion (*payoga-suddhi*) is achieved. Mental defilements (*kilesa-paradha*) are eradicated through renunciation; by so doing, the inherent elements of the wrong views of eternalism (*sassata-diṭṭhi*) and annihilationism (*uccheda-diṭṭhi*) are cleared

away, and purity of disposition (*āsaya-suddhi*) with regard to insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*), and to knowledge that volitions are one's own property (*kammassa-kata-ñāṇa*) is achieved. The Buddha accordingly wishes to teach the purification of knowledge by renunciation which follows the purification of exertion (*payoga-suddhi*); and 5) because the Buddha wishes to teach that eradication of mental defilements at the emergence (*pariyuṭṭhāna*) stage through renunciation can take place only after eradication of the mental defilements at the transgression (*vītikkama*) stage through morality. [53]

> There are three stages in the arising of defilements: 1) the dormant stage (*anusaya*) where defilements remain at the base of the mental continuum as a latent tendency, not manifesting themselves as a mental property; 2) the stage where defilements come into existence from the latent stage (*pariyuṭṭhāna*), manifesting themselves as a mental property at the mind's door; and 3) the stage where defilements become violent and uncontrollable (*vītikkama*), manifesting themselves in some unwholesome physical or verbal action.
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> The observance of precepts inhibits the active expression of defilements (*vītikkama*) through body or speech. This is a temporary putting away of defilement (*tad-aṅga-pahāna*). The practice of concentration meditation (*samatha-bhāvanā*), especially at the stage of attainment of the absorptions (*jhāna*), prevents the violent arising of mental defilements at the mind's door (*pariyuṭṭhāna*). This is the putting away of defilements to a distance for a considerable time (*vikkhambhana-pahāna*).
>
> Defilements are entirely eradicated right down to the level of dormacy through wisdom (*paññā*) which is the knowledge of the path and fruition, leaving no trace of defilements in the mental continuum. This is a complete abandoning of defilements which are never to rise again (*samuccheda-pahāna*).

4. Wisdom is mentioned immediately after renunciation 1) because renunciation is perfected and purified by wisdom; 2) because the Buddha wishes to teach that there is no wisdom without the absorptions (*jhāna*), including renunciation; 3) because he wishes to teach wisdom which is the basic cause of equanimity, immediately after teaching renunciation which is the basic cause of concentration of the mind; and 4) because he wishes to teach that only by sustained thinking directed towards the welfare of others can there arise the knowledge of skilful means (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*) in working for their welfare.

5. Energy is stated immediately after wisdom 1) because the function of wisdom is fulfilled by an application of energy; 2) because the Buddha wishes to teach the marvels of endeavour for the welfare of beings after teaching wisdom, that comprehends with insight the nature of reality, which is void of personality or self; 3) because he wishes to teach the cause for exertion[374] immediately after the cause for equanimity; and 4) because he wishes to teach that special benefits accrue only from ardent striving after making careful consideration.

6. Forbearance is mentioned immediately after energy 1) because forbearance is fulfilled by energy as only an energetic man can withstand all the suffering that he encounters; 2) because the Buddha wishes to teach that energy is an adornment of forbearance, as forbearance, shown by an indolent man because he cannot win, is not dignified, whereas forbearance, shown by an energetic man in spite of his winning, is dignified; 3) because he wishes to teach the cause of concentration immediately after teaching the cause of energy as restlessness (*uddhacca*), due to excessive energy, is abandoned only by understanding the Dhamma through reflection on it (*dhamma-nijjhānakkhanti*); 4) because he wishes to teach that only an energetic man can constantly endeavour as only a man of great forbearance is free from restlessness and is always able to perform meritorious deeds; 5) because he wishes to teach that craving for rewards cannot arise when endowed with mindfulness as there can be no craving when one reflects on the Dhamma in undertaking welfare works; and 6) because he wishes to teach that a Bodhisatta bears with patience the suffering caused by others, also when he is not working diligently for their welfare, as evidenced from the Short Birth Story about Prince Dhammapāla (*Cūḷa-dhammapāla-jātaka*, Ja 358), etc.

7. Truthfulness is mentioned immediately after forbearance 1) because forbearance can be maintained for long through truthfulness as one's forbearance will last only when one is truthful; 2) because having mentioned first the forbearance of wrongs inflicted by others, the Buddha wishes to teach next how the Bodhisatta keeps his word to render assistance even to those who have done him wrong ungratefully, for at the time of receiving the prophecy,

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[374] Exertion: *paggaha*, which means "support," "help," "aid," "exertion," here "exertion" may be the most appropriate.

the Bodhisatta, aspiring to Buddhahood, makes the resolution to rescue all beings. True to this firm determination he renders help even to those who [54] had wronged him.

To illustrate this matter: In the Long Birth Story about the Monkey King (*Mahā-kapi-jātaka*, Ja 516), the story is told of the Bodhisatta, in his existence of a monkey, going to the rescue of a Brahmin who had fallen into a deep chasm. Exhausted by strenuous exertion to bring the man out of danger, the Bodhisatta trustingly fell asleep on the lap of the man whom he had saved. With an evil thought of eating the flesh of his rescuer the wicked man hit the monkey's head with a stone. Without showing any anger and patiently bearing the injury on his head, the Bodhisatta continued his effort to save the man from the danger of wild beasts. He showed him the way out of the forest by drops of blood that fell as he jumped from tree to tree; 3) because he wished to show that a Bodhisatta, with tolerance, never relinquishes the practice of speaking only the truth steadfastly though he is misrepresented by others; and 4) because having taught the meditative reflection by means of which emptiness may be understood, the Bodhisatta wishes to show the knowledge of truth, developed through the process of that reflection (*dhamma-nijjhānakkhanti*).

8. Resolution is mentioned immediately after truthfulness 1) because truthfulness is accomplished through resolution, since refraining from falsehood becomes perfect in one whose resolution to speak truth remains unshakeable even at the risk of his life; 2) because, after teaching truthfulness, he wishes to teach the resolute commitment of Bodhisattas to truth without wavering; and 3) because after teaching that only those who possess knowledge of the truth of things as they really are able to build up the perfections and bring them to completion, he wishes to teach that the requisites of the perfections can be effected as a result of the knowledge of truth.

9. Loving-kindness is mentioned immediately after resolution 1) because development of loving-kindness helps fulfilment of resolution to undertake the work for the welfare of others; 2) because, after teaching resolution, the Buddha wishes to teach what brings benefit to others in accordance with his resolve, for a Bodhisatta, in the course of fulfilling his perfections, generally abides in loving-kindness; and 3) because when one is established imperturbably in determination to work for others' welfare, can one carry out one's wish with loving-kindness.

10. Equanimity is mentioned immediately after loving-kindness 1) because equanimity purifies loving-kindness, and when one develops loving-kindness without equanimity, one is liable to be deceived by craving or greed that wears the mask of loving-kindness. Only when one develops equanimity, can one sometimes escape from the deceptive craving or greed; 2) because after teaching how the interest of others should be served out of loving-kindness, the Buddha wishes to teach that indifference is to be maintained towards all wrongs inflicted by them;[375] 3) because, after teaching the development of loving-kindness, the Buddha wishes to teach its advantages, for only after developing loving-kindness can equanimity be successfully developed; and 4) the Buddha wishes to teach the wonderful attribute of a Bodhisatta who can remain equanimous even towards those who show him good-will.

Thus our teacher, the lord of the world, teaches the perfections in a proper sequence, as described above, arranged on some principle of order and succession, not at random or haphazardly.

5. What are the Characteristics, Functions etc.?

We shall begin this section with explanations of the words characteristic, function, manifestation, and proximate cause. We shall next deal with the definitions and purport of the perfections together with their characteristics, functions, manifestations, and proximate causes collectively, as well as individually.

Knowledge free from personality-belief (*atta-diṭṭhi*) is possible only through comprehension of the ultimate realities of mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*) which is attained by reflecting upon each reality in terms of its characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate [55] causes. Similarly, it is only when one knows the characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes of the perfections collectively, as well as individually, that will one have a clear understanding of them. Therefore, the texts usually describe these four features concerning the perfections.

1. Characteristic (*lakkhaṇa*).

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[375] The Bodhisatta works for the welfare of beings with loving-kindness; he keeps a balanced mind, forgiving all beings when wronged by them.

The commentary[376] defines it thus: The characteristic has two aspects: 1) ordinary features common to all (*sāmaññ*a) and 2) special features peculiar to one and not shared by others (*sāmaññaṁ vā sabhāvo vā, dhammānaṁ lakkhaṇaṁ mataṁ*)."

> Ordinary and special features of ultimate realities, are known as characteristics (*lakkhaṇa*); 1) features common to all (*sāmañna*), and 2) features not shared by others but possessed by one only (*sabhāva*) and thus unique (*visesa*).
>
> For example, the material qualities of the earth-element (*paṭhavī*) has two characteristics: 1) change, impermanence, suffering, not being subject to control, and 2) hardness. The characteristics under 1) are features common (*sāmañna*) to other elements, whereas the characteristic of 2) hardness is the unique feature of the earth-element only, not shared by the others (*sabhāva*).

2. Function (*rasa*).

The commentary defines it as: *kiccaṁ vā tassa sampatti, raso ti paridīpito*, "function is to be explained also as having two aspects: *kicca* and *sampatti*. 1) function which is to be performed (*kicca-rasa*), and 2) attainment as a result thereof (*sampatti-rasa*)."

3. Manifestation (*paccupaṭṭhāna*).

The commentary defines it as: Whenever a person ponders deeply on a certain mind-object, what usually appears in his mind relates to the nature of the mind-object under consideration, relates to its functions, relates to its cause and relates to its effect. Thus, anyone of those, which appears in his mind concerning the mind-object he is thinking about, is called manifestation (*Phalaṁ vā paccupaṭṭhānaṁ upaṭṭhāna-nayo pi vā*).

> Manifestation should be known as result (*phala*) and manifestation (*upaṭṭhānākāra*); 1) the result of the ultimate realities (*phala*) and 2) the way something manifests to the yogi (*upaṭṭhānākāra*). Whenever the yogi ponders deeply over a certain ultimate reality, what relates to the nature,

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[376] [These lines and the ones that follow are actually being quoted from the sub-commentary the Classification of Mind and Matter (*Nāma-rūpa-pariccheda*, vs. 633-634; PTS 64)].

function, cause, or effect of that reality appears in his mind. Thus something relating to any of these four and appearing in the yogi's mind is called its manifestation.

4. Proximate cause (*padaṭṭhāna*).

The commentary defines it as: The immediate contributory factor for the arising of an ultimate reality is known as the proximate cause (*āsanna-kāraṇaṁ yaṁ tu, taṁ padaṭṭhāna-saññitaṁ*).

What then are the four features of the ten perfections? The answer is: dealing first with those common to all the ten perfections:

1. They have the characteristic of serving the interest of others.
2. Their function is to provide assistance to others (*kicca-rasa*), or not vacillating as to fulfilment (*sampatti-rasa*).
3. Their manifestation is the appearance in the yogi's mind of the knowledge that they have the nature of wishing for the welfare of beings or the effect of becoming a Buddha.
4. Their proximate cause is great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā*) and knowledge of skilful means (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*).

The features belonging to each of the perfections are: 1) The volition founded on great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā*) and 2) the knowledge of skilful means (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*) to relinquish, donate, give away one's possessions to others is called the perfection of alms giving (*dāna*).

1. It has the characteristic of relinquishing.
2. Its function is to destroy greed that clings to materials that could be given away.
3. Its manifestation is non-attachment that appears in the yogi's mind regarding its nature, or attainment of wealth and prosperity and happy existence regarding its effect.
4. Its proximate cause is the object to be given, for giving is possible only when there is that object.

1. The perfection of generosity is well comprehended only when it is studied thoroughly in eight ways with these four aspects. When studied thus, it would be

clearly understood that generosity (*dāna*) is an act that has the characteristic of forsaking or abandoning. At the same time, it performs the task of destroying greed that tends to attach the supporter to the things to be given away. To the yogi's mind, who ponders [56] deeply and carefully, it would appear as non-attachment to the objects of offering, or it would appear as an act which could produce a favourable existence endowed with wealth and prosperity. Generosity is possible only when there exists something for one to offer. The same consideration applies to all the remaining perfections.

2. Founded on great compassion and knowledge of skilful means, wholesome physical and verbal conduct is called the perfection of morality. In terms of Abhidhamma, it means abstention from wrongdoings that should not be committed (*viratī cetasika*) and volition (*cetanā*) to perform different duties that should be performed.

1. It has the characteristic of not allowing one's physical and verbal actions to become wrong but of keeping them orientated towards the wholesome, and has the characteristic of serving as a foundation for all good deeds.
2. Its function is to prevent one from indulging in moral depravities, such as the three wrong physical actions and the four wrong verbal actions; or it helps one attain a virtuous state with spotless and blameless conduct.
3. It manifests as purity in word and deed when the yogi reflects on its nature.
4. Its proximate cause is conscience (*hirī*) and concern (*ottapa*) not to do evil.

3. Founded on great compassion and knowledge of skilful means, the group of consciousnesses and mental concomitants which aspire after emancipation from sensual existences, after perceiving the faults of the objects of sense-desire (*vatthu-kāma*), the mental defilements of greed and for various existences, is the perfection of renunciation.

1. It has the characteristic of emancipation from sense-desire and from sensual existence.
2. Its function is to bring out their faults.

3. Its manifestation is realization by the yogi that it is turning away, or withdrawing from these states of sensual existence.

4. It has the knowledge of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega-ñāṇa*) as its proximate cause.

Knowledge formed by concern (*ottappa*) about dangers, such as birth, ageing, disease, death, and woeful states is the knowledge of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega-ñāṇa*).

4. Founded on great compassion and knowledge of skilful means, the mental concomitant of wisdom, which penetrates the ordinary and special characteristics of phenomena, is the perfection of wisdom.

1. It has the characteristic of penetrating the real nature of phenomena; or of unerring discernment of the ordinary and special characteristics of objects under contemplation, like hitting the bull's eye with an arrow by a skilful archer.

2. Its function is to illuminate the object like a lamp and dispelling the darkness of delusion (*moha*) that hides the nature of objects.

3. Its manifestation as to its nature is non-confusion in the yogi's mind with regard to objects of contemplation, like a guide showing the way to travellers who have lost their sense of direction in a forest, or as an effect, having the beneficial result of freedom from bewilderment with regard to the objects of contemplation.

4. Its proximate cause is concentration (*samādhi*), or the four noble truths.

5. Founded on great compassion and knowledge of skilful means, the physical and mental endeavours for the welfare of others, is the perfection of energy.

1. It has the characteristic of striving or making effort.

2. Its function is to support and strengthen the factors which arise together with it, so that they will not become lax in performing meritorious deeds.

3. Its manifestation is steadfastness in the yogi's mind which is opposed to sloth and torpor which are detrimental to meritorious deeds.

4. Its proximate cause is the knowledge of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega-ñāṇa*) or the eight factors that promote exertion (*viriyārambha-vatthu*).

Eight Factors which promote Exertion

Ven. Mahā Visuddhārāma Sayādaw, in the section on meditation in his Break Down of Form into its Ultimate Parts (*Paramattha-sarūpa-bhedāni*), has described the eight factors which promote exertion (*viriyārambha-vatthu*), which are: two concerning repairs and maintenance; two concerning travelling; two concerning ill-health; and two concerning the taking of meals. [57]

Two Factors concerning Repairs and Maintenance

1. One says to oneself thus: "I have to do some mending of robes, etc. While I am engaged thus, it will not be easy for me to devote myself to the teaching of the Buddha. I shall endeavour to do so in advance before I start mending."

2. On completion of such an undertaking, he also considers: "I have finished my mending job. While I was doing it, I could not pay attention to the teaching of the Buddha. Now I must work harder to make up for this remissness."

Two Factors concerning Travelling

3. He reflects: "I have to go on a journey. While going on the journey, it will not be easy to devote my attention to the teaching of the Buddha. I shall endeavour to do so in advance before I travel."

4. After the journey, he considers: "I have made the journey. While I was travelling, I could not devote my attention to the teaching of the Buddha. Now I must work harder to make up for this remissness."

Two Factors concerning Ill-Health

5. When he begins to suffer slight illness he reflects: "I am feeling indisposed. The ailment may grow worse. I will work hard before it does."

6. While recuperating, he reflects: "I have just recovered from illness, but it may recur at any time. I will make an effort before any sickness reappears."

Two Factors concerning the Partaking of Meals

7. When sufficient alms food is not available, he reflects: "I have come back from the alms round with only a little food. A small meal keeps my body light and fit, free from sloth and torpor. I shall immediately start putting in effort."

8. Having obtained sufficient alms food, he reflects: "I have come back from alms round with enough food which will give me strength to work hard. I shall immediately start working energetically."

These are the eight factors that encourage exertion (*viriyārambha-vatthu*). As against these factors, there are eight others, the opposite of these, which encourage indolence (*kusīta-vatthu*). When one has to do some repair, one delays, saying: "It will make me tired. I shall have a good sleep before doing the repair." When one has to go on a journey, too, one says in the same manner. When one starts feeling unwell, one complains of one's feebleness and tries to sleep. When one has had enough food, one simply dozes, for one's stomach is heavy. When one has done the repair, or come back from the journey, or recovered from illness, or had meagre food, one grumbles: "I am tired out; I shall take rest." In this way, one foolishly excuses oneself for not making efforts to cultivate meritoriousness.

The eight things that encourage exertion (*viriyārambha-vatthu*) and the eight things that encourage indolence (*kusīta-vatthu*) are taught in the Chanting Together Discourse (*Saṅgīti-sutta*, DN 32).

6. Founded on great compassion and knowledge of skilful means, tolerance to the wrongdoings of others is the perfection of forbearance. In terms of Abhidhamma, the group of consciousnesses and mental concomitants that arise in such a mode of tolerance are headed by non-aversion (*adosa*).

1. It has the characteristic of bearing with patience.

2. Its function is to overcome both desirable and undesirable objects.

> One who is not endowed with endurance, adheres to greed when encountering pleasant, desirable objects; and to aversion, when encountering unpleasant, undesirable objects. One is then said to be defeated by both desirable objects and undesirable objects. One who is endowed with endurance, stands firmly, keeping away from both greed

and aversion. Forbearance is thus said to overcome all sense objects whether desirable or [58] undesirable.

3. Its manifestation in the yogi's mind is patience, acceptance of both desirable objects and undesirable objects or non-opposition to them.
4. Its proximate cause is seeing things as they really are.

7. Founded on great compassion and knowledge of skilful means, speaking the truth and keeping one's word is the perfection of truthfulness. In terms of Abhidhamma, it is the mental concomitant of abstinence (*virati-cetasika*), or volition (*cetanā-cetasika*), or wisdom (*paññā-cetasika*), depending on the circumstance.

1. It has the characteristic of veracity.
2. Its function is to make clear the truth as it is.
3. Its manifestation in the yogi's mind is nobility, sweetness and pleasantness.
4. Its proximate cause is purity of deed, word and thought.

8. Founded on great compassion and knowledge of skilful means, an unshaken determination to pursue meritoriousness is the perfection of resolution. In terms of Abhidhamma, it is the group of consciousnesses and mental concomitants arising in such a mode of resolution.

1. It has the characteristic of unshaken determination in fulfilment of the perfections, charity and good conduct as requisites of Awakening.
2. Its function is to overcome all demerit which is opposed to the requisites of Awakening.
3. Its manifestation in the yogi's mind is steadfastness in fulfilment of the requisites of Awakening.
4. Its proximate cause is the requisites of Awakening.

9. Founded on great compassion and knowledge of skilful means, service to the welfare and happiness of the world is the perfection of loving-kindness. It is the mental concomitant of non-aversion (*adosa-cetasika*) in terms of Abhidhamma.

1. It has the characteristic of wishing prosperity to all beings.

2. Its function is to work for the welfare of beings in fulfilment of that wish; or its function is removing the nine causes of resentment.[377]
3. Its manifestation in the yogi's mind is serenity.
4. Its proximate cause is seeing beings as agreeable.[378]

10. Founded on great compassion and knowledge of skilful means, the attitude of impartiality towards desirable and undesirable conditioned beings, discarding love and hate, is the perfection of equanimity. In terms of Abhidhamma, it is the mental concomitant of specific neutrality (*tatra-majjhattatā*), which arises in such modes.

1. It has the characteristic of taking up the mental position between love and hate.
2. Its function is to have an impartial view.
3. Its manifestation in the yogi's mind is allaying both love and hate.
4. Its proximate cause is reflection that all beings are owners of their own deeds (*kamma*).

Each of the above descriptions of the perfections begins with the qualifying words "founded on great compassion and knowledge of skilful means." These two attributes form the basic virtues, which are always present in the mental continuum of Bodhisattas and only deeds of generosity and morality, etc., that are founded on them constitute the perfections.

6. What are the Basic Conditions of the Perfections?

Briefly stated, they are:

1. Great aspiration (*abhinīhāra*).
2. Great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā*) and skill in ways and means (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*).

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[377] For details of the nine causes of resentment see the nine causes of anger, described under the perfection of forbearance in the Second Treatise on the Perfections below.

[378] No development of loving-kindness is possible if one looks at them as disagreeable ones.

3. Four grounds for becoming a Buddha (*Buddha-bhūmi*).
4. Sixteen mental dispositions (*ajjhāsaya*).
5. Reflective knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*) of disadvantages of non-giving, morality, etc., and advantages of giving, morality, etc. [59]
6. Fifteen kinds of practices (*caraṇa*) and five kinds of super knowledges (*abhiññā*), together with their contributory causes.

1. Great Aspiration

Great aspiration (*abhinīhāra*): In Pāḷi *abhi* means towards, here implying "towards omniscience;" *nīhāra* means "directing" or "applying the mind;" hence the "aspiration for omniscient Buddhahood." Here, the eight factors required for receiving the prophecy of Buddhahood, described in chapter II on "The Rare Appearance of a Buddha," may be recalled.

In an existence complete with the eight factors, like that of the wise Sumedha, the following thoughts occur in the mind of the Bodhisattas without being aroused by anyone, but only by being endowed with the same eight factors: 1) When I have crossed the ocean of Saṁsāra by myself, with my own effort, I shall also rescue other beings; 2) when I have freed myself from the bonds of Saṁsāra, I shall also liberate other beings; 3) when I have tamed my sense faculties, I shall teach other beings so that they can tame them themselves; 4) when I have extinguished the fires of the mental defilements myself, I shall calm the burning minds of other beings; 5) when I have gained the most excellent comfort of Nibbāna, I shall let other beings enjoy the same; 6) when I have extinguished the flames of the three rounds of rebirths,[379] I shall put out those flames raging in other beings; 7) when I have purified myself of the dust of the defilements through my own effort, I shall cause purification of other beings; 8) when I have gained knowledge of the four noble truths, I shall teach them to other beings."[380]

Thus the aspiration to Buddhahood arises fervently, continuously, as a great meritorious consciousness (*mahā-kusala-citta*) together with its mental

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[379] Three rounds of rebirths: the round arising from productive deeds (*kamma-vaṭṭa*); the round of defilements (*kilesa-vaṭṭa*); the round of results (*vipāka-vaṭṭa*).

[380] In short, I shall strive to become a Buddha and go to the rescue of all beings.

concomitants. These meritorious consciousnesses and mental concomitants which aspire to Buddhahood are known as the great aspiration (*abhinīhāra*), which forms the basic condition for all the ten perfections.

Indeed, it is only through the arising of this great aspiration that Bodhisattas receive the definite prophecy of Buddhahood; after receiving the prophecy, there occur in succession: Reflection on the perfections, resolution to fulfil them and necessary practices that take him to the sublime height of accomplishment.

This great aspiration has the characteristic of an inclination of the mind towards omniscience. Its function is to aspire to become a Buddha and having gained it, to wish for the ability to bring welfare and happiness to all beings until they attain Nibbāna. Its manifestation in the yogi's mind is its being the basic cause of the requisites for Awakening. Its proximate cause is great compassion.[381]

This great aspiration has, as its object, the inconceivable provenance of the Buddhas and the welfare of the whole immeasurable world of beings. It should thus be seen as the basis of actions, such as the perfections, charity and good conduct, and the most exalted meritoriousness which is endowed with incomparable power.

To deal briefly with this unique power, as soon as the great aspiration arises, the Bodhisatta is poised to enter the great field of the performance for the attainment of omniscience (*mahā-bodhiyāna-paṭipatti*). He is then destined to become a Buddha. This destiny is irreversible after the arising in him of this great aspiration and he thereby gains the designation of "Bodhisatta."[382]

From that time onwards, the Bodhisatta becomes fully inclined to the attainment of [60] omniscience, and the power to fulfil and practise the perfections (*pāramī*), charity (*cāga*) and good conduct (*cariyā*). Thus, the requisites for Awakening become established in him.

Because he possesses this great meritorious aspiration, the recluse Sumedha correctly investigated all the perfections with perfection-investigating wisdom

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[381] Or, the completion of the necessary supporting conditions to be explained later.

[382] One is not entitled to be called a Bodhisatta until one has made the aspiration (*abhinīhāra*).

(*pāramī-pavicaya-ñāṇa*).[383] This wisdom was achieved by himself, without the help of a teacher, and was therefore known also as a self-created knowledge (*sayambhū-ñāṇa*) which was the forerunner of omniscience. Having thought about and investigated the perfections clearly and correctly, he fulfilled and practised them for the duration of four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons.

This great aspiration has:

1. Four conditions (*paccaya*).
2. Four causes (*hetu*).
3. Four strengths (*bala*).

1. The Four Conditions, or Remote Factors

1. When the Great Being, who aspires to become a Buddha, sees a Buddha performing a miracle, he thinks: "Omniscience is of tremendous power; by acquiring it, the Buddha has come to be of such a wonderful and marvellous nature and to possess such inconceivable power." Having witnessed the Buddha's powers, he is inclined towards omniscience.
2. Although he does not himself see the Buddha's great power, he hears from others: "The Fortunate One is endowed with such and such powers." Having heard this, he is inclined towards omniscience.
3. Although he neither witnesses nor hears of the Buddha's great powers, he learns a discourse on the powers of a Buddha. Having learned it, he is inclined towards omniscience.
4. Although he neither sees the powers of a Buddha, nor learns about it from others, nor hears a discourse concerning them, since he has a very noble disposition, he thinks thus: "I will protect the heritage, lineage, tradition and law of the Buddhas." Because of this high reverence for Dhamma (*Dhamma-garu*) he is inclined towards omniscience.

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[383] *Pāramī-pavicaya-ñāṇa*. See chapter VI, Sumedha's Reflection on the Perfections.

2. The Four Causes, or Immediate Factors

1. The great being is endowed with the immediate support (*upanissaya*) of having performed special deeds of merit (*adhikāra*) under former Buddhas.
2. He is naturally endowed with a compassionate temperament and is willing to alleviate the suffering of beings even at the sacrifice of his life.
3. He is endowed with energy and strength to strive long until he achieves his goal of Buddhahood, without feeling discouraged by the suffering in Saṁsāra or by the hardships in working for the welfare of beings.
4. He enjoys the friendship of good people who restrain him from doing evil and encourage him to develop what is good.

Of these four causes, being endowed with immediate support (*upanissaya-sampadā*) means that, because the great being has resolved mentally or verbally in the presence of former Buddhas for becoming a Buddha, he is always inclined toward omniscience. He is always inclined also to work for the welfare of beings.

Because he is endowed with such immediate support, he becomes sharply distinguished from those who would become Paccekabuddhas (*Paccekabodhisatta*) or disciples of Buddhas (*sāvaka-bodhisatta*) in respect of the faculties (*indriya*); of practices for the welfare of others and of skill in serving the interests of others and in knowing right from wrong (*ṭhānāṭhāna-kosallañāṇa*).[384] [61]

As for association with good friends, by good friends (*kalyāṇa-mitta*) are meant those who are possessed of eight attributes: faith, morality, learning, charity, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom.

1. Being endowed with faith, a good friend has confidence in the omniscience of the Fortunate One, and of one's own deeds (*kamma*) and the fruits thereof. Because of such faith, he does not give up his wish for

[384] From these three qualities, it may be deduced that the Bodhisattas have done special deeds of merit under former Buddhas.

the welfare of beings; this wish is the basic cause for Supreme Awakening.

2. Being endowed with morality, he is dear to beings who hold him in esteem and reverence.
3. Being accomplished in learning, he usually gives profound discourses which lead to the welfare and happiness of beings.
4. Being accomplished in charity, he is of few wants, easily contented, detached from sense pleasures, remaining aloof from them.
5. Being endowed with energy, he always strives to promote the welfare of beings.
6. Being endowed with mindfulness, he never neglects to do deeds of merit.
7. Being accomplished in concentration, he becomes a person of undistracted, concentrated mind.
8. Being endowed with wisdom, he understands things as they really are.

Through mindfulness, the good friend examines the results of meritorious and demeritorious deeds. He understands truly through wisdom what is beneficial or harmful to beings.

Through concentration, he keeps his mind steady, and through energy, he restrains beings from what will bring harm to them and directs them to strive hard with unremitting zeal for their well-being. Associating with and relying on a good friend, who is possessed of such qualities, the Bodhisatta endeavours to strengthen his own accomplishment in his immediate support (*upanissaya-sampatti*).

With clear purified wisdom and extreme purity of deeds and words which are achieved through persistent endeavours, he becomes accomplished in the four great powers. Before long, he comes to possess the eight factors required for receiving the prophecy. He shows the great aspiration (*mahābhinīhāra*) boldly, and becomes established firmly as a true Bodhisatta. From then onwards, he has no aspiration other than Supreme Awakening. He becomes a noble person with a fixed, irreversible destination of full Awakening.

3. The Four Strengths

1. Internal strength (*ajjhattika-bala*):[385] Exercising this strength, having self-reliance and conscience towards doing evil, the Bodhisatta aspires after becoming a Buddha, fulfils the perfections and attains Supreme Awakening.
2. External strength (*bāhira-bala*):[386] Exercising this strength, relying upon the outside world, being supported by pride and self-confidence, thinking: "I am a person fully equipped with the powers to attain Buddhahood," the Bodhisatta aspires after Buddhahood, fulfils the perfections and attains Supreme Awakening.
3. Strength of supporting conditions (*upanissaya-bala*):[387] Exercising this strength, being endowed with sharp faculties and natural purity and being supported by mindfulness, the Bodhisatta aspires after Buddhahood, fulfils the perfections and attains Supreme Awakening.
4. Strength of exertion (*payoga-bala*):[388] Exercising this strength, being endowed with purity of deed and word, and constantly engaged in meritorious deeds, the Bodhisatta aspires after Buddhahood, fulfils the perfections and attains Supreme Awakening. [62]

Complete with these four conditions, four causes and four strengths, by the time the Bodhisatta reaches the stage of development, as in the existence of the wise Sumedha, he acquires the eight factors which entitle him to receive the prophecy of becoming a Buddha. Actuated by the acquisition of these eight factors, the great aspiration, which is meritorious consciousness and its

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[385] An extreme inclination towards omniscience through reliance on one's physical ability, with reverence for the Dhamma (*Dhamma-gārava*), the last of the aforesaid four conditions.

[386] Extreme inclination towards omniscience through reliance on external power, the first three of the four conditions described above.

[387] Extreme inclination towards omniscience through reliance on the first of the four conditions.

[388] Being endowed with appropriate and sufficient energy for the attainment of omniscience; thorough and persistent pursuit of supporting conditions and meritorious acts.

concomitants, arises: "I will strive with unremitting zeal to become a Buddha and go to the rescue of all beings." This great meritorious aspiration (*abhinīhāra*) forms a basic condition for all the perfections.

Because of the arising of the great meritorious aspiration in him, the following marvels come to be attributed to the noble Bodhisatta:

1. He treats all beings with love like his own children.
2. His mind is not defiled through demerit, he remains undisturbed and untainted by defilements.
3. All his intentions, actions and words are for promoting the welfare and happiness of beings.
4. Fulfilment of the perfections, and practice of the charity and good conduct, instead of diminishing, becomes more and more pronounced and mature in him.

Because of the arising in him of these marvels, the Bodhisatta is endowed with the stream of the most sublime meritoriousness and benevolence. As a result, he becomes worthy of receiving excellent gifts, and an incomparably fertile field where seeds of merit may be sown, establishing himself as an object of the highest homage and reverence for beings.

2. Great Compassion and Skilful Means

The great meritorious aspiration (*abhinīhāra*), great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā*) and knowledge of skilful means (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*) form the basic conditions for all the perfections. Through them, Bodhisattas are able to promote constantly the welfare and happiness of other beings, without concern for their own interests. Although performing the duties of Bodhisattas which are beyond the capability of ordinary men, they do not consider them too wearisome.

Because great compassion and knowledge of skilful means exist in them, welfare and happiness accrue to those who develop confidence in them, who show respect to them, who have occasion to see the Bodhisatta or recollect their virtues.

To explain further about compassion and wisdom, it is through wisdom that a Bodhisatta attains omniscience; it is through compassion that he performs the duties of a Buddha. Through wisdom he is able to cross the ocean of Saṁsāra;

through compassion he goes to the rescue of beings. Through wisdom he understands thoroughly the suffering of others; through compassion he endeavours to alleviate their suffering. Through wisdom he becomes wearied of suffering; through compassion he accepts the same disgusting suffering as happiness in order to work for the liberation of beings. Through wisdom he aspires after Nibbāna; through compassion he continues to go round after round in Saṁsāra.

Thus, compassion and wisdom are beneficial in many ways. These two not only form the foundation of the perfections, they are the basic condition of the aspiration after Buddhahood as well.

3. Four Grounds for becoming a Buddha

Like aspiration, compassion and wisdom, the following four factors also form the basic conditions of the perfections:

1. Endeavour (*ussāha*): It is the endeavour for the fulfilment of the perfections (*pāramī*), charity (*cāga*) and practices (*cariyā*).
2. Higher intelligence (*ummaṅga*): It is the skill in ways and means, (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*), or skill in means.
3. Firm standing (*avaṭṭhāna*): It is imperturbable determination in practices leading to [63] becoming a Buddha.
4. Beneficial practice (*hita-cariyā*): It is development of loving-kindness and compassion.

These four factors are known as the grounds for becoming a Buddha since they are conducive to the arising of omniscience.

4. Sixteen Mental Dispositions[389]

There are sixteen dispositions of a good type: inclinations to renunciation (*nekkhammajjhāsaya*); to solitude (*pavivekajjhāsaya*); to non-greed (*alobhajjhāsaya*); to non-hatred (*adosajjhāsaya*); to non-delusion

[389] *Ajjhāsaya*, mental disposition is an inclination or temperament which influences the formation of one's personality. It is basically of two types: good and bad.

(*amohajjhāsaya*); to liberation (*nissaraṇajjhāsaya*); and inclination towards each of the ten perfections (*dānajjhāsaya*, *sīlajjhāsaya*), etc.

Because of their intense inclination for renunciation, Bodhisattas see danger in sense-pleasures and household life; because of their intense inclination for solitude, they see danger in company and social life; because of their intense inclination for non-greed, non-hatred, and non-delusion, they see danger in greed, hatred and delusion; because of their intense inclination for liberation, they see danger in all forms of existence.

The perfections do not arise in him who does not see danger in greed, hatred, etc., and who has no intense inclination to non-greed, non-hatred, etc. Therefore, the six inclinations for non-greed, non-hatred, etc., are also the conditions of the perfections.

Likewise, the ten inclinations to generosity, morality, etc. (*dānajjhāsaya*, *sīlajjhāsaya*), form the conditions of the perfections. The inclination to generosity means constant inclination for generosity through intensity of non-greed by seeing danger in its opposites.

Because of having an intense inclination for non-greed, Bodhisattas see danger in its opposite, selfishness, and therefore fulfil the perfection of generosity; because of having an intense inclination for morality, they see danger in moral depravity and therefore fulfil the perfection of morality. The same consideration applies to all the remaining perfections.

It should be particularly noted here that the opposites of inclination for renunciation are sense pleasures and household life; for wisdom are delusion (*moha*) and doubt (*vicikicchā*); for energy is indolence (*kosajja*); for forbearance is resentment (*akkhanti*); for truthfulness is speaking lies; for resolution is indetermination, not being firm in pursuit of merit; for loving-kindness it is ill-will; for equanimity it is submission to the vicissitudes of the world.

Because of their intense inclination for equanimity, Bodhisattas see dangers in its opposite: submission to the vicissitudes of the world and therefore fulfil the perfection of equanimity. In this way, the ten inclinations, such as those for generosity, morality, etc., also form conditions of the perfections.

5. Reflecting on the Perfections

Reflective knowledge of the disadvantages of not fulfilling the ten perfections, such as generosity, morality, etc., and of the advantages of fulfilling them also form basic conditions for the perfections.

1. Reflecting on the Perfection of Generosity

Personal possessions, such as land, gold, silver, cattle, buffaloes, female slaves, male slaves, children, wives, etc., bring great harm to their owners who become attached to them. Because they are the objects of sense desires, coveted by many people, they can be taken away or destroyed by the five enemies of water, fire, kings, thieves and unloved heirs; they cause quarrels and disputes; they are unsubstantial; their acquisition and protection necessitate harassment of others; their destruction leads to intense suffering such as sorrow, lamentation, etc. Through attachment to them, those who are filled with stinginess (*macchariya*) are bound to be reborn in the realms of suffering. Thus, these possessions [64] bring much harm to the possessor in diverse manners. Giving them away, forsaking them, renouncing them, is the only means of escape to happiness." A Bodhisatta should reflect in this manner and practise mindfulness so as not to be remiss in deeds of generosity.

A Bodhisatta should also reflect in the following manner whenever a supplicant presents himself for alms: "He is a very intimate friend, confiding all his personal secrets to me. He instructs me well on how to take along with me to the next existences, by this means of generosity (*dāna*), my possessions which I will have to leave behind otherwise. He is a great friend who assists me in removing, to a safe place, my possessions from this world, which like a blazing house, is raging with the fires of death. He is, to me, like an excellent storehouse where my possessions can be kept safe from burning," and "He is my best friend, for by enabling me to perform the act of generosity, he helps me achieve the most eminent and difficult of all attainments, the attainment of the ground for becoming a Buddha (*Buddha-bhūmi*)."

Likewise, he should reflect thus: "This man has favoured me with an opportunity to do a most noble deed, I should therefore seize this opportunity without fail." "My life will certainly come to an end, I should therefore give, even when not asked, indeed then, I should do all the more so when asked." "Bodhisattas, who are intensely inclined towards generosity, go about searching

for someone to receive their alms, in my case a supplicant has come on his own accord to receive my offering because of my merit." "Although an act of generosity is shown to recipients, true to its nature, it benefits me only." "I should benefit all these beings as I benefit myself." "How could I fulfil the perfection of generosity if there were no one to receive my offering?" "I should acquire and accumulate properties only for those who may ask." "When would they come and avail themselves of my belongings freely, on their own accord, without asking me?" "In what way could I endear myself to recipients and how could they become friendly with me." "How will I rejoice while giving and after giving?" "How would recipients come to me and the inclination for giving to them develop in me?" "How would I know their mind and give them what they need without their asking?" "When I have things to offer and supplicants to receive, should I fail to give them, it would be a great deception on my part." "How would I sacrifice my life and limbs to those who come for them?" He should thus constantly develop a propensity to perform deeds of generosity.

"Just as a hopping insect (*kīṭaka*)[390] springs back to one who throws it away without any concern, good results come back to one who has performed alms giving generously, without expecting any reward." Reflecting thus, he should develop the mind which does not wish or expect any fruit out of his act.[391]

When the recipient of alms happens to be a dear person, he should be glad by reflecting: "One, who is dear to me, asks me for something." If the recipient is a neutral person, he should be glad by reflecting: "By making this offering to him, I will surely gain his friendship." If the recipient is a hostile person, he should specially rejoice by reflecting: "My enemy asks for something. By this offering to him, he will surely become a dear friend of mine." Thus, he should make an offering to a neutral person or a foe in the same way as he does to a dear person, with compassion, preceded by loving-kindness.

If the aspirant to becoming a Buddha finds himself so attached to objects of offering that relinquishing is impossible because of greed, which he is imbued with over long stretches of time, he should reflect on himself: "You, good man, aspiring after becoming a Buddha, when you resolved to become a Buddha, in

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[390] *Kīṭaka*, according to the Tipitaka Pali-Myanmar Dictionary: "a hopping insect."

[391] Here fruit means celestial or human bliss but not attainment of Buddhahood.

order to assist and support beings, did you not give up this body, as [65] well as the good deeds done by sacrificing it and the fruits thereof. As then you are now attached to external objects; it is like the bathing of an elephant. So you should not remain attached to any object."

> Other animals bathe to wash their bodies. Elephants bathe not to clean themselves, but to crush and destroy lotus shoots and stems. Just as an elephant's bathing is futile, attachment to external objects will not be fruitful, and will not bring about the benefit of becoming a Buddha.

Suppose there is a medicine tree; those in need of its roots, take away its roots; those in need of its crust, bark, trunk, fork, heartwood, branches, leaves, flowers and fruits take whatever they need. Although thus stripped of its roots, crust, etc., the medicine tree is not disturbed with such a thought as: "They have deprived me of my possessions."

Likewise, the Bodhisatta should reflect thus: "I, who have worked strenuously for the welfare of beings, should not entertain even one iota of wrong thought in serving others by making use of this body which is miserable, ungrateful and unclean. The four great elements, whether internal of the body, or external of the outside world, are all subject to decomposition and dissolution. There is no distinction between internal and external elements. In the absence of such a distinction, attachment to this body, thinking: 'This is mine, this am I, this is myself,' is a mere display of activity by delusion (*sammoha-vijambhītā*). So, without regard for my hands, feet, eyes, flesh and blood, as in the case of external objects, I should be prepared to give up my whole body, thinking: 'Let those who need any of them take them away.' "

When he reflects in this way, with no regard for his life and limbs, relinquishing them for the sake of self-awakening, his deeds, words, and thoughts easily become more and more purified. The Bodhisatta, who is thus purified in physical, verbal and mental actions, comes to possess purity of livelihood, and becomes established in the practice of the true path leading to Nibbāna. He gains accomplishment also in the knowledge of what is detrimental and what is beneficial. As a result, he becomes indeed a person who is capable of rendering more and more services to all beings through gifts of material goods (*vatthu-dāna*), gifts of harmlessness (*abhaya-dāna*) and gifts of Dhamma (*dhamma-dāna*).

2. Reflection on the Perfection of Morality

Morality is the Dhamma water which can wash away mental defilements that cannot be removed by the waters of the Ganges, and other such things. Morality acts as a good medication to eradicate the heat of passion which cannot be assuaged by yellow sandalwood, and other such things. It is the ornament of the wise, having nothing in common with the adornments, such as necklaces, diadems and earrings, of ordinary people.

It is a kind of natural perfume whose fragrance pervades all directions and which is suitable for all occasions. It is an excellent mantra of spell-binding power (*vasi-karaṇa-mantaṁ*) which commands homage and reverence from high-born humans, such as kings, Brahmins, etc., and of Devas and Brahmas. It is a stairway to the Deva and Brahma realms. It serves as a means of gaining the absorptions (*jhāna*) and super knowledges (*abhiññā*), a highway leading to the great city of Nibbāna, the foundation of the three forms of Awakening. As it fulfils all that one wishes, it is superior to the wish-fulfilling gem (*cintā-maṇi*) and the wish-fulfilling tree (*kappa-rukkha*).” Thus should one reflect on the attributes of morality.

The commentary recommends the Discourse giving the Simile of the Bonfire (*Aggikkhandhopama-sutta*, AN 7.72), for reflecting on the faults of not being endowed with morality. The following is a summary of the discourse.

At one time, the Buddha was touring in the country of Kosala accompanied by many [66] monastics. On seeing a blazing fire at one place, he left the highway and sat down on a fourfolded robe, prepared by Venerable Ānanda at the foot of a tree. Then the Buddha addressed the monastics: “Monastics, which would be better, to sit and lie down embracing a raging flame or to sit and lie down embracing a damsel of high birth with a lovely soft body, pleasant to the touch?” The monastics responded, unwisely, that it would be better to sit and lie down, embracing a damsel.

The Buddha explained that for an immoral monastic, it would be better to sit and lie down embracing a raging flame for it would cause suffering for just one existence only, whereas embracing a damsel would lead them to the lower realms of existence over and over again.

He continued to question the monastics: "Would it be better to be tormented by a strong man who roughs up one's legs with a leather tether until the skin, flesh, muscles and bones are all torn and crushed, than to take delight in the homage paid by the faithful?

Would it be better to have one's chest pierced by a strong man with a sharp spear than to be paid homage to by the faithful?

Would it be better to have your body enveloped in a red hot iron plate by a strong man than for an immoral monastic to make use of the robe offered by the faithful?

Would it be better to have your mouth opened and held up with a red hot iron prop and to have a burning hot lump of iron thrown into it so that it burns up all the internal organs[392] along its way to the lower orifice of the body than for an immoral monastic to partake of the alms food offered by the faithful?

Would it be better to be seized firmly by the head or shoulders by a strong man and forcibly pushed down to sit or lie down on an iron couch which is burning red hot than for an immoral monastic to make use of the couch or divan offered by the faithful?

Would it better to be held upside down by a strong man and flung into a big pan of boiling iron than for an immoral monastic to dwell in a monastery offered by the faithful?"

To all these six latter questions, the monastics answer unwisely as they did to the first question. The Buddha gives answers similar to that given to the first one: that for an immoral monastic, it would be better to have one's legs torn and crushed … to be pierced by a sharp spear, etc., for they would cause suffering for one existence only; whereas to take delight in the homage paid by the faithful, to be paid homage by the faithful, etc., would lead to the suffering realms of intense suffering where they would remain for a long time.

The Buddha ends his discourse with these words: "In order to bring the utmost benefit to the faithful supporters who offer requisites and to make one's life advantageous in the Saṅgha, a monastic should undergo the three trainings

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[392] The lips, palate, tongue, throat, chest, stomach and intestines.

(*sikkhā*). A monastic wishing for his own welfare as well as that of others must be ever mindful and diligent."

> The trainings (*sikkha*), which the Buddha's disciples have to undergo, is of three kinds: training in higher morality (*adhisīla-sikkha*), higher mentality (*adhicitta-sikkha*) and higher wisdom (*adhipaññā-sikkha*). This threefold training forms the threefold divison of the noble path of eight constituents: morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*).

By the end of the discourse, 60 immoral monastics vomited hot blood; 60 monastics who had infringed light disciplinary rules left the Saṅgha for the household life; 60 monastics who had led a pure life became Arahats.

One should continue reflecting on the attributes of morality in this manner also: A moral person takes delight in the thought: "I have done a faultless, good deed which protects one from harm." He is free from danger of self-reproach or reproach by others who are wise. To him there is no possibility of punishment, or [67] of going to the suffering states. He is praised by the wise who say: "This man is moral and of good conduct. Unlike an immoral person, he is absolutely free from remorse."

Since morality is the root cause of mindfulness, it brings manifold benefits such as prevention of loss of one's wealth (*bhoga-vyāsana*), and so on, and since it eradicates demeritoriousness, it is the best source of one's prosperity and well-being.

Even a person of low caste, when endowed with morality, receives homage and respect from persons of high birth such as kings, Brahmins, etc. Thus, accomplishment in morality excels high birth or caste.

The wealth of moral virtues surpasses that of external materials because it cannot be endangered by five enemies. It follows one to the next existence. Its benefit is great and it serves as a foundation for development of concentration and wisdom.

Even those so-called rulers in the world have no control over their own minds. Only those who are moral, have control over their minds (*cittissariya*). Therefore morality is superior to the authority of kings, etc. Those who are moral, gain the attribute of supremacy (*issariya*) in their respective existences.

Morality is superior even to life itself, as the Buddha explains that a single day in the life of a person with morality is far better than 100 years in the life of an immoral person, and that mere living without any moral virtue amounts to death.

Because a moral person is esteemed even by his enemy and because he cannot be vanquished by ageing, sickness and misfortune, his morality transcends his physical beauty. As it is the foundation for the states of happiness of Devas or Nibbāna, it is far superior to the best mansions and palaces or to the highest status and positions of kings, princes or generals.

Morality is better than one's relatives and friends who are solicitous of one's well-being because it truly promotes one's welfare and interests and follows one closely to the next existence.

Morality serves as a special bodyguard protecting this body, which is difficult to be guarded from harm, even by the four divisions of an army or by such devices as drugs, spells and charms.

When one reflects that "morality is full of innumerable qualities," one's imperfect morality will become perfect or one's impure morality will become pure.

Should aversion in his life continuum, antithetical to morality, and having accumulative effect, occur to the aspirant for becoming a Buddha from time to time, he should reflect thus: "Have you not resolved to attain the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) and omniscience? If your morality is defective, you cannot progress even in mundane matters, let alone in supermundane ones. The omniscience you aspire to is the highest of all achievements. Since morality is the foundation of omniscience, your morality should be of very high quality. Therefore, you should be a person who regards morality with much affection."

Or he should reflect thus: "You should teach Dhamma and save beings by three vehicles from such characteristics as impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anatta*); you should also help immature beings in the five faculties of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom, to reach maturity. Just as the treatment of a doctor, who gives a wrong prescription, is untrustworthy, even so the word of an immoral person is unreliable to many. Therefore, reflecting as a trustworthy person, how could I save them and help them reach maturity in those faculties, I should be pure in morality."

Furthermore, thinking: "Only when I have special attributes, such as the attainments of the absorptions (*jhāna*), etc., will I be able to help others and fulfil the perfections, such as wisdom, etc. And such special attributes as attainment of the absorptions, etc., are not possible without pure morality. Therefore, I should be a person of naturally pure morality." [68] Reflecting thus, the Bodhisatta should earnestly strive to purify his morality.

3. Reflecting on the Perfection of Renunciation

The Bodhisatta should reflect on the disadvantages of a household life which is restricted with duties towards one's wife and children, and on the advantages of the life of a monastic, which, like space, is free and vast, being exempted from such obligations.

As explained in the Long Discourse on the Mass of Suffering (*Mahā-dukkhakkhandha-sutta*, MN 13) one should dwell upon the fact that sensual objects are more of worry and lamentation than of enjoyment and so on; upon suffering from contact with heat, cold, gadflies, mosquitoes, flies, wind, sun, reptiles, fleas, insects, etc., while in quest of sense objects, as motivated by sense-desires; upon pain and distress when one's laborious quest for sense objects ends up fruitless; upon worry and anxiety for their security from the five enemies after they have been acquired; upon great suffering caused by terrible wars waged through desire for sense objects; upon the 32 kinds of severe punishment (*kamma-kāraṇa*) meted out in this life to those who have committed crimes caused by sense-desires; upon terrible suffering in the life beyond in the four realms of miserable existences.

4. Reflecting on the Perfection of Wisdom

One should reflect on the attributes of wisdom thus: "Without wisdom, such perfections as generosity, morality, etc., cannot become pure; and volition for giving, volition for observing morality, etc., cannot perform their respective functions."

Without life, this bodily mechanism loses its significance and cannot function properly. Without consciousness, the sense faculties of eye, ear, etc., cannot perform their respective functions of seeing, hearing, etc. Similarly, the faculties of faith, energy, etc., cannot do their respective duties effectively in the absence of wisdom. Therefore, wisdom is the main and chief cause for the

fulfilment of the perfections, such as generosity, morality, etc. How does wisdom help with the fulfilment of the other perfections?

1. Because they keep their eyes of wisdom always open, Bodhisattas, when giving away their limbs and organs, do so without extolling themselves or disparaging others. Like the great medicine-tree, they give without developing wrong thoughts, and are always filled with joy in the past, present and future. Only when endowed with wisdom does one become equipped with the knowledge of skill in ways and means (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*) and give for the benefit to others; and only such an act of generosity is a genuine perfection.

   Without wisdom, one is likely to give with the motivation of self-interest; such an act of generosity for one's own benefit is like earning interest for oneself from an investment.

2. Morality without wisdom but overwhelmed by greed, ill-will, etc., cannot achieve purity, much less serve as a foundation of omniscience.

3. Only a person of wisdom discerns faults in the household state and benefits of an ascetic life, faults in sensuous pleasures and benefits of attaining the absorptions (*jhāna*), faults in Saṁsāra and benefits of Nibbāna. Discerning thus, he goes forth into homelessness, develops the absorptions (*jhāna*) and realizes Nibbāna for himself. He can then help others to go forth and get established in the absorptions and Nibbāna.

4. Energy without wisdom is wrong striving; it does not serve the purpose desired.[393] When accompanied by wisdom, it becomes right endeavour and achieves the required object.

5. Only a person of wisdom can bear with patience wrongs done by others; for one devoid of wisdom, offensive actions by others incite in him unwholesome states, such as ill-will, etc., which go against forbearance. For the wise, such wrongs help [69] him develop patience and strengthen it.

6. Only a person of wisdom comprehends the three truths as they really are, i.e. truth of abstinence (*virati-sacca*), truth of speech (*vacī-sacca*),

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[393] It is better not to strive at all than to make wrong application of energy.

truth of knowledge (*ñāṇa-sacca*); their causes and opposites. Having understood them perfectly by abandoning what should be abandoned and cultivating what should be cultivated, he could help others keep to the path of truth.

7. Having fortified himself with the power of wisdom, a wise person becomes accomplished in concentration. With concentrated mind, unshakable determination to fulfil all the perfections is possible.

8. Only a man of wisdom can direct his thoughts of loving-kindness towards the three types of person without discriminating them as dear ones, neutrals or enemies.

9. And only by means of wisdom can one remain indifferent to the vicissitudes of life whether good or bad without being affected by them.

In this way, one should reflect on the attributes of wisdom, realizing it to be the cause for the purification of the perfections. Or, the Bodhisatta should admonish himself thus: "Without wisdom, there can be no perfect and pure view; without perfect and pure view, there can be no perfect and pure morality; without perfect and pure morality, there can be no perfect and pure concentration. Without concentration one cannot work for one's own benefit, much less others'. Therefore, practising as you are for the welfare of others, should you not make an earnest effort to develop your wisdom?"

It is by the power of wisdom that the Bodhisatta becomes established in the four foundations (*catu-adhiṭṭhāna*): the foundation of wisdom (*paññā*); of truth (*sacca*); of generosity (*dāna*) and of tranquillity (*upasama*); and benefits all beings with four objects of support (*catu-saṅgaha-vatthu*): generosity (*dāna*), kindly speech (*peyya-vajja*), a life of usefulness (*attha-cariyā*), and impartiality (*samānattatā*), which helps them remain on the path of liberation and brings their five faculties of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom to maturity.

Likewise, by the power of wisdom, he engages in the investigation of absolute realities, such as the aggregates (*khandha*), sense spheres (*āyatana*) etc., and comes to understand correctly the processes of Saṁsāra and its cessation. He endeavours to bring his meritorious deeds, such as the perfection of generosity, morality, etc., to the most beneficial stage of development and to enjoy the

profits of the paths and fruitions. Thus, he works to complete and perfect the training of Bodhisattas.

Comprehending the various virtues of wisdom in this manner, he should repeatedly develop the perfection of wisdom.

5. Reflecting on the Perfection of Energy

Even in worldly pursuits, the end of which is foreseeable, one cannot achieve the desired goal without the necessary energy. There is nothing which a man with indefatigable energy cannot achieve. One should reflect: "One lacking energy cannot begin the task of rescuing beings from the whirlpool of Saṁsāra. One with moderate energy will undertake the task, only to give it up half-way without pursuing it to the end. It is only the person with a superior kind of energy who will see it through to the completion of the task, without regard for one's own personal well-being, and realise the goal of omniscience."

Again, without sufficient energy, even aspirants for the Awakening of a disciple (*sāvaka-bodhi*) or the Awakening of an Independent Buddha (*Pacceka-bodhi*)[394] who are intent on liberating themselves from Saṁsāra, cannot [70] achieve their desired goal of Awakening. How can one aspiring after Perfect Self-Awakening rescue the entire world of beings with Devas and Brahmas without sufficient exertion?

A host of defilements, such as greed, hatred, etc., are as hard to restrain as elephants in must. One's productive deeds (*kamma*) that happen due to these defilements are like executioners holding high their swords and threatening to put one to death. The four suffering states caused by these deeds have their doors constantly open. Evil friends are always around to instigate one to commit these deeds and thus despatch one to these states of woe. The nature of a foolish worldling is such that he easily succumbs to the ill advice of evil friends. One should therefore keep oneself away from those evil friends who are sophists, who put forward their wrong, irrational arguments, saying: "If emancipation from Saṁsāra were a reality, it would be achieved automatically without any need to strive for it." Dissociation from such wrong views is possible only through the power of energy; or, "If becoming a Buddha is attainable through

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[394] For these two see chapter II: The Rare Appearance of a Buddha.

personal effort, what difficulty can there be for a superior person like me to put forth the required energy?" In this manner the attributes of energy should be reflected upon.

6. Reflecting on the Perfection of Forbearance

Forbearance should be cultivated repeatedly by reflecting thus: "Forbearance dispels anger which is opposed to all wholesome attributes and serves as the indestructible weapon of good people in the acquisition of such attributes. It is the adornment of Bodhisattas who can dominate others; the strength of ascetics (*samaṇa*) and Brahmins; a stream of water that extinguishes the fire of anger; a magic charm for neutralizing the poison of the rude, abusive words of evil persons; it is the natural disposition of those established in the faculties of restraint and of those supremely wise ones."

"Forbearance is a faculty, deep like an ocean; the shore where the waves of the ocean terminate; the door that closes the way to the realms of misery; the stairway that ascends to the realms of Devas and Brahmas, the sanctum where all wholesome attributes reign; the supreme purity of body, speech and mind." Thus one should reflect on the virtues of forbearance.

Again, forbearance should be cultivated repeatedly by reflecting thus: "Without holding on to forbearance, which gives calm and peace, these beings pursue demeritorious deeds which afflict them. In consequence, they are subjected to affliction in this life as well as in the life to come."

"Although it is true that I suffer through the wrongs of others, this body of mine, which serves as a field, and the action, which serve as seeds of that suffering, have been done by none other than myself."

"This forbearance of mine is the means of settling the debt of suffering."

"If there were no wrong doer, how could I fulfil the perfection of forbearance?"

"Although this person has wronged me now, he had brought certain benefits to me in the past."

"His wrong deed forms a cause for my practice of forbearance, and it therefore proves beneficial to me."

"All these beings are like my own children, how could a wise man become angry about the misdeeds of his own children?"

"He has wronged me as he is seized by the demon of wrath; I should exorcise this demon that has seized him."

"I am also the cause of the wrong deed which gives rise to this suffering, for if I were not in existence, there could be no wrong-doing."

"The mental and physical phenomena (*nāma-rūpa*) which did the wrong deed, and the mental and physical phenomena to which the wrong deed was done, both sets of such phenomena, at this very moment, have ceased. Who should [71] then be angry with whom? There should be no arising of anger."

"When all phenomena are non-self, in the absolute sense, there could be no wrong doer and no one to whom any wrong is done." Reflecting in this manner, he should repeatedly develop forbearance.

Should the anger that arises from wrongs done by others continue to overpower one's mind through the force of habit, which is gained through a long time, the aspirant for becoming a Buddha should reflect thus: "Forbearance is complementary to practices which oppose the wrongs of others."

"Wrongs of others, by causing my suffering, become a factor of arising in me of faith, since suffering is the cause of faith, and also a factor in the perception of unhappiness and dissatisfaction with the world (*anabhirati-saññā*)."

"It is the nature of sense faculties, such as eyes, ears, etc., to encounter various objects, good and bad; it is not possible to avoid coming across undesirable sense objects."

"Following the dictates of anger, a person is distraught and mad with fury. What is the use of retaliating against the wrongs of such a person?"

"An omniscient Buddha looks after all these beings as if they were his own dear children. Therefore, aspiring after omniscience by becoming a Buddha, I should not despair because of them or be angry with them."

"Should the wrong-doer be one endowed with noble attributes such as morality, one should reflect, 'I should not show anger to such a virtuous one.' "

"Should the wrong-doer be one without any noble attributes such as morality, one should reflect: 'He is a person I should regard with great compassion.' "

"By getting angry, my virtues and fame will diminish."

"Becoming angry with him, I shall look ugly, sleep in discomfort, lose wealth, lose subordinates, lose friends and be reborn in a woeful state, to the delight of my enemies."

"This anger is a powerful enemy which brings all harm and destroys all prosperity."

"When one has forbearance, one can have no enemies."

"Thinking that with forbearance, I will meet with no suffering which will befall the wrong-doer; or, by retaliating against him with anger, I shall only be following in the footsteps of my foes."

"Should I overcome anger through forbearance, I would be completely vanquishing also the foe who is a slave of anger."

"It is not proper for me to relinquish the noble quality of forbearance because of anger."

"How could I be endowed with noble qualities, such as morality, etc., when anger, the opposite of all good qualities, is arising in me? And, in the absence of such noble qualities, how could I render help to beings and achieve the avowed goal of becoming an omniscient Buddha."

"Only with forbearance, one can remain undistracted by external objects and have concentration of mind; and only with concentration of mind can one discern all conditioned formations (*saṅkhāra*) to be impermanent and unsatisfactory, and all phenomena to be non-self; and Nibbāna, to be unconditioned, deathless, etc., and the attributes of a Buddha to be of inconceivable, immeasurable powers."

Because of such discernment, one becomes established in insight (*vipassanā*) through which it is realized that: "All these phenomena are natural phenomena, devoid of self or anything pertaining to self. They arise and pass away in accordance with their [72] individual conditions. They came from nowhere and they go nowhere. They are not permanently established as an entity anywhere. There is no operating agency in this group of natural phenomena as there is no such thing as individuality in the first place." Realizing what they really are, one could comprehend that they are not the abode of the I-conceit. With such reflection, Bodhisattas stand firmly and irreversibly in their destiny, and are bound to attain omniscience.

7. Reflecting on the Perfection of Truthfulness

The perfection of truthfulness should be reflected on thus: "Without truthfulness, attributes, such as morality, etc., are impossible and there can be no performance of the vow of becoming a Buddha."

"When truthfulness is transgressed, all kinds of evil come together."

"One, who does not speak truth constantly, is regarded as untrustworthy in this very life. In every future existence too, his word will not be accepted by others."

"Only with truthfulness, can one develop attributes such as morality, renunciation, etc."

"Only with truthfulness as a foundation, can one purify and fulfil noble qualities such as the perfections, charity and good conduct. Therefore, by being truthful with regard to phenomena, one can perform the functions of the perfections, charity and good conduct and become accomplished in the practice of Bodhisattas."

8. Reflecting on the Perfection of Resolution

He should reflect thus: "In the absence of a firm resolution in doing good deeds, such as the perfection of generosity, morality, etc., and on encountering of their opposites, such as miserliness (*macchariya*), immorality (*dussīlya*), etc., one could not maintain steadfastness in performing such good deeds; and without steadfastness, one could not practise them with skill and valour. And without skill and valour, the perfection of generosity, morality, etc., which form the requisites for omniscience, could not be accomplished."

"Only when resolution in doing good deeds, such as the perfection of generosity, morality, etc., is firm, can one maintain steadfastness in encountering their opposites such as miserliness, immorality, etc. Only when such steadfastness is maintained, can one gain skill and valour in performing such good deeds. Then only the perfections of generosity, morality, etc., which form the requisites of omniscience, could be accomplished." In this manner, the attributes of resolution should be reflected upon.

9. Reflecting on the Perfection of Loving-Kindness

"Even one occupied entirely with one's personal welfare, like a selfish person, could not gain prosperity in this or a future life without promoting loving-

kindness for the well-being of others. How much more should a Bodhisatta, wishing to establish all beings in the bliss of Nibbāna, develop it? Only by fostering infinite loving-kindness for them, can a Bodhisatta establish all beings in Nibbāna."

"Wishing to help all beings achieve the supermundane bliss of Nibbāna when I become a Buddha, I should begin right now, wishing them, in advance, mundane prosperity."

"If I could not perform now the mere mental act of wishing for their welfare, when would I accomplish the verbal and physical deeds of helping them achieve their welfare?"

"These beings, whom I nurture now with loving-kindness, would, in future, become heirs and companions, in the future occasion, of sharing my Dhamma [73] inheritance."

"Without these beings, there could be no requisites for my perfections. Therefore, they form complementary conditions for fulfilment and accomplishment of all the attributes of a Buddha. They serve as a highly fertile field for sowing the seeds of merit, the best location for the performing of meritorious deeds, the unique site to be revered."

In this manner, one should especially cultivate goodwill towards all beings. The attributes of loving-kindness should also be reflected on this way: "Compassion is the first and foremost of all fundamental practices which lead to becoming a Buddha. For the Bodhisatta, who delights in providing welfare and happiness of all beings without discrimination, loving-kindness; and the desire to remove their suffering and misfortune, compassion, becomes firmly rooted and powerful." Thus loving-kindness which forms the foundation of compassion should be developed towards all beings.

10. Reflecting on the Perfection of Equanimity

"In the absence of equanimity, abuses and wrongs done by others may cause disturbances in my mind. With a disturbed mind, there is no possibility even of doing good deeds such as generosity, morality, etc., which are the requisites for becoming a Buddha."

"When loving-kindness is cultivated towards beings as mere affection, unaccompanied by equanimity, purification of the requisites of the perfections is not possible."

"Having no equanimity, one cannot channel the requisites of meritorious deeds and their results towards the promotion of the welfare of all beings."

"A Bodhisatta makes no discrimination of gifts and of their recipients. It is impossible to do so without equanimity."

"When not endowed with equanimity, one cannot attend to purification of morality without taking consideration of the dangers that may befall one's life and life-accessories (*jīvita-parikkhāra*)."

"Only one who has overcome, by virtue of equanimity, the dislike of good deeds and delight in sensual pleasures can acquire the power of renunciation."

"All functions of the requisites for the perfections can be accomplished only by examining them rightly with intelligent equanimity (*ñāṇupekkhā*)."

"In the absence of equanimity, excess of energy makes engagement in meditation impossible."

"Only with equanimity it is possible for one to concentrate on forbearance."

"Only because of equanimity can beings possess truthfulness."

"By remaining indifferent to the vicissitudes of life one's resolution to fulfil the perfections becomes firm and unshakeable."

"Only with equanimity can one disregard others' wrong; only such disregard promotes abiding in loving-kindness."

Building up the requisites of all the perfections in this manner, remaining unshakeable in determination, fulfilling and accomplishing them, all these become possible only by virtue of equanimity. Thus should the perfection of equanimity be reflected on.

Thus, reflections (*paccavekkaṇa-ñāṇa*) on the disadvantages of not doing meritorious deeds, such as alms giving, etc., and on the advantages accruing from such deeds of merit form the basis of the perfections. [74]

Good Conduct and the Super Knowledges

Like the reflections stated above, fifteen kinds of good conduct and the fivefold super knowledges, together with their components, also form the basis of the perfections. The fifteen kinds of good conduct are:

1. Observance of the precepts (*sīla-saṁvara*).
2. Closely guarding with mindfulness the six doors of the sense faculties: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, so that no plunder by bandits in the form of evil deeds could take place (*indriyesu gutta-dvaratā*).
3. Being moderate in eating (*bhojana-mattaññutā*).
4. Out of the six divisions of a day: morning, midday, evening, first watch, second watch and last watch of the night, sleeping only in the second watch, and engaging in meditation only in the two postures of sitting and walking during the remaining five periods (*jāgariyānuyoga*).

5-11. The seven virtues of the good: faith, mindfulness, conscience about doing evil, concern about doing evil, learning, energy and wisdom.

12-15. The four absorptions (*jhāna*).

Of these fifteen kinds of conduct (*caraṇa*), the components of the first four are the thirteen ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*), and such qualities as having few wants, being easily contented, and etc.

> The thirteen ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*) are enumerated in the Exposition of the Ascetic Practices (*Dhutaṅga-niddesa*, Vism 2), which forms chapter II of The Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*): 1) wearing patched-up robes (*paṁsukūlikaṅga*); 2) wearing only three robes (*tecīvarikaṅga*); 3) going for alms (*piṇḍapātikaṅga*); 4) not omitting any house whilst going for alms (*sapadānikaṅga*); 5) eating at one sitting (*ekāsanikaṅga*); 6) eating only from the alms bowl (*pattapiṇḍikaṅga*); 7) refusing all other food (*khalupacchā-bhattikaṅga*); 8) living in the forest (*āraññikaṅga*); 9) living under a tree (*rukkha-mūlikaṅga*); 10) living in the open air (*abbhokāsikaṅga*); 11) living in a cemetery (*susānikaṅga*); 12) being satisfied with whatever dwelling (*yathā-santhatikaṅga*); 13) sleeping in sitting position and never lying down (*nesajjikaṅga*).

1. The Components of Faith

Of the seven virtues of the Good Dhamma:

1. Recollection of the Buddha (*Buddhānussati*).
2. Recollection of the Dhamma (*Dhammānussati*).
3. Recollection of the Saṅgha (*Saṅghānussati*).
4. Recollection of one's morality (*sīlānussati*).
5. Recollection of charity (*cāgānussati*).
6. Recollection of one's faith, morality, learning, charity and wisdom, with Devas as witnesses (*devatānussati*).
7. Recollection of the attributes of Nibbāna (*upasamānussati*).
8. Avoidance of people who have barren, dry faith (*lūkha-puggala-parivajjana*).
9. Association with amiable people with faith (*siniddha-puggala*).
10. Reflection on phenomena which inspire devotional faith (*pasādanīya-dhamma-paccavekkaṇa*).
11. Inclination to generate faith in all postures (*tad-adhimuttatā*).

2. The Components of Mindfulness

1. Mindfulness and clear comprehension in the seven movements, such as moving forward, moving backward, etc. [75]
2. Avoidance of careless and negligent people.
3. Association with mindful people.
4. Inclination to generate mindfulness in all postures.

3. The Components of Conscience and Concern

1. Reflection on the dangers of demerit.
2. Reflection on the dangers of the realms of misery.
3. Reflection on the supporting character of merit.
4. Avoidance of people who are devoid of conscience and concern about doing evil.
5. Association with people who are endowed with conscience and concern about doing evil.

6. An inclination for developing conscience and concern about doing evil.

4. The Components of Learning

1. Previous efforts made for learning.
2. Being a constant enquirer.
3. Association with and practice of the Good Dhamma.
4. Pursuit of blameless knowledge.
5. Maturity of faculties, such as faith, energy, etc.
6. Keeping away from the defilements.
7. Avoidance of the ignorant.
8. Association with the learned.
9. Inclination for extending knowledge in all postures.

5. The Components of Energy

1. Reflection on the dangers of the realms of misery.
2. Reflection on the benefits of strenuous effort.
3. Reflection on the desirability of following the path trod by the virtuous, such as the Buddha, Paccekabuddhas, etc.
4. Honouring alms food by devoting oneself to the practice of Dhamma.
5. Reflection on the noble heritage of the Good Dhamma.
6. Reflection on the supremacy of the teacher who is a Buddha.
7. Reflection on one's eminent lineage as a descendent of a Buddha.
8. Reflection on the nobility of companions in the Dhamma.
9. Avoidance of the indolent.
10. Association with the industrious.
11. Inclination for developing energy in all postures.

6. The Components of Wisdom

1. Making repeated enquiries about the aggregates (*khandha*), the bases (*āyatana*), the elements (*dhātu*), etc.

2. Purity of objects both inside and outside the body.

3. Keeping in perfect balance the two pairs of faith and wisdom on the one hand, and energy and concentration on the other.

   This is in accordance with the Ven. U Budh's saying in his Assistance with Steadfast Mindfulness (*Mahā-satipaṭṭhāna-nissaya*): [76] "Excess of faith leads to over enthusiasm, excess of wisdom leads to craftiness, excess of energy leads to restlessness, excess of concentration leads to ennui or mental weariness, but there is never an excess of mindfulness."

4. Avoidance of the foolish.

5. Association with the wise.

6. Reflection on the diversity of profound knowledge related to subtle subjects, such as the aggregates, the bases, etc.

7. Inclination for developing wisdom in all postures.

7. The Components of the Four Absorptions

1. The first four components of conduct (*caraṇa-dhamma*) beginning with the observance of precepts.

2. The beginning portion of tranquillity (*samatha*) meditation.

3. The fivefold mastery[395] (*vasi-bhava*).

Through these kinds of good conduct and super knowledges, it is possible to achieve purity in application (*payoga-suddhi*) and purity of disposition (*āsaya-suddhi*). Through purity in application, one can make the gift of harmlessness (*abhaya-dāna*) to beings and through purity of disposition, one can make the gift of material objects (*āmisa-dāna*); and through the purity of both, the gift of Dhamma (*Dhamma-dāna*) becomes possible.

In this way it may be understood how the kinds of good conduct (*caraṇa*) and the super knowledges (*abhiññā*) form the requisites of the perfections.

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[395] For the five masteries (*vasi-bhāva*), see elsewhere in the Further Explanations.

7. What are the Factors that defile the Perfections?

To the question: "What are the factors that defile the perfections?" The answer in general is: Regarding the perfections as "I," "mine," "myself" through craving, conceit and wrong view is the cause of the defilement of the perfections.

The precise answer, however, in each particular case is as follows:

1. Thinking to discriminate between gifts and between their recipients causes a defilement of the perfection of generosity.

   The Bodhisatta, who is fulfilling the perfection of generosity, should give without discrimination whatever gifts he has in hand to whoever has come to seek. He should not think about the quality of the gift: "This is too bad to offer, or this is too good to donate," nor should he think about the recipient: "This man is an immoral person, I cannot give it to him." Such discriminating thoughts make the perfection of generosity impure.

2. Thinking to discriminate between beings and between occasions causes defilement of the perfection of morality.

   The perfection of morality should be fulfilled regardless of beings and occasion, thinking: "I shall refrain from killing only such and such creatures, but I shall not refrain from killing others. I shall observe precepts only on such and such an occasion but not on other occasions." Thinking discriminatingly thus will make the perfection of morality impure.

3. Thinking that the two kinds of sensuality, and the three realms of existence to be pleasant, and thinking that the cessation of sensuality and existence to be unpleasant are the causes of the defilement of the perfection of renunciation.

4. The wrong thought of "I" and "mine" is the cause of the defilement of the perfection of wisdom.

5. Sluggish thoughts, which encourage sloth and torpor and restlessness, are the cause [77] of defilements of the perfection of energy.

6. Thoughts discriminating between oneself and others such as "my men" and "their men" are the cause of the defilement of the perfection of forbearance.

7. Avowing to have seen, heard, touched and known what was not seen, heard, touched and known; and avowing not to have seen, heard, touched and known what was seen, heard, touched and known are the causes of defilements of the perfection of truthfulness.

8. Thinking that the requisites of Awakening, the perfections (*pāramī*), charity (*cāga*), and good conduct (*cariyā*) are disadvantageous and that their opposites are advantageous are the causes of defilements of the perfection of resolution.

9. Thinking as to who is one's benefactor and who is not, who is friendly or who is not, is the cause of the defilements of the perfection of loving-kindness.

10. Discriminating between desirable sense objects and undesirable ones that are encountered is the cause of the defilement of the perfections of equanimity.

8. What are the Factors that Purify the Perfections?

To the question: "What are the factors that purify the perfections?" the answer is: Not being destroyed or spoilt by craving, conceit and wrong view, and, as has been stated above, not having thoughts of discrimination between gifts and between recipients are the cause of the purification of the perfections.

True, the perfections are pure only when they are not tainted by defilements, such as craving, conceit, wrong view, etc., and are devoid of discriminating thoughts of the quality of gifts and recipients.

9. What are the Factors that Oppose the Perfections?

To the question: "What are the factors that oppose the perfections?" the answer is: When considered in general, all the defiling factors and all the demeritorious factors are the opposites of the perfections. When considered in detail:

1. Craving for the object to be offered and stinginess are the opposite of the perfection of wisdom (*paññā-pāramī*).

2. Wrong doings, physical, verbal and mental, are the opposite of the perfection of morality (*sīla-pāramī*).

3. Taking delight in sense objects, sense pleasures and existence is the opposite of the perfection of renunciation (*nekkhamma-pāramī*).
4. Extreme delusion is the opposite of the perfection of wisdom (*paññā-pāramī*).
5. The eight occasions of indolence (*kusīta-vatthu*), which were enumerated above, are the opposites of the perfection of energy (*viriya-pāramī*).
6. Intolerance, through greed or dislike, of desirable and undesirable objects, is the opposite of the perfection of forbearance (*khanti-pāramī*).
7. Not bringing out the real nature as it truly exists is the opposite of the perfection of truth (*sacca-pāramī*).
8. The inability to overcome the phenomena which are opposed to the perfections, not practising them successfully, is the opposite of the perfection of resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna-pāramī*).
9. The nine forms of developing hatred are the opposite of the perfection of loving-kindness (*mettā-pāramī*).
10. Not viewing with feelings of neutrality when encountering desirable or undesirable objects is the opposite of equanimity (*upekkhā-pāramī*).

Further details:

1. Craving for the objects to be given away (*lobha*), aversion to the recipients (*dosa*) and being deluded over generosity and its beneficial results (*moha*) are opposed to the perfection of generosity because only in the absence of such craving, aversion and delusion is an act of generosity accomplished.
2. The ten wrongdoings are opposed to the perfection of morality because observance of precepts is accomplished only when one is free from the evils of wrong thought, word and deed.
3. Renunciation is the noble act of abstinence from sense pleasures, ill treatment of others and self-mortification; therefore indulgence in sense pleasures (*lobha*), ill-treatment of others (*dosa*) and self-mortification (*moha*) are opposed to the [78] perfection of renunciation.

4. Craving, aversion and delusion make beings blind, whereas wisdom restores the sight of beings blinded by them. Therefore, these three unwholesome factors, which cause blindness in beings, are opposed to the perfection of wisdom.

5. Through craving, one flinches from doing meritorious deeds; through aversion, one cannot be established in good deeds; and through delusion, one cannot strive in a right way. It is only by means of energy, one performs meritorious deeds without flinching, becomes established in them and proceeds in a right manner. Therefore, these three unwholesome factors are opposed to the perfection of energy.

6. Only with forbearance can one resist the inclination towards craving for desirable objects, or towards ill-will for undesirable objects, and can perceive the non-personality and voidness of natural phenomena. Thus, craving, aversion, and delusion, which cannot perceive the empty nature of phenomena, are opposed to the perfection of forbearance.

7. Without truthfulness, one is likely to be biased by craving because of services rendered by others, or by aversion, because of harm done by them. Hence truth cannot prevail under such circumstances. Only with truthfulness can one, in the face of favouritism or antagonism, be free from bias caused by craving, or by aversion, ill-will or delusion that deter the prevalence of truth. Thus, these three unwholesome factors are opposed to the perfection of truthfulness.

8. With resolution, one can overcome the pleasant and unpleasant vicissitudes of life and remain unshakeable in fulfilling the perfections. Therefore, craving, aversion and delusion, which cannot vanquish the vicissitudes of life, are opposed to the perfection of resolution.

9. Development of loving-kindness can ward off the obstacles in the path of spiritual progress; therefore these three unwholesome factors, constituents of the obstacles, are opposed to the perfection of loving-kindness.

10. Without equanimity, craving for desirable objects and aversion to undesirable objects cannot be stopped and destroyed; nor can one view them with a balanced mind. Only when endowed with equanimity can

one do so. Therefore, these three unwholesome factors are opposed to the perfection of equanimity.

Obstacles in the path of spiritual progress : 1) All forms of craving and desire (*kāmacchanda*); 2) ill-will (*vyāpāda*) 3) sloth and torpor (*thīna-midda*); 4) distraction and worry (*uddhacca-kukkucca*), and 5) doubt or wavering of mind (*vicikiccha*).

10. What is the Method for Practising the Perfections?

To the question: "How are the perfections fulfilled? How do the Bodhisattas practise the perfections?" the answer is:

1. How the Perfection of Generosity is Fulfilled

A Bodhisatta fulfils the perfection of generosity by serving the interest of beings in several ways, such as attending to their welfare, giving up his own life and limbs, warding off the danger that would befall them, instructing them in the Dhamma, etc.

The answer in detail is that generosity is of three kinds: the gift of material objects (*āmisa-dāna*); the gift of fearlessness (*abhaya-dāna*) and the gift of Dhamma (*Dhamma-dāna*).

The Gift of Material Objects

The gift of material objects (*āmisa-dāna*): Of these three kinds, the gift of material objects to be given by the Bodhisatta can be twofold, the gift of internal objects and the gift of external objects.

External objects for offering, according to the discourse method of enumeration, consists of ten kinds: food, drinks, garments, vehicles, flowers, unguents, bedding, dwelling places and lighting materials. These offerings become manifold when each of them is divided into various things, such as hard food, soft food, etc., in the case of food. [79]

Likewise, according to the Abhidhamma method of enumeration, offerings are of six kinds, when analysed by way of six sense objects, e.g. gifts of colour, gifts of sounds, etc. These sense objects become manifold, for example, the gift of colour alone may be the gift of blue, the gift of yellow, etc.

Likewise, there are inanimate things, such as rubies, gold, silver, pearls, coral, etc; or paddy fields, other arable plots of land, parks, gardens, etc; and there are also animate ones, such as female slaves, male slaves, cattle, etc. Thus things to be given are plentiful.

How a Gift of External Objects is Made

When a Bodhisatta makes a gift of external objects, he offers whatever is necessary to the needy. When he knows, by himself, that someone is in need of something, he gives it away when not asked, even more so when asked. When giving gifts, he does so freely, with no conditions.

When there are sufficient objects to offer, he gives them to each recipient sufficiently. But when there are not enough to give, he divides them into equal portions and gives them.

There is a special point to note. In making gifts, he does not give things which would cause harm to others, such as arms, poisons and intoxicants; nor does he make gifts of playthings, which are not beneficial but would cause negligence and playfulness.

To a sick recipient, he does not offer unsuitable food or drink. He offers him only what is suitable and in proper quantity and measure.

Likewise, when asked, he gives to householders what is good for householders and to monastics what is appropriate to them.[396] And he makes his offerings without causing trouble to those close to him such as his mother, father, kinsmen and relatives, friends and colleagues, children, wife, slaves, and workers.

Having promised an excellent gift, he does not give something inferior. He does not give, expecting gain, honour, fame or reward, nor does he give anticipating benefits, such as a good existence, wealth or prosperity, other than omniscience. He makes his offerings with the one and only wish, which is for omniscience.

He does not make his offerings, detesting the recipients or the gift materials. Even to the recipients, who, without restraining themselves, abuse and revile him, he does not give in an irreverential manner as if he is discarding refuse and with annoyance. He always gives with reverence, a serene mind and full of

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[396] He does not give householders things that are acceptable to monastics or vice versa.

compassion. His generosity is totally free of the belief that noisy acclamation is auspicious, but it is associated with the staunch faith in the law of deeds and their results.

He makes his offerings without subjecting the recipients to the trouble of showing respect and humbleness to him. Without any wish to deceive or to cause disunity, he gives only with a mind of great purity. He does not use harsh, abusive words, nor does he give with sullenness; he gives only with sweet words of endearment, a smile on his face and a serene, calm disposition.

Whenever attachment to or craving for a particular object appears excessively in him because of its superior quality, or because of long personal use, or because it is the nature of greed to crave, and to hanker after objects of value and excellence, the Bodhisatta is aware of this greed and he quickly dispels it by seeking a recipient for it.

Suppose he is about to partake of a meal, which is just enough for one, and someone presents himself and asks for it. Under such circumstances, a Bodhisatta does not think twice to forego his meal and offer it right away to the recipient respectfully, just as the Bodhisatta Akitti the wise had done. [80]

The Bodhisatta, in one of his births, was a Brahmin magnate of Bārāṇasī named Akitti (Ja 480), who gave away all his wealth and retired to a forest. There he continued to distribute his newly acquired possessions to others even when he had nothing to eat but rough leaves.

When asked for his own children, wife, slaves, etc., he first explained to them his proposed act of giving. Only when they become satisfied and happy does he give them away to those who are happy to assist him in his fulfilment of the perfections. But, he does not make such an offering if he knows that those who ask for them are non-humans, such as Yakkhas and Rakkhasas, etc.

Likewise, he will not give up his kingdom to those who will bring harm or suffering to the people and who will work against their interest, but only to those who would protect them in a righteous manner.

How a Gift of Internal Objects is Made

A Bodhisatta makes his offering of internal objects in two ways:

1. Just as a person, for the sake of food and clothing, gives himself to another in servitude and serves as a slave, even so the Bodhisatta gives away his whole body, placing himself at the service of others, not at all desiring the pleasures of the senses or a good existence, but wishing only for the supreme welfare and happiness of beings and to bring to the highest stage his fulfilment of the perfection of generosity by giving, e.g. the gift of his whole body.

2. He gives, without hesitation or wavering, his limbs and organs such as the hands, the feet, the eyes, etc., to anybody who is in need of them. As in the case of external objects, he has no attachment to, or craving for, these various limbs and organs of his, nor has he one iota of reluctance in giving the gift of his limbs and organs.

Two Objectives of Giving

In sacrificing his limbs and organs or the whole body, the Bodhisatta has two objectives: to fulfil the wish of the recipient and let him enjoy whatever he needs and to gain mastery over the performance of meritorious deeds of the perfections by giving generously without the slightest attachment to the objects offered. The Bodhisatta gives the internal objects of his whole body or any parts thereof, big or small, just as he dispenses offerings of external possessions in generosity, believing: "I will certainly attain omniscience through such generosity."

In these acts of offering, he gives only what would be truly beneficial to the recipient. In particular, he does not knowingly give his own body or its parts to Māra, or his company of deities, who wish to cause injury to him, thinking: "Lest this should prove fruitless to them." Likewise, he does not give his body or its parts to those possessed by Māra or his associates, or to the insane. But to all others who ask for them, he makes an immediate offer because of the rarity of such a request or opportunity to make such a gift.

The Gift of Fearlessness

The Bodhisatta makes the gift of fearlessness (*abhaya-dāna*) by giving protection to beings and saving them, even at the sacrifice of his own life, when they are subjected to harm and danger by kings, thieves, fire, water, enemies, wild beasts, such as lions and tigers, and Nāgas, Yakkhas, Rakkhasas, etc.

The Gift of Dhamma

The gift of the Dhamma (*Dhamma-dāna*) means unequivocal teaching of the truth with a pure mind completely free from the defilements of greed, hatred, etc. To future disciples of a Buddha who have a strong, wholesome desire to realize the Awakening of a disciple (*sāvaka-bodhi*), the Bodhisatta gives discourses on taking refuge in the Three Treasures, morality, guarding the doors of the sense faculties, moderation in eating, practice of wakefulness, the seven good things, practising concentration and insight meditation, the seven kinds of purification, the knowledge of the four paths (*magga-ñāṇa*), the three kinds of understanding (*tevijja*), the six super knowledges (*abhiññā*), the four analytical knowledges (*paṭisambhidā-ñāṇa*) and the Awakening of a disciple (*sāvaka-bodhi*).

He gives the gift of Dhamma by elaborating on the attributes of the above mentioned topics, establishing in the Three Treasures, precepts, etc., those who have not yet been so [81] established, and helping those who have already been established purify their practices.

Likewise, to beings who aspire to become Paccekabuddhas and Sammāsambuddhas, the Bodhisatta gives the gift of Dhamma by explaining clearly the characteristics, functions, etc., of the ten perfections; by elaborating upon the glory of Bodhisattas throughout the three stages of their existence, viz., at the moment of the fulfilment of the perfections, of becoming a Buddha and of the fulfilment of the duties of a Buddha; by establishing them in the practices for attainment of Independent Awakening (*Pacceka-bodhi*) or Perfect Self-Awakening (*Sammā-sambodhi*); and by purifying the practices of those who are already established in them.

The Discourse Classification of Giving

When a Bodhisatta gives material gifts, he makes an offering of alms food with the wish: “Through this material gift, may I help beings achieve long life, beauty, happiness, strength, intelligence, and attain the supreme fruit of Awakening.” Similarly, he makes an offering of a drink to assuage the thirst for sensual defilements of beings.

He makes an offering of garments to gain a golden complexion and the adornment of conscience and concern (*hiri-ottappa*); of vehicles to become

accomplished in various psychic powers and to gain the bliss of Nibbāna; of perfumes to produce the sweet fragrance of incomparable morality; of flowers and unguents to be endowed with the splendour of the Buddha qualities; of seats to win the seat of Awakening under the Bodhi tree; of beds to acquire the "sleep of a Buddha" which is entering into the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) according to the saying: "Lying on the left is the sleep of the sensuous; lying on the right is the sleep of a lion; lying with upturned face is the sleep of a Peta; entering into the fourth absorption is the sleep of a Buddha." He makes an offering of dwelling places, such as rest houses, etc., to become a refuge of beings; and of lamps to acquire the five-eyes.

> The fivefold eyes of wisdom, which the sub-commentary explains as follows: 1) The Buddha-eye (*Buddha-cakkhu*), complete intuition of another's inclinations, intentions, hopes, hankerings, will, dispositions, proclivities and moral state; 2) the eye of all-round knowledge (*samanta-cakkhu*), the eye of a being perfected in wisdom; 3) the eye of truth (*Dhamma-cakkhu* or *ñāṇa-cakkhu*), perception of the attainment of the first three paths which lead to the fourth and final path of an Arahat; 4) the eye of supernormal power (*dibba-cakkhu*), the Deva-eye of super senuous perception, the clear sight of a seer, all pervading and seeing all that proceeds in hidden worlds; and 5) the physical eye (*pasāda-cakkhu* or *maṁsa-cakkhu*).

Various Kinds of Giving with their Respective Objects

He made a gift of colour (*rūpa-dāna*) to acquire the aura which constantly illumines an area of 80 cubics around the Buddha's body, even in the darkness of a thick forest, at midnight, on a new moon day, with rain clouds covering the sky. He made a gift of sound (*sadda-dāna*), to acquire a voice like that of a Brahma. He made a gift of tastes, to become a person endearing to all beings. He made a gift of tangibles, to acquire the fruit of the gentleness of a Buddha (*Buddha-sukhu-mālatā*).

He made a gift of medicines, to attain the fruit of the ageless and deathless Nibbāna. He made a gift of freedom to slaves, in order to gain emancipation from the slavery to the defilements. He made a gift of blameless amusement, so as to take delight in the true Dhamma.

He made a gift of his own children, in order to make all beings his children of noble birth by permitting them into the Saṅgha. He made a gift of his wives such as Queen Maddī,[397] in order to become lord of the whole world.

He made a gift of the ten kinds of treasures such as gold, gems, pearls, coral, etc., in order to achieve the major characteristics of physical beauty of a great being. He made a gift of various adornments, in order to achieve the 80 minor characteristic marks of physical beauty. He made a gift of his worldly wealth, in order to win the treasury of the true Dhamma.

He made a gift of his kingdom, in order to become the King of the Dhamma. He made a gift of pleasance or garden, ponds and groves, in order to achieve the superhuman transcendental absorptions, liberations, concentrations, paths and fruitions.

He made a gift of his feet to whoever wants them, to enable himself to approach the tree of Awakening with feet marked with auspicious [82] wheels. He made a gift of his hands, as he wishes to extend the helping hand of the True Dhamma to get beings across the four wild floods.[398] He made a gift of ears, nose, etc., to be endowed with the faculties of faith, etc. He made a gift of eyes, to be endowed with the all-seeing eye of a Buddha, that is, omniscience. He made a gift of flesh and blood with the wishful thought: "May my body bring welfare and happiness to all-beings, at all times, even when I am seeing, hearing, recollecting or helping myself. May it be the means for sustaining the whole world." He made a gift of the head, the top-most part of the body, in order to become the supreme one in the whole world.

In making such gifts, the Bodhisatta does so, not by seeking wrong means, nor by ill-treating others, nor through fear or shame, nor by causing vexation to the recipient, nor does he give inferior objects when he has superior ones to offer, nor does he extol himself while disparaging others, nor does he wish for any fruit other than becoming a Buddha in making his gifts, nor does he give with loathing, disgust, detestation, contempt or despisement.

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[397] Queen Maddī: wife of Prince Vessantara who was well known for his generosity as a Bodhisatta. Read chapter II: The Rare Appearance of a Buddha.

[398] Four floods (*ogha*) of desires for sensuality, existence, wrong views and ignorance.

He gives after careful preparation of materials with his own hands, at the proper time, with due reverence to the recipient, without discrimination, filled with joy at all three moments, that is: before giving, during giving and after giving.

Therefore, there is no feeling of remorse after making the gift. He does not become haughty or disdainful towards recipients but speaks endearingly to them. Understanding the speech of the recipient, he is accessible to them.

When he makes an offering, he does so together with additional materials along with it. For example, when he wishes to offer alms food, he thinks: "I will make this offering of alms food along with suitable accompaniments," and makes an offering of drinks, robes etc., as well. And when he wishes to offer robes, he thinks: "I will make this offering of robes along with suitable accompaniments," and so he makes an offering of food, drinks, etc., as well. The same method is followed with regard to gifts of vehicles, flowers, etc.

Whenever he wishes to make a gift of visible forms (*rūpa-dāna*), he makes a gift of sound, scents, etc., as accessories to accompany it. The same method is followed with regard with a gift of sound, scents, etc. In making the ten kinds of offering of food, drink etc., following the discourses way of giving the materials offered are tangible and easily intelligible.

The Abhidhamma Classification of Giving

In the Abhidhamma way of making gifts, which are objects of senses, such as colour, sound, etc., it is sometimes not clear to people as to what constitutes a gift of colour (*rūpa-dāna*), or how one should be mentally disposed, to effect a gift of colour. Because of this, how such gifts should be made is explained below.

A Gift of Colour

According to the six kinds of offering following the Abhidhamma classifications, the gift of colour (*rūpa-dāna*) should be understood thus: Having acquired a material gift, such as flowers, garments or mineral elements of blue, yellow, red, white, etc., one regards them only as colour, and thinking: "I shall make a gift of colour, this is my gift of colour," he offers the flower, the garment, etc., which has the colour intended as a gift. This kind of offering is known as a gift of colour (*rūpa-dāna*).

If it is not possible for a person, who wants to make a gift of a particular colour, by separating it out from the material of that colour, he can make an offering of

a flower, garment or mineral element which has the colour of his choice, thinking: "I shall make a gift of colour, this is my gift of colour." This is how an offer of colour (*rūpa-dāna*) is made.

A Gift of Sound

The gift of sound (*sadda-dāna*) should be understood by way of the sound of drums, etc. When making such a gift, it is not possible to give sound the way one gives lotus bulbs and [83] roots, after pulling them out; or a cluster of blue lotuses, by placing it in the hands of the recipient. One makes a gift of sound by giving sound-producing objects such as drums or bells.

Thinking: "I will make a gift of sound," he pays homage to the Three Treasures by playing one of these musical instruments himself or causing others to do so; or thinking: "This is my gift of sound," he erects on the relic shrine (*stūpa*) platforms, bells or bronze drums himself, or causes others to do so; or by giving voice enhancers, such as honey, molasses etc., to Dhamma preachers; by announcing and inviting people to listen to the Dhamma, or by giving a talk on the Dhamma, by discussing Dhamma with those who have approached him; or by expressing appreciation for the good deeds of feeding monks or building monasteries or causing others to do so. Such a gift is known as the gift of sound (*sadda-dāna*).

A Gift of Scent

Likewise, the gift of scent (*gandha-dāna*) is made when, after acquiring some delightfully fragrant objects in the form of roots, branches or powder, considering it only as scent – not as an object – and thinking: "I shall make a gift of scent, this is my gift of scent," he offers it to the Three Treasures; or he relinquishes short pieces of fragrant wood, such as aloe, sandal, etc., with the intention of making a gift. Such a gift is known as the gift of scent (*gandha-dāna*).

A Gift of Taste

Likewise, the gift of taste (*rasa-dāna*) is made when, after getting a delightfully flavoured root, bulb, globule, fruit, etc., considering it, not as a material object, but only as taste, and thinking: "I shall make a gift of taste, this is my gift of taste," he offers it to a recipient; or he makes an offering of tasty food, such as rice, corn, beans, milk, etc. Such a gift is known as the gift of taste (*rasa-dāna*).

A Gift of Tangibles

The gift of tangibles (*phoṭṭhabba-dāna*) should be understood by way of couches, cots, beds, chairs, etc., and by way of spreads, coverlets, blankets, etc. Having acquired some soft and delightful tangible objects, such as couches, cots, chairs, spreads, coverlets, blankets, etc., and considering them, not as material objects, but only as tangible qualities, thinking: "I shall make a gift of tangibles, this is my gift of tangibles," he makes a gift of some such tangible objects. Such a gift is called the gift of tangibility (*phoṭṭhabba-dāna*).

A Gift of Mental Objects

The gift of mental objects (*dhamma-dāna*) here means the gift of a mental object (*dhammārammaṇa*), one of the six sense objects. In accordance with the dictum, nutriment (*ojā,*) drinks (*pāna,*) life (*jīvita*) are to be taken as a gift of a mental object, the gift of a mental object should be understood by way of nutriment, drinks and life.

> According to A Manual of Abhidhamma by Nārada Thera: Dhamma embraces both mental and physical phenomena, mental objects (*dhammārammaṇa*) includes all objects of consciousness. pp 126, 128, 181.
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> U Shwe Zan Aung's Compendium of Philosophy describes objects of consciousness as either "objects of sense or objects of thought." It continues by saying that: "The object of thought also consists of five sub-classes of mind (*citta*); mental properties (*cetasika*); sensitive qualities of the body (*pasāda-rūpa*) and subtle qualities of body (*sukhuma-rūpa*); names, ideas, motions, concepts (*paññātti*); and Nibbāna" and concludes "these are collectively termed mental objects." (pp 2-3).

Having acquired some such material as butter, ghee, etc., which is rich in nutrients (*ojā*), and considering it only as a nutrient, actually a mental object, and thinking: "I shall make a gift of this mental object; this is my gift of a mental object," he makes a gift of butter, ghee, etc; or a gift of the eight kinds of drinks (*pāna*)[399] made from fruits [84] and roots; or, thinking: "This is a gift of life," he makes gifts of materials which are conducive to life-prolongation such as an offering of food by tickets, and so on, or gets physicians to attend to the

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[399] Eight kinds of drinks (*pāna*): drinks made from mango, rose-apple, plantain, banana, honey-fruit (*Bassia latifolia*); grapes, edible roots of water-lily; the fruit of Pharusaka.

sick and afflicted; or causes fishing nets, bird-cages, traps to be destroyed; or liberates those who have been imprisoned; or causes a proclamation to be made by a beating of gongs: "Slaughter of animals is forbidden; no fish or meat is to be sold," he undertakes the proclamation himself or causes others to do so for the protection of the lives of living beings. Such a gift is also known as a gift of mental objects (*dhamma-dāna*).

The Bodhisatta dedicates all the said accomplishments in generosity to the happiness and welfare of the whole world of beings till they attain Nibbāna. He dedicates them as supporting requisites to his attainment of Supreme Awakening, to his inexhaustible will (*chanda*), energy (*viriya*), concentration (*samādhi*), wisdom (*paññā*) and emancipation (*vimutti*) in becoming an Arahat.

In fulfilling the perfection of generosity, the Bodhisatta develops the perception of impermanence with regard to his life and his possessions. He considers these possessions as belonging to others as well. He constantly and continuously develops great compassion towards beings. In developing such compassion, he is gathering the essence of merit, which is worth extracting from his wealth. Just like a person, whose house is blazing, removes himself and all his most valuable belongings to a safe place, so does the Bodhisatta save himself and his valuable assets from the great mansion of the three abodes, the realms of humans, Devas and Brahmas, which are raging with the eleven fires of passion, hate, delusion, birth, ageing, death, grief, lamentation, pain, distress and despair, by giving them away generously without leaving anything behind. He does so without concern, without discrimination as to what is to be given away or what is to be kept for personal use.

2. How the Perfection of Morality is Fulfilled

Wishing to support others with material aids, one should, in the first instance, strive to become possessed of wealth and property. Likewise, wishing to adorn beings with the ornaments of morality, the Bodhisatta, to begin with, has to purify his own morality. Herein, morality is purified in four modes:

1. Purifying one's inclination (*ajjhāsaya-visuddhi*). A person, through purity of his own inclination, is naturally disgusted with evil. He may become very pure in morality by arousing his inward sense of conscience (*hirī*).

2. Undertaking the observance of precepts (*samādāna*). Likewise, a person, who has taken precepts, reflects: "I am undertaking the observance of precepts which are taken from such and such a teacher," and, having respect for other beings, he may become very pure in morality by arousing his sense of concern about wrong doing (*ottappa*).

3. Non-transgression (*avītikkama*). When endowed with both conscience and concern about doing wrong, there can be no transgression. Through non-transgression, one may become pure in morality and be well established in it.

4. Making amends in case of transgression (*paṭipākatika-karaṇa*). If due to forgetfulness, one sometimes breaks a precept or two, then, through one's sense of of conscience and concern, one quickly makes amends by the proper means of reinstating, such as confession or observance of probation (*parivāsa*) and carrying out penance (*mānatta*) to become pure again in morality.

After certain transgressions, a monastic has to observe probation and carry out penance; a layman or a novice has to renew the undertaking for the observance of the precepts to gain [85] reinstatement.

Abstention and Conduct

The morality which has been purified by means of the aforesaid four modes is of two kinds: abstention (*vāritta-sīla*) and good conduct (*cāritta-sīla*).

Not doing what is prohibited by the Buddha and other noble persons who say: "This is wrong; this should not be done; it should be abstained from." Thus abstaining from ten deeds of evil, such as killing, stealing, etc., is called abstention (*vāritta-sīla*).

Showing respect to honourable persons, such as one's teachers, parents or good friends, and performing blameless, useful services for them is called good conduct (*cāritta-sīla*).

How Bodhisattas observe Abstention

1. The Bodhisatta has such great compassion for all beings that he harbours no resentment towards anyone, not even in a dream. Thus he abstains from killing.

2. As he is always dedicated to assisting others, he would handle the belongings of others with an inclination to misappropriate it no more than he would take hold of a poisonous snake.

3. In his existences as a monk or a recluse, he keeps away from sexual practice.

   Not only does he avoid coital relations with a woman, he refrains from the seven minor acts of sensual craving (*methuna-saṁyoga*) mentioned in the Discourse about Intercourse (*Methuna-sutta*, AN 7.50) which are: 1) Taking delight in being caressed, massaged and rubbed by a woman; 2) taking delight in jokes and laughter with a woman; 3) taking delight in staring and gazing at a woman, eye to eye; 4) taking delight in hearing a woman laughing, singing, crying from the other side of a wall; 5) taking delight in recalling the past pleasures one enjoyed in the company of a woman; 6) taking delight in watching someone enjoying sense pleasures and longing for such pleasures; 7) leading a holy life with a longing for rebirth in a divine abode. Since he avoids even such minor sensual craving, to commit adultery is totally impossible for him. He has already abstained from such sexual misconduct from very early times. In those existences of his as a householder, the Bodhisatta does not entertain even a thought of passion for the wives of others.

4-7. When he speaks, he avoids the four wrong speeches and states only what is true, what is conducive to harmony between friends, what is endearing, and he makes only timely talks on the Dhamma in a measured manner.

8-9. His mind is always devoid of covetousness and ill-will. Always holding unperverted views, he is endowed with the knowledge that he is the owner of his deeds (*kammassa-kata-ñāṇa*).[400] He has faith and good will towards recluses, who are practising rightly.

Because he avoids the unwholesome courses of action (*kamma*) which leads to the four planes of misery, and because he is established in the wholesome courses of action which leads to the Deva realm and Nibbāna, through the purity of his inclinations, and through the [86] purity of his physical and verbal actions,

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[400] The owner of his deeds; he is solely responsible for all his deeds, good or bad.

all the Bodhisatta's wishes for the welfare and happiness of beings are rapidly fulfilled. He also achieves the fulfilment of his perfections.

1. By abstaining from the wrong deed of killing (*pāṇātipāta*), the Bodhisatta gives the gift of harmlessness to all beings. He becomes accomplished in the development of loving-kindness without difficulty, and enjoys the eleven advantages (AN 11.15) of developing loving-kindness. Together with the advantages of enjoying robust health, longevity and great happiness, he possesses the distinguished characteristics of a great being such as long, tapering fingers and toes; and he is able to eradicate the natural tendencies towards hatred (*dosa-vāsanā*).

2. By abstaining from the wrong deed of taking what is not given (*adinnādāna*), the Bodhisatta acquires wealth and possessions which are immune from molestation by the five enemies: water, fire, kings, thieves and unloved heirs. He is not susceptible to suspicion by others. He is dear, amiable and trustworthy. He is not attached to wealth and property. With an inclination to relinquishing, he is able to eradicate the natural tendencies towards greed (*lobha-vāsanā*).

3. By abstaining from unchaste practices (*abrahmacariyā*), the Bodhisatta remains modest, calm in mind and body, dear, agreeable to all beings and is not loathed by them. He enjoys a good reputation. He has neither attachment to women nor strong desire for them. With earnest inclination to renunciation, he is able to eradicate the natural tendencies towards greed (*lobha-vāsanā*).

4. By abstaining from false speech (*musā-vāda*), the Bodhisatta is highly esteemed, trusted and relied upon by beings. His words are well accepted and have much influence on many. He is dear and agreeable to Devas. He has a sweet fragrance. He is well guarded in his speech and action. He possesses the distinguished characteristics of a great being such as having only a single hair in each of the pores of his body, and so on. He is able to eradicate the natural tendencies towards defilements (*kilesa-vāsanā*).

5. By abstaining from slander (*pisuṇā-vācā*), the Bodhisatta possesses a physical body which is indestructible and a following that cannot be

divided by the wiles of others. He has unbreakable faith in the true Dhamma. He is a firm friend, endearing to all beings, enjoying the benefits of having but few defilements (*kilesa*).

6. By abstaining from abusive language (*pharusā-vāca*), the Bodhisatta becomes dear to beings. With a pleasant, amiable disposition, sweet in speech, he is held in high esteem by all. He becomes endowed with a voice of eight qualities.

   According to the Discourse concerning Mahā Govinda (*Mahā-govinda-sutta*, DN 19) the eight qualities of voice possessed by Sanaṅkumāra Brahma are: 1) Purity of enunciation; 2) clearness, being easily understood; 3) melodiousness; 4) pleasantness; 5) being full and rounded; 6) not being scattered and diffused; 7) being deep and resonant; and 8) not travelling beyond his audience; like the Brahma, Bodhisattas are also possessors of a voice with these eight qualities.

7. By abstaining from frivolous talk (*samphappalāpā-vāca*), the Bodhisatta is dear and agreeable to all beings, esteemed and revered by them. Speaking, as a rule, in a cautious manner, his words are well accepted and have much influence on them. He wields great power and has the skill to give instant answers to questions asked by others. When he becomes a Buddha, he becomes capable of answering all the questions put forward by beings in numerous languages. He answers by giving a single reply in Pāḷi, the language of noble persons (*ariya-vācā*), which is well understood by the audience of different races numbering 101, each speaking their own language.

8. By abstaining from covetousness (*abhijjhā*), the Bodhisatta gains whatever he wishes without difficulty. He obtains excellent riches to his liking. He is honoured and revered by [87] wealthy kings, Brahmins and householders. He is never vanquished by his adversaries. He has no defects in his faculties of eye, ear, nose, etc., and becomes a person without a peer.

9. By abstaining from ill-will (*vyāpāda*), the Bodhisatta becomes a pleasant person, lovely to behold and is admired by all. He inspires them easily with faith in himself. He is inoffensive by nature, abides only in loving-kindness and is endowed with great power.

10. By rejecting wrong views and developing only right views, the Bodhisatta gains good companions. He does not commit evil even if he is threatened with beheading. Holding the view that he is the owner of his deeds (*kamma*), he does not believe in superstitious omens. He has firm confidence in the True Dhamma, and steadfast faith in the omniscience of the Awakened Ones. Just as a royal swan takes no delight in a dung heap so does the Bodhisatta take no delight in various creeds other than right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*). He is skilled in fully comprehending the three characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and unsubstantiality. In the final existence when he becomes a Buddha, he gains unobstructed knowledge (*anāvaraṇa-ñāṇa*), which knows all there is to know without any hindrance. Before becoming a Buddha, he becomes the chief and foremost of beings in every existence he happens to be born into and attains the highest fortunes.

    Superstitious omens (*diṭṭha-suta-muta-maṅgala*). The Tipiṭaka Pāḷi-Myanmar Dictionary describes it as the meaning of freedom from superstitious views (*akotuhala-maṅgala*), mentioned in the commentary of the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*), which is explained as: "The belief held by the uninstructed in the auspiciousness of the five sense objects when they happened to be seen, heard or touched under such and such circumstances and conditions."

He reflects like this: "Morality is the foundation of all achievements. It is the origin, source of all the attributes of a Buddha. It is the beginning of all the perfections." Having morality, the Bodhisatta develops the power of mindfulness and comprehension in four matters: control of verbal and physical actions, restraint of faculties, purity of livelihood and use of the four requisites. He fulfils the observance of morality with due respect and care, considering gain and honour as a foe in the guise of a friend.

How Bodhisattas observe Conduct

The Bodhisatta always welcomes good friends, greeting them with a gesture of respect and courtesy, by extending his clasped hands towards them and waiting upon them. He attends personally on the sick and renders needful services to them. He expresses appreciation after hearing a Dhamma discourse. He speaks in praise of the virtues of the virtuous. He bears with patience the wrongs of others and recollects repeatedly only their services rendered to him. He rejoices

in the meritorious deeds of others and dedicates his own good deeds to Supreme Awakening. He always abides without neglecting the practice of wholesome Dhamma. If he happens to commit a wrong doing, he sees it as such, without attempting to hide it, and confesses it to his Dhamma companions. He develops more and more the practice of Dhamma, going up higher and higher in the stages of attainment.

Likewise, he is skilful and diligent in rendering services to beings in such matters that are agreeable to him and would benefit them. When they are afflicted with disease, etc., he tries to give relief to them as much as possible. When misfortune (*vyāsana*) befalls them, concerning relatives, wealth, health, morality and belief, he gives them solace by dispelling their sorrow. He reproves righteously those who need to be reproved, only to take them out of evil and establish them in good. To those who deserve his support, he righteously gives them a helping hand.

On hearing the supreme practices of the past Bodhisattas, by means of which they gain maturity of the perfections (*pāramī*), charity (*cāga*), and good conduct (*cariyā*), and which are most difficult to perform, inconceivably powerful, and which definitely contribute to the happiness and welfare of beings, the Bodhisatta is not frightened or discouraged at all.

He reflects: "All the past Bodhisattas, just like me, were only human beings; and yet [88] by dint of constant training in morality, concentration and wisdom they reached Supreme Awakening. Like those great Bodhisattas of the past, I too will undergo the complete training in morality, concentration and wisdom. In this way, after completing the same three trainings, I will ultimately attain the same goal of omniscience." Thus, with unrelenting diligence preceded by faith, he undertakes to complete the training in morality, etc.

Similarly, the Bodhisatta does not publicize his own good deeds, instead he confesses his faults without concealing them. He has few wishes, is easily contented, enjoys seclusion, and is not given to socializing. He endures hardships, and does not crave for this or that object nor does he get agitated. He is not haughty, not immodest, not scurrilous, and not given to loose talk. He is quiet, calm and free from such wrong means of livelihood as fraud.

He is endowed with proper physical and verbal conduct and with his own subjects for meditation. He sees danger even in the slightest fault and undertakes

to observe well the rules of training. With no attachment to body or life, he has his mind directed only to attainment of omniscience and Nibbāna, and incessantly devotes himself to wholesome practices. He has not formed even the slightest attachment to body and life, instead he discards them. He dispels also defiling factors, such as ill-will, malice, etc., which will cause a corruption of morality.

He does not remain complacent with minor achievements but strives successively for higher attainments. By such endeavours, his achievements in the absorptions, etc., do not get diminished or stagnant at all but grow and develop more and more into higher and higher stages.

Likewise, the Bodhisatta helps the blind to reach the desired destination or directs them the right way. He communicates with the deaf and the dumb by signalling gestures with his hands. He provides a chair or a vehicle to the cripple; or he carries them personally on his back to wherever they want to go.

He works hard so that those with poor faith may develop faith, the lazy may develop energy, the heedless, unmindful ones may develop mindfulness, the restless, worried ones may develop concentration and the ignorant, uninstructed one may develop wisdom. He strives to enable those troubled by hindrances to dispel such troubling factors and those oppressed by wrong thoughts of sensuality, ill-will and cruelty to remove such oppressing factors.

To those who have helped him before, he shows his gratitude, greeting them with endearing words, honouring them in return with benefits similar to, or even greater than, those bestowed on him. In time of their misfortune, he serves them as a boon companion.

Understanding the natural disposition of various beings, he assists them to be free from what is unwholesome and to become established in what is wholesome. He associates with them, meeting their needs and wishes.

> What is meant here is that he seeks their company and friendship to free them from evil, and establish them in virtues by alms giving (*dāna*) to those who like gifts; by speaking endearing words (*piya-vācā*) to those who like kind speech; by beneficial conduct (*attha-cariyā*) to those who approve of such a life; and by treating with a sense of impartiality (*samānattatā*) those who wish to be treated with such themselves.

Likewise, even with a desire to serve their interest, the Bodhisatta does not hurt others nor quarrel with them. He does not humiliate them or make them feel remorse. He does not look down on others nor find fault with them. He is humble when dealing with those who treat him without arrogance but with humility.

He does not keep himself completely aloof from others, but also avoids excessive familiarity or association at the wrong time. He keeps company with only those worthy to associate with, at proper times and places. He does not speak ill of others in the presence of their friends nor praise those who are not on good terms with them. He does not cultivate intimate friendship with those not appropriate to mix with. [89]

He does not refuse a proper invitation, nor does he indulge in making excessive demands either; nor does he accept more than what he needs. He gives delight and encouragement to the faithful by giving a discourse on the merits of faith. Likewise, he gives delight and encouragement to those endowed with morality, learning, generosity and wisdom by giving discourses on the merits of these qualities.

If, in a certain existence, the Bodhisatta happens to be accomplished in the attainments of the absorptions and super knowledges (*abhiññā*), by exercising these powers, he arouses fright in those beings who are negligent in doing good deeds. By showing them, to a certain extent, the horrors in the realms of misery, he gets those devoid of faith and other virtues established in them, and gives them access to the Buddha's Dispensation. To those already endowed with faith, etc., he helps them gain maturity in those virtues.

In this manner, the Bodhisatta's conduct (*cāritta-sīla*) is like the flood of immeasurable meritorious deeds, which grows bigger and bigger, one existence after another.

3. How the Perfection of Renunciation is Fulfilled

As already stated above, the perfection of renunciation is the group of consciousnesses and mental concomitants which desire emancipation from sense pleasures and existences, which is founded on great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā*) and knowledge of skilful means (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*) and which is preceded by the knowledge of the dangers in them. Therefore, the Bodhisatta undertakes

first to discern the faults as they truly are in sense pleasures and existences by means of the knowledge of danger (*ādīnava-ñāṇa*).

This is how he discerns these faults: "Because household life is the dwelling place of all kinds of defilements, because there are impediments, such as wife and children, etc., restricting one's meritorious performances, because one gets involved and entangled in multifarious activities such as trading and cultivation, it is not a proper place where the happiness of renunciation can be achieved."

The sensual pleasures of men, like a drop of honey on the sharp edge of a sword, prove to be more harmful than enjoyable. Their enjoyment is short-lived, like a theatrical show seen only by intermittent flashes of lightning. They are enjoyed only through perverted perception, which is disorderly like the ornaments of a mad man. They are as deceptive as a camouflaging object, which conceals a heap of excreta, as unsatisfying as licking the moisture on one's fingers. They are afflictive, damaging, like the gorging of food by a famished person, causing hordes of misfortune like the bait on a hook, causing suffering (*dukkha*) in the past, present and future like the heat of burning fires. They are sticky like the gum of a plant (*makkaṭa-lepa*). They form a means to conceal destructive objects like the mantle of a murderer. Thus, discerning first the disadvantages in sense pleasures and existences, and then the advantages of being free from them, which is renunciation (*nekkhamma*), the Bodhisatta fulfils the perfection of renunciation.

Since going forth from household life is the foundation of the perfection of renunciation, at a time when there is no teaching of a Buddha, in order to fulfil this perfection, the Bodhisatta takes up an ascetic life under recluses or wanderers who uphold the doctrine of action (*kamma-vādī*) and the doctrine of the efficacy of action (*kiriya-vādī*). However, when an Awakened One appears in the world, he joins the Saṅgha in the Dispensation of the Buddha.

Having thus gone forth, he establishes himself in the abstentions (*vāritta-sīla*) and good conduct (*cāritta-sīla*), as described above, and, in order to purify these things, he undertakes the ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*).

The Bodhisatta, who has thus washed away the mental defilements with the clean water of morality, fortified by ascetic practices becomes endowed with blameless, pure physical and verbal conduct. He shows contentment with any available robe, alms food and [90] dwelling. Having followed the first three of

the four traditions of the noble ones (*ariya*): contentment with any kinds of robes, alms food and dwelling (*ariya-vaṁsattāya*), he strives to achieve the fourth one, delight in meditation (*bhāvanārāma*), by practising an appropriate meditation out of the prescribed 40 meditation subjects until he attains the stages of meditation access (*upacāra*) and absorption (*appanā*). Attainment of absorption is the Bodhisatta's complete fulfilment of the perfection of renunciation.[401]

4. How the Perfection of Wisdom is Fulfilled

As the light of wisdom cannot co-exist with the darkness of delusion (*moha*), the Bodhisatta, who is fulfilling the perfection of wisdom, avoids the causes of delusion, such as aversion (*arati*) to wholesomeness, laziness, stretching out one's limbs in drowsiness, etc., but applies himself with ardour to acquisition of wide knowledge, various kinds of absorptions (*jhāna*), etc.

Wisdom is of three kinds:

1. The wisdom arising from hearing (*suta-maya-paññā*).
2. The wisdom arising from reflecting (*cintā-maya-paññā*).
3. The wisdom arising from meditation (*bhāvanā-maya-paññā*).

The Wisdom arising from Hearing

In order to bring the wisdom arising from hearing, otherwise known as great learning (*bāhu-sacca*), to maturity, the Bodhisatta develops it through careful study, listening, learning, memorizing, interrogating and investigating with mindfulness, energy and wisdom preceded by the knowledge of skilful means (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*). The whole of the wisdom arising from hearing is made up of the five aggregates, the twelve sense spheres, the eighteen elements, the four truths, the 22 faculties, the law of dependent origination, the methods of steadfast mindfulness, etc., which constitute the factors of Awakening, as well as various categories of Dhamma, such as knowing what is wholesome and unwholesome, etc.; and blameless, mundane forms of knowledge which promote the welfare and happiness of beings. In this way the Bodhisatta develops the

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[401] Details on the 40 subjects of meditation may be obtained from the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*).

wisdom arising from hearing and becomes a man of wisdom who has delved into the entire subject of it himself and established others in it too.

Likewise, in order to serve the interest of beings, the Bodhisatta develops the wisdom that arises instantaneously to find the suitable means, right on the spot (*ṭhānuppattika-paṭibhāna-ñāṇa*), which is also known as the wisdom arising from hearing. By means of this wisdom, the Bodhisatta is able to distinguish the factors which will promote growth and prosperity from those which will contribute to ruin and destruction in the various undertakings of beings.

The Wisdom arising from Reflecting

Likewise, the Bodhisatta develops the wisdom arising from reflecting (*cintā-maya-paññā*) by reflecting penetratingly on natural phenomena, and the absolute realities such as aggregates, the bases, etc. Careful study, listening, learning and memorizing of natural phenomena such as the aggregates is the wisdom arising from hearing (*suta-maya-paññā*). Thinking first and then reflecting on these natural phenomena which one has studied, learnt and memorized is the wisdom arising from reflecting (*cintā-maya-paññā*).

The Wisdom arising from Meditation

Likewise, the Bodhisatta, who has developed the mundane kinds of thorough understanding of natural phenomena, such as the aggregates, the bases, etc., by discerning their specific as well as general characteristics, proceeds to perfect and fulfil the preliminary portion of the wisdom gained by meditation (*bhāvanā-maya-paññā*): the nine insight knowledges (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) such as knowledge of conditioned things (*sammasana-ñāṇa*), their impermanence, suffering, not-self, etc.

By thus perfecting and fulfilling insight knowledge, the Bodhisatta comprehends fully the external and internal objects only as mental and physical phenomena, thinking: “This group of natural phenomena, which is merely mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*), arises and ceases according to [91] conditions. In reality there is no one who creates or causes others to create. Mind and matter, as a reality, arise only to disappear and therefore they are impermanent. It is unsatisfactory because of its constant arising and ceasing. It is uncontrollable, ungovernable, and it is therefore not-self.” Thus comprehending the real nature of both

internal and external objects without distinction, he abandons attachment to them and helps others to do so as well.

During the period preceding his becoming a Buddha, the Bodhisatta, through great compassion, helps beings step into the three vehicles of practice (*paṭipatti*), by which, beings may gain maturity in the three kinds of Awakening or reach maturity in their practice if they have already stepped into them.

As for himself, the Bodhisatta strives to achieve the five kinds of mastery over the mundane absorptions (*jhāna*) and various super knowledges (*abhiññā*) and with the great help rendered by the concentration associated with these, the absorptions and super knowledges, he reaches the pinnacle of wisdom.

> As to the methods of developing the mundane absorptions (*jhāna*) and super knowledges (*abhiññā*) and the ten kinds of knowledge of insight, reference may be made to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*). It is especially to be noted, however, that in the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*), the development of wisdom for a future disciple is explained up to the stage of attainment of the path. Here in this work, however, as it is intended for the Bodhisattas who aspire to Supreme Awakening, all the endeavours for development of meditation are preceded by great compassion (*mahā-karuṇā*) and knowledge of skilful means (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*) and stop short at the sixth stage of purity of knowledge following the right path (*paṭipadā-ñāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*) before the attainment of the path, also called the stage of purity of knowledge of the paths and fruitions (*ñāṇa-dassana-visuddhi*). As regards the ten stages of the knowledge of insight, the development of wisdom is carried out as far as the first part of the knowledge of equanimity about formations (*saṅkhāra-upekkhā-ñāṇa*), giving attention only to the nine lower stages of insight (*vipassanā*).

5. How the other Perfections are Fulfilled

Just as a general, intent on vanquishing his foes, strives ceaselessly, even so the Bodhisatta, who seeks to overcome the enemies of defilement unaided and who wants other beings to make similar conquests also, works arduously all the time in fulfilment of the perfections.

Therefore the Bodhisatta continuously reflects with mindfulness: “What have I accumulated in the way of the requisites of merit and wisdom today? What have

I done for the welfare of others today?" Reflecting thus every day, he works energetically to be of service to other beings.

In order to help beings, he gives away generously his possessions, including his life and limbs. Whatever he does bodily or verbally, he does so with his mind inclined towards omniscience; whatever merit he accrues from such actions, he dedicates to the attainment of full Awakening.

With a mind for looking for emancipation he turns away from objects of sense pleasures, even if they are of superior kind or in small amount, not to speak of inferior objects of sense pleasures or in abundant quantity.

In every undertaking, he develops and applies the knowledge of skilful means (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*). He always works assiduously for the welfare of beings. He bears all sense objects with patience, whether desirable or undesirable. He stands firm on truth, not deviating from it even for the sake of his life.

He suffuses all beings, not making any discrimination, with loving-kindness and compassion. Just as a father wishes to take upon himself the suffering of his children, even so, he wishes to take upon himself all the suffering that would fall on beings.

He rejoices in the meritorious deeds of all beings. He keeps reflecting on the greatness of the Buddhas and the greatness of their powers. Whatever action he does, bodily or verbally, he does so only with his mind inclined towards Perfect Awakening. [92]

In this manner, the Bodhisatta, being constantly devoted to meritorious deeds, such as giving, etc., makes an incomparable accumulation of the requisites of merit and wisdom day by day.

Furthermore, having relinquished his own life and limb for the use and protection of beings, he seeks ways and means and applies them for the alleviation of various kinds of suffering borne by other beings: hunger, thirst, cold, heat, wind, sun, etc.

The happiness he derives from the removal of the said afflictions, the various physical and mental comforts that result from staying in delightful parks, gardens, mansions, pools, and forest abodes, the bliss of the absorptions enjoyed by Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas, noble disciples and Bodhisattas after renunciation, he wishes to make available to all beings without distinction.

When he has become accomplished in the absorptions, he endeavours to bestow on beings the fruits of the absorptions he himself has enjoyed such as rapture, calm, happiness, concentration, knowledge of things as they really are, so that they may also relish them even as he has done so himself.

Furthermore, he sees beings engulfed and helpless in the great suffering of the round of rebirths (*Saṁsāra-vaṭṭa-dukkha*), in the suffering caused by the defilements (*kilesa-dukkha*), and in the suffering caused by volitions (*abhisaṅkhāra-dukkha*) which keep beings in Saṁsāra.

He distinctly sees beings such as the inmates in the realms of misery like Niraya, experiencing continuous, intense agony for a long time, being cut up, severed, amputated, pulverized and subjected to fierce burning.

He distinctly sees beings such as animals, undergoing great suffering through mutual animosity, oppression, causing injury, killing one another, or having to toil in the service of others.

He distinctly sees beings such as ghosts, being enveloped in raging flames, consumed and withered by hunger, thirst, wind, sun, etc., feasting on what has been vomited up, or on spittle and phlegm, etc., and throwing up their arms in lamentation.

He distinctly sees some beings such as human beings, ruined in their search for a means of livelihood; suffering punishment, such as the cutting off their hands and feet, etc., for crimes committed by them; horrible to look at, ugly, deformed; deeply immersed in the mire of suffering, not distinguishable from the suffering of the inmates of Niraya.

Some humans, afflicted by hunger and thirst, due to shortage of food, are suffering just like famished ghosts. Some of them, being numerically and materially weak, are vanquished by the more powerful, forced into their service and made dependent on their masters for their livelihood. He sees their suffering as not being different from those of animals.

The Bodhisatta distinctly sees the Devas of the six realms of sensual pleasures, who are seen only as happy ones by humans, suffering from restlessness as they have swallowed the poison of sense pleasures and are burning with the fires of greed, hatred and delusion, like a blazing pile of dry firewood stoked up with

blasts of wind, with not a moment of peace and always struggling desperately, dependent upon others for mere existence.

He distinctly sees the Brahmas of the fine material and immaterial realms, after existing there for the long lifespan of 84,000 great aeons (*mahā-kappa*), succumb to the natural law of impermanence and finally plunge back into the unsurmountable rounds of suffering due to birth, ageing, and death, as do birds, propelled with tremendous energy, fly far into space or like arrows shot into the sky by a strong man.

Seeing their suffering vividly in this manner, the Bodhisatta feels a sense of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*), and suffuses all beings with loving-kindness and compassion without discrimination in the 31 planes of existence.

The Bodhisatta, who in this way accumulates, without interruption, the requisites of Awakening by way of good physical, verbal and mental actions, strives thoroughly and [93] with constant perseverance in order that all the perfections may reach the height of fulfilment.

Again, energy, which is responsible for conveying him to becoming a Buddha, i.e., the repository of inconceivable, incomparable, extensive, undefiled, pure attributes, is of unthinkable might. Ordinary people dare not even hear about this energy of the Bodhisatta, much less exercise it.

It is only through the power of this energy that the Bodhisatta develops, accumulates and fulfils the requisites of Awakening, which are the three aspirations towards becoming an omniscient Buddha with the thoughts of becoming a Buddha (*Buddho bodheyyaṁ*), of achieving liberation (*mutto moceyyaṁ*) and of crossing the ocean of Saṁsāra (*tiṇṇo tāreyyaṁ*); the four grounds of becoming a Buddha; the four ways of gaining friendship (*saṅgaha-vatthu*): generosity (*dāna*), kindly speech (*peyya-vajja*), beneficial conduct (*attha-cariyā*) and impartiality (*samānattatā*); the single function of compassion; reflection on the unique condition for becoming a Buddha by realization of the Buddha qualities; being untainted with craving, conceit and wrong view concerning all things; perceiving all beings as his own dear children; not being wearied by the suffering of Saṁsāra while striving for becoming a Buddha; relinquishing everything that could be given away; and in so relinquishing, not being conceited with the thought: “There is none in the universe to match me in generosity;” applying oneself to development of higher morality, higher

concentration and higher wisdom; being unshakeable in the practice of these virtues; being joyful, happy and delighted with meritorious deeds; being inclined to the three forms of seclusion: keeping aloof from companions (*kaya-viveka*), being void of sensuous thoughts (*citta-viveka*), and detached from the defilements (*upadhi-viveka*); applying himself to the development of the absorptions; being insatiable with blameless phenomena; teaching the Dhamma one has heard to others, out of goodwill; making great efforts to initiate meritorious deeds in fulfilment of the perfections; having unremitting perseverance intensified by courage; remaining unperturbed by accusations, and by the wrongs of others; being firmly established in truth; gaining mastery over the absorptions; achieving power in the super knowledges; comprehending the three characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anatta*); accumulating the requisites for the four supermundane paths through the practice of steadfast mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), etc.; and becoming accomplished in the nine supermundane phenomena of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna.

All these endeavours to develop, accumulate and fulfil the requisites of Awakening can be made only with the power of energy. Therefore, the Bodhisatta has, from the time of forming the aspiration until his becoming a Buddha, worked to perfect his energy thoroughly, incessantly, assiduously, without any relaxation, so that it will enable him to advance to higher and higher stages of Dhamma.

When this forward-driving (*parakkama*) perfection of energy has been fulfilled, the perfections of forbearance, truthfulness etc., which follow it, as well as those of generosity, morality, etc., which precede it, become fulfilled since all of them are dependent on energy for their perfection. Therefore, fulfilment of the perfection of forbearance and the others should be understood in the same manner.

Thus, benefitting others in various ways by relinquishing objects to be offered, which contribute to the happiness of beings, is fulfilment through generosity. Non-destruction and protection of life, property and family of beings, not causing dissension, speaking endearing, beneficial words, etc., constitute fulfilment through morality.

Likewise, performance of many beneficial deeds, such as accepting the four requisites given by beings and giving the gift of Dhamma to them, is fulfilment through renunciation; having skill in ways and means of promoting the welfare of beings is fulfilment through [94] wisdom; striving with zeal, undergoing difficulties without slacking in the use of that skill is fulfilment through energy; bearing with patience all the wrongs of beings is fulfilment through forbearance; not deceiving, not breaking the pledge of help to beings is fulfilment through truthfulness; remaining unshaken, even when his interests suffer as a result of rendering service to beings, is fulfilment through resolution; contemplating repeatedly the welfare and happiness of beings is fulfilment through loving-kindness; being unmoved, when helped or troubled by others, is fulfilment through equanimity.

Thus, the Bodhisatta endeavours for an accumulation of incomparable merit and wisdom, not shared by common people, made for the sake of helping an infinite numbers of beings and his thorough, careful fulfilment of the basic conditions of the perfections, as mentioned above. All these undertakings may be taken in brief as practising the attainment of the perfections (*pāramī-sampatti*).

11. What is the Classification of the Perfections?

Each perfection is of three categories: ordinary perfection (*pāramī*), higher perfection (*upapāramī*) and supreme perfection (*paramattha-pāramī*). For instance, generosity (*dāna*) is of three categories: 1) The ordinary perfection of giving (*dāna-pāramī*); 2) the higher perfection of giving (*dāna-upapāramī*); and the supreme perfection of giving (*dāna-paramattha-pāramī*). [1502] Likewise for morality (*sīla*) and each of the remaining virtues. Thus there are 30 kinds of perfection in its detailed enumeration.

With regard to these three categories: 1) Properties, such as one's own gold, silver, etc. and family members, such as one's own children and wife; 2) limbs, big and small, such as one's own hands, legs, etc.; and 3) one's own life, should be noted first. Then referring to giving (*dāna*): 1) Gifts of property is the ordinary perfection of giving (*dāna-pāramī*); 2) gifts of limbs, big and small, is the higher perfection of giving (*dāna-upapāramī*); and 3) a gift of life is the supreme perfection of giving (*dāna-paramattha-pāramī*).

Similarly: 1) Observance of morality at the abandoning of properties is the ordinary perfection of morality (*sīla-pāramī*); 2) observance of morality at the abandoning of limbs, big and small, is the higher perfection of morality (*sīla-upapāramī*); and 3) observance of morality at the abandoning of life is the supreme perfection of morality (*sīla-paramattha-pāramī*). Likewise, for the remaining eight perfections, the same way of classification should be applied.

Different views held by different commentators may be looked up in the exposition of the words: *Ko vibhāgo* in the commentary to the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*, CpA, PTS 277). [93]

To the question: "How many perfections (*pāramī*) are there?" the answer in brief is: There are 30 perfections: ten ordinary perfections (*pāramī*), ten higher perfections (*upapāramī*) and the ten supreme perfections (*paramattha-pāramī*).

To the [94] questions: "What are ordinary, higher and supreme perfections?" the answer is provided in the commentary to the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*, CpA). Therein, the commentator answers this question elaborately, giving different interpretations, views and comments by diverse teachers. To reproduce them all in this work would cause only confusion to readers, so we shall give here only the view preferred by the commentator Ven. Mahā Dhammapāla himself.

1. Giving away one's external objects, such as wife, children, wealth and property, is the ordinary perfection of giving (*dāna-pāramī*); giving up one's limbs, such as hands, feet, etc., is the higher perfection of giving (*dāna-upapāramī*); giving up one's life is the supreme perfection of giving (*dāna-paramattha-pāramī*).

2. Likewise, observing a precept and not breaking them on account of one's external objects, such as wife, children, wealth and property, is the ordinary perfection of morality (*sīla-pāramī*); observing a precept and not breaking them on account of one's limbs, such as hands, feet, etc., is the higher perfection of morality; observing a precept and not breaking them on account of one's life is the supreme perfection of morality.

3. Cutting off attachment to one's external objects and going forth from household life is the ordinary perfection of renunciation (*nekkhamma-pāramī*); cutting off attachment to one's limbs, such as hands, feet, etc.,

and going forth from household life, is the higher perfection of renunciation; cutting off attachment to one's life and going forth from household life is the supreme perfection of renunciation.

4. Rooting out attachment to one's external objects and deciding deliberately what is beneficial to beings and what is not is the ordinary perfection of wisdom (*paññā-pāramī*); rooting out attachment to one's limbs, such as hands, feet, etc., and deciding deliberately what is beneficial to beings and what is not is the higher perfection of wisdom; rooting out attachment to one's life and deciding deliberately what is beneficial to beings and what is not is the supreme perfection of wisdom.

5. Striving to fulfil and become accomplished in the aforesaid perfections and those to be mentioned later is the ordinary perfection of energy (*viriya-pāramī*); striving to fulfil and become accomplished in the aforesaid higher perfections and those to be mentioned later is the higher perfection of energy; striving to fulfil and become accomplished in the aforesaid supreme perfections and those to be mentioned later is the supreme perfection of energy.

6. Bearing with patience the vicissitudes which endanger one's external objects is the ordinary perfection of forbearance (*khanti-pāramī*); bearing with patience the vicissitudes which endanger one's limbs, such as hands, feet, etc., is the higher perfection of forbearance; bearing with patience the vicissitudes which endanger one's life, is the supreme perfection of forbearance. [95]

7. Not abandoning truth on account of one's external objects is the ordinary perfection of truth (*sacca-pāramī*); not abandoning truth on account of one's limbs, such as hands, feet, etc., is the higher perfection of truth; not abandoning truth on account of one's life is the supreme perfection of truth.

8. Unshakeable determination in spite of destruction of one's external objects while holding firmly that the perfections such as giving, morality etc., can be fulfilled only with indestructible determination is the ordinary perfection of resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna-pāramī*); unshakeable determination in spite of destruction of one's limbs, such as hands, feet,

etc., is the higher perfection of resolution; unshakeable determination in spite of destruction of one's life is the supreme perfection of resolution.

9. Not abandoning loving-kindness towards beings, or continuous suffusion of beings with loving-kindness, even if they have caused destruction to one's external objects is the ordinary perfection of loving-kindness (*mettā-pāramī*); not abandoning loving-kindness towards beings even if they have caused destruction to one's limbs, such as hands, feet, etc., is the higher perfection of loving-kindness; not abandoning loving-kindness towards beings even if they have caused destruction to one's life is the supreme perfection of loving-kindness.

10. Maintaining an equanimous attitude towards beings and their volitions, irrespective of whether they have been helpful or harmful to one's external objects is the ordinary perfection of equanimity (*upekkhā-pāramī*); maintaining a neutral attitude towards beings and their volitions, irrespective of whether they have been helpful or harmful to one's limbs, such as hands, feet, etc., is the higher perfection of equanimity; maintaining a neutral attitude towards beings and their volitions, irrespective of whether they have been helpful or harmful to one's life is the supreme perfection of equanimity.

In this way, the classification of the perfections should be understood.

12. What is the Synopsis of the Perfections?

To the question: "What is the synopsis of the perfections?" the answer is: The 30 perfections can be reduced to ten by grouping together those of the same nature, e.g. three kinds of the perfection of giving (*dāna-pāramī*) into one; three kinds of the perfection of morality into one, and so on. Similarly these ten perfections may further be reduced to six by grouping together those of a related nature, into:

1. The perfection of giving (*dāna-pāramī*).
2. The perfection of morality (*sīla-pāramī*).
3. The perfection of forbearance (*khanti-pāramī*).
4. The perfection of energy (*viriya-pāramī*).

5. The perfection of meditation (*jhāna-pāramī*).

6. The perfection of wisdom (*paññā-pāramī*).

This is how the abridgement is made: Renunciation (*nekkhamma*) means taking up an ascetic life, meditation and general meritoriousness. Here renunciation as taking up an ascetic life should be counted as the perfection of morality because they are of similar nature; in the same way renunciation as meditation, free from hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*) should be counted as the perfection of meditation (*jhāna-pāramī*); and renunciation as general meritoriousness belong to all the six perfections.

Truthfulness is of three kinds: truthful speech (*vacī-sacca*); abstaining from falsehood (*virati-sacca*) which is a mental concomitant of right speech (*sammā-vācā*); and truthful knowledge (*ñāṇa-sacca*) which is a mental concomitant of wisdom (*paññā*). Of these, truthful speech and abstaining from falsehood being related to morality should be counted as the perfection of morality; truthful knowledge being the concomitant of wisdom should be counted as the perfection of wisdom.

The perfection of loving-kindness (*mettā-pāramī*) which is similar in nature to the perfection of meditation is thus included in the latter.

The perfection of equanimity (*upekkhā-pāramī*) consists of concomitants of specific neutrality (*tatra-majjhattatā*) and wisdom (*paññā*); specific neutrality should be counted as the perfection of meditation (*jhāna-pāramī*) to which it is related; and as a concomitant of wisdom (*paññā*), which is the same as equanimity-knowledge (*ñāṇupekkhā*), should be counted as the perfection of wisdom.

The perfection of resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna-pāramī*) should be included in all the six perfections of giving, morality, forbearance, energy, meditation and wisdom. [96]

> An unshakeable determination in performance of giving should be counted as the perfection of giving; likewise, an unshakeable determination in matters related to morality, forbearance, energy, meditation and wisdom should be included in their respective perfections.

Advantages of Pairing the Six Perfections

First of all, the six abridged perfections: giving, morality, forbearance, energy, meditation and wisdom, could be formed into fifteen pairs as follows:

1. Giving and morality.
2. Giving and forbearance.
3. Giving and energy.
4. Giving and meditation.
5. Giving and wisdom.
6. Morality and forbearance.
7. Morality and energy.
8. Morality and meditation.
9. Morality and wisdom.
10. Forbearance and energy.
11. Forbearance and meditation.
12. Forbearance and wisdom.
13. Energy and meditation.
14. Energy and wisdom.
15. Meditation and wisdom.

The Bodhisatta accomplishes through the pair of:

1. Giving and morality, the double merit of doing what is beneficial to others and of abstaining from what is harmful to them.
2. Giving and forbearance, the double benefit of non-greed and non-hatred.
3. Giving and energy, the double merit of generosity and learning.
4. Giving and meditation, the double merit of abandoning sensual desires and ill-will.

5. Giving and wisdom, the double merit of concentration and insight meditation; and also the double merit of learning the text (*pariyatti*) and meditation.

6. Morality and forbearance, the double merit of purity of bodily and verbal conduct and purity of mental disposition.

7. Morality and energy, the double merit of concentration and insight meditation.

8. Morality and meditation, the double merit of abandoning defilements through transgression, physically and verbally (*vītikkama-kilesa*) and defilements in the mind (*pariyuṭṭhāna-kilesa*).

9. Morality and wisdom, the double gift of harmlessness (*abhaya-dāna*) and the gift of Dhamma (*Dhamma-dāna*); the gift of harmlessness is possible only when endowed with morality; and the gift of Dhamma, when endowed with wisdom.

10. Forbearance and energy, the double quality of patience and perseverance; the vicissitudes of life can be withstood only with forbearance; and it is only when there is energy that meritorious deeds are performed with zeal and enthusiasm.

11. Forbearance and meditation, the double benefit of abandoning hostility that arises out of ill-will and of favouritism that arises out of greed; without forbearance one is opposed to the undesirable aspect of the world out of ill-will; without meditation one is overwhelmed by the desirable aspect of the world out of greed.

12. Forbearance and wisdom, the double benefit of comprehending the voidness of the self in mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*) and of penetrative insight into Nibbāna.

13. Energy and meditation, the double benefit of effort (*paggaha*) and a balanced state of mind (*avikkhepa*).

14. Energy and wisdom, the double benefit of being a refuge to beings and to himself; the refuge to beings by means of energy and the refuge of self by means of wisdom.

15. Meditation and wisdom, the double benefit of concentration and insight meditation.

Advantages accruing from the Triads

Similarly, there are advantages of grouping the perfections into triads. The Bodhisatta accomplishes the triple benefit of:

1. Abandoning greed, hatred and delusion, the three roots of demerit, through the triad of giving, morality and forbearance. [97]

2. Extracting of the essence from one's wealth, from one's physical body and from one's life.

   Being associated with five enemies, wealth and property are void of intrinsic values; their real worth is in giving them away (*dāna*); being subjected to various ills and ailments, the body is devoid of substance; its real essence is in observance of precepts (*sīla*); ultimately ending up in destruction, life is devoid of substance; its real essence is development of insight meditation. The commentary on The Birth Story about (the Wise Ascetic) Kaṇha (*Kaṇha-jātaka*, Ja 440) gives an account on these subjects.

3. The meritorious deeds of giving, morality and cultivation (*bhāvanā*) through the triad of giving, morality and meditation.

4. Three kinds of gift: the gift of material objects, the gift of harmlessness and the gift of Dhamma, through giving, morality and wisdom.

   Through giving, the gift of material objects is accomplished; through morality, the gift of harmlessness and through wisdom, the gift of Dhamma.

In this way, gaining of triple, quadruple benefits through the remaining triads and tetrads may be understood as is appropriate in each case.

Including the Six Perfections in the Four Foundations

Previously we have translated *adhiṭṭhāna* as "resolution" or "determination," but these words are not applicable here and "foundation" seems more appropriate in this context. PED gives *adhiṭṭhāna* "in the sense of fixed, permanent abode" besides "decision, resolution, self-determination, will."

Having shown how the ten perfections could be condensed into six by combining similar ones, it could be shown again how the six can be included in the four foundations (*adhiṭṭhāna*):

1. The foundation of truthfulness (*saccādhiṭṭhāna*) means Nibbāna, which is absolute truth (*paramattha-sacca*), together with the initial practices which lead to Nibbāna (*pubba-bhāga-paṭipada*): truthful speech (*vacī-sacca*), abstention from falsehood (*virati-sacca*), which is a mental concomitant of right speech (*sammā-vācā*) and truthful knowledge (*ñāṇa-sacca*) which is a mental concomitant of wisdom (*paññā*).

   Truthful speech, abstention from falsehood and truthful knowledge form a supporting foundation for the Bodhisatta to stand on, in the course of existences during which the perfections are fulfilled and in the existence when he becomes a Buddha. Nibbāna as absolute truth forms a supporting foundation on which he stands when he becomes a Buddha. Hence they constitute the foundation of truthfulness.

2. The foundation of abandoning (*cāgādhiṭṭhāna*) means abandoning and uprooting all mental defilements without any remnant, by means of the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*) and forsaking, in the initial stages, while still a Bodhisatta, of sense objects and sense desires through fulfilment of the perfections, such as giving, etc.

   While fulfilling the perfections as a Bodhisatta, he is not able to abandon and uproot mental defilements without any remnant. He can only forsake sense objects as far as possible through the perfection of giving, etc., and put away sense desires temporarily (*tad-aṅga-pahāna*) and to a distance (*vikkhambhana-pahāna*). Only in this way can the Bodhisatta build a supporting foundation to stand on. Only when he becomes an Arahat (*Arahatta*) and omniscience and becomes a Buddha is he firmly established on the foundation of complete abandoning and the uprooting of the defilements without any remnant. Therefore, complete abandoning and the uprooting of defilements by means of the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*) and putting away sense objects and sense desires temporarily or to a distance constitute the foundation of abandoning.

3. The foundation of tranquillity (*upasamādhiṭṭhāna*) means complete calming of the "fever of defilements" by means of the Arahat path (*Arahatta-magga*), allaying the suffering in the cycle of rebirths when

Nibbāna is realized, and putting away the fever of defilements temporarily or to a distance through fulfilment of the perfections, such as giving, etc., while still a Bodhisatta.

While fulfilling the perfections as a Bodhisatta, the fever of defilements and suffering in the cycle of rebirth have not completely [98] subsided yet. Therefore, through the perfections, such as giving, etc., which form the means of allaying them, the Bodhisatta puts away the fever of defilements temporarily or to a distance. By such practices only, the Bodhisatta builds for himself a temporary supporting foundation to stand on. It is only when he becomes a Buddha that he is firmly established on the foundation through a complete removal of the fever of defilements and of the suffering in the cycle of rebirths. Hence, calming of the fever of defilements, and of the suffering in the cycle of rebirths constitute the foundation of tranquillity (*upasamādhiṭṭhāna*).

4. The foundation of wisdom (*paññādhiṭṭhāna*) means: the Arahat fruition (*Arahatta-phala*) insight, omniscience and all kinds of wisdom, such as the knowledge of skilful means (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*), and so on, which have arisen earlier in the mental continuum of the Bodhisatta.

   In his existences as a Bodhisatta, he remains with the earlier forms of wisdom such as knowledge of skilful means, and so on. It is only when he becomes a Buddha that he is firmly established on the supporting foundation of the Arahat fruition insight and omniscience. Hence all the various kinds of aforesaid wisdom constitute the foundation of wisdom (*paññādhiṭṭhāna*).

For the ignorant common worldlings, who have only sense objects and sense desires to rely on, these sense objects and sense desires constitute their foundation. As for the Bodhisatta who clearly sees the danger in them, he establishes himself on the four supporting foundations of truth, charity, tranquillity and wisdom, which lead from these sense objects and sense desires to freedom, which is Nibbāna. Therefore, these four factors constitute the supporting foundations for the Bodhisatta.

How Fulfilment of the Four Foundations Occurs

After receiving the definite prophecy of becoming a Buddha, the Bodhisatta investigates the perfections by means of perfection-investigating knowledge (*pāramī-pavicaya-ñāṇa*). Having done so, he makes a vow to fulfil all the

perfections, then he proceeds to fulfil them all in keeping with this vow. Thus the foundation of truthfulness (*saccādhiṭṭhāna*) becomes manifest in the mental continuum of the Bodhisatta.

While perfections are being fulfilled, there occurs an abandoning of defilements, which oppose them, and there also occurs an abandoning of sense objects and sense desires. Thus, the foundation of abandoning (*cāgādhiṭṭhāna*) also becomes manifest.

As there is an extinction of defilements by virtue of the perfections, the foundation of wisdom (*paññādhiṭṭhāna*) also becomes manifest.

Through these same perfections, the Bodhisatta becomes endowed with knowledge of skilful means (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*) and the foundation of wisdom (*paññādhiṭṭhāna*) also becomes manifest.

> Whenever he fulfils the ten perfections or the six perfections, or whenever he performs a meritorious deed related to the perfections, there become manifest in the mental continuum of the Bodhisatta: 1) The foundation of truthfulness (*saccādhiṭṭhāna*), which is the endeavour without fail, to implement the vow he has made; 2) the foundation of abandoning (*cāgādhiṭṭhāna*), which is the abandoning of defilements, which oppose the perfections; 3) the foundation of tranquillity (*upasamādhiṭṭhāna*), which is the extinction of the defilements; and 4) the foundation of wisdom (*paññādhiṭṭhāna*), which is skill in ways and means for promotion of the welfare of beings. Therefore the six perfections can again be condensed into the four foundations (*adhiṭṭhāna*) of truth, abandoning, tranquillity and wisdom.

When a person, engaged in a blameless business venture, finds it profitable as intended, he keeps pursuing that venture with increasing industry and vigour. Here the profit accruing from the initial business venture is the cause; increasing industry and vigour in the pursuance of it is the effect of that cause.

In a similar manner, when the Bodhisatta undertakes to perform blameless meritorious deeds of the perfections, he comes to enjoy the benefit of these meritorious deeds in the form of the four foundations: the sweet taste of truthful

speech (*vacī-sacca*);[402] the abandoning of the defilements (*cāga*); the extinction of the fever of defilements (*upasama*); and the knowledge of skilful means (*upāya-kosalla-ñāṇa*). He keeps on performing these [99] meritorious deeds of the perfections with increasing industry and vigour, existence after existence. Here, the benefit of these meritorious deeds, in the form of the four foundations, is the cause and the meritorious deeds of the perfections repeated with increasing industry and vigour are the effect of that cause.

It should be understood that the occurrence of the meritorious deeds of the perfections and the occurrence of the four foundations are one and the same thing expressed in different words. To describe them in detail:

1. While in the course of performing the good deeds for the perfection of giving, the Bodhisatta comes to enjoy the benefits accruing from: 1) The foundation of truthfulness (*saccādhiṭṭhāna*), which is performance of an act of giving without fail in accordance with his vow: "I will make an offering when I see someone seeking gifts;" 2) the foundation of abandoning (*cāgādhiṭṭhāna*), which is abandoning of demeritorious stinginess, etc., which opposes generosity; 3) the foundation of tranquillity (*upasamādhiṭṭhāna*), which is extinction of greed for material gifts, of hatred which occurs to those who are reluctant to make gifts towards those who come for gifts; of delusion as to giving – delusion tends to occur when one is not used to making gifts; of fear of waste which arises in unwilling givers when they see a loss or destruction of material gifts brought about somehow or other; 4) the foundation of wisdom (*paññādhiṭṭhāna*), which is offering gifts befittingly at the proper time as planned, and preceded by wisdom. Having enjoyed the benefit of these four foundations, the Bodhisatta keeps on developing the perfection of giving more earnestly.
2. Likewise, while in the course of fulfilling the perfection of morality, the Bodhisatta comes to enjoy the benefit accruing from: 1) The foundation of truthfulness, which is non-transgression of precepts in accordance with his vow; 2) the foundation of abandoning, which is

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[402] Truth, for sure, is is the sweetest of tastes (*saccaṁ have sādu-taraṁ rasānaṁ*) as it says in the Discourse to Āḷavaka (*Āḷavaka-sutta*, SN 10.12, Snp 1.10).

abandoning of immoral unwholesome volition, and demerit; 3) the foundation of tranquillity, which is extinction of harm caused by wrong deeds; 4) the foundation of wisdom, which is wisdom playing a dominant role. Having enjoyed the benefit of these four foundations, the Bodhisatta keeps on developing the perfection of morality more earnestly.

3. While in the course of fulfilling the perfection of forbearance, the Bodhisatta comes to enjoy the benefit accruing from: 1) The foundation of truthfulness, which is practice of forbearance without fail in accordance with his vow; 2) the foundation of abandoning, which is abandoning of wrong thoughts caused by wrong deeds and words of others; 3) the foundation of tranquillity, which is extinction of violent anger; 4) the foundation of wisdom, which is wisdom playing a dominant role. Having enjoyed the benefit of these four foundations; the Bodhisatta keeps on developing the perfection of forbearance more earnestly.

4. While in the course of fulfilling the perfection of energy, the Bodhisatta comes to enjoy the benefit accruing from: 1) The foundation of truthfulness, which is working for the welfare of others in accordance with his vow; 2) the foundation of abandoning, which is abandoning of slackness and inefficiency; 3) the foundation of tranquillity, which is extinction of harm caused by demerit; 4) the foundation of wisdom, which is wisdom playing a dominant role. Having enjoyed the benefit of these four foundations; the Bodhisatta keeps on developing the perfection of energy more earnestly.

5. While in the course of fulfilling the perfection of meditation, the Bodhisatta comes to enjoy the benefit accruing from: 1) The foundation of truthfulness, which is thinking deeply about and seeking the welfare of the world in accordance with his vow; 2) the foundation of abandoning, which is abandoning of demeritorious hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*); 3) the foundation of tranquillity which is peace of mind; 4) the foundation of wisdom which is wisdom playing a dominant role. Having enjoyed the benefit of these four foundations, the Bodhisatta keeps on developing the perfection of meditation more earnestly.

6. While in the course of fulfilling the perfection of wisdom, the Bodhisatta comes to enjoy the benefit accruing from: 1) The foundation of truthfulness, which is skill in means and ways of [100] promoting the welfare of others in accordance with his vow; 2) the foundation of abandoning, which is abandoning of wrong paths and actions; 3) the foundation of tranquillity, which is extinction of all forms of worries and anxieties caused through one's ignorance; 4) the foundation of wisdom, which is wisdom playing a dominant role. Having enjoyed the benefit of these four foundations, the Bodhisatta keeps on developing the perfection of wisdom more earnestly.

In this manner, with every act of merit in fulfilment of the perfections, there occur the four foundations; hence it is said that the six perfections may be included in the four foundations.

The Four Foundations as One Foundation

Just as the six perfections (*pāramī*) are included in the four foundations (*adhiṭṭhāna*), so also each of the four foundations may be counted as embracing the remaining three.

Just like the foundation of truthfulness (*saccādhiṭṭhāna*); the foundation of abandoning (*cāgādhiṭṭhāna*), the foundation of tranquillity (*upasamādhiṭṭhāna*) and the foundation of wisdom (*paññādhiṭṭhāna*), being of the nature of faithful performance in keeping with the vow, may be included in the foundation of truthfulness.

Just like the foundations of abandoning; truthfulness, tranquillity and wisdom being of the nature of abandoning of opposing factors, and being the result of total relinquishing, may be included in the foundation of abandoning.

Just like the foundations of abandoning; truthfulness, tranquillity and wisdom, being of the nature of the extinction of all the heat caused by one's deeds and defilements, may be included in the foundation of tranquillity.

So too the foundations of truthfulness; abandoning and tranquillity, following wisdom as their leader, may be included in the foundation of wisdom.

How the Foundations bring Benefits

Thus all the perfections have their commencement with the foundation of truthfulness; they become manifest through the foundation of abandoning; they grow and prosper through the foundation of tranquillity, and by means of the foundation of wisdom, they distance themselves from defilements and become purified of all of them.

Furthermore, in the first phase of the perfections, the foundation of truthfulness plays a leading role; only with the foundation of truthfulness, fulfilment of the perfections can be commenced. In the middle phase, the foundation of abandoning takes the leading role; having commenced the fulfilment of the perfections with the foundation of truthfulness, it is continued in the middle phase by sacrificing totally one's body and life for the welfare of others through the foundation of abandoning. In the final phase, the foundation of tranquillity takes over the leadership; only with the extinction of all the suffering of Saṁsāra, the task of fulfilling the perfections comes to an end.

The foundation of wisdom is supreme throughout all the three phases of the beginning, the middle and the end. Only with wisdom can fulfilment of the perfections be commenced, total abandoning of one's body and life can be made and final cessation of suffering of Saṁsāra can take place.

All four foundations constantly promote the welfare of oneself and of others and cause one to be highly revered and loved by everyone. Of these four, through the foundation of truthfulness and the foundation of abandoning, the Bodhisatta, as a layman, benefits others with material gifts; and through the foundation of tranquillity and the foundation of wisdom, the Bodhisatta, as an ascetic, benefits others with the gift of Dhamma.

Through the foundation of truthfulness, purification of morality is effected; through the foundation of abandoning, purification of livelihood; through the foundation of tranquillity, purification of mind; and through the foundation of wisdom, purification of knowledge.

In addition, through the foundation of truthfulness, because he does not deviate from truth, he does not follow the wrong course of hatred; through the foundation of abandoning, because he is not attached to sense objects, he does not follow the wrong course of greed; through the foundation of tranquillity,

because he is faultless and since there is nothing to be afraid of, he does not follow the wrong course of fear; and through the foundation of wisdom, because he sees things as they really are, he does not follow the wrong course of delusion.

Furthermore, through the foundation of truthfulness, he can tolerate, without anger, inconveniences caused by cold, heat, hunger; by contact with gadflies, mosquitoes, flies, wind, sun, reptiles; annoying insults and abuses of others and distressing ailments. Through the foundation of abandoning, he makes use of the four requisites of robes, alms food, dwelling and medicine, without attachment arising from greed. Through the foundation of tranquillity, he avoids the dangers of wild elephants, wild horses, wild cattle, wild dogs, etc., remaining absolutely calm. Through the foundation of wisdom, he dispels, without delusion, wrong thoughts of sense pleasure, ill-will and cruelty as well as demeritorious factors.

Through the foundation of truthfulness, he achieves the happiness of renunciation; through the foundation of abandoning, of solitude; through the foundation of tranquillity, of peace; and through the foundation of wisdom, happiness associated with the fourfold knowledges of the path.

Through the foundation of truthfulness, he achieves the happiness of the first absorption (*jhāna*); through [104] the foundation of abandoning, of the second absorption; through the foundation of tranquillity, of the third absorption; through the foundation of wisdom, of the fourth absorption.

Thus it should be understood how all the perfections are included in the four foundations accompanied by various attributes.

How all the Perfections are counted as Two

Just as all the perfections are included in the four foundations they are also counted as two factors: compassion (*karuṇā*) and wisdom (*paññā*). True, it is only the virtues, such as giving, morality, etc., founded on compassion and wisdom which are the requisites for Perfect Self-Awakening resulting in attainment of omniscience.

This has explained how the 30 perfections are reduced to ten; how the ten perfections are reduced to six: giving, morality, forbearance, energy, meditation and wisdom; then how these six perfections are reduced to the four foundations;

and finally, how all the perfections are reduced to two factors: compassion and wisdom.

13. What Factors Accomplish the Perfections?

To the question: "What are the factors for accomplishing the perfections?" the answer is:

1. Developing the four kinds of cultivation (*bhāvanā*).
2. Reflecting upon what oppose the perfections and dispelling them.
3. Surrendering oneself to the Buddha.

In short, the means for accomplishing the perfections are an extinction of self-love and development of love for other beings. To elaborate:

1. The four good means for accomplishing the perfections are development and accumulation of all the requisites, such as the perfections (*pāramī*), charity (*cāga*) and good conduct (*cariyā*), not omitting any of them with the sole aim of achieving omniscience (*sabba-sambhāra-bhāvanā*); with high esteem and reverence (*sakkacca-bhāvanā*); without interruption throughout all existence (*nirantara-bhāvanā*); throughout the long duration without slacking before he becomes a Buddha (*cira-kāla-bhāvanā*).
2. The Bodhisatta has to abandon beforehand all his personal possessions, even before alms seekers appear at his door, with the determination: "Offer I will, without wavering, my life, as well as the wealth and property that I possess, if people come to ask for them. I will make use of only what remains, after I have given!"

In this manner, he has made up his mind, in advance, to abandon whatever property he possesses. But there are four factors which hinder his giving them away (*dāna-vinibandha*):

1. Not being accustomed, in the past, to the practice of giving.
2. Not having sufficient quantity of things in his possession.
3. Things in his possession being too good to give away.
4. Worrying over the depletion of things in his possession.

1. Of these four hindrances, when the Bodhisatta possesses things to give away and alms seekers have arrived and yet the Bodhisatta's mind is not inclined to give, he realizes: "Surely, I was not accustomed to giving in the past; therefore the desire to give does not arise in me now in spite of such favourable circumstances."

Then he reflects: "Although the desire to give does not arise in me, I will make a gift so that I will get accustomed to giving and take delight in it. From now on, I will make generous offerings. Have I not already decided to give all my belongings to those who seek alms?" [105]

Having reflected thus, he gives them away freely and gladly. On making such gifts, the Bodhisatta removes the first hindrance of "not being accustomed in the past to the practice of giving."

2. When not having a sufficient quantity of things in his possession, the Bodhisatta reflects: "Because I have not practised giving in the past, I suffer from a shortage of things. I should therefore make an offering of whatever I have, whether they are few or inferior, even if it makes my life more difficult. With such gifts I will in future reach the height of the perfection of generosity."

Having reflected thus, he gives away freely and gladly whatever material gift he comes by. On making such gifts, the Bodhisatta removes the second hindrance of "not having sufficient quantity of things in his possession."

3. When not inclined to give because of the excellent quality of things in his possession, the Bodhisatta reflects: "Good man, have you not aspired to the noblest, the most admirable, Supreme Awakening? To achieve this it is only proper that you should make the noblest, the most admirable gift."

Having reflected thus, he makes an offering of the most excellent, delightful object, freely and gladly. On making such gifts, the Bodhisatta removes the third hindrance of "things in his possession being too good to give away."

4. When the Bodhisatta sees the depletion of material gifts on giving them away, he reflects: "To be subjected to destruction and loss is the nature of wealth and possessions. It is because in the past I did not perform good deeds of giving, which never became depleted, that I now experience a deficiency of material gifts. I will make an offering of whatever objects I come to possess whether few

or abundant. With such gifts, I will, in future, reach the height of the perfection of generosity."

Having reflected thus, the Bodhisatta gives away whatever material gifts he comes by, freely and gladly. On making such gifts, the Bodhisatta removes the fourth hindrance of "worrying over the depletion of things in his possession."

Removing hindrances to giving in this manner, by reflecting upon them in whatever way is appropriate, constitutes a good means of fulfilling the perfection of generosity.

This same method applies to the other perfections such as morality, forbearance, etc.

3. In addition, the Bodhisatta surrenders himself, in the first instance, to the Buddha saying: "I dedicate this individuality to the Buddhas, (*imāhaṁ atta-bhāvaṁ Buddhānaṁ niyyādemi*)." This self-surrender, made in advance to the Buddhas, is a good means of fulfilling all the perfections.

The Bodhisatta, who has already surrendered himself to the Buddhas, reflects: "I have given up this individuality to the Buddhas come what may." When he encounters troubles, which may endanger his body and life and which are difficult to endure, or when he meets with painful injury, which is caused by beings and which may deprive him of his life, while striving to fulfil the perfections in various existences. Having reflected thus, he remains absolutely unshaken, unmoved, in the face of troubles that may harm even his life and he is fully determined to accumulate the merit of good deeds forming the perfections. In this way, self-surrender made in advance to the Buddha is a good means of fulfilling all the perfections.

Again to state briefly, the means for accomplishing the perfections are extinction of self-love and development of love and compassion for other beings.

By fully understanding the true nature of all phenomena the Bodhisatta who aspires [106] after omniscience remains untainted with craving, conceit and wrong view regarding them. By viewing his individuality as a mere aggregate of natural phenomena, self-adoration and self-esteem get diminished and exhausted day by day.

By repeated development of great compassion he looks upon all beings as his own children; his loving-kindness or affection, and his compassion or sympathy for them grow and prosper more and more.

Therefore, the Bodhisatta, who has put away stinginess, and other defilements, which are opposed to the perfections, after being momentarily freed from greed, hatred, and delusion in regard to himself and others, helps beings with the four objects of support (*saṅgaha-vatthu*): generosity (*dāna*), kindly speech (*piya-vācā*), beneficial conduct (*attha-cariyā*) and impartiality (*samānattatā*), which always accompany the four foundations. He then assists them with the three "conveyances" of practice: morality (*sīla*), concetration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*paññā*) which lead to the three kinds of Awakening, causing those who have not entered the conveyances to enter them, or those who have done so to reach maturity therein.

True, the Bodhisatta's compassion and wisdom are adorned by the act of generosity, which is one of the four objects of support. Compassion and wisdom never manifest by themselves without giving. They both manifest simultaneously, as acts of generosity are performed. Generosity is adorned by kindly speech, for the Bodhisatta never scolds or yells while performing generosity to those who come for alms and to the attendants, but speaks only loveable, kind words. Kindly speech is adorned by the object of beneficial conduct, for the Bodhisatta speaks kind words not for mere superficial pleasantness but only with sincere, good intentions to serve the interest of others. Fulfilling the requisites of Awakening: the perfections (*pāramī*), charity (*cāga*), and good conduct (*cariya*), means practising for the welfare of beings; it is therefore beneficial conduct as one of the four objects of support. Beneficial conduct is adorned by a sense of impartiality, for in fulfilling the requisites of Awakening, the Bodhisatta treats all beings as his equal under all circumstances, happy or painful.

When he becomes a Buddha, his function of taming and teaching is accomplished by benefitting all beings with these same four objects of support which have been developed to the utmost through fulfilment of the four foundations.

For the Buddha, the act of generosity is brought to completion by the foundation of abandoning; kindly speech by the foundation of truthfulness; beneficial

conduct by the foundation of wisdom; and a sense of equality by the foundation of tranquillity.

Concerning these four foundations and four objects of support, the commentary on the *Cariyā-piṭaka* gives four verses eulogizing the attributes of the Buddha (CpA, PTS 329):

> *Sacco cāgī upasanto paññavā anukampako,*
> *sambhata-sabba-sambhāro kaṁ nāmatthaṁ na sādhaye.*

The Buddha, who has reached the height of accomplishment in the fourfold foundation of truthfulness, who is fully accomplished in the foundation of abandoning, who has extinguished the fires of the defilements, who is possessed of omniscience and who looks after beings with great compassion, being equipped with all the requisites of the foundations, what is there that he cannot achieve?

> *Maha-kāruṇiko Satthā hitesī ca upekkhako,*
> *nirapekkho ca sabbattha, aho acchariyo Jino.*

The Buddha, as the teacher of Devas and humans, being a person of great [107] compassion, seeks the welfare of beings till their realization of Nibbāna. He remains equanimous when faced with the vicissitudes of life. Free from craving for, and attachment to, everything within his body or without, how wonderful is the Buddha who conquers the five deaths (*māra*).

> The five deaths (*māra*): 1) The Deva who challenged the Buddha for position on the seat of wisdom by surrounding him with a huge army of his followers (*Deva-putta-māra*); 2) the mental defilements (*kilesa-māra*); 3) the volitions which lead to rebirth (*abhisaṅkhāra-māra*); 4) the aggregates of mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*) which materialize in all the existences before the attainment of Nibbāna (*khandha-māra*); and 5) death (*maccu-māra*).

> *Viratto sabba-dhammesu sattesu ca upekkhako,*
> *sadā sattahite yutto, aho acchariyo Jino.*

Though detached from all things, and though keeping a balanced mind towards all beings, still he applies himself, day and night, to the welfare of beings. How wonderful is the Buddha who conquers the five deaths (*māra*)!

Sabbadā sabba-sattānaṁ hitāya ca sukhāya ca,
uyyutto akilāsū ca, aho acchariyo Jino.

Always working for the welfare and happiness of all beings, viz. humans, Devas and Brahmas, and attending to the five duties of a Buddha, day and night without ceasing, still he does not show any sign of fatigue or weariness. How wonderful is the Buddha who conquers the five deaths (*māra*)!

14. How Long does it take to Accomplish the Perfections?

To the question: "How long does it take to accomplish the perfections?" the answer is: The minimum period required for fulfilling the perfections is four immeasurable periods (*asaṅkhyeyya*) and 100,000 aeons (*kappa*); the medium period, eight immeasurables and 100,000 aeons; and the maximum period, sixteen immeasurables and 100,000 aeons, after receiving the definite prophecy of becoming a Buddha. Only after fulfilling the perfections for such durations can one become a Buddha.

The three different durations relate to three different Bodhisattas,[403] namely, the Bodhisatta with the factor of predominant wisdom (*paññādhika*); the Bodhisatta with the factor of predominant faith (*saddhādhika*); and the Bodhisatta with the factor of predominant energy (*viriyādhika*).

The Bodhisatta with the factor of predominant wisdom takes four immeasurable periods and 100,000 aeons; the Bodhisatta with the factor of predominant faith takes eight immeasurables and 100,000 aeons; and the Bodhisatta with the factor of predominant energy takes sixteen immeasurables and 100,000 aeons to fulfil the perfections completely.

To the question: "All of them being Bodhisattas, why are there three different durations for fulfilment of the perfections?" the answer is: A Bodhisatta with the factor of predominant wisdom is weak in faith but strong in wisdom; a Bodhisatta with the factor of predominant faith is strong in faith but medial in wisdom; a Bodhisatta with the factor of predominant energy is weak in wisdom. It is only through the power of wisdom that one attains omniscience. When wisdom is strong, attainment of omniscience is fast; when it is weak, the

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[403] Three different future Buddhas, see chapter II: The Rare Appearance of a Buddha.

attainment is slow. This difference in the degree of strength of wisdom accounts for the difference in the duration required for the fulfilment of the perfections.

Secondary (*apare*) teachers say the difference between the three durations lies in the three degrees of energy: strong, medial and weak. Again, other (*aññe*) teachers say it is due to the difference in degrees i.e. strong, medial and weak, of maturity of the perfections leading to emancipation (*vimutti-paripācanīya-dhamma*). Of these three views, that of the commentator appears most appropriate when we consider the divisions of Bodhisattas into three types.

15. What Advantages accrue from the Perfections?

To the question: "What are the advantages that accrue from the perfections?" the answer in brief is: The advantages accruing from the perfections are not being reborn in Avīci, and so on.

The advantages accruing from the perfections are not being reborn in the eighteen [109] existences (*abhabbaṭṭhāna*), such as Avīci, and so on, which was dealt with in The Eighteen Impossible Births in the Miscellaneous Topics of the Further Explanations above; the ability to practise for the welfare of the sentient world; the 20 marvels as described in the Discourse on the Marvellous and the Wonderful (*Acchariya-abbhutā-sutta*, MN 123); fulfilment of all the Bodhisattas' wishes; and all other benefits, such as proficiency in arts and crafts, etc., as shown in various Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) and the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) and the like.

> The benefits concerning the fifteen pairs of perfections mentioned in Section 12 above. "What is the Synopsis of the Perfections?" are also to be taken as advantages that accrue from the perfections.

Furthermore, the following are also the advantages that derive from the perfections: from the time of aspiring to becoming a Buddha, the Bodhisatta, wishing for the welfare of all beings, becomes like a father to them. Possessing distinguished qualities, he is worthy of offerings, worthy of homage. He is like an excellent field for sowing seeds of merit. He is dearly loved by Devas and humans. Because his heart is filled with loving-kindness and compassion he is not harmed by wild beasts, such as lions, leopards, tigers, etc. Being a person possessed of extraordinary merit wherever he is reborn, he surpasses others in beauty, fame, happiness, strength and sovereignty. He is free from ailments. He

has very pure faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom. He has few defilements and therefore he is easy to admonish. He is patient. He takes delight in good deeds. He shows neither anger nor malice, nor does he denigrate others. He is not given to rivalry, envy, jealousy, craftiness, hypocrisy. He is not haughty, nor arrogant. He is calm. He is mindful of merit. Bearing with patience the torments of others, he does not cause suffering to them. Wherever he resides, whether in a town, a village, or a district, the place is free from dangers and calamities. Whenever he is born through unfortunate circumstances in the planes of misery such as in the Ussada Niraya – as he was in one existence before he was born as Prince Temiya – unlike other inhabitants there, he is not distressed by intense suffering but develops even more and more a sense of spiritual urgency.

Furthermore, the accomplishment of the lifespan (*āyu-sampadā*), the accomplishment of physical form (*rūpa-sampadā*), the accomplishment of family (*kula-sampadā*), the accomplishment of supremacy (*issariya-sampadā*), the acceptability of speech (*adeyya-vacanatā*) and the greatness of power (*mahānubhāvatā*) are also the advantages of the perfections.

The accomplishment of lifespan (*āyu-sampadā*) is longevity in whatever existence he is reborn. With this accomplishment, the Bodhisatta finishes whatever wholesome deed he has begun and develops greater meritoriousness.

The accomplishment of physical form (*rūpa-sampadā*) is beauty of physical form. With this accomplishment, the Bodhisatta inspires beings, who appreciate and value beauty of physical form, with confidence and esteem in him.

The accomplishment of family (*kula-sampadā*) is rebirth in a high class family. With this accomplishment he is approached even by those intoxicated with the vanity of their birth, etc.; he can therefore instruct them in order to cleanse them of their pride.

The accomplishment of supremacy (*issariya-sampadā*) is greatness of wealth, greatness of power and greatness of retinue. By means of this accomplishment, the Bodhisatta is able to confer benefits, together with the four objects of support, on those who deserve them or restrain righteously those who need to be restrained.

The acceptability of speech (*adeyya-vacanatā*) is being a person whose words are trustworthy. With this accomplishment, the Bodhisatta is relied upon like a great pair of scales, a standard of impartiality whose authority cannot be disregarded.

The greatness of power (*mahānubhāvatā*) is the magnitude of power. With this accomplishment he remains unvanquished by others, while he overcomes them righteously.

In this manner, all the accomplishments, such as longevity, etc., are the advantages which accrue from the perfections. These in themselves are the cause for the growth of immeasurable requisites of merit and the means by which beings enter the three vehicles [110] and by which those who have done so reach maturity.

16. What is the Fruit of the Perfections?

To the question: "What is the fruit of the perfections?" the answer briefly is: The fruit of the perfections is the Buddha's innumerable attributes headed by the path-knowledge of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) and omniscience which is Supreme Awakening; that is to say, his becoming a Buddha is the fruit of the perfections.

To elaborate, it is the acquisition of the physical body (*rūpa-kāya*) adorned with many attributes, such as the 32 characteristics of a Great Man, the 80 minor marks which was given in detail in the Chronicle of Buddha Gotama, the aura emanating from his body extending up to 80 cubits even in the total darkness of the four conditions,[404] the acquisition of the Dhamma body (*Dhamma-kāya*) which is founded on the physical body and which is glorious with innumerable attributes, such as the ten powers[405] (*dasa-bala-ñāṇa*), the fourfold valorous wisdom[406] (*catu-vesārajja-ñāṇa*); the sixfold unique wisdom[407] (*cha-asādhāraṇa-*

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[404] Four conditions: at midnight, on new moon, amidst a thick forest and under an overcast sky without lightning.

[405] Ten powers (*dasa-bala-ñāṇa*), perfect comprehension in the ten spheres of knowledge. See chapter 2: The Rare Appearance of a Buddha.

[406] The fourfold valorous knowledges (*catu-vesārajja-ñāṇa*). See chapter VI: Reflection on the Perfections.

ñāṇa); and eighteen unique qualities of a Buddha (*āveṇika-dhamma*). What are the eighteen?

1. Having no hindrance with regard to knowledge of the past.
2. Having no hindrance with regard to knowledge of the present.
3. Having no hindrance with regard to knowledge of the future.
4. Being preceded by wisdom in all physical actions.
5. Being preceded by wisdom in all verbal actions.
6. Being preceded by wisdom in all mental actions.
7. Having no falling off in intention.
8. Having no falling off in energy.
9. Having no falling off in concentration.
10. Having no falling off in wisdom.
11. Having no falling off in teaching the Dhamma.
12. Having no falling off in emancipation.
13. Not indulging in joking and laughter.
14. Not making blunders.
15. Having nothing which cannot be gauged by wisdom.
16. Having nothing which needs to be attended to in a hurry.
17. Never being negligent.
18. Not undertaking anything without due reflection.

The following verse is quoted by commentators:[408]

Buddho pi Buddhassa bhaṇeyya vaṇṇaṁ,
kappam-pi ce aññam-abhāsamāno,

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[407] The sixfold unique wisdom (*cha-asādhāraṇa-ñāṇa*). See chapter VI: Reflection on the Perfections.

[408] [Quoted, for instance, in the commentary to the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*, PTS 135]

khīyetha kappo cira-dīgham-antare,
vaṇṇo na khīyetha Tathāgatassa.

So numerous are the attributes of a Buddha that even another Buddha, devoting all his time to nothing else but dwelling on the virtues of that Buddha for the whole of his life, cannot finish describing them.

All such attributes of a Buddha are the fruit of his perfections. At this point, in order to arouse devotional faith and appreciation of the innumerable, inestimable attributes of the Buddha, and to let the reader of this treatise develop merit which is conducive to wisdom, I shall conclude this chapter by reproducing the three verses with their meanings, recited in honour of Buddha Anomadassī by Suruci the recluse, who later become Ven. Sāriputta (from *Apadāna*, *Buddha-vaggo* 220-222, PTS 1.20).

1. Sakkā samudde udakaṁ, pametuṁ āḷhakena vā,
na tveva tava sabbaññu, ñāṇaṁ sakkā pametave.

It may be possible to gauge the immense volume of water in the great ocean using some form of liquid measure; but, O omniscient Buddha, no one, whether a man or a Deva, is able to fathom the depth of wisdom possessed by the omniscient one.

2. Dhāretuṁ pathaviṁ sakkā, ṭhapetvā tula-maṇḍale,
na tveva tava sabbaññu, ñāṇaṁ sakkā dharetave.

It may be possible to measure the total mass of the great earth by means of a weighing machine; but, O omniscient Buddha, no one, whether a man or a Deva, is able to fathom the depth of wisdom possessed by the omniscient one.

3. Ākāso minituṁ sakkā, rajjuyā aṅgulena vā,
na tveva tava sabbaññu, ñāṇaṁ sakkā pametave.

It may be possible to measure the vast extent of the open space by means of a tape measure or a hand measure; but, O omniscient Buddha, no one, whether a man or a Deva, is able to fathom the depth of wisdom possessed by the omniscient one. [112]

The Second Treatise on the Perfections

Miscellany

The Order of the Perfections

With [1516] regard to the perfection of generosity, it is clearly stated in the Pāḷi canon concerning the Chronicles of the Buddhas that the Bodhisatta Sumedha admonished himself to start forth with the practice of the perfection of generosity since the Bodhisattas of the past had done so. It is clearly seen, therefore, that amongst the ten perfections, perfection of giving or generous giving demands the highest priority for fulfilment.

But in the Discourse about the Tangle (*Jaṭā-sutta*, SN 1.23.2) we find the verse: *Sīle patiṭṭhāya naro sapañño*, in which the Buddha explains that: "When a person of mature wisdom [1517] has three root-conditions of greedlessness, hatelessness, undeludedness, and is well established in morality," he ardently develops concentration and insight wisdom and can unravel the tangled network of craving. Here, the Buddha mentions only the three trainings: morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*paññā*); there is not even a hint about the practice of generosity.

Furthermore, as the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*), which is the expository treatise of the single verse quoted above, does not touch upon the subject of generosity, and as the noble path of eight constituents which leads to Nibbāna includes the paths concerning morality, concentration and wisdom only, and there is no path including generosity, some people misconstrue it, thinking that generosity is not regarded by the Buddhas as essential, that it is not conducive to the attainment of Nibbāna, that it generates more rebirths in the cycle of existence and, as such, generosity should not be cultivated.

The well-known minister of King Mindon, U Hlaing of Yaw, went so far as to write in his book the Taste of Liberation (*Vimutti-rasa*), that the Buddha taught generosity only for the sake of very ordinary people such as a rich man's son, Siṅgāla.

There are many Buddhists who are offended by such observations as "generosity should not be cultivated" and who are indignant at Yaw minister's writing that "the Buddha taught generosity only for the sake of very ordinary people." But

mere dislike of such views and indignation with them serves no purpose. What is more important and helpful is to understand correctly what the Buddha means by his teaching.

Concerning the aforesaid verse of the Discourse about the Tangle (*Jaṭā-sutta*, SN 1.23), what one should understand the true meaning of the Buddha's discourse is as follows: This discourse was taught by the Buddha for the benefit of those superior persons who are capable of striving hard for the complete eradication of defilements, for the attainment of Awakening in the present life, with no more rebirth. If such a superior person actually strives hard for the attainment of Awakening in this very life and if, as a consequence of his strenuous efforts, he becomes an Arahat, there is no need for him to be reborn in a new life.

Generosity is an act which generates new life, new pleasures; for the person who will break the circle of the existence in this very life, there will be no more rebirths. Since there will be no new life for him to reap the benefits of generosity, acts of giving by him are unnecessary. That is why the Buddha, for the benefit of superior persons, dwells in this discourse of the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*) mainly on morality, concentration and wisdom which are more important than generosity for the purpose of the eradication of the defilements. But the Buddha does not at all say that generosity should not be cultivated.

Generosity has the quality of making the mind and heart pliable. When someone makes a generous offer of some gift, the very act of giving serves as a decisive support (*upanissaya-paccaya*) to make the mind more pliable and ready for the observance of precepts, for the cultivation of concentration, and for the development of wisdom through the practice of insight (*vipassanā*) meditation.

It is within the experience of every Buddhist that a feeling of awkwardness and embarrassment arises in him whenever he visits, without an offering, monasteries or temples for the purpose of keeping precepts, of listening to Dhamma talks, or for the practice of meditation. Therefore, it was customary for the noble disciples like Visākhā to bring an offering, such as rice, sweets or fruits in the morning and beverages and medicinal preparations in the evening, whenever she visited the Buddha.

Everyone who does not become an Arahat in this life will go through more rounds in the cycle of existence. In doing so, it will be difficult for them to attain favourable states of existence without practising generosity in the present life. Even if they happen to gain a good rebirth, they will find themselves lacking in material possessions, without which they cannot do meritorious deeds.

> In such a case, it may be argued that they could devote themselves to the practice of morality, concentration and wisdom. But this is easier [1518] said than done. Indeed, it is only with the support of the beneficial results of past deeds of generosity that the three trainings of morality, concentration and wisdom can be cultivated successfully.

Therefore, it is most important for those who still have to go on this long journey in Saṁsāra, the cycle of existence, to cultivate generosity. Only when one is equipped with the "provisions for a long journey," namely, generosity, then only can one reach a good destination, and while there, possessing material wealth as the fruits of the generosity of past lives, one can devote oneself to the pursuit of whatever meritorious deeds one wishes to.

Among the travellers in the round of this cycle of Saṁsāra, Bodhisattas are the greatest individuals. After receiving a definite prophecy from a Buddha of his becoming a Buddha, a Bodhisatta continues to fulfil the perfections for the attainment of omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) for four immeasurable aeons plus 100,000 aeons. A Paccekabuddha, i.e. a non-teaching Buddha, had to fulfil his perfections for two immeasurable aeons plus 100,000 aeons; a Chief Disciple (*Agga-sāvaka*) for one immeasurable aeon plus 100,000 aeons; and one of the leading disciples (*mahā-sāvaka*) for 100,000 aeons. Therefore, for Bodhisattas, who are great travellers on the long journey of Saṁsāra, perfection of generosity is of primary importance, and as such, a place of prominence is given to steadfast fulfilment of the perfection of generosity in the Pāḷi texts concerning the Chronicles of the Buddhas.

Thus, as the discourse in the Discourse about the Tangle (*Jaṭā-sutta*, SN 1.23), was addressed to individuals who are ripe for attainment of Awakening, those who have not yet fulfilled the perfections should not say that the perfection of generosity is not essential.

Those are some who ask if it is possible to attain Nibbāna by practising only generosity. It may be replied that, practising only one perfection by itself,

neither generosity, nor morality, nor meditation, will result in the attainment of Nibbāna. For practising generosity alone implies that it is not accompanied by morality nor by meditation. Similarly, practising meditation alone means that it is practised without the support of morality and generosity. When not restrained by morality, one is liable to indulge in evil deeds. If such a person of evil habits attempts to practise meditation, his efforts will be futile like a good seed which, when put on red-hot iron, does not produce a sprout but turns to ashes. Thus, it should be noted that it is improper to speak of "practising generosity alone."

The Recipient of Generosity

In the chapter on generosity in the Chronicles of the Buddhas, it is clearly stated that alms should be given irrespective of the recipient's status, whether high, medium or low. In view of such a firm statement, it is neither desirable nor necessary to pick and choose the recipient when one makes an offering.

But in the Discourse giving an Analysis of Offerings (*Dakkhiṇā-vibhaṅga-sutta*, MN 142), the Buddha taught seven kinds of gifts to be made to the Saṅgha, the community of monastics, and fourteen kinds of gift to be made to individual recipients. It is pointed out with regard to the fourteen kinds of gifts made to individual recipients, the merit gained increases according to the recipient, going up from the lowliest animals to the highest beings; the most meritorious gift is, of course, that made to the community of monastics.

Again, in the Story about the Peta Aṅkura (*Peta-vatthu*, Pv 21), we find the story of two Devas. When the Buddha taught the Abhidhamma while being seated on Sakka's throne in the abode of Tāvatiṁsa, two Devas, Indaka and Aṅkura, went to listen to the discourse. Whenever powerful Devas arrived, Aṅkura had to make way for them and move back until he was ten leagues away from the Buddha.

But Indaka remained in his seat; he did not have to move. The reason is as follows: At the time when the human lifespan was 10,000 years, Aṅkura was a human being and was very rich. Throughout that life he made offerings of meals to large numbers of ordinary people, cooking the meals on fireplaces which stretched for twelve leagues. Because of the merit gained, he had taken rebirth as a Deva. Indaka, however, became a Deva because he had offered a spoonful of rice to Arahat Anuruddha.

Although the offering Indaka had made was just a spoonful of rice, as the recipient was an [1519] Arahat, the merit he acquired was great and noble. Thus, as an equal of the powerful Devas, he did not have to make way for them. On the other hand, although Aṅkura had made large amounts of gifts over a very long period of time, the recipients were worldlings and consequently the beneficial result that accrued was not of a high order. And he had to move back every time a powerful Deva arrived. Therefore, we find in the Pāḷi text the exhortation (Pv 329): "When an offering is to be made, the one who can bring the greatest benefit should be chosen as the recipient (*viceyya dānaṁ dātabbaṁ yattha dinnaṁ mahapphalaṁ*)." There seems to be a contradiction between the Pāḷi text of the Chronicles of the Buddhas and the discourses such as the Discourse giving an Analysis of Offerings (*Dakkhiṇā-vibhaṅga-sutta*, MN 142), etc. and other Pāḷi texts. The seeming contradiction is easily resolved when one remembers that discourses such as the Discourse giving an Analysis of Offerings are meant for ordinary people or Devas, whereas the discussions in the Chronicles of the Buddhas are directed exclusively to the Bodhisattas, whose goal is attainment of omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*), or the Buddha-wisdom. This wisdom is only one kind and is not to be classified into low, medium or great wisdom.

A Bodhisatta has only to give away whatever he has to offer to whoever comes along to receive them, irrespective of his status whether high, medium or low. He does not have to consider thus: "This recipient is of low status; by making an offering to him, I shall gain only a low order of omniscience. This recipient is only of medium status; by making offerings to him, I shall gain omniscience merely of medium order." Therefore, giving of alms to whoever comes along to receive them without any discrimination is the habitual practice of Bodhisattas, who are bent on attainment of omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*). On the other hand, the aim of ordinary worldlings, Devas or humans, in practising generosity is to gain worldly comforts of their liking, and as such, it is natural that they would choose the best recipient for their alms.

It may be concluded, therefore, that there is no contradiction between the texts in the Chronicles of the Buddhas, which are intended for the great Bodhisattas, and a discourse such as the Discourse giving an Analysis of Offerings, which is meant for ordinary people and Devas.

The Word Perfection

The possible meanings of the word *pāramī* have been variously explained in the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*) commentary. Just to let the reader have an idea:

Pāramī is the combination of *parama* and *ī*. *Parama* means "most excellent," which is used here in the sense of Bodhisattas, who are the most excellent ones.

Or *pāramī* derives from the root *para* with the suffix *ma*. The root *para* means "to fulfil" or "to protect." Because they fulfil and protect such virtues as alms giving (*dāna*), etc., Bodhisattas are called *parama*.

Or *para*, a prefix is attached to the root *mava*, meaning "to bind." Because Bodhisattas behave as though they bind on and attract other beings to them by means of special virtues, they are called *parama*.

Or *paraṁ*, a prefix is attached to the root *maja* meaning "to be pure;" *paraṁ* means "more." Because Bodhisattas are free of mental impurities and far purer than others, they are called *parama*.

Or *paraṁ*, a prefix, is attached to the root *maya* meaning "to go;" *param* means "superior." Because Bodhisattas go to the superior state of Nibbāna in a special manner, they are called *parama*.

Or *paraṁ*, a prefix, is attached to the root *mu* meaning "to determine." Because Bodhisattas determine their next existence as they do in the case of the present, they are called *parama*.

> What this means to say is that as Bodhisattas are able to ascertain precisely what should be done to make the present existence pleasant and faultless, so are they able to do with regard to their next existence. That is, they have the ability to improve their existences.

Or *paraṁ*, a prefix, is attached to the root *mi* meaning "to put in;" *paraṁ* means [1520] "more." Because Bodhisattas "put in" more and more such virtues as morality (*sīla*), etc. in their mental process, they are called *parama*.

Or *paraṁ* means "different from" or "opposed to;" the root is *mi*, meaning "to crush." Because Bodhisattas crush all their enemies, which in the form of impurities, are different from and opposed to all virtues, so they are called *parama*.

Or *pāra*, a noun, is attached to the root *maja* meaning "to purify;" *pāra* means "the other shore." Here Saṁsāra is to be taken as "this shore" and Nibbāna as "the other shore." Because Bodhisattas purify themselves as well as others on the other shore of Nibbāna, they are called *pāramī*.

Or *pāra*, a noun, is attached to the root *mava*, meaning "to bind" or "to put together." Because Bodhisattas bind or put beings together in Nibbāna, they are called *pāramī*.

Or the root is *maya*, meaning "to go." Because Bodhisattas go to the other shore of Nibbāna, they are called *pāramī*.

Or the root is *mu*, meaning "to understand." Because Bodhisattas fully understand the other shore of Nibbāna as it really is, they are called *pāramī*.

Or the root is *mi*, meaning "to put in." Because Bodhisattas put in and convey beings to the other shore of Nibbāna, they are called *pāramī*.

Or the root is *mi*, meaning "to crush." Because Bodhisattas crush and eradicate in Nibbāna the impurities which are the enemies of being, they are called *pāramī*.

> These are the various meanings presented in accordance with natural etymology (*sabhāva-nirutti*). They are not random attempts.

Paramānaṁ ayaṁ pāramī; *pāramī* means property in the form of practices of Bodhisattas; or *paramānaṁ kammaṁ pāramī*; *pāramī* means the duties of the Bodhisattas; *paramissa bhāvo pāramitā paramissa kammaṁ pāramitā* means duties that bring about knowledge that such a person is a Bodhisatta.

All this means: A series of duties such as giving (*dāna*) and others to be fulfilled by Bodhisattas are called *pāramī* (or *pāramitā*).

In the sub-commentary on the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) it is said: The volition of alms giving, etc, which forms the way to Nibbāna, the other side of Saṁsāra, should be called perfection (*pāraṁ nibbānaṁ ayan-ti gacchanti etāhī ti pāramiyo, nibbāna-sādhakā hi dāna-cetanādayo dhammā paramī ti vuccanti*).

In the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*) commentary it is said: "Perfection is constituted by virtues, such as generosity, morality, etc., that are to be grasped by means of compassion and skill. Compassion is shown towards beings who are

not spoiled or overwhelmed by craving, pride and wrong view (*taṇhā-māna-diṭṭhīhi anupahatā karuṇūpāya-kosalla-pariggahita dānādayo guṇā pāramiyo*)." Skill means wisdom in seeking ways and means. Giving, morality, etc., that is to be guided by compassion and wisdom are to be named perfections.[409]

The ten perfections are:

1. Generosity (*dāna*), sometimes gifts, liberality or alms giving.
2. Morality or virtue (*sīla*).
3. Renunciation (*nekkhamma*).
4. Wisdom (*paññā*).
5. Energy (*viriya*).
6. Forbearance or patience (*khantī*).
7. Truthfulness (*sacca*).
8. Resolution or determination (*adhiṭṭhāna*). [1521]
9. Loving-kindness (*mettā*).
10. Equanimity (*upekkhā*).

Concerning these perfections, it has been mentioned in chapter II: The Rare Appearance of a Buddha, that there are four kinds of cultivation of mind. One of these cultivations deals with the fact that from the time Bodhisattas receive definite assurance from a Buddha about their becoming a Buddha till the last rebirth when they actually become a completely Self-Awakened Buddha, there is no period in this very long interval in which they do not practise for the fulfilment of the ten perfections (*pāramī*), at the very least, they do not fail to fulfil the perfection of generosity. It fills us with devotional inspiration to reflect on these noble practices pursued by the Bodhisattas.

Characteristics, Functions, etc.

A person practising insight (*vipassanā*) meditation must come to know the nature of mind (*nāma*) and matter (*rūpa*) by means of their characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes. Then only will he come to

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[409] This explanation is made with special reference to the perfections of Sambuddhas.

possess a clear view of them. Similarly, it is only when one knows the characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes of the perfections that one will have a clear understanding of them. Therefore, we find in the commentary to the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*) a separate chapter on the characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes of the perfections.[410]

A feature common to all the ten perfections is that they have the characteristic of serving the interest of others. Their function is providing assistance to others (*kicca-rasa*) and being endowed with steadfastness or prosperity, success, fulfilment (*samāpatti-rasa*). Their manifestation is the recurring phenomenon of the quest for the welfare and benefit of beings, or the recurring phenomenon of appearing in the mind of the Bodhisatta that it is a useful means of becoming a Buddha. Their proximate cause is great compassion, or great compassion and skilfulness as to means and ways.

It is necessary to provide a few explanations on the above definitions. Characteristic (*lakkhaṇa*) has two aspects: the ordinary feature of each thing, i.e. the feature applicable to others also (*samañña-sabhāva*) and the peculiar feature, which is not applicable to others (*visesa-sabhāva*). For example, amongst the material qualities, the earth-element of the four great elements has two characteristics: impermanence and hardness. Of these, the characteristic of impermanence is a feature applicable to other elements and is thus an ordinary feature only (*samañña-sabhāva*), whereas the characteristic of hardness is the unique feature of the earth-element only, it is not shared by others, and is thus its special feature (*visesa-sabhāva*).

Function (*rasa*) has also two aspects to it, the function of what is to be performed (*kicca-rasa*) and fulfilment, attainment (*sampatti-rasa*). For example, when meritoriousness arises, it does so after counteracting or obliterating demeritoriousness. Thus, it is said that the function of meritoriousness is the counteracting of demeritoriousness. The final fulfilment of a meritorious act is production of beneficial results; thus the function of meritoriousness is the attainment of beneficial results.

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[410] See the Miscellaneous Talk (*Pakiṇṇaka-kathā*) of the commentary to the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*).

Whenever a person ponders deeply on certain mind-objects, what usually appears in his mind relates to the nature of the mind-object under consideration, it relates to its function; it relates to its cause; it relates to it effect. The manifestations which thus appear in his mind concerning the mind-object he is thinking about is called its manifestation. For example, when a person starts to investigate: "What is meritoriousness?" it would appear in his mind, "meritoriousness is of the nature of purity" regarding its nature; "meritoriousness is that which counteracts or obliterates demeritoriousness" regarding its function; "meritoriousness is possible only when one associates with the good and virtuous" regarding its cause; "meritoriousness is that which enables the production of desirable results" regarding its fruition.

The immediate and the most powerful contributory factor for its arising is called the proximate cause. For example, of many factors which cause the arising of meritoriousness, a proper attitude of mind is the immediate and the most powerful contributory factor for its arising and is therefore termed its proximate cause (*padaṭṭhāna*) in the texts. [1522]

1. The Perfection of Generosity[411]

Two Kinds of Giving

The essential thing to know concerning the perfection of generosity (*dāna-pāramī*) is that anything which is given away or any act of giving is generosity (*dāna*). There are two kinds of giving:

1. Giving as an act of merit (*puñña-visaya-dāna*).
2. Giving in conformity with worldly practices (*loka-visaya-dāna*).

Acts of giving out of pure faith are deeds of merit (*puñña-visaya-dāna*) and only such givings constitute the perfection of generosity.

But gifts given in pursuit of love or out of anger, fear, or foolishness etc. and even giving punishment, giving a sentence of death are worldly giving. They do not form part of perfection of generosity.

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[411] [*Dāna* is a particularly difficult word to cover with one word. Here I have translated it as generosity, giving, gifts and offerings, as appropriate.]

In connection with giving which would amount to an act of merit it is helpful to understand the differences and similarities between what is termed *dāna*, translated as "generosity," and what is termed as *pariccāga*, translated as charity, or, renunciation through generosity.

In the Long Birth Story about the Golden Goose (*Mahā-haṁsa-jātaka*, JA 534), an enumeration is given of the ten duties of a king: Generosity, morality, charity, justice, gentleness, self-control, not being angry, not being violent, forbearance, not being confrontational. We see therein that generosity and charity are listed separately.

According to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary, there are ten objects which may be offered as alms: food, drink, transportation – which also includes such things as umbrellas, slippers or shoes, which are used while travelling – flowers, perfumed powder, scented unguent or ointment, beds, dwelling places, and facilities for lighting. The volition that prompts the giving of these alms constitutes generosity (*dāna*). The volition that accompanies the giving away of any other objects of alms is to be regarded as charity (*pariccāga*). Thus the differentiation here rests on the different kinds of the objects of alms.

But the sub-commentary of the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*), quoting the views of many teachers, says that "the giving of offerings with the prospect of enjoying good results in future lives is *dāna*; giving rewards to servants and service personnel, etc. in order to reap the benefits in the present life is *pariccāga*."

A story that gives another illustration of the difference between generosity and charity is described in the commentary to the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*) and in the commentary to the Birth Stories (Ja 490). Briefly, the Bodhisatta was once a learned Brahmin by the name of Akitti. When his parents passed away, he was left with a vast accumulation of wealth. Deeply stirred by urgency, he reflected thus: "My parents and ancestors who have accumulated this great wealth have abandoned them and left, as for me, I shall gather only the substance of this accumulation and depart." Then having obtained permission from the king, he had a drum beaten all over the country to proclaim the great gift he was going to make. For seven days, he personally gave away his riches but there still remained more.

He saw no point in presiding himself over the ceremony of distribution of his wealth, so leaving the doors of his mansion, treasure houses and granaries wide

open, so that whoever wished might go and help themselves to whatever they liked, he renounced the worldly life and went away.

It may be said that in the above story, distribution of wealth personally by the Bodhisatta during the first seven days is an act of generosity (*dāna*), whereas abandoning of the remaining wealth after seven day's personal distribution is an act of charity (*pariccāga*). The reason for such distinction is that for an offering to be an act of generosity (*dāna*), four conditions must be fulfilled: 1) A supporter; 2) objects to offer; 3) a recipient actually present to receive; and 4) the volition to give. The wise man Akitti's distribution of wealth during the first seven days fulfils all these conditions. Hence, it is an [1523] act of generosity (*dāna*). After seven days had passed, he went away leaving his wealth before any recipient went near or arrived to actually receive the gifts. Hence, it is said that such offering should be regarded as charity.

In everyday practices which are not deeds of merit, when we give something to someone, we just say we "give;" the Pāḷi word is *deti*. But when we part with our property with the thought: "Let whoever wants it, take it; if no one wants it, then let it be," it is not giving away but discarding or charity; in Pāḷi, it is not called *dāna* but *cāga* or *pariccāga*.

In short, when we hand over the possession of our property to another person, it is said to be given away or an act of generosity. When we relinquish the wish to possess the property which is our own, it is termed abandoning or discarding as one would cast aside anything which is of no more use.

Another method of differentiation is: Giving to noble persons is generosity (*dāna*); giving to persons of lower status is charity (*pariccāga*). Thus, when a king, in performance of the ten duties of a king, makes an offering to noble monastics, Brahmins, etc., it would be giving (*dāna*); when he offers alms to lowly beggars, it would be charity (*pariccāga*).

In this way, it should be noted how generosity (*dāna*) is distinguished from charity (*pariccāga*).

Where Giving and Charity are Similar

Although giving (*dāna*) and charity (*pariccāga*) are treated separately as in the list of the ten duties of a king, shown above, in ultimate truth, the two terms cannot be different from each other. When there is giving, there must be charity;

when there is charity, there must be giving. The reason is that when an offering is made to a recipient, whether he is near or far, it is an act of giving (*dāna*). When the sense of ownership is banished from the mind at the time of giving, this relinquishment is charity (*pariccāga*). Thus, whenever someone makes a gift, it is always preceded by the thought: "I will not make use of it any more," which implies charity. Therefore, with deeds of merit, there is charity (*pariccāga*) always accompanying giving (*dāna*).

In the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) also, in dealing with the ten perfections, the Buddha mentions only the perfection of generosity not the "perfection of charity (*cāga*)" because, as explained above, charity is included in an act of generosity. As the text of the Chronicles of the Buddhas deals only with the ultimate truth without considering the conventional usages, it mentions that making an offering to any recipients, whether of high, medium or low status, is generosity (*dāna*). It is incorrect to say that it is giving when an offering is made to a noble person and charity when the recipient is of low status.

Similarly, in the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) and other Pāḷi texts, we find the enumeration of the seven riches of a noble person as follows: faith, morality, knowledge, charity (*cāga*), wisdom, conscience about doing evil, and concern about doing evil. There is only charity (*cāga*) in the list; there is no mention of giving (*dāna*) here because it is understood that generosity is included in charity (*cāga*).

These are even examples where *dāna* and *cāga* are mentioned without any distinction, with identical meaning.

Where Giving is termed Charity

Although any act of giving may generally be described as a perfection of generosity, great offerings of extraordinary nature are described in the texts as great charity (*mahā-pariccāga*). The great charity which consist of the five kinds of relinquishing of possessions are listed differently in different commentaries.

Commentaries on the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*), the Collection of the Middle Length Discourses (*Majjhima-nikāya*) and the

Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) in explaining the meaning of the word Realised One (*Tathāgata*), list the great charities as follows:

1. Relinquishing of limbs. [1524]
2. Relinquishing of the eyes.
3. Relinquishing of wealth.
4. Relinquishing of a kingdom.
5. Relinquishing of wife and children.

The commentary to the Collection of the Middle Length Discourses (*Majjhima-nikāya*) in the exposition on the Short Discourse about the Lion's Roar (*Cūḷa-sīha-nāda-sutta*, MN 11) gives a different list:

1. Relinquishing of limbs.
2. Relinquishing of wife and children.
3. Relinquishing of a kingdom.
4. Relinquishing of one's life.
5. Relinquishing of the eyes.

The sub-commentary to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) gives this list:

1. Relinquishing of one's life.
2. Relinquishing of the eyes.
3. Relinquishing of wealth.
4. Relinquishing of a kingdom.
5. Relinquishing of wife and children.

The sub-commentary to the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*), in exposition on the Long Discourse on the Traditions (*Mahāpadāna-sutta*, DN 14), gives this list:

1. Relinquishing of limbs.
2. Relinquishing of the eyes.
3. Relinquishing of one's body or life.
4. Relinquishing of a kingdom.

5. Relinquishing of one's wife and children.

The commentary to the This-Saids (*Iti-vuttaka*), in its exposition of the Discourse on the Complete Understanding of Delusion (*Moha-pariññā-sutta*, Iti 21), gives this list:

1. Relinquishing of limbs.
2. Relinquishing of one's life.
3. Relinquishing of wealth.
4. Relinquishing of wife and children.
5. Relinquishing of a kingdom.

The commentary to the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) gives this list:

1. Relinquishing of limbs.
2. Relinquishing of one's life.
3. Relinquishing of wealth.
4. Relinquishing of a kingdom.
5. Relinquishing of wife and children.

The commentary to the Birth Story about the Great King Vessantara (*Vessantara-jātaka*, Ja 547) gives this list:

1. Relinquishing of wealth.
2. Relinquishing of limbs. [1525]
3. Relinquishing of children.
4. Relinquishing of wife.
5. Relinquishing of one's life.

The same list is found in the sub-commentary to the Ornaments of the Victor (*Jinālaṅkāra*) but arranged in a different order.

Although each of the above lists is made up of slightly different items, it should be noted that the essentials are the same in all of them: external objects and one's own body. Under external objects, we find material things apart from one's

own body, such as the relinquishing of wealth; relinquishing of wife and children, very dear to oneself; relinquishing of a kingdom, a most important treasure of one's own. With regard to the relinquishing of one's own body, it falls under two modes: One that does not endanger life, that is relinquishing of the limbs (*aṅga-pariccāga*), and the other endangers life, that is relinquishing of the eyes (*nayana-pariccāga*), or relinquishing of life (*jīvita-pariccāga*) and relinquishing of one's own body (*atta-pariccāga*). Here, it is explained giving one's own eyes or giving one's own body involves the risk of losing one's life, so these are considered to be essentially the same as giving one's life.

The great ceremony of offering performed by King Vessantara when he gave away seven kinds of objects, 100 each in number, is described by the commentary as Great Generosity (*Mahā-dāna*) and not as Great Charity (*Mahā-pariccāga*). But one can argue that this great offering can be considered as one of the five great charities: a great relinquishing of wealth.

Miscellaneous Notes on Giving or Generosity

For the edification of those aspirants who ardently strive for attainment of perfect Self-Awakening of a Buddha, or for the Self-Awakening of a Paccekabuddha, or for the Awakening of a disciple of a Buddha, we provide herewith miscellaneous notes on different aspects of generosity, which forms a part of the conditions for obtaining Awakening. These notes are given in the form of answers to the following questions:

1. What things are called generosity?
2. Why are they called generosity?
3. What are the characteristics, functions, etc., of generosity?
4. How many types of generosity are there?
5. What elements strengthen the beneficial results of generosity?
6. What elements weaken the beneficial results of generosity?

This form of treatment will be adhered to when dealing with the other perfections too.

1. What Things are called Generosity?

In brief, it should be answered that "the volition to give a suitable thing" is called generosity. The meaning will become clearer in the following passages.

2. Why are they called Generosity?

The volition is called generosity because it is responsible for an act of giving to take place. There can be no generosity without the volition to give; an act of generosity is possible only when there is the volition to give.

In this connection, by volition is meant:

1. The volition that arises at the time of making a donation, a relinquishing volition (*muñca-cetanā*). Here, *muñca* means relinquishing. It is only this volition which accompanies the act of relinquishing that forms the true element of generosity.

2. The volition that arises in anticipation before one makes the donation [1526] (*pubba-cetanā*). This type of volition can also be considered as generosity, provided that the object to be given is at hand at the time that the intention to make an offering of the object occurs. Without the object to be given being actually in one's possession, cherishing the thought of generosity may be called preceding intention (*pubba-cetanā*) but cannot qualify as generosity; it can only be a benevolent thought of ordinary merit.

How volition comes to be taken as synonymous with giving is based on the grammatical definition of: That which prompts giving is generosity (*dīyati anenā ti dānaṁ*)." Volition, here, is definitely the determining cause of generosity.

Things to be given are also called *dāna* from the grammatical definition: Objects which could be offered as alms (*dīyatī ti dānaṁ*).

Following these grammatical definitions, the texts of the canon mention two kinds of generosity: volitional generosity and material generosity. In this connection, questions have been asked why objects to be offered are called generosity, since only volition is capable of producing results and material objects are not. It is true that only volition is productive of results because volition is a mental action but as explained above, volition can be called

generosity only if it arises when there exist suitable things to be given. Therefore, a material object for giving is also an important contributory factor for an act of giving to qualify as generosity (*dāna*).

For example, we say "rice is cooked because of the firewood." Actually, it is the fire that cooks the rice. But there can be no fire without firewood. So fire burns because of firewood, and rice is cooked because of fire. Thus, taking into consideration these connected phenomena, it is not incorrect to say "rice is cooked because of firewood." Similarly, we can rightly say "beneficial results are obtained because of objects of offering."

Because things to be given away feature importantly in deeds of generosity, the canonical texts mention different types of generosity, depending on different objects to be offered. Thus, in expositions on the Vinaya, we find four kinds of generosity, since the Buddha allows four kinds of requisites to the Saṅgha, the offerings made to the Saṅgha are naturally listed under these four kinds, so there is this classification in the Vinaya expositions of four types of generosity, which is primarily based upon different kinds of objects of offering.

According to the classification in the exposition on the Abhidhamma, everything in the world comes under six categories, which correspond to the six sense objects, there are six kinds of generosity depending upon whether it is a gift of a visible object, sound, smell, taste, touch or mind-object. Here also, although there is no direct mention of the six kinds of generosity in the Abhidhamma teachings, if gifts were to be made of each of the sense objects, there would be six kinds of offering; hence this classification in the Abhidhamma expositions of six types of generosity.

In the Dhamma classification, there are ten kinds of generosity: offerings of various kinds of food, drink, transportation, flowers, perfumed powder, scented unguent or ointment, beds, dwelling places and facilities of lighting. Here again, the actual teaching in the discourses relates only to the ten classes of objects which may be offered as alms. But when these ten objects are offered as alms, there would be then ten kinds of offering; hence this classification in the discourses is of ten types of giving.

Maintaining that the Buddha teaches only these ten objects of offering, one should not consider that these are the only gifts to be given and that other gifts are not allowable. One should understand that the Buddha merely mentions the

ten things most commonly offered as alms in practice; or as any material thing can be classified as belonging to one or the other of the ten types of gifts, one should take it that by these ten objects are covered also, as is any object which is in daily use by the noble recipient.

From what has been said above, it should be well noted how a material object is an important contributory factor for the arising of volitional generosity. It will be seen that the various types of generosity which will be described henceforth include many that relate to objects of offerings.

As a resume of this chapter, it should be remembered that volition is *dāna* because it [1527] prompts generosity; the material thing is *dāna* because it is a suitable thing to give.

3. Characteristics, Functions, etc., of Generosity

1. Generosity has the characteristic (*lakkhaṇa*) of charity (*cāga*).
2. Its function (*kicca-rasa*) is the destruction of attachment to the objects offered; or it has the property of faultlessness (*sampatti-rasa*).
3. Its manifestation is absence of attachment, a sense of freedom from attachment that appears in the mind of the supporter, or knowing that generosity is conducive to good destinations and wealth; on thinking of the effects of generosity, the supporter senses that his act of generosity will result in an attainment of rebirth in the human or Deva realm and an attainment of great wealth.
4. The proximate cause of giving is having the objects offered in one's possession. Without having anything to give, there can be no act of generosity, only imagining that one gives. Thus objects to be offered are the proximate cause of *dāna*.

4. How Many Types of Generosity are There?

The subject to be dealt with under this topic is quite vast and it entails considerable exercise of mental alertness and intelligence to study them.

Gifts in Groups of Two

1. Material Gifts and Gifts of the Teaching

There are gifts of material things (*āmisa-dāna*) and gifts of the teaching (*Dhamma-dāna*).

Offering of material things, such as alms rice, is known as material offerings (*āmisa-dāna*). It is also called offerings of support (*paccaya-dāna*) when the things offered are the requisites of monastics.

Teaching the Dhamma in the form of talks, lectures, etc. is giving the gift of Dhamma. The Buddha said that this is the noblest of all types of giving.

This classification of giving into two types is made according to the objects offered.

In relation to this division of types of giving, it is necessary to look into the question of what type of giving accrues to one who erects relic shrines (*stūpa*) and statues of Buddha.

There are some who maintain that although making shrines and statues of Buddha involves relinquishing a large amount of wealth, it cannot be an act of generosity (*dāna*) because they say for an act of giving to become *dāna*, three conditions must be fulfilled: 1) There must be a recipient; 2) there must be an object for offering; and 3) there must be a supporter. In making shrines and statues of Buddha, there is obviously the supporter, but who receives his gift, they ask? In the absence of anyone to receive the gift, how can it be an act of generosity (*dāna*)?

From their point of view, the shrines and Buddha statues are not objects to be given as an act of *dāna,* but rather they serve as aids to the recollection of the attributes of the Buddha. A builder of shrines and Buddha statues has no particular receiver in mind when giving them away. He builds them to help produce vivid visualization of the Buddha in the mind of the devotees so as to enable them to practise the recollection of the virtues of the Buddha. It should, therefore, be considered, they maintain, that erecting shrines and Buddha statues is related to the Recollection of the Buddha (*Buddhānussati*) meditation, and is not an act of generosity.

There are, again, some people who maintain that as the person who builds shrines and installs Buddha statues undertakes these works in order to honour, to make homage to, the most Arahat Buddha, his act must be considered as an act of honouring the Buddha (*apacāyana*), one of the ten qualities contributing to merit (*puñña-kiriya-vatthu*). They further say that since this kind of merit: honouring those who are worthy of honour, is a practice of morality (*cāritta-sīla*), it should come under the observance of morality (*sīla*) and not under the cultivation of the Recollection of the Buddha meditation.

But neither the merit of the Recollection of the Buddha meditation nor the merit of honouring [1528] (*apacāyana*) involves relinquishing of objects of offering; whereas building a relic shrine (*stūpa*) and installing Buddha statues requires an expenditure of a large sum of money. Hence these works of merit must be considered to come under *dāna*.

Here the question may be asked: "If it comes under *dāna*, will it still be an act of giving when there is no recipient for it?" According to the texts, whether an offering should be regarded as an act of giving may be decided by an analysis of its features, viz. characteristic, function, manifestation and proximate cause.

We have already provided above what these features are, for a true act of *dāna*. Now applying this test to the present problem, we find the characteristic of abandoning since the person who builds the shrines and installs the Buddha statues relinquishes a large sum of money; as for function, there is destruction of attachment to the objects of offering by the supporter; as its manifestation, the supporter senses that his act of generosity will result in the attainment of rebirth in the human or Deva realm and the attainment of great wealth; and finally, as the proximate cause, there is the object to be offered. Thus, all the four features necessary for an offering to be truly an act of generosity (*dāna*) are present here and we may, therefore, conclude that building shrines and installing Buddha statues is a true act of generosity (*dāna*).

As to the question of who receives the gift, it will not be wrong to say that all the Devas and human beings who worship at the shrines and Buddha statues in memory of the virtues of the Buddha are the recipients of the gift. At the same time, as they serve as objects of worship for the Devas and human beings in their recollection of the virtues of the Buddha, they also form the objects offered. All the various material things in the world are utilized in different ways depending

on their nature; food materials are utilized for consumption; clothing materials are utilized for wearing; materials for religious devotion and adoration are utilized as objects of veneration.

If wells and tanks are dug near public highways, the general public could use them for drinking water, washing, etc. The supporter would have no particular recipient in mind when he dug the wells and tanks. When, as he intended, the wayfarers, passing by the road, make use of his gifts, no one could say that his gift is not an act of generosity (*dāna*); even if he did not finalize it with a libation ceremony.

Now to wind up the discussion, it is quite proper to say that a builder of shrines with Buddha statues is a supporter, the shrines and Buddha statues are objects of generosity, and Devas and human beings who pay homage to them in adoration are the recipients of the generosity.

An additional question may be asked: "Is it really proper to refer to shrines and Buddha statues as objects of generosity; may it not be sacrilegious to classify them as such?" Just as bookcases and shelves are used in the monasteries for holding canonical texts which are looked up to as sacred (*Dhamma-cetiya*), so also do shrines and Buddha statues form storehouses for keeping sacred relics and objects of veneration. So it may be answered that it is quite appropriate to designate them as objects of generosity (*dāna*).

Whether a Libation Ceremony is Necessary

The point to consider here is: Does it constitute an act of giving (*dāna*) when it is not finalised with a libation ceremony. Actually there is no mention of this requirement in the texts. The practice is, however, of long-standing tradition.

In the Vinaya commentary on the Chapter about Robes (*Cīvarakkhandhaka*, Vin Mv 8), we find the following reference to this tradition of a libation ceremony. There was a split among the monastics of a monastery prior to the time of the offering of robes after the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*). When the time arrived, lay devotees came and offered robes, piled up in a heap, to one group of monastics. The devotees then went to the other group of monastics and performed the ceremony of libation, saying: "We offer to the other group of monastics."

As to how the robes should be distributed among the Saṅgha, the great commentary says that if it was a region where the ceremony of libation is of no

importance, the robes belonged to the group of monastics which had been directly offered the robes. The group which received only the libation had no claim to the robes. But if it was in a region where the libation ceremony is of importance, the group which received only the libation had a claim to the [1529] robes because the ceremony of libation was performed with them; the other group to which the robes were offered directly had also a claim on them since they had the robes already in their possession. Therefore, the two groups must divide the robes equally among themselves. This method of distribution is a practice followed by tradition in regions on the other side of the ocean.

"Regions on the other side of the ocean" from Śrī Laṅkā implies Jambudīpa or India. Therefore, it should be noted that the ceremony of libation is a practice traditionally followed by the people of India.

Considering that there are regions where they set a great store by the ceremony of libation and there are regions where they set no great store by the ceremony of libation, it cannot be said that an offering constitutes an act of generosity only when it is finalised by a ceremony of libation. The ceremony is important only for those who follow the tradition of libation; it is clear that no significance is attached to it by those who do not follow the tradition. It should be noted, therefore, that a libation ceremony is not a primary factor for the successful completion of an act of generosity.

With respect to the gift of the teaching (*Dhamma-dāna*), there are, nowadays, people who are unable to teach the Dhamma but who, bent on making a gift of the teaching, spend money on books, palm-leaf scripts, etc. of canonical texts and make a gift of them. Although such a donation of books is not truly a gift of the teaching, we must consider that since a reader will be benefitted by reading in the books, practices and instructions which will lead him to Nibbāna, the supporter may be regarded as one who makes a gift of the teaching.

It is like the case of one who has no medicine to give to a sick person, but only a prescription for a cure of the illness. When the medicine is prepared as prescribed and taken, the illness is removed. Although the person does not actually administer any medicine, because of his effective prescription, he is entitled to be regarded as one who has brought about the cure of the illness. Likewise, the supporter of books on Dhamma who personally cannot teach the

Dhamma enables the readers of his books to attain knowledge of the Dhamma and thus is entitled to be called the supporter of the gift of Dhamma.

Now, to conclude this section, the pair of gifts mentioned above: gifts of material things (*āmisa-dāna*) and gifts of Dhamma (*Dhamma-dāna*) may also be called honouring with material things (*āmisa-pūjā*) and honouring with the Dhamma (*Dhamma-pūjā*); the terms mean the same thing.

The word *pūjā* means "honouring" and is generally used when a younger person makes an offering to an older person or a person of higher status. Depending on this general usage, some people have stated that gifts (*dāna*) should be divided into honouring (*pūjā-dāna*) and assisting (*anuggaha-dāna*).

Honouring with an offering when the gift is made by a younger person or by a person of lower status to an older person or person of higher status (*pūjā-dāna*); and an offering to render assistance out of kindness when a gift is given by an older person or a person of higher status to one who is younger or of lower status (*anuggaha-dāna*).

But as we have seen before in the chapter V on the Prophecy, the word honouring (*pūjā*) can be used for both the high or the low, and the word assisting (*anuggaha*) is likewise applicable to both cases. It is true that, generally, assisting is used when the giving is made by the high to the low or by the old to the young. But we must, however, remember the usages of *amisānuggaha* and *Dhammānuggaha* to describe the assistance rendered and support given for the progress and development of the Buddha's teaching. Here, the word assisting is employed even though the gift is being made to the highest and the noblest teaching of the Buddha. Thus, it should be noted that the division into honouring (*pūjā-dāna*) and assisting (*anuggaha-dāna*) is not an absolute division into two aspects of giving (*dāna*) but rather a classification following common usage.

2. Offering One's Self and External Property

There is an gift of one's own person (*ajjhattika-dāna*) and a gift of external property (*bāhira-dāna*). An gift of one's own person means the giving away of one's own life and limbs; gifts [1530] of external property include giving any of the external material possessions of the supporter.

Even in these modern times, we read sometimes in the newspapers of an offering of one's own limbs at the relic shrine (*stūpa*) or of "honouring with the

gift" of burning oneself after wrapping the whole body with cloth and pouring oil on it. Some comments have been made on such kinds of giving (*dāna*) involving one's limbs. According to them, such offerings of one's life and limbs are deeds to be performed only by great Bodhisattas and are not the concern of ordinary persons. They doubt if such offerings made by ordinary persons produce any merit at all.

Now to consider whether such views are justified or not, it is not as if a Bodhisatta can suddenly make his appearance in this world. Only after gradually fulfilling the required perfections to the best of his ability, an individual grows in maturity and develops stage by stage to become a Bodhisatta. Ancient poets have written thus: "Only by gradual venture, one ensures continuous improvement in rebirths to come." Therefore, we should not hastily condemn those who make offerings of parts of their body or the whole of their body. If a person, through unflinching volition and faith, very courageously makes an offering of his own body, even to the extent of abandoning his life, he is actually worthy of praise as a supporter of the gift of one's own person (*ajjhattika-dāna*).

3. Offerings of Property and Granting of Safety

There is an offering of property (*vatthu-dāna*) and the granting of safety (*abhaya-dāna*). An offering of property (*vatthu-dāna*) is concerned with the offering of material things. The granting of safety (*abhaya-dāna*) means the granting of safety or security with respect to life or property. This is usually an exercise of mercy by kings.

4. Offerings aimed at Wealth and at Nibbāna

There is an offering made in the hope of future worldly wealth and pleasures (*vaṭṭa-nissita-dāna*), which means suffering in the cycle of existence. There is an offering made in aspiration for Nibbāna (*vivaṭṭa-nissita-dāna*), which is free of the suffering of rebirth.

5. Faulty and Unfaulty Offerings

There are offerings tainted with fault (*sāvajja-dāna*) and offerings untainted with fault (*anavajja-dāna*).

An offering of meals with meat obtained from the killing of animals is an example of an offering tainted with fault. An offering of meals which do not

involve killing of animals is an offering untainted with fault. The first type is an act of generosity accompanied by demeritoriousness and the second type is an act of generosity unaccompanied by demeritoriousness.

We see the case of some fishermen who, having accumulated wealth from fishing, decided to give up the business thinking: "We will abandon this demeritorious fishing work and adopt a pure mode of livelihood." Engaging in other occupations, they find their prosperity declining and, therefore, have to revert to their old vocation, and their wealth grows again.

This is an example of giving tainted with fault (*sāvajja-dāna*) done in previous lives coming to fruition in the present life. Since that act of giving was associated with the act of killing, at the time of its fruition too, success is achieved only when associated with an act of killing, in this case, fishing. When not associated with an act of killing, the previous offering tainted with fault cannot come to fruition and his wealth declines.

6. Offerings made by Hand and by Order

There are offerings made with one's own hand (*sāhatthika-dāna*) and offerings made by agents on one's behalf or made by others under one's instruction (*āṇattika-dāna*).

> That offerings made with one's own hand brings more beneficial results than the offerings made by agents on one's behalf can be understood from the Discourse to Pāyāsi (*Pāyāsi-sutta*, DN 23). [1531]

7. Offerings Prepared Carefully and Carelessly

There are offerings made with proper and careful preparation (*sakkacca-dāna*) and offerings made without proper and careful preparation (*asakkacca-dāna*).

As an example, an offering of flowers may be cited as an example. Having gathered flowers from trees, a supporter creates garlands with them, arranges them to look as beautiful and as pleasant as possible, and makes his offering of flowers, then it is an offering made with proper and careful preparation (*sakkacca-dāna*). Without such careful preparations, when flowers are presented just as they have been gathered from trees, thinking that the mere gift of the flowers is sufficient in itself, then it is an offering made without proper and careful preparations (*asakkacca-dāna*).

Some ancient writers have translated these as meaning "offerings made with due respect" and "offerings made without due respect." This rendering has, as often as not, misled the modern readers to think that it means paying due respect or without paying due respect to the receiver of the offering. Actually, "paying due respect" here means simply "making careful preparations" for the offering.

8. Offerings made Wisely and Unwisely

An offering associated with wisdom (*ñāṇa-sampayutta-dāna*) and an offering unassociated with wisdom (*ñāṇa-vippayutta-dāna*).

An offering made with clear comprehension of volitional acts and the results they produce is said to be an offering associated with wisdom. When an offering is made without such comprehension and awareness, by just following the example of others making donations, it is an offering unassociated with wisdom (*ñāṇa-vippayutta-dāna*).

It must be mentioned that just awareness of cause and its ensuing effect (*kamma-vipāka*), while an offering is being made, is sufficient to make it an offering which is associated with wisdom. In this connection, an explanation is necessary with respect to some exhortations which run like this: "Whenever an offering is made, it should be accompanied by insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*); in this manner I, the supporter of the gift, am impermanent (*anicca*), and the recipient of the gift is also impermanent. I, being impermanent, am offering an impermanent gift to an impermanent recipient. Thus, you should contemplate whenever you make an offering of gifts."

This exhortation is made only to encourage the practice of developing insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*); it should not be misunderstood that an act of generosity is not associated with wisdom if the supporter does not practise the contemplation as exhorted.

As a matter of fact, whoever wants to develop real insight knowledge (*vipassanā-ñāṇa*) should first of all discard the notion of "I," "he," "man," "woman," that is, the illusion of I, the illusion of self, to discern that they are merely material aggregates and mental aggregates. Then, one has to go on contemplating so as to realise that these aggregates of mind and matter are of the nature of impermanence, suffering and non-self. Without differentiation into aggregates of mind and matter, if one were to contemplate conventional

concepts of "I am impermanent; the object of offering is impermanent; the recipient is impermanent," no real insight knowledge would be possible.

9. Offerings Prompted and Unprompted

An offering made hesitatingly and only after being prompted (*sasaṅkhārika-dāna*) and an offering made spontaneously without being prompted (*asaṅkhārika-dāna*).

Here, prompting means urging or entreating someone earnestly to give when he is hesitating or reluctant to do so. Such offering is made only with prompting. But, a simple request should not be taken as being prompted. For example, a person who has not made any decision whether he will or he will not make a donation is requested to make some alms contribution and he gives willingly without any hesitation. This is a spontaneous gift in response to a simple request. Such is one made without prompting (*asaṅkhārika-dāna*), and should not be called one made without prompting (*sasaṅkhārika-dāna*) just because it is made after a request.

Another [1532] person is similarly approached and similarly requested to make a contribution, but he is reluctant at first and refuses to do so. But when the request is repeated with a prompting: "Do make a gift, don't flinch," and he makes a contribution, his gift made as a consequence of urging is of the one made with prompting (*sasaṅkhārika-dāna*) type. Even in the case where no one has made an approach to request for giving (*dāna*), if one first thinks of making an offering, then shrinks away from the idea, but after much self persuasion, self-inducement, finally makes the gift, his gift is one made with prompting (*sasaṅkhārika*) too.

10. Pleasureable and Equanimous Offerings

There is an offering made while one is in a joyful mood, with a happy frame of mind (*somanassa-dāna*); and an offering made with a balanced state of mind, neither joyous nor sorrowful but equipoised (*upekkhā-dāna*). When the act of giving is accompanied by pleasure, it is made while one is in a joyful mood (*somanassa-dāna*); when it is accompanied by equanimity, it is neither joyous nor sorrowful but equipoised (*upekkhā-dāna*).

11. Righteous and Unrighteous Offerings

There is an offering of property earned in accordance with Dhamma, by just means (*Dhammiya-dāna*); and an offering of property earned by immoral means, such as stealing or robbing (*adhammiya-dāna*).

Although earning of property by immoral means is not in accordance with Dhamma, offering as alms of such property is nevertheless an act of merit, but the good results accruing from this type of giving (*dāna*) cannot be as great as those obtained from the first type, an offering of property earned in accordance with Dhamma (*Dhammiya-dāna*). A comparison can be made of these two different results with types of plants that will grow from a good seed and from a bad seed.

12. Enslaving and Freeing Offerings

An offering made with hopes of gaining worldly pleasures is enslaving (*dāsa-dāna*), it is an offering that will enslave one. Being a slave to craving for sense-pleasures, one makes this kind of offering to serve one's master, the craving to fulfil his wishes. An offering made with an aspiration for attainment of the paths and fruitions, and Nibbāna, is an offering for freedom (*bhujissa-dāna*), an offering made in revolt against the dictates of the master, craving.

Sentient beings in the endless round of existences desire to enjoy the delightful pleasures of the senses: visible objects, sounds, smells, tastes, touches. This desire to revel in the so-called pleasures of the senses is called craving. Every moment of their existence is devoted to satisfying that craving; fulfilling the needs of that craving, they have become its servants. Continuously striving for wealth, day and night, throughout their life is nothing but fulfilment of the wishes of the craving which demands the best of food, the best of clothing, and the most luxurious way of living.

Not content with being a slave to craving in the present life, working to fulfil its every need, we make offerings (*dāna*) to ensure luxurious living in the future. This type of offering accompanied by a strong wish for enjoyment of worldly pleasures continuously for lives to come is definitely enslaving (*dāsa-dāna*).

This type of offering, in fulfilment of the wishes of craving and which ensures servitude to craving throughout the endless round of existence, is performed thinking it to be the best, before one encounters the teachings of the Buddha. But

once we are fortunate enough to hear the Dhamma, we come to understand how powerful this craving is, how insatiable it is, how much we have to suffer for fulfilling the wishes of this craving. Then resolving: "I will no longer be a servant of this terrible craving, I will no longer fulfil its wishes, I will rebel against it, I will go against it," and in order to uproot and eradicate this evil craving, one makes offerings with an aspiration for attainment of the paths and fruitions, and Nibbāna. This offering is called *dāna* made for freedom (*bhujissa-dāna*), an offering made in revolt against the dictates of the master, craving.

13. Immovable and Moveable Offerings

There is an offering of things of a permanent, immovable nature (*thāvara-dāna*), such as relic shrines (*stūpa*), temples, [1533] monasteries, rest houses; and digging wells, tanks, etc.; and an offering of things of movable nature (*athāvara-dāna*) meant for temporary use, such as food and robes.

14. Offerings with and without Supplements

There is an offering made with an accompaniment of supplementary materials that usually go along with such an offering (*saparivāra-dāna*). For example, in offering robes as the main item of gifts, when it is accompanied by suitable and proper accessories and requisites, it is an offering made with an accompaniment of supplementary materials (*saparivāra-dāna*); when there are no other objects of offering besides the main item of robes, it is a gift without anything accompanying (*aparivāra-dāna*). The same differentiation applies to offerings made with other forms of gifts.

The special characteristic marks on the body of Bodhisattas, who have large retinues attending upon them, are the benefits that result from the offering made with an accompaniment of supplementary materials type of giving (*dāna*).

15. Regular and Occasional Offerings

There is an offering made constantly or regularly such as an offering of alms food to the Saṅgha everyday (*nibaddha-dāna*); and an offering made not constantly, not on a regular basis, but only occasionally when one is able to so, an occasional offering (*anibaddha-dāna*).

16. Tarnished and Untarnished Offerings

There is a tarnished offering (*parāmaṭṭha-dāna*) and and untarnished offering (*aparāmaṭṭha-dāna*). An offering which is tarnished by craving and wrong view is a tarnished offering (*parāmaṭṭha-dāna*). An offering which is not corrupted by craving and wrong view is an untarnished offering (*aparāmaṭṭha-dāna*).

According to the Abhidhamma, one is corrupted when led astray by wrong view alone; but wrong view always co-exists with craving. When wrong view corrupts and leads one astray, craving is also involved. Therefore, both craving and wrong view are mentioned above. And this is how craving and wrong view bring about corruption. Having made an offering, if one expresses an ardent, wholesome wish: "May I speedily attain the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna as a result of this act of merit," the offering becomes one of the made in aspiration for Nibbāna (*vivaṭṭa-nissita*) type,[412] and it could serve as a strong sufficing condition for the attainment of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna.

But instead of making such a wholesome wish for Nibbāna, when corrupted and led astray by craving and wrong view, one aspires to a result of this act of merit: "May I become a distinguished Deva such as Sakka, the Lord of the Tāvatiṁsa abode, or just a Deva of the durable divine realms, his giving (*dāna*) cannot serve as a sufficing condition for the attainment of Nibbāna and is classed as a mere tarnished offering (*parāmaṭṭha-dāna*), the giving of which is bereft of the sufficing condition for the attainment of Nibbāna, being tarnished by craving and wrong view. The giving which is not tarnished by craving and wrong view, but is made with the sole purpose of attaining Nibbāna, is classed as an untarnished offering (*aparāmaṭṭha-dāna*).

Much generosity can also be practised outside the teaching of the Buddha; but giving of the tarnished offering (*parāmaṭṭha*) type is only possible then. It is only within the teaching of the Buddha that giving of the untarnished offering (*aparāmaṭṭha*) type can be practised. So while we are blessed with the rare opportunity of meeting with the teachings of the Buddha, we should strive to our utmost to ensure that our offerings are of the untarnished offering type.

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[412] See type 4 above.

17. Inferior and Superior Offerings

There is an offering made with what is leftover, which is inferior and wretched (*ucchiṭṭha-dāna*); and an offering made with what is not leftover, which is not inferior and wretched (*anucchiṭṭha-dāna*).

Suppose, while preparations are being made for a meal, a recipient appears and one donates some of the food that has been prepared before one has eaten it; it is considered to be the highest gift (*agga-dāna*), and it is also an offering made with what is not leftover (*anucchiṭṭha-dāna*) since the offering is not the [1534] leftover of a meal. If the recipient arrives while one is eating the meal, but before eating is finished, and one makes an offering of the food taken from the meal one is eating, that is also considered to be an offering made with what is not leftover (*anucchiṭṭha-dāna*); it can even be said to be a noble gift.

When the offering is made of the food leftover after one has finished eating, it is a gift of the leftovers, an offering made with what is leftover (*ucchiṭṭha-dāna*), a wretched, inferior one. It should be noted, however, that the humble offering made by one who has nothing else to give but the leftover meal could well be called an offering made with what is not leftover (*anucchiṭṭha-dāna*). It is only when such an offering is made by one who can well afford to make a better gift that his gift is regarded as a wretched, inferior one (*ucchiṭṭha-dāna*).

18. Offerings made while Alive and after Passing

There is an offering made while one is still alive (*sājīva-dāna*); and an offering which is meant to become effective after one's death, saying: "I give such of my property to such and such a person; let him take possession of it after my death and make use of it as he wishes" (*accaya-dāna*).

A monastic is not permitted to make an offering which is meant to become effective after one's death, i.e., he cannot leave his properties as gifts for others after his death. Even if he should do so, it does not constitute an act of giving (*dāna*); the would-be recipient also would have no right of possession to them. If a monastic gives from his properties to another monastic while he is still living, the receiver is entitled to what is given to him; or while the monastic is still alive, some monastic who is on intimate terms (*vissāsa-gaha*) with him can take it and come to possess it; or if he owns something jointly (*dvi-santaka*) with another monastic, when he dies, the surviving monastic becomes the sole owner. Unless

these conditions are fulfilled: giving his property during his lifetime, taking possession of it by reason of intimacy while he is still alive, or possessing it through dual ownership, the monastic's property becomes the property of the Saṅgha when he dies.

Therefore, if a monastic makes an offering which is meant to become effective after one's death (*accaya-dāna*), saying: "I give such of my property to such and such a person when I die. Let him take possession of them," it amounts to giving a property which by then belongs to the Saṅgha. His giving does not form an act of giving (*dāna*), and the would-be recipient is also not entitled to its ownership. It is only amongst the laymen that such kinds of gifts (*accaya-dāna*) are possible and legal.

19. Offerings made to Individuals and to the Saṅgha

There is an offering made to one or two separate individual persons (*puggalika-dāna*); and an offering made to the whole Saṅgha (*Saṅghika-dāna*). Saṅgha means a group, an assemblage or community; here, the whole community of the noble disciples of the Buddha is meant. In making an offering intended for the Saṅgha, the supporter must have in his mind not the individual from the noble disciples that constitute the Saṅgha, but the community of the noble disciples as a whole. Then only will his offering be an offering made to the whole Saṅgha (*Saṅghika-dāna*).

Fourteen Kinds of Gift to Individuals

The Discourse giving an Analysis of Offerings (*Dakkhiṇā-vibhaṅga-sutta*, MN 142) gives an enumeration of the 14 kinds of gifts to individuals (*puggalika-dāna*), and the 7 kinds of gifts to the Saṅgha (*Saṅghika-dāna*). It is useful to know them, and so I will list them here.

1. An offering made to a Buddha.
2. An offering made to a Paccekabuddha, a Buddha who does not teach ultimate reality.
3. An offering made to an Arahat, one who has attained the fruition stage of an Arahat (*Arahatta-phala*).

4. An offering made to one who is striving to realise the fruition stage of an Arahat, one who has attained the path to being an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga*).
5. An offering made to Non-returners (*Anāgāmī*), one who has attained the fruition stage of a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-phala*).
6. An offering made to one who is striving to realise the fruition stage of a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi*), one who has attained the path stage of a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-magga*).
7. An offering made to Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmī*), one who has attained the fruition stage of a Once-Returner (*Sakadāgāmī-phala*).
8. An offering made to one who is striving to realise the fruition stage of a Once-returner (*Sakadāgāmī*), one who has attained the path stage of a Once-returner (*Sakadāgāmi-magga*).
9. An offering made to a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*), or to one who has attained the fruition stage of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).
10. An offering made to one who is striving to realise the fruition stage of Stream-entry (*Sotāpanna*), or one who has attained the path stage of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*).
11. An offering made to recluses outside the teaching of the Buddha, or when the teaching is not in existence, who are accomplished in absorption (*jhāna*) or the five supernormal power attainments (*pañca-abhiññā*).
12. An offering made to an ordinary lay person who possesses morality.
13. An offering made to an ordinary lay person who is devoid of morality.
14. An offering made to an animal.

Of these fourteen kinds of offering made to individuals, giving one full meal to an animal will bring wholesome results of long life, good looks, physical well-being, strength, and intelligence for 100 lives. Then in an ascending order, giving one full meal to a lay person of poor morality will bring these wholesome results for 1,000 lives; to a lay person of good morality at a time when the Buddha's teaching is not in existence who has no opportunity to take refuge in the Three Treasures, for 100,000 lives; to recluses and ascetics accomplished in

absorption (*jhāna*), for one million lives; to laymen and novitiates during a period when the teachings of Buddhas are extant, who take refuge in the Three Treasures, and up to the noble person who has attained the path of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*), for an innumerable number (*asaṅkhyeyya*) of lives; and to persons of higher attainment up to the Buddha, for countless periods of lives.

According to the commentary, even one who only takes refuge in the Three Treasures may be considered as a person who is practising for the realisation of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*).

There is no mention of monastics of loose morality in the above list of 14 kinds of recipient of offerings made to individuals. The Buddha's enumeration of offerings made to a person devoid of morality concerns only the period when the Buddha's teaching is not in existence. For these reasons, there is a tendency to consider that offerings made to monastics of impure morality while the Buddha's teaching are still not in existence are blameworthy. But one should remember that anyone who has become a Buddhist, at the very least, takes refuge in the Three Treasures; and the commentary says that whoever takes refuge in the Three Treasures is a person who is practising for the realisation of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*). Furthermore, when an offering made to an ordinary lay person who is devoid of morality, while the teaching of Buddha is not in existence, could be of much benefit, there is no doubt that offerings made to an ordinary lay person devoid of morality while the teaching of the Buddha is still existing would be beneficial too.

Again, in the Questions of King Milinda (*Milinda-pañha*), Ven. Nāgasena explains that an immoral monastic is superior to an immoral lay person in ten respects, such as reverence shown to the Buddha, reverence shown to the Dhamma, reverence shown to the Saṅgha, etc. Thus, according to Milinda's Questions, an immoral monastic is superior to an immoral lay person; and since he is listed by the commentary as one who is practising for the realisation of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-phala*), one should not say that it is blameworthy and fruitless to make an offering to a monastic who is devoid of morality.

There is yet another point of view in connection with this matter. At a time when there is no teaching of the Buddha, immoral monastics cannot cause any harm to the teaching; but when the teaching is in existence, they can bring harm to it. For that reason, no offering should be made to monastics who are devoid

of morality during the period when there is the Buddha's teaching. But that view is shown by the Buddha to be untenable.

At the conclusion of the discourse on the seven kinds of offering to the Saṅgha (*Saṅghika-dāna*), the Buddha explains to Ānanda: [1536] "Ānanda, in times to come, there will appear vile monastics, devoid of morality, who are monastics only in name, who will wear their robes round their necks. With the intention of giving to the Saṅgha, offerings will be made to these immoral monastics. Even when offered in this manner, an offering meant for the whole Saṅgha (*Saṅghika-dāna*) I declare, will bring innumerable, inestimable benefits."

There is still another point to take into consideration. Of the four purities of offerings (*dakkhiṇā-visuddhi*), the first purity is that even if the receiver is of impure morality, when the supporter is moral, the offering is pure by reason of purity of the supporter. For these reasons also, one should not say that an immoral monastic cannot be a receiver and that no benefit will accrue by making an offering to him.

It should be well noted, therefore, that it is blameworthy only when we make an offering with bad intentions of approving and encouraging an immoral monastic in his evil practices; without taking into considerations his habits, if one makes the offering with a pure mind, thinking only "one should give if someone who comes for a donation," it is quite blameless.

Seven Kinds of Offerings to the Saṅgha

1. An offering made to the community of both monks and nuns led by the Buddha, while he is still living.
2. An offering made to the community of both monks and nuns after the Parinibbāna of the Buddha.
3. An offering made to the community of monastics only.
4. An offering made to the community of nuns only.
5. An offering made with the whole Saṅgha in mind to a group of monks and nuns as nominated by the Saṅgha.

   Such an offering is made when the supporter could not afford to give offerings to all the monks and nuns and requests the Saṅgha to nominate a certain number of monks and nuns to receive the offerings. The Saṅgha

nominates the required number of monks and nuns, and the supporter makes the offerings to that group of monks and nuns with the whole Saṅgha in mind.

6. An offering made to a group of monastics only, with the whole Saṅgha in mind, after requesting the Saṅgha to nominate the number he could afford to give to.

7. An offering made with the whole of the Saṅgha in mind to a group of nuns only after requesting the Saṅgha to nominate the number he could afford to give to.

During the Buddha's lifetime, people were generally not disposed to form attachment to, or concern themselves with, individual personalities; they had their mind bent on the Saṅgha as a whole and thus were able to make many offerings of a noble kind to the Saṅgha (*Saṅghika-dāna*). Consequently, the needs of the members of the Saṅgha were mostly met by the distributions made to the Saṅgha; they had little need to rely on laymen and laywomen [1537] supporters and, therefore, had little attachment to them as "the supporters of my monastery, the supporters of my robes, etc." Thus, the monastic could be free of the bonds of attachments.

Here you should read the story of Ugga the householder given in chapter 45b. Of the eight wonders described by the householder Ugga, the sixth is concerned with making impartial offerings to the noble, the moral and the immoral alike. It is necessary to know how one can be impartially-minded in such circumstances. The impartial attitude can be understood to be brought about in this manner: "As I have made the invitation with intention to give to the whole Saṅgha, when I make the offering to a noble one, I will not recognise him as such; I will not consider that I am making the offering to a noble one; I will keep in mind only that I am making my offering to the Saṅgha, the noble disciples of the Buddha as a whole. And when I make the offering to an immoral person, I will not recognise him as such; I will not consider that I am making the offering to an immoral person; I will keep in mind only that I am making an offering to the Saṅgha, the noble disciples of the Buddha, as a whole. In this manner, impartiality may be maintained."

Emulating the example set by the householder Ugga when making an offering, one should ignore the status of the recipient, keep aside personal feelings

towards him, and strive to keep firmly in mind only the Saṅgha as a whole, so that one's gift may be of the noble type made with the whole community of monastics in mind. As taught explicitly by the Buddha in the Discourse giving an Analysis of Offerings (*Dakkhiṇā-vibhaṅga-sutta*, MN 142) mentioned above, when an offering is made with the whole community of monastics in mind (*Saṅghika-dāna*), it could bring innumerable, inestimable benefits to the supporter, even if the recipient is an immoral person devoid of virtues.

An offering made with the whole community of monastics in mind (*Saṅghika-dāna*) is made with full reverence to the Saṅgha; but it is not always easy to do so. Suppose a person decides to make an offering made with the whole community of monastics in mind; having made the necessary preparations, he goes to a monastery and addresses the monastics: "Reverend Sirs, I wish to make an offering made with the whole community of monastics in mind; may you designate someone from amongst the Saṅgha as its representative." Should the monastics nominate a novice whose turn it is to represent the Saṅgha, the supporter is likely to be displeased; should they choose an elderly venerable of long standing to represent them, he is likely to be overwhelmed with intense delight, exulting: "I have an elderly venerable of long standing as my recipient." Such generosity, affected by the personality of the recipient, cannot be a perfect offering made with the whole community of monastics in mind.

Only if one can accept the representative nominated in turn by the Saṅgha without any misgiving – without concerning oneself about whether the recipient is a novice or a monastic, a young monastic or an elderly monastic, an ignorant monastic or a learned monastic – and one makes one's offering, thinking only: "I make my offering to the Saṅgha, with full [1539] reverence to the Saṅgha," does one make a true offering made with the whole community of monastics in mind (*Saṅghika-dāna*).

There is something that happened on the other side of the ocean, in India. A rich householder, who had already donated a monastery, intended to make an offering to the Saṅgha. After making the necessary preparations, he went to the Saṅgha and addressed them: "Venerable sirs, may you designate someone to receive my offering for the Saṅgha?" It happened that it was the turn of an immoral monastic to represent the Saṅgha for alms. Although the man knew well that the designated monastic was immoral, he treated him with full respect: The seat for the monastic was prepared as for a ceremonious occasion,

decorated with a canopy overhead, and scented with flowers and perfumes. He washed the feet of the monastic and anointed them with oil very reverentially as if he were attending upon the person of the Buddha himself. He then made his offering to the monastic paying full homage to the Saṅgha.

That afternoon, the immoral monastic went back to the house and standing at the doorway asked for a hoe, which he needed to make some repairs in the monastery. The supporter of the monastery did not even bother to get up from his seat; he simply pushed the hoe towards the monastic with his feet. The members of his family then asked him: "Respected sir, this morning you heaped upon this monastic so much veneration; now you have shown him not even a small part of that deference. What is the difference between the morning and the afternoon in your attitude towards the monastic?" The man replied: "My dear ones, the respect I was showing this morning was towards the Saṅgha, not to this immoral monastic."

Offerings to Individuals and the Saṅgha

There are some people who maintain that if some person should approach one for alms and if one knew beforehand that the person was of bad morality, one should not make any offering to that person; if one should do so, it would be like watering a poisonous plant.

But it could not be said that every act of offering made knowingly to immoral persons is blameworthy. It is the volition of the giver that must be taken into account here. If the supporter should approve of the bad habits of the recipient and give with a view to give him support and encouragement for continuance of his immoral practices, then only would his gift be like watering a poisonous plant. If the supporter does not approve of the bad habits to the recipient and has no mind to encourage him to continue with his bad practices, but, emulating the example of the monastery supporter described above, if he makes his gift in such a way that it becomes a true gift made with the whole community of monastics in mind (*Saṅghika-dāna*), then no blame can be attached to such an offering.

Again, there are some who maintain that whether the recipient is of good moral character or bad moral character is of no concern of the supporters; it only concerns the recipient. Therefore, remaining indifferent to the character of the recipient, whether good or bad, the supporter should bear in mind: "This is a noble person, a noble one (*ariya*) or an Arahat." They maintain that this act of

offering is blameless and as fruitful as making an offering to an Arahat. This point of view is also untenable.

Disciples of other teachers, who are not in a position to know whether a person is a noble one (*ariya*) or an Arahat, wrongly believe their teachers to be noble ones, Arahats. This sort of belief, called wrong resolution (*micchādhimokkha*), making the wrong decision or conclusion, is demeritorious. Surely, it would be demeritorious and would be making a wrong decision if one were to bear in mind: "These are noble Arahats," when one knew full well that they were not. It is not proper, therefore, to hold such views.

When faced with such recipients in making one's offering, the proper attitude to bear in mind should be: "Bodhisattas, in fulfilment of the perfection of generosity, make their offering without discriminating between persons of high, medium, or low status of development. I will also emulate the examples of the Bodhisattas and make my offerings to whoever comes for them, without discrimination." In this way, one would not be giving support or any [1540] encouragement to the practice of bad habits and would not be making wrong decisions or conclusions about the recipient's development; the act of offering would thus be free from blame or fault.

Controversies and difficulties arise only in the case of offerings made to individuals (*puggalika-dāna*), because there exist various kind of individuals, good or bad. In the case of offerings made to the Saṅgha (*Saṅghika-dāna*), there exists only one kind of Saṅgha, not two, good and bad.[413] There is no distinction amongst the noble Saṅgha (*Ariya-saṅgha*) as high, medium, or low status of development as they are all equally noble. Therefore, as explained above, whenever a recipient appears before one, without taking into consideration his character, one should make the offering with the thought: "I make my offering to the disciples of the Buddha, the noble Saṅgha." Then this offering is of the type made to the Saṅgha (*Saṅghika-dāna*), and the recipient is the Saṅgha; the person who appears before him to receive the offering is merely the representative of the Saṅgha. However low that person may be in his morals, the true recipient of the offering is the noble Saṅgha, and therefore this is truly a noble gift.

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[413] Here, the noble disciples of the Buddha are meant.

Some people consider that it is very difficult to put into actual practice the advice to ignore the personal character of the immoral recipient who has appeared before one and to make one's offering with the mind directed not to him, but to the noble Saṅgha, regarding him only as a representative of the Saṅgha. The difficulty arises only because of lack of habitual practice in such matters.

In making reverential vows to the images and statues of the Buddha, regarding them as the Buddha's representatives, one is so accustomed to the practice of projecting one's mind from the images or statues to the person of the living Buddha that no one says it is difficult. Just as the householder Ugga during the Buddha's time and the monastery supporter of Jambudīpa had habituated themselves to make offerings to an immoral monastic as a representative of the Saṅgha, so also Buddhists of modern times should discipline their mind to become accustomed to such an attitude.

Four Kinds of Offerings to the Saṅgha

The Basket of Discipline (*Vinaya-piṭaka*) for members of the Saṅgha gives a description of the four categories of offerings made intentionally for the Saṅgha. But these four categories of offerings for the Saṅgha (*Saṅghika-dāna*) do not concern the lay supporter; only the seven types of offerings for the Saṅgha mentioned above concern them. The Vinaya distinctions are made for the Saṅgha only so that they would know how to distribute the offerings amongst themselves. The four categories are:

1. Offerings to be distributed amongst the Saṅgha which is actually present at the time and place (*sammukhī-bhūta-saṅghika*).

   Suppose an offering of robes is made at a certain place in towns or villages where some monastics have gathered together, and the offering is made to the noble Saṅgha as a whole by the supporter saying: "I give to the Saṅgha." It will be difficult to reach all the various noble monastics in the town or the village concerned. The distribution is, therefore, to be made amongst the Saṅgha present at the place and the time. Hence it is called offerings to be distributed amongst the Saṅgha which is actually present at the time and place (*sammukhī-bhūta-saṅghika*), here, *sammukhī-bhūta* means present at the time and place; *Saṅghika* means belonging to the Saṅgha.

2. Offerings to be distributed amongst the Saṅgha residing in the whole compound of the monastery (*ārāmaṭṭha-saṅghika*).

Suppose a supporter comes into the compound of a monastery and makes an offering of robes to a monastic or monastics whom he meets, saying: "I give it to the Saṅgha." As the offering is made within the compound of the monastery, it belongs to all the Saṅgha residing in that whole compound of the monastery, not just to the monastics who are in the vicinity. Hence it is called an offering to be distributed amongst the Saṅgha residing in the whole compound of the monastery (*ārāmaṭṭha-saṅghika*), here, *ārāmaṭṭha* means residing in the compound; *Saṅghika* means belonging to the Saṅgha.

3. Offerings which belong to the Saṅgha of whichever place they have been taken to (*gatāgata-saṅghika*).

Suppose a supporter comes to a monastery where a solitary monastic resides and makes an offering of 100 robes, saying: "I give to the Saṅgha." If the residing monastic is well-versed in the disciplinary rules, he can take possession of all the offerings for himself by simply remarking: "At the present moment, in this monastery, I am the sole monastic; all these 100 robes, therefore belong to [1541] me and I take possession of them." He has the right according to the Discipline to do so; he cannot be faulted for monopolising the offering made to the Saṅgha.

If the monastic is not proficient in Vinaya rules, he would not know what to do. Without resolving or determining: "I am the sole owner. I take possession of them," suppose he left for another place taking the robes with him, the monastics he met there should ask him how he came by the robes. Suppose, on learning how he had come by them, these monastics claimed their share of the robes, saying: "We also have a claim on them," and consequently all the robes were divided equally among them. Then this sharing of the robes is deemed to be a good one.

But suppose, without sharing the robes, he should continue on his way and encounter other monastics; these monastics would also be entitled to receive their share of the robes. In this way, wherever the monastic would go, taking the robes with him, the monastics of those places would be entitled to the robes. Hence it is called an offering which belongs to the Saṅgha of whichever place they have been taken to (*gatāgata-saṅghika*), here *gatāgata* means wherever one has gone; *Saṅghika* means belonging to the Saṅgha.

4. Offerings which belong to all monastics who come from the four directions (*catuddisā-saṅghika*).

> Such offerings include gifts which are weighty and important, which are to be treated with deference, for example, monasteries. They are not to be apportioned in any other way, but are meant only for use by the Saṅgha coming from all directions. Hence it is called an offering which belongs to all monastics who come from the four directions (*catuddisā-saṅghika*), here *catuddissā* means from four directions; *Saṅghika* means belonging to the Saṅgha.

Not being mindful of the fact that these four categories are mentioned in the Discipline to provide measures for distinction of ownership and distribution of the offerings made to the Saṅgha, some monastics make use of these Discipline provisions when lay people make offerings. To give an illustration, suppose a supporter, actuated by pious devotion to a certain monastic, builds a monastery, though not intending for him, but for the whole Saṅgha. For the libation ceremony, he invited ten monastics including the monastic to whom he has so much devotion. After recitation of the protection discourses (*paritta*),[414] when the time comes for the actual announcement of the offering, the monastic wants to be offered the monastery as an offering made to a particular individual (*puggalika-dāna*), because he feels that living in a monastery meant for the whole Saṅgha entails so many liabilities and responsibilities. But the supporter prefers to make it a gift to the whole Saṅgha (*Saṅghika-dāna*) because, he believes, such a gift (*dāna*) is superior and of much merit. The congregation resolves the disagreement between the supporter and his preceptor by asking the supporter to make the offering, saying: "I give this monastery to the Saṅgha who is present here and now," which is an offering to the Saṅgha which is actually present at the time and place (*sammukhī-bhūta-saṅghika*). Then nine monastics of the congregation, saying to the remaining one: "We relinquish our right of possession of the monastery to your reverence," hand over the new monastery to him and leave.

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[414] *Paritta*, protection discourses; it is a Buddhist custom to recite certain discourses such as the discourses on the Blessings (*Maṅgala*), Treasures (*Ratana*), Loving-kindness (*Metta*), etc. to ward off evil influences.

In this manner, such procedures are liable to be followed, believing that by so doing, the supporter's wish for a gift to the whole Saṅgha (*Saṅghika-dāna*) is fulfilled and the recipient who prefers individual ownership is also happy since the nine co-owners have relinquished their right of possession of the monastery making him the sole owner.

But, in reality, such a procedure is not proper and should not be followed. The gift of a monastery is a weighty, important one; the ten monastics to whom the monastery has been offered cannot make any kind of apportionment of the offering between them; and the supporter's gift amounts only to a gift to the ten monastics present on the occasion and not to the Saṅgha as a whole.

20. Offerings made at a Specific Time and at any Time

There are offerings made on specific occasions (*kāla-dāna*) and offerings made at any time (*akāla-dāna*).

An offering of Cloth (*Kaṭhina*) at the end of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) for the duration of one month; an offering of robes at the beginning of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*); an offering of dietary food to the sick; an offering of food to visiting monastics; an offering of food to monastics who are setting out on a journey are all gifts made at a specific time for a specific purpose and are called timely [1542] gifts (*kāla-dāna*); all other gifts made as one wishes without reference to any particular time are called offerings made at any time (*akāla-dāna*).

Offerings made on specific occasions (*kāla-dāna*) are of greater merit than the offerings made at any time (*akāla-dāna*) because the offering is made to meet the specific needs at a specific time. The specific occasion type of offering, at the time of its fruition, brings specific good results at the time they are needed. For example, if the supporter wishes for something special to eat, his wish is immediately fulfilled; likewise if he wishes to have some special clothes to wear, he will receive them. These are examples of special merits that accrue from offerings made at specific times to meet specific needs.

21. Offerings Witnessed and not Witnessed

Offerings made in the presence of the supporter (*paccakkha-dāna*) and offerings made in the absence of the supporter (*apaccakkha-dāna*).

The Pāḷi word *paccakkha* is made up of *pati* and *akkha*. *Pati* means towards; *akkha* means the five senses: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body. Although *paccakkha* is generally "before the eye," its complete meaning should be "perceptible to the senses." Thus *paccakkha-dāna* has a wider scope, not just the kind of offering which can be seen by the supporter but also those which can be perceived by his other senses, by sound, smell, taste and touch. In this connection, it should be noted that offerings made in the presence of the supporter (*paccakkha-dāna*) are not exactly the same as that made with one's own hands (*sāhatthika-dāna*). Offerings made in one's presence at one's instance but not actually with one's own hands are offerings made at one's request or command (*āṇattika-dāna*).

22. Matched and Matchless Offerings

Offerings matched by someone else (*sadisa-dāna*) and offerings which cannot be matched by anyone (*asadisa-dāna*).

When offerings are made in a spirit of competition, supporters make efforts to excel their rivals in the scale and magnificence of generosity. In such competitions, the offerings that prove to be incomparable, inimitable, are called an unrivalled alms giving (*asadisa-dāna*).

According to the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) commentary, as explained in the story about the unrivalled alms giving in the commentary to Dhp 177 only one supporter appeared during the time of each Buddha to make an unrivalled offering.

The Unrivalled Alms Giving

The story runs as follows: At one time, the Buddha, after going on a long journey followed by 500 Arahats, arrived back at the Jetavana monastery. King Pasenadi of Kosala honoured the Buddha and his 500 disciples by inviting them to the palace and offering them alms on a magnificent scale. The king invited also the people of Sāvatthī to his offering so that they could watch and rejoice in his meritorious deed. The next day, the people of Sāvatthī, rivalling the king, organized the resources of the whole city and gave offerings which surpassed those of the king to the Buddha and his disciples. They invited the king to their ceremony to observe their deed and rejoice in it.

Catching onto the spirit of competition, the king accepted the challenge of the citizens by conducting a more magnificent offering ceremony the following day.

The citizens in turn organized yet another grand ceremony of offering to outdo the efforts of the king. In this manner, the keen contest between the king and his citizens went on until both sides had made six offerings, but the contest still remained indecisive.

As the seventh round came along, the royal supporter was feeling despondent: "It will be very difficult to surpass the efforts of the citizens in this seventh round, and life would not be worth living if I, the sovereign ruler of the land, were to lose to the people over whom I rule, in this round." To console him, Queen Mallikā thought out a plan by which the king could make a truly majestic offering which the people would find impossible to match. She had a grand pavilion built in which 500 great disciples of the Buddha, the Arahats, were to sit in the pavilion with 500 princesses fanning them and spraying perfumes and scented water in the pavilion. At the back of the 500 Arahats, there would be 500 elephants, kneeling down and holding a white [1543] umbrella over each of the great Arahats.

As the arrangements were being made according to the above plan, they found they had one tame elephant short of 500; so they had a wild, unruly elephant, which was notorious for its savagery, placed at the back of Ven. Aṅgulimāla and made it hold a white umbrella like other elephants. People were amazed to find this savage beast taking part in the ceremony and holding an umbrella over the head of Ven. Aṅgulimāla in a docile manner.

After the meal had been offered to the congregation, the king declared: "I made an offering of all the things in this pavilion, allowable things as well as unallowable things. On this declaration, the people had to admit defeat in the contest because they had no princesses, no white umbrellas and no elephants.

Thus the supporter of the unrivalled alms giving (*dāna*) at the time of the supreme being of the three worlds, the Buddha Gotama, was King Pasenadi of Kosala. It should be noted that each of the other Buddhas also had a supporter who presented him with an incomparable, unrivalled alms giving (*dāna*).

Gifts in Groups of Threes

1. Gifts (*dāna*) can also be divided into three categories: inferior (*hīna*), medium (*majjhima*), and superior (*paṇīta*). The degree of benevolence of an act is dependent upon the strength of intention (*chanda*), the

conscious state (*citta*), energy (*viriya*) and investigative knowledge (*vimaṁsā*) involved in the act. When these four constituent elements are weak, the alms giving is said to be of inferior type; when they are of medial standard, the alms giving is regarded as of medium type; when all are strong, the alms giving is considered to be of the superior order.

2. When the act of giving (*dāna*) is motivated by desire for fame and acclaim, it is of the inferior type; when the goal of giving is for attainment of a happy life as a human being or a Deva, it is of medium type; if the gift is made in reverence to the noble ones (*ariya*) or Bodhisattas for their exemplary habits of offering, it is an excellent gift of superior order.

In the various discourses of the Pāḷi texts are mentioned parks and monasteries which were given the names of the individual supporters, for example, Jetavana, the garden of Prince Jeta; Anāthapiṇḍikārāma, the monastery donated by the rich man Anāthapiṇḍika; Ghositārāma, the monastery donated by the rich man Ghosita.

This system of nomenclature was adopted by the elders at the First Council with the intention of encouraging others to follow these examples and thus acquire merit. So, supporters today, when making such gifts, inscribe their names in marble or stone. In doing so, they should keep under control, by exercise of mindfulness, any desire for fame, bearing in mind that they make the gift in order to set an example to those who wish to acquire merit.

3. When the supporter aspires for a happy life as a human or celestial being, his gift is of an inferior type; when the aspiration is for the attainment of Awakening as a disciple (*sāvaka-bodhi-ñāṇa*), or as an Independent Buddha (*Pacceka-buddha-ñāṇa*), the gift is a medium one; when one aspires for Perfect Self-Awakening (*Sammā-sambodhi-ñāṇa*), one's gift is of a superior order.

By Awakening is meant knowledge of one of the four paths. The sages of the past advised that, in order for the gift to serve as a means of escape from the round of rebirths (*vivaṭṭa-nissita*), one should never make a gift in a haphazard or casual manner; one should seriously and positively aspire for one of the three forms of Awakening while making an offering.

4. Again, gifts may be of three types: Gifts fit for a servant (*dāna-dāsa*); gifts fit for a friend (*dāna-sahāya*); and gifts fit for a master (*dāna-sāmi*).

Just as in everyday life one uses materials of good quality while offering the servants inferior quality, so also if one makes a gift of materials which are poorer in quality than those enjoyed by oneself, the gift is of the inferior type (*dāna-dāsa*), fit for a servant. Just as [1544] in everyday life one offers one's friends things which one uses and enjoys, so also if one makes a gift of materials which are of the same quality as used by oneself, then the gift is said to be of the medium type (*dāna-sahāya*). Just as in everyday life if one makes a present of gifts to one's superior of things better in quality than those enjoyed by oneself, so also if one gives a gift of superior quality materials, then the gift is said to be of a superior order (*dāna-sāmi*).

1. There are three types of gifts of Dhamma (*Dhamma-dāna*), the division being based on the meaning of the word *Dhamma* for each type. In the first type of Dhamma gifts, Dhamma is the one associated with the material Dhamma gift (*āmisa-dhamma-dāna*), mentioned above under the gift (*dāna*) categories by twos. Therein, it was stated that the material Dhamma gift is the gift of palm-leaf scriptures or books of the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*). In this classification, the Dhamma is the scriptures themselves, the Dhamma that was taught by the Buddha and recorded on palm leaves or in books. The gift of Dhamma (*Dhamma-dāna*), therefore, means here teaching the scriptures or giving the knowledge of the Buddha's teachings to others. The scripture is the gift-object, the material that is given; the listener is the recipient; and one who teaches or expounds the Dhamma is the supporter.

2. In the second type of gifts of dhamma (*dhamma-dāna*), mental objects (*dhamma*) refers to the phenomena included in the Abhidhamma classification of gifts into six classes: Gifts of forms (*rūpa-dāna*), sounds (*sadda-dāna*), smells (*gandha-dāna*), tastes (*rasa-dāna*), touches (*phoṭṭhabba-dāna*) and mental objects (*dhamma-dāna*). The mental objects, in this particular case, is explained as all that forms the object of the mind or mental objects. The mental objects are: 1) The five sense organs (*pasāda-rūpa*); 2) the sixteen subtle forms (*sukhuma-rūpa*); 3) the 89 states of consciousness (*citta*); 4) the 52 mental factors (*cetasika*);

5) Nibbāna; and 6) concepts (*paññatti*). Whereas in the noble scriptures (*pariyatti-dhamma*), the Dhamma means "noble" here it has the sense of "the truth concerning the real nature of things."

Gifts of mental objects of this type are made through rendering assistance to those afflicted with physical disabilities, for example, weak eyesight, trouble in hearing, etc. Helping others to improve their eyesight (*cakkhu-dhamma-dāna*); helping them to improve their hearing (*sota-dhamma-dāna*), etc. The most distinctive giving of this type is the promotion of the longevity of others (*jīvita-dāna*). In a similar manner, the remaining gifts of the type: smells (*gandha*), tastes (*rasa*), touches (*phoṭṭhabba*) and mental objects (*dhamma*) may be understood.

3. In the third type of gifts of Dhamma (*Dhamma-dāna*), Dhamma refers to the Three Treasures: the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha. As in the first type of gift of Dhamma, the Dhamma here means the scriptures, or the teaching of the Buddha; whereas in the second type, the phenomena is a gift-object for offering, while the listener is the recipient. In this third type, the Dhamma, which is a part of the trinity of the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, itself forms the recipient to which offerings are to be made. When the Buddha and the Saṅgha become recipients, the associated Dhamma also becomes a recipient of offerings.

The Birth Story about the Succession of the Almsfood

This story is described in the introduction to the Birth Story about the Succession of the Almsfood (*Bhikkhā-parampara-jātaka*, Ja 496): The Buddha was residing in the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī, and at that time, a rich householder who had faith in the teaching thought to himself thus: "I have had opportunities to honour the Buddha and his Saṅgha constantly with offerings of food, robes, etc. But I have never honoured the Dhamma by making offerings to it. It is now time that I should do so." With this thought, he approached the Buddha and asked him how to do it.

The Buddha replied: "If you wish to honour the Dhamma, you should give food, robes, etc. to the monastic who is well cultivated in the Dhamma, but with the clear intention of honouring the Dhamma which he has realized."

When the householder asked him which monastic would be appropriate to receive such an offering, the Buddha told him to ask the Saṅgha. The Saṅgha directed him to give his offerings to Ven. Ānanda. So he invited Ven. Ānanda and made a generous offering of food, robes, etc. to him, keeping in mind that he was honouring the Dhamma which Ven. Ānanda had realized.

According to the story, the householder is the supporter; food, robes, etc. are material objects [1545] of offering, and the body of the Dhamma which lies embedded in the person of Ven. Ānanda is the recipient of the gift.

King Asoka

This householder was not the only one who made such offerings at the time of the Buddha, keeping in mind the Dhamma as the recipient of offering. The text clearly mentions that the great ruler, Siri Dhammāsoka or King Asoka, with much pious reverence for the Dhamma, built 84,000 monasteries in all, one in honour of each of the 84,000 groups of Dhamma (*Dhammakkhandha*) which form the complete teaching of the Buddha.

> Many have heard of this great alms giving (*dāna*) of Asoka and have desired to imitate him in such a gift. But it is important to follow his example in a proper manner. The real motive of the Great King Asoka was not merely the giving of monasteries, but the paying of respect to the Dhamma. A building of monasteries serves only to provide him with materials for offering. Later generations of supporters, who wish to follow the example of King Asoka, should understand that they build monasteries not just as objects for offering, not with the intention of acquiring the fame of being a monastery supporter, but with the sole aim of paying homage to the Dhamma.

The significance of these gifts of Dhamma (*Dhamma-dāna*) may be appreciated when one remembers the importance of the Dhamma. The great commentator, Ven. Mahā Buddhaghosa concluded his work, the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA), the commentary to the Enumeration of Phenonema (*Dhamma-saṅgaṇī*), the first book of the Abhidhamma, with the wish: "May the true Dhamma endure long. May all beings show reverence to the Dhamma (*ciraṁ tiṭṭhatu Saddhammo, Dhamme hontu sagāravā, sabbe pi sattā*). He made this wish because he was fully aware of the important role of the Dhamma. He realised that as long as the Dhamma endures, the teachings of the Buddha cannot decline, and everyone who honours the Dhamma will show reverence to

the teachings and follow them. And the Buddha said: "Only those who see the Dhamma see me." And nearing the end of his life, the Buddha had said that: "The Dhamma will be your teacher after I am gone (*so vo mamaccayena satthā*)." Therefore, one should strive to cultivate this third type of gift of Dhamma which plays such an important role.

A Gift Difficult to Give

6. Another three types of gift (*dāna*) are classified as a gift which is difficult to be given (*dukkara-dāna*); an awe-inspiring gift of great magnificence (*mahā-dāna*); and common forms of gifts (*asāmañña-dāna*) which are neither too difficult to make nor too magnificent.

An example of the first type, a gift difficult to be given (*dukkara-dāna*), may be found in the story of the gifts given by Dārubhaṇḍaka to Ven. Tissa. This story is given in the commentary to the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (AA, PTS 2.60).

The Story of the Gifts given by Dārubhaṇḍaka

There was a poor man who lived in Mahāgāma of Śrī Laṅkā who earned his living by selling firewood. His name was Tissa, but because his livelihood was selling firewood, he was known as Dārubhaṇḍaka Tissa, "Tissa who has only firewood as property."

One day, he spoke with his wife: "Our life is so humble, wretched and lowly. Although the Buddha had taught the benefits of the observance of the duty of regular giving (*nibaddha-dāna*), we cannot afford to cultivate the practice. But we could do one thing; we could start giving alms food regularly, twice a month, and when we can afford more, we will try for the higher offering of food by tickets[415] (*salāka-bhatta*)." His wife was agreeable to his proposal, and they started giving whatever they could afford as alms food the next morning.

That was a very prosperous time for the monastics, who were receiving plenty of good food. Certain young monastics and novices accepted the poor alms food

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[415] According to I.B. Horner in the Book of the Discipline (2.313), food tickets were issued at times when food was scarce. But the story of Dārubhaṇḍaka suggests that the same was adopted also when food was abundant as a higher form of alms giving (*dāna*).

offered by the Dārubhaṇḍaka's family but threw it away in their presence. The housewife reported to her husband: "They threw away our alms food," but she didn't have an unpleasant thought over [1546] the incident.

Then Dārubhaṇḍaka had a discussion with his wife: "We are so poor; we cannot offer alms food that would please the noble ones. What should we do to satisfy them?" His wife said: "Those who have children are not poor," and in order to give him solace and encouragement she advised him to hire out the services of their daughter to a household and, with the money so acquired, to buy a milch cow. Dārubhaṇḍaka accepted his wife's advice. He obtained twelve pieces of money, with which he bought a cow. Because of the purity of their wholesome volition, the cow yielded large quantities of milk.

The milk they got in the evening was made into cheese and butter. The milk they got in the morning was used by the wife in the preparation of milk porridge, which together with the cheese and butter they offered to the Saṅgha. In this manner, they were able to make offerings of alms food which were well accepted by the Saṅgha. From that time onwards, the ticket food (*salāka-bhatta*) of Dārubhaṇḍaka was available only to the noble ones of high attainments.

One day, Dārubhaṇḍaka said to his wife: "Thanks to our daughter, we are saved from humiliation. We have reached a position in which the noble ones accept our alms food with great satisfaction. Now, do not miss out on the regular duty of offering alms food during my absence. I shall find some kind of employment and I shall come back after redeeming our daughter from her bondage." Then he went to work for six months in a sugar mill where he managed to save twelve pieces of money with which to redeem his daughter.

Setting out for home early one morning, he saw ahead of him Ven. Tissa on his way to worship at the relic shrine (*stūpa*) at Mahāgāma. This monastic was one who cultivated the austere practice of partaking only of alms food which is offered to him when going on alms round. Dārubhaṇḍaka walked fast to catch up with the monastic and strolled along with him, listening to his Dhamma talk. Approaching a village, Dārubhaṇḍaka saw a man coming out with a packet of cooked rice in his hand. He offered the man one piece of money to sell him the meal-packet.

The man, realising that there must be some special reason for offering one piece of money for the food packet when it was not worth the sixteenth part of it,

refused to sell it for one piece of money. Dārubhaṇḍaka increased his offer to two, then three pieces of money and so on until he had offered all the money he possessed. But the man still declined the offer thinking Dārubhaṇḍaka had still more money with him.

Finally, Dārubhaṇḍaka explained to the man: "I have no money with me other than these twelve pieces. I would have given you more if I had. I am buying this meal packet not for myself, but, wishing to offer alms food, I have requested a monastic to wait for me under the shade of a tree. The food is to be offered to that monastic. Do sell me the packet of food for these twelve pieces of money. You will also gain merit by doing so."

The man finally agreed to sell his food-packet and Dārubhaṇḍaka took it with great happiness to the waiting monastic. Taking the bowl from the monastic, Dārubhaṇḍaka put the cooked rice from the packet into it. But Ven. Tissa accepted only half of the meal. Dārubhaṇḍaka made an earnest request to the monastic: "Venerable sir, this meal is sufficient for only one person. I will not eat any of it. I bought the food intending it only for you. Out of compassion for me, may the venerable one accept the food." Upon this, Ven. Tissa permitted him to offer all the food in the packet.

After Ven. Tissa had finished the meal, they continued the journey together, and he asked Dārubhaṇḍaka about himself. Dārubhaṇḍaka told everything about himself to Ven. Tissa. The venerable was struck with awe by the intense piety of Dārubhaṇḍaka, and he thought to himself: "This man has made a gift which is difficult to be given (*dukkara-dāna*). Having partaken of the meal offered by him, under difficult circumstances, I am greatly indebted to him, and I should show my gratitude in return. If I can find a suitable place, I shall strive hard to become an Arahat in one sitting. Let all my skin, flesh and blood dry up, I will not stir from this position until I attain the goal." As they reached Mahāgāma, they went on their separate ways.

On arriving at the Tissa Mahā Vihāra monastery, Ven. Tissa was allotted a room [1547] for himself, where he made his great effort, determined not to leave the place until he had eradicated all defilements and become an Arahat. Not even getting up to go on alms round, he steadfastly worked on until at the dawn of the seventh day, he became an Arahat fully accomplished in the four branches of analytical knowledge (*paṭisambhidā*). Then he thought to himself thus: "My

body is greatly enfeebled. I wonder whether I could live longer." He realised, through exercise of his psychic powers, that the mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*) which constituted his living body would not continue much longer. Putting everything in order in his dwelling place and taking his bowl and double robe, he went to the Assembly Hall at the centre of the monastery and sounded the drum to assemble all the monastics.

When all the monastics had gathered together, the head monk enquired who had called for the assembly. Ven. Tissa, who had cultivated the austere practice of taking only alms food, replied: "I have sounded the drum, venerable sir." – "And why have you done so?" – "I have no other purpose, but if any member of the Saṅgha has doubts about the attainments of the paths and fruitions, I wish them to ask me about them."

The head venerable told him there were no questions. He then asked Ven. Tissa why he had persevered so arduously, sacrificing even his life for the attainment. He related all that had happened and informed him that he would pass away the same day. Then he said: "May the bier on which my corpse is supported remain immoveable until my alms food supporter, Dārubhaṇḍaka, comes and lifts it with his own hands." And he passed away that very day.

Then King Kākavaṇṇa Tissa came and ordered his men to put the body on the bier and take it to the funeral pyre at the cremating grounds, but they were not able to move it. Finding out the reason for this, the king sent for Dārubhaṇḍaka, had him dressed in fine clothes and asked him to lift up the bier.

The text gives an elaborate account of how Dārubhaṇḍaka lifted the bier with the body on it easily over his head and how, as he did so, the bier rose in the air and travelled by itself to the funeral pyre.

Dārubhaṇḍaka's gift involved the ungrudging sacrifice of twelve pieces of money which were needed for redeeming his own daughter from servitude and which had taken six whole months to earn, and it is indeed a very difficult one to give, and thus it is known as a gift difficult to give (*dukkara-dāna*).

Sukha the Novice

Another example of such gifts is found in the story of the novice Sukha, given in the commentary to the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*, Dhp 145). Before he became a novice, he was a poor villager who wanted to eat the sumptuous meal

of a rich man. The rich man Gandha told him that he would have to work for three years to earn such a meal. Accordingly, he worked for three years and obtained the meal he so earnestly longed for. When he was about to enjoy it, a Paccekabuddha happened to come by. Without any hesitation, he offered the Paccekabuddha the meal, which he had so cherished and which had taken him three years to earn.

A Poor Girl

Another example is provided by the Birth Story about the Wealthy Man's Daughter Ummādantī (*Ummādantī-jātaka*, Ja 527), which gives the story of a poor girl who worked for three years to get printed clothes, which she wanted to adorn herself with. When she was about to dress herself in the clothes, which she had so yearned for, a disciple of Buddha Kassapa came by who was covered only with leaves because he had been robbed of his robes by thieves. The giving away of clothes, which she so cherished and for which she had to work for three years, is also a gift difficult to give (*dukkara*).

Great Offerings

Awe-inspiring offerings of great magnificence are called great offerings (*mahā-dāna*). The great Siri Dhammāsoka's offering of 84,000 monasteries in honour of the 84,000 passages of the canon are great offerings of this type. On this account, Ven. Mahā Moggaliputta Tissa said: "In the Dispensation of the Buddha, or even in the lifetime of the Buddha, there is no one equal to you as a supporter of the four requisites. Your offering is the greatest."

Although Ven. Mahā Moggaliputta Tissa said so, the gifts of Asoka were made on [1548] his own initiative, without anyone to compete with and, therefore, there is no need to classify them as a matched (*sadisa*) or matchless (*asadisa*) type of offering. King Pasenadi Kosala's gifts were made in competition with those of the citizens of Sāvatthī and are, therefore, properly termed matchless offerings (*asadisa-dāna*).

Common Offerings

All other gifts of an ordinary nature which are neither difficult to make nor of great magnitude are just common gifts (*sāmañña-dāna*).

In addition to these, there is another classification of three gifts of Dhamma (*Dhamma-dāna*) described in the Vinaya Summary (*Parivāra*) and its commentary:

1. Giving to the Saṅgha gifts which were verbally declared to be offered to the Saṅgha.
2. Giving to the relic shrine (*stūpa*) gifts which were verbally declared to be offered to the shrine.
3. Giving to an individual gifts which were verbally declared to be offered to an individual.

These are called righteous gifts (*Dhammika-dāna*), gifts offered in connection with the Dhamma. Further details of these types of gifts will be found below, in accordance with the nine kinds of unrighteous gifts (*adhammika-dāna*).

Gifts in Groups of Fours

The texts do not mention any type of gifts by fours. But the Vinaya lists four kinds of requisites which may be offered as gifts. They are:

1. Gifts of robe or robe-materials (*cīvara-dāna*).
2. Gifts of alms food (*piṇḍapāta-dāna*).
3. Gifts of dwelling places (*senāsana-dāna*).
4. Gifts of medicines (*bhesajja-dāna*).

Gifts may also be classified into four types depending on the purity of the supporter and the receiver:

1. Gifts where the supporter is moral but the recipient is not.
2. Gifts where the recipient is moral but the supporter is not.
3. Gifts where both the supporter and the recipient are immoral.
4. Gifts where both the recipient and the supporter are moral.

Gifts in Groups of Fives

The Discourse on the Timely Gift (*Kāla-dāna-sutta*, AN 5.36) mentions the following five types of gifts which are to be given at an appropriate time:

1. Gifts made to a visitor.

2. Gifts made to one starting on a journey.
3. Gifts made to one who is ill.
4. Gifts made at the time of scarcity.
5. Gifts of newly harvested grains and crops made to those endowed with virtue.

The fifth type has direct reference to farmers and cultivators, but it should be understood that it also includes the first fruits of labour of anyone who offers them as gifts (*dāna*) before using them for oneself.

Five Kinds of Gifts to Men of No Virtue

There are five kinds of gifts made by men of no virtue (*asappurisa-dāna*):

1. Gifts made without seeing carefully that the gift to be offered is properly prepared, fresh, wholesome and clean. [1549]
2. Gifts made without due reverence or consideration.
3. Gifts made without offering it with one's own hands; for example, the gift (*dāna*) of King Pāyāsi, who instead of presenting the gifts with his own hands, had his attendant Uttara do so for him.

   Pāyāsi, a chieftain at Setavya in the kingdom of Kosala, was reborn in the Catumahārājika as a result of his alms giving in the human world. He related his past experiences to the visiting Ven. Gavampati. He said he had given alms without thorough preparation, not with his own hand, without due thought, as something discarded, and hence his rebirth in that lowest of the six celestial planes. But Uttara, the young man who supervised his alms giving at his request, was reborn in a higher abode, Tāvatimsa, because he gave with thorough preparation with his own hand, with due thought, not as something discarded. The story teaches the right way of alms giving.

4. Gifts made in the manner of discarding one's leftovers.
5. Gifts made without the knowledge that the good deed done now will surely bring good results in the future (*kammassakata-ñāṇa*).

Five Kinds of Gifts to Men of Virtue

There are five kinds of gifts made by men of virtue (*sappurisa-dāna*), these two groups of five kinds of gifts are described in the Discourse about Gifts given by Inferior People (*Asappurisa-dāna-sutta*, AN 5.147):

1. Gifts made after seeing carefully that the gift to be offered is properly prepared, fresh, wholesome and clean.
2. Gifts made with due reverence, with the mind firmly fixed on the material for offering.
3. Gifts made with one's own hands.

   Throughout the beginningless cycle of existences, about the beginning of which we have no knowledge, there have been many existences in which one is not equipped with hands and feet. In this existence, when one has the rare fortune of being equipped with complete limbs, one should avail oneself of this rare opportunity of offering gifts with one's own hands, reflecting that one would work for liberation making use of the hands one is fortunate enough to be born with.

4. Gifts made with due care and not as if one is discarding one's leftovers.
5. Gifts made with the knowledge that the good deed done now will surely bring good results in the future.

Another Five Kinds of Gifts

This classification of five kinds of gifts (*dāna*) is found in the [1550] Discourse about Gifts given by Superior People (*Sappurisa-dāna-sutta*, AN 5.148).

1. Gifts made with faith in the law of cause and effect (*saddhā-dāna*).
2. Gifts made after seeing carefully that the gift to be offered is properly prepared, fresh, wholesome and clean (*sakkacca-dāna*).
3. Gifts made at the right time, on the proper occasion (*kāla-dāna*).[416]
4. Gifts made with a view to rendering assistance to the recipient or to show kindness to him (*anuggaha-dāna*).

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[416] When it is the meal-time, alms food is offered; when it is the *Kaṭhina* season, robes are offered, and so on.

5. Gifts made without affecting, in any way, one's dignity and the dignity of others (*anupaghāta-dāna*).

All of these five kinds of gifts give rise to great wealth, riches and prosperity. In addition, gifts made with faith (*saddhā-dāna*) result in a fair, handsome appearance. As a result of gifts made after preperation (*sakkacca-dāna*), one's followers and attendants are attentive and obedient. Resulting from being given at the right time (*kāla-dāna*) are benefits that come at the right time and in abundance. As a result of gifts offering assistance (*anuggaha-dāna*), one is well disposed to enjoy the fruits of one's good deeds and is able to do so in full. As a result of gifts that do no harm (*anupaghāta-dāna*), one's property is fully protected against the five destructive elements of water, fire, kings, thieves and unloved heirs.

The opposites of these five kinds of gifts are not mentioned in the texts, but it may be assumed that the five corresponding gifts made by people with no virtues would be as follows:

1. Gifts made without believing in the law of cause and effect (*asaddhiya-dāna*), just to imitate others' gifts or to escape from being censured or reviled.

   Such a gift will produce wealth and riches for the supporter, but he will not be bestowed with a fine appearance.

2. Gifts made without seeing carefully that the gift to be offered is properly prepared, fresh, wholesome and clean (*asakkacca-dāna*).

   Wealth and riches will accrue from such gifts, but the supporter will not receive obedience and discipline from his subordinates.

3. Gifts made at an inappropriate time (*akāla-dāna*).

   It will produce wealth, but its beneficial results will not be in great abundance and will not come at the time needed.

4. Gifts made perfunctorily (*ananuggaha-dāna*) without intention of assisting or doing honour to the recipient.

   One may reap riches and wealth out of such deeds, but one will not be disposed to enjoy his wealth, or he may be denied the occasion to enjoy them.

5. Gifts made in such a way that it will affect, in some way, one's dignity or the dignity of others (*upaghāta-dāna*).

   Wealth and riches may accrue from such gifts, but they will be subject to damage or destruction by the five enemies.

In view of the gifts at the appropriate time (*kāla-dāna*) and the gifts at the inappropriate time (*akāla-dāna*) mentioned above, it should be well noted that it is improper to make offerings, even with the best of intentions, of light to the Buddha during the day when there is light, or of food when it is afternoon.

Five Kinds of Immoral Gifts

The Summary (*Parivāra*) of the Basket of Discipline (*Vinaya-piṭaka*) mentions five kinds of giving which are commonly and conventionally called by people deeds of merit, but which are nothing but harmful, demeritorious forms of offering. They are:

1. A gift of intoxicants (*majja-dāna*).
2. A holding of festivals (*samajja-dāna*).
3. Provision of prostitutes for sexual enjoyment (*itthi-dāna*).
4. Dispatch of bulls into a herd of cows for mating (*usabha-dāna*).
5. Drawing and offering of pornographic pictures (*citta-kamma-dāna*).

The Buddha described these forms of offering as immoral, demeritorious gifts because they cannot be accompanied by good intentions or wholesome volitions. Some people think that by providing opium to an addicted person who is nearing death because of withdrawal from the drug, they are doing a meritorious deed of giving life (*jīvita-dāna*). As a matter of fact, this does not constitute an act of merit because it is an unwholesome consciousness that motivates one to offer opium which is not suitable for consumption. The same consideration holds good in the case of offering intoxicants.

The commentary to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) mentions the inclusion of intoxicating drinks in the display of materials to be given away by the Bodhisatta King Vessantara as a great offering (*mahā-dāna*).

Some people try to explain this inclusion of intoxicants as materials for offering by King Vessantara by saying that the king had no intention of providing liquor

to the drunkards, that it is only the volition that determines the merits of an offering; as King Vessantara did not want anyone to drink the intoxicants, there is no wrong intention involved. He merely wanted to avoid being criticised by those who would say that the king's great gifts (*dāna*) has no offerings of intoxicants.

But such rationalizations are untenable. Great persons, like King Vessantara, do not worry about criticism levelled at them by others, especially when the criticism is unjustified. The fact of the matter is that it is only in drinking that the guilt lies; using it as a lotion or for [1551] medicinal preparations in a proper manner is not demeritorious. We should take it, therefore, that it is for such purposes that King Vessantara included intoxicants as materials for offering in his great gifts (*mahā-dāna*).

Five Kinds of Great Offerings

In the Discourse on the Streams of Merit (*Abhisanda-sutta*, AN 8.39), comprehensive expositions are given of the five precepts, beginning with the words: *Pañcimāni bhikkhave dānāni, mahā-dānāni*, describing "the five precepts as the five kinds of great gifts (*mahā-dāna*)." But it should not be thought that virtue (*sīla*) is generosity (*dāna*) just because the five precepts are described as the five great gifts in the text mentioned above. The Buddha does not mean to say that morality (*sīla*) is not different from giving (*dāna*) or that the two are exactly the same. Morality (*sīla*) is proper restraint of one's physical and verbal actions, and giving (*dāna*) is the offering of a gift, and the two should not be taken as identical.

When a virtuous person observes the precept of non-killing and abstains from taking the life of other beings, that virtuous person is actually giving them the gift of harmlessness (*abhaya-dāna*). The same consideration applies to the remaining precepts. Thus, when all the five precepts are well observed by a moral person, he is, by his restraint, offering all beings gifts of freedom from harm, danger, worries, anxiety, etc. It is in this sense that the Buddha teaches here that observance of the five precepts constitutes offering of the five great gifts (*mahā-dāna*).

Gifts in Groups of Sixes

Just as the texts do not mention any list of gifts in groups of fours as such, so there is no direct mention of types of gifts in groups of six either. But the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA), the commentary to the Enumeration of Phenonema (*Dhamma-saṅgaṇī*), gives an exposition of six types of gifts in which the six sense objects provide materials for offerings: the gift of colour, sound, odour, taste, objects of touch, and mind-objects.

Gifts in Groups of Sevens

Similarly, there is no mention of types of gifts in groups of sevens as such, but the seven kinds of gifts to the Saṅgha (*Saṅghika-dāna*) described above under the heading Gifts in Pairs and Gifts to the Saṅgha may be taken to represent this type of gift (*dāna*).

Gifts in Groups of Eights

The Buddha teaches a group of eight types of gifts (*dāna*) in the First Discourse on Gifts (*Paṭhama-dāna-sutta*, AN 8.31). The eight gifts are:

1. Gifts made without delay, without hesitation, as soon as the recipient arrives.
2. Gifts made through fear of censure or of being reborn in the realms of misery and suffering.
3. Gifts made because the recipient had in the past given him gifts.
4. Gifts made with the intention that the recipient of the offering will make a return offering in future.
5. Gifts made with the thought that making a gift is a good deed.
6. Gifts made with the thought: “I am a householder who prepares and cooks food to eat; it would not be proper if I partake of the food without making offerings to those who are not allowed by their disciplinary rules to prepare and cook their own food.”
7. Gifts made with the thought: “The gift I am offering will bring me a good reputation which will spread far and wide.”

8. Gifts made with the idea that it will serve as an instrument to help one attain concentration when one fails to achieve it while practising concentration and insight meditation.

Of the eight kinds of gifts, the last one is the best and the noblest. The reason is that this [1552] last type of gift is unique, one which promotes joy and delight in one who is practising concentration and insight meditation, and renders great assistance to his endeavours in meditation.

The first seven modes of giving do not arouse and encourage the mind in the work of concentration and insight meditation but of them, the first and the fifth are superior ones (*paṇīta*). The seventh type is an inferior one (*hīna*), while numbers 2, 3, 4 and 6 are of medium status.

The eight categories of gifts may be divided into two groups: gifts which belong to the sphere of meritorious giving (*puñña-visaya-dāna*) and gifts which belong to the sphere of worldly gifts (*loka-visaya-dāna*). The first, the fifth and the eighth are gifts which belong to the sphere of meritorious giving and the remaining five belong to the gifts which belong to the sphere of worldly gifts.

Again, the Discourse on the Bases for Gifts (*Dāna-vatthu-sutta*, AN 8.33) provides another list of eight gifts.

1. Gifts made out of affection.
2. Gifts made under unavoidable circumstances, made reluctantly and showing resentment.
3. Gifts made through delusion and foolishness without understanding the law of cause and effect.
4. Gifts made through fear of censure, through fear of rebirth in the realms of misery and suffering, through fear of harm that may be caused by the recipient.
5. Gifts made with the thought: “It has been the tradition of generations of my ancestors, and I should carry on the tradition.”
6. Gifts made with the objective of gaining rebirth in the Deva realms.
7. Gifts made with the hope of experiencing joy and delight with a pure mind.

8. Gifts made with the idea that it will serve as an instrument to help one attain concentration when one fails to achieve it while practising concentration and insight meditation.

Of these eight categories of gifts also, only the eighth kind is the noblest; the sixth and the seventh are gifts which belong to the sphere of meritorious giving. The remaining five are of inferior status belonging to the gifts which belong to the sphere of worldly gifts.

Again, in the Discourse on Rebirths following Gifts (*Dānūpapatti-sutta*, AN 8.35), the Buddha had taught comprehensively on the subject of gaining a good rebirth as a result of giving alms (*dānūpapatti*). According to the eight kinds of destination to be gained as future births, the gifts are divided into eight categories:

1. Seeing the happy circumstances of rich and prosperous people in this life, one makes gifts (*dāna*) wishing for such wealth and comfortable life in the future and, at the same time, taking care to lead a life of morality. After death, his wish is fulfilled; he gains rebirth in the human world in happy, comfortable and wealthy circumstances.

2. Hearing that the Catumahārājika Devas are powerful beings leading a life of comfort and pleasures, one makes gifts wishing for such a powerful, comfortable life full of pleasures in the Catumahārājika realm and at the same time taking care to lead a life of morality. After death, his wish is fulfilled; he is reborn in the Catumahārājika realm.

3. Hearing that the Tāvatiṁsa Devas are powerful beings leading a life of comfort and pleasures, one makes gifts wishing for such a powerful, comfortable life full of pleasures in the Tāvatiṁsa realm and at the same time taking care to lead a life of morality. After death, his wish is fulfilled; he is reborn in the Tāvatiṁsa realm.

4. Hearing that the Yāma Devas are powerful beings leading a life of comfort and pleasures, one makes gifts wishing for such a powerful, comfortable life full of pleasures in the Yāma realm and at the same time taking care to lead a life of morality. After death, his wish is fulfilled; he is reborn in the Yāma realm.

5. Hearing that the Tusita Devas are powerful beings leading a life of comfort and pleasures, one makes gifts wishing for such a powerful, comfortable life full of pleasures in the Tusita realm and at the same time taking care to lead a life of morality. After death, his wish is fulfilled; he is reborn in the Tusita realm.

6. Hearing that the Nimmānarati Devas are powerful beings leading a life of comfort and pleasures, one makes gifts wishing for such a powerful, comfortable life full of pleasures in the Nimmānarati realm and at the same time taking care to lead a life of morality. After death, his wish is fulfilled; he is reborn in the Nimmānarati realm.

7. Hearing that the Paranimmitavasavattī Devas are powerful beings leading a life of comfort and pleasures, one makes gifts wishing for such a powerful, comfortable life full of pleasures in the Paranimmitavasavattī realm and at the same time taking care to lead a life of morality. After death, his wish is fulfilled; he is reborn in the Paranimmitavasavattī realm.

8. Hearing that the Brahmas are powerful beings leading a life of comfort and pleasures, one makes gifts wishing for such a powerful, comfortable life full of pleasures in the Brahma world and at the same time taking care to lead a life of morality. After death, his wish is fulfilled; he is reborn in the Brahma world.

It should not be concluded from the above statements that the giving of alms alone is a sure guarantee for a happy life in the Brahma world. As stated under the eighth type, in the above two categories, it is only by making the mind pliable and gentle through offering of alms and through development of concentration up to the absorption (*jhāna*) stage, by practising meditation on the four immeasurables: loving-kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), sympathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*) that one can gain rebirth in the Brahma world.

Again, in the Discourse on the Gifts of a Good Person (*Sappurisa-dāna-sutta*, AN 8.37) there is the following list of eight gifts (*dāna*) given by a moral person (*sappurisa-dāna*):

1. Giving of gifts which have been made clean, pure and attractive.

2. Giving of gifts of choice materials and of excellent quality.
3. Giving of gifts at proper and appropriate times.
4. Giving of gifts which are suitable for and acceptable to the recipient.
5. Giving of gifts, after making careful selection of the recipient and the objects to be offered.

   Excluding persons of immoral conduct, the selected recipients should be moral persons who follow the teachings of the Buddha. As to the materials to be offered, when possessing things of both good and bad quality, better quality materials should be selected for making a gift.

6. Giving of gifts according to one's ability in a consistent manner.
7. Giving of gifts with a pure, calm mind.
8. Giving of gifts and feeling glad after having done so.

A separate list of eight types of gifts made by persons of immoral conduct (*asappurisa-dāna*) is not given as such in the texts, but one could surmise that they would be as follows:

1. Giving of gifts which are unclean, impure and unattractive.
2. Giving of gifts of inferior quality.
3. Giving of gifts at improper and inappropriate times.
4. Giving of gifts which are unsuitable for the recipient.
5. Giving of gifts without making careful selection of the recipient and the objects to be offered.
6. Giving of gifts only occasionally although one is capable of doing so in a consistent manner.
7. Giving of gifts without calming the mind.
8. Giving of gifts feeling remorse after having done so.

Gifts by Groups of Nines

The Vinaya Summary (*Parivāra*) mentions the nine types of giving which were taught by the Buddha as not valid as a deed of offering (*adhammika-dāna*). The commentary on the text explains these nine types of gifts as follows: [1554]

Causing the gift which was intended by the supporter for a certain group of the Saṅgha:

1. To be given to another group of the Saṅgha.
2. To be given to a shrine.
3. To be given to an individual.

Causing the gift which was intended by the supporter for a certain shrine:

4. To be given to another shrine.
5. To be given to the Saṅgha.
6. To be given to an individual.

Causing the gift which was intended by the supporter for a certain individual:

7. To be given to another individual.
8. To be given to the Saṅgha.
9. To be given to a shrine.

Here the gift which has been intended by the supporter means the four requisites of robes, food, dwelling places and medicines and other small items of necessities which the supporter has already committed verbally to give to the Saṅgha, or to a shrine, or an individual.

The story of why the Buddha taught these nine types of unrighteous gifts is given in the Expulsion (*Pārājika*) and Confession (*Pācittiya*) texts of the Basket of Discipline (*Vinaya-piṭaka*).

At one time the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī. Then a certain group of people decided to make offerings of food and robes to the Saṅgha. Accordingly, they made the necessary preparations and had the robes and food ready for the offering. A group of immoral monastics went to the would-be supporters and forcibly urged them to make the offering of robes to them instead. Being thus forced to give away the robes to the immoral monastics, the people had only food left to offer to the Saṅgha. Hearing of this, the modest monastics denounced the immoral monastics and reported what had happened to the Buddha. It was then that the Buddha laid down the rule: “Whatever monastic should knowingly appropriate for himself the gift which

has been declared to be intended for the Saṅgha, there is an offence of expiation involving forfeiture (Vinaya Np 30)."

In the explanation that accompanies the rule, the Buddha explains: "If the gift that is already committed by word of mouth to be given to the Saṅgha is appropriated for oneself, there is the offence of expiation involving forfeiture (*nissaggiya-pācittiya-āpatti*); if it is caused to be given to the Saṅgha other than the intended one or to a shrine, there is an offence of wrong-doing (*dukkaṭa-āpatti*). Knowing the gift is intended for a certain shrine, if it is made to be given to another shrine or to the Saṅgha or to an individual, there is an offence of wrong-doing. Knowing the gift is intended to be given to a certain individual, if it is caused to be given to another individual, or to the Saṅgha, or to a shrine, there is an offence of wrong-doing.

The above story is given to illustrate how one's well-intentioned deeds of merit could become vitiated through intervention and interference of undesirable intermediaries and how, due to their intervention, it could be turned into an unrighteous gift (*adhammika-dāna*). The Buddha also explained the nine unrighteous acceptances (*adhammika-paṭiggaha*) of the nine unrighteous gifts and the nine righteous uses (*dhammika-paribhoga*) of righteously offered requisites.

It should be noted, however, that not every transfer of gifts from the recipient originally intended by the supporter to another results in an unrighteous gift. The supporter himself may change his original intention for some good reason or may be persuaded by a well-wisher to transfer the gift for acquiring more merit.

An illustration of such a transfer of gifts is found in the story of Mahā Pajāpatī who had made a new robe intending it to be offered to the Buddha. The Buddha advised her to offer the robe to the Saṅgha instead. If it were an offence, the Buddha would not have given the advice. As a matter of fact, the Buddha knew that Mahā Pajāpatī would gain much greater merit by offering the robe to the Saṅgha headed by himself. [1555]

In another instance, the Buddha persuaded King Pasenadi of Kosala to change his mind about permitting a monastery for ascetics of another faith to be built close by the Jetavana monastery. The king had been bribed by the ascetics into granting land to build their monastery. Foreseeing endless disputes that would

later arise, the Buddha first sent Ven. Ānanda and other monastics and later the two chief disciples, Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, to dissuade the king from taking the bribe and granting the land to the ascetics. The king gave some excuse to avoid seeing the great disciples. Consequently, the Buddha himself had to go to the king and told him the story of King Bharu, mentioned in the Birth Story about the King of Bharu (*Bharu-jātaka*, Ja 213), who, in a similar situation, had caused much suffering through taking bribes. Fully convinced of his wrong doing, King Pasenadi made amends by withdrawing the grant of land and appropriating the building materials gathered in it by the ascetics. The king then had a monastery built with those materials on the very site and donated it to the Buddha.

As stated above, there is no offence when a supporter changes his first intention for a good reason and makes the offer to another person. This has direct reference to one of the attributes of the noble Saṅgha (*Ariya-saṅgha*). If a supporter prepares gifts for monastics who would be visiting him, but then in the meantime, monastics who are well-established in the higher phenomena and who are members of the noble Saṅgha arrive, he may change his mind and offer the gifts to the newcomers to his better advantage. And they may also accept such gifts. They may also make use of the gifts so received. Being worthy of accepting such gifts originally intended for visitors is an attribute of the noble Saṅgha (*pāhuneyya*).

Gifts in Groups of Tens and Fourteens

As in the case of gifts in groups of fours, sixes, or sevens there is no direct mention of types of gifts in groups of tens in the texts. But the commentaries provide a list of ten material things which may be offered as gifts.

Likewise, the Discourse on the Analysis of Gifts (*Dakkhiṇā-vibhaṅga-sutta*, MN 142) gives a list of gifts (*dāna*) which come under the category of the fourteen kinds of gifts by individuals.[417]

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[417] See item 19 of the types of alms giving (*dāna*) in the groups of twos above.

5-6. What Strengthens and Weakens the Beneficial Results

The Discourse on the Gifts with Six Factors (*Chaḷaṅga-dāna-sutta*, AN 6.37) explains the elements that strengthen the beneficial results of gifts and those that weaken them.

At one time, the Buddha was residing at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī. At that time, he saw, by his supernormal psychic power of divine sight, that a certain female follower of his teaching by the name of Nandamātā was making an offering to the two chief disciples and the Saṅgha, in the distant town of Velukantakī.

He said to the monastics: "Monastics, Nandamātā of Velukantakī is right now making a great offering to the Saṅgha headed by Sāriputta and Moggallāna. Her offering has the distinguished feature of the supporter possessing three special qualities of volitional purity: feeling happy before the act of offering; having a clear, pure mind while making the offering; and rejoicing after having made the offering, and of the recipients possessing three special qualities of mental purity: being free of attachment (*rāga*) or practising to be liberated from it; being free of ill-will (*dosa*) or practising to be liberated from it; being free of delusion (*moha*) or practising to be liberated from it.

Monastics, just as the water in the ocean is immeasurable, the benefit that will accrue from an offering distinguished by those six features is also immeasurable. [1556] You speak of the water in the ocean as an immeasurably huge mass of water, likewise you speak of such an offering, which is unique with these six features, as one that will bring an immeasurably huge accumulation of merit."

According to this text, it may be seen that the three qualities possessed by the supporter and the three qualities possessed by the recipients form the elements that strengthen the beneficial results of gifts. It follows from it that, to the extent that the supporter and the recipients are lacking in their respective qualities, to that extent will the act of giving (*dāna*) falls short of the full possible beneficial results.

Again, in the ninth birth story of the Long Birth Story about Dhammapāla (*Mahā-Dhammapāla-jātaka*, Ja 447), it is mentioned that King Suddhodana was a Brahmin in a past life. The great teacher of Takkasilā, to whom he had

entrusted his son for education, asked him why members of his clan did not die young but lived to a ripe old age. He replied in verse:

> *Pubbeva dānā sumanā bhavāma,*
> *dadam-pi ve attamanā bhavāma,*
> *datvā pi ve nānutappāma pacchā,*
> *tasmā hi amhaṁ daharā na mīyare.*
>
> We feel very happy before we make an offering, we are delighted and satisfied while making the offering, and we rejoice after having made the offering, never feeling remorseful. For these three reasons, people never die young in our clan.

From this story, one can surmise that when an offering is made with fulfilment of these three volitional conditions, the benefit that accrues from it is enjoyment of long life in the present existence.

Again, in the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) and the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) commentary are mentioned four conditions that bring beneficial results in the present life from an act of offering:

1. The materials to be offered as gifts have been acquired legitimately and equitably (*paccayānaṁ dhammikatā*).
2. They are given with faith and confidence and with fulfilment of three volitional conditions (*cetanā-mahattā*).
3. The recipient is one of high attainment, an Arahat or a Non-returner (*vatthu-sampatti*).
4. The recipient has just arisen from the attainment of cessation (*guṇātirekatā*).

Offerings of this kind, which bring beneficial results in the present life, were made by people such as Puṇṇa, Kākavaliya and the flower girl Sumanā, who reaped great benefits from their gifts which met these four conditions completely.

In the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA), these four conditions for a gift are termed "the four purities of gifts (*dakkhiṇā-visuddhi*);" in the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) commentary, they are called "the four accomplishments (*sampadā*)."

Again, there is a list of four kinds of purity (*dakkhiṇā-visuddhi*) connected with an act of giving (*dāna*) in the Discourse on the Analysis of Gifts (*Dakkhiṇā-vibhaṅga-sutta*, MN 142). They are:

1. A gift made pure by the supporter but not by the recipient.

   Even if the recipient is of no moral virtue (*dussīla*), if the supporter is virtuous and makes an offering of what has been acquired legitimately and equitably, with pure and good volition before, during and after giving the gift and does it with full faith in the law of cause and effect, then the gift is pure because of the supporter and will bring great benefit.

2. A gift made pure by the recipient but not by the supporter.

   Even if the supporter is of no moral virtue and makes an offering of what has been acquired illegitimately and unequitably, and does not have pure, good volition before, during and after giving the gift, and is without faith in the law of cause and effect, if the recipient is morally [1557] virtuous, then the gift is pure because of the recipient and will bring great benefits.

3. A gift not made pure either by the supporter or the recipient.

   When the supporter of no moral virtue makes an offering of ill-gotten wealth to an immoral recipient with no pure, good volition before, during and after the act of offering and without faith in the law of cause and effect, the gift will bring no great beneficial result, just as a poor seed planted on poor soil will not grow properly to produce good crops.

4. A gift made pure both by the supporter and the recipient.

   When the supporter of moral virtue makes an offering of what has been acquired legitimately and equitably, with pure and good volition before, during and after the act of offering to a morally virtuous recipient, the gift will bring great beneficial result, just as a good seed planted in good soil produces good crops.

The third type, of course, is not concerned with purity at all, but it is mentioned to include all the cases involved. To summarise all that we have considered, there are five elements that strengthen the beneficial results of gifts:

1. The supporter observes the precepts and is of good moral conduct.
2. The recipient is also morally virtuous.
3. The materials offered have been acquired justly and rightly.

4. The offering is made with happiness before, with pure satisfaction and delight during, and with rejoicing after having made the offer.

5. The supporter has complete faith in the law of cause and effect.

These five elements should accompany the gift so that it will be of greatest purity and benefit; to the extent they are lacking when offerings are made, to that extent will the gift be deficient in beneficial results.

Some Remarks on Faith

It is important to understand clearly the complete meaning of the fifth element: "faith in the law of cause and effect." Here, faith is the rendering of the Pāḷi word *saddhā*. Grammatically, it would mean "that which holds and keeps well."

Just as clear water in which all sediment and impurities have settled down to the bottom can hold the image of the moon and of the sun and keep it well, so also faith, which is devoid of mental defilements, can firmly hold the virtues and attributes of the Buddha to serve as an object for contemplation.

To give another illustration: If a man is not equipped with hands, he would not be able to help himself to jewels lying around him although he sees them. If he does not possess wealth, he would not be able to provide himself with a variety of goods and materials.

Without seeds, there would be neither crops nor grains. Similarly, without faith, we cannot acquire the jewels of generosity, morality and the development of concentration and insight, and there can be no enjoyment of the pleasures of the human or Deva realm or the bliss of Nibbāna. Hence, the Buddha in his teaching compared faith to possessing hands, wealth or seeds.

In the Questions of King Milinda (*Milinda-pañha*) and Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) commentary, faith is compared to the crown jewel, the ruby, of a Universal Monarch, which has the property of instantly purifying and clearing the water into which it is put, no matter how dirty the water is. In a similar manner, faith dispels instantly all that is defiling the mind and makes it pure and clear at once. If the mind is filled with faith, there is no room in it for defilements, such as grief, worry, etc.

How difficult it is to keep the mind steadfastly contemplating the attributes of the Buddha is within the experience of all good Buddhists. In other words, it is

not a simple matter to keep the mind only filled with faith, devoid of all defilements. But with practice, one can maintain a pure, clear mind through faith for short periods until, with steadfast effort, one can do so continuously for long periods. [1558]

As regards having faith in the law of cause and effect mentioned above, we should reflect thus: "I will have spent a certain amount of my wealth by offering this gift (*dāna*), but it will not be spent in vain. Through this act of giving (*dāna*) I will have developed volitions which are much more precious than the wealth I will have spent. My wealth is liable to be destroyed by the five kinds of enemies, but this mental volition is indestructible and will follow me through the rounds of existence till I attain Nibbāna. Ability to keep the mind clear and pure in this manner is having faith in the law of cause and effect, the mental volition."

And considering the results that would accrue from the mental action, we will come to a very clear, definite conclusion: "Because of this mental volition, I will reap beneficial results throughout the rounds of existence, there is no doubt about it." Reflecting thus and experiencing the exhilarating purity of the mind is having faith in the law of cause and effect.

Thus, it is important to develop faith, through reflecting on the law of cause and effect, which is conducive to purity of mind, for it is the fifth element that strengthens the beneficial results of giving (*dāna*).

2. The Perfection of Morality

The author gives here an elaborate description of the animal *cāmarī*, which we have translated as a "yak." He quotes various authorities to dispel the notion of many people that the *cāmarī* is a kind of winged animal. Far from it, the author says based upon the authority of Abhayārāma Sayādaw of Mandalay and Taung Pa Auk Sayādaw of Mawlamyine that it is a yak, a Tibetan beast of burden, useful also for its milk and flesh. The fan made of its tail is one of the emblems of royalty.

Wishing to prevent damage, the yak will sacrifice its life rather then make any effort to release itself when even a single hair of its tail happens to be caught in the branches of a bush. Sumedha admonished himself to take the example set by a yak and preserve the purity of morality even at the risk of his life.

Miscellaneous Notes on Different Aspects of Morality

As with the perfection of giving (*dāna*), these notes are given in the form of answers to the following questions, quoting the authority of the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*):

1. What is morality?
2. Why is it called morality?
3. What are the characteristics, functions, manifestations, and proximate cause of morality?
4. What are the benefits of morality?
5. How many types of morality are there?
6. What are the defiling factors of morality?
7. What are the purifying factors of morality?

1. What is Morality?

Morality [1559] may be conveniently studied as follows:

1. Volition that accompanies one when abstaining from wrong physical or verbal actions or when performing duties towards one's elders or teachers, etc.
2. The three mental factors of abstention from wrong action, wrong speech and wrong livelihood.
3. The three right mental actions of non-covetousnes (*anabhijjhā*), non-ill-will (*abyāpāda*) and right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*).
4. The five restraints (*saṁvara*).
5. The mental factor which arises when avoiding transgressions: Morality of volition (*cetanā-sīla*), and morality of abstinence (*virati-sīla*).

The three wrong physical actions are taking the life of other beings, taking what is not given and sexual misconduct. The four wrong verbal actions are telling lies, gossiping or backbiting, using harsh, abusive words and indulgence in vain, frivolous talks. These two categories of wrong actions may be committed in association with earning a livelihood, like that of a fisherman or a hunter, or may not be associated with earning a livelihood, like game hunting for sport.

Likewise, abstaining from these two categories of wrong actions may or may not be associated with earning a livelihood. Abstaining from three wrong physical actions, when not associated with earning a livelihood, is known as abstention through right action (*sammā-kammanta-virati*); abstaining from the four wrong verbal actions, when not associated with earning a livelihood, is known as abstention through right speech (*sammā-vāca-virati*); abstaining from these two categories of wrong actions, when associated with earning a livelihood, and from various kinds of wrong livelihood, especially those kinds which monastics are enjoined against, is known as abstention through right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva-virati*).

The three mental factors of abstention mentioned above are known as the morality of abstention (*virati-sīla*), and the mental factor of volition that accompanies them is known as the morality of volition (*cetanā-sīla*). The volition that arises when performing deeds of great merit of attending upon one's teacher is also known as the morality of volition (*cetanā-sīla*).

The greed that prompts one to covet others' property, harbouring the thought: "It would be good if these were mine," is known as the wrong mental action of covetousness (*abhijjhā-mano-duccarita*). When one dispels such thoughts, there arise in one the mental factors of dispelling the volition (*cetanā*) of greedlessness (*alobha*) or non-covetousness (*anabhijjhā*). These mental factors are called morality.

Wishing harm to someone, there arises in a person the mental factor of hatred, which is known as the wrong mental action of ill-will (*byāpāda-mano-duccarita*). When one dispels such thoughts of ill-will, there arise in him the mental factors of dispelling volition and hatelessness (*adosa* or *abyāpāda*). These mental factors are called morality.

When someone holds that there is no such thing as generosity (*dāna*) and that there are no beneficial results accruing from it, he holds a wrong view which is called the wrong mental action of wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi-mano-duccarita*). When he dispels such beliefs, there arises in him the dispelling volition and non-delusion (*amoha*) or right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*). These mental factors are called morality.

When three wrong mental actions: greed (*abhijjhā*), ill-will (*byāpāda*) and wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) are present, a person is liable to commit

demeritorious deeds such as killing, etc. which ruin one's morality. When volition and the three right mental actions arise in one, it is impossible to commit deeds, such as killing, which are ruinous to one's morality. Therefore, the three right mental actions of non-greed (*anabhijjhā*), non ill-will (*abyāpāda*) and right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*) are called morality.

When consciousness arises, it is always accompanied by volition. That volition is [1560] responsible for prompting the mind to take notice of an object; it serves as a link between the mind and an object. Without its prompting, there would be no mind-object linkage; the mind will not rest on the object; it will not be aware of the object. It is only through the services of volition that a mind-object linkage is possible at all. Thus, every volition that accompanies consciousness and arises with each moral act is called morality.

There is the morality of restraint (*saṁvara-sīla*) and the morality of avoiding transgression (*avitikkama-sīla*). The kinds of morality, as described, apply to laymen and monastics equally. But there are other forms of morality which are concerned with monastics only, that is, the morality of restraint (*saṁvara-sīla*) and the morality of avoiding transgressions (*avitikkama-sīla*). The morality of restraints (*saṁvara-sīla*):

1. Restraint through following the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara*), observance of which liberates one from the dangers of rebirths in the realms of misery and continuous suffering.
2. Restraint through mindfulness (*sati-saṁvara*), which means keeping close guard over the doors of the six senses: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind, so that the "thief of demeritoriousness" cannot gain entry.
3. Restraint through knowledge (*ñāṇa-saṁvara*), which means control of the mind with insight, so that the current of the mental defilements of craving, wrong view and ignorance, which normally flow incessantly, stops flowing. Under this type is also included exercise of proper care over the use of requisites (*paccaya-nissita-sīla*).
4. Restraint through forbearance (*khanti-saṁvara*), which means controlling the mind, so that no defiling thoughts disturb it when enduring extreme heat or cold.

5. Restraint through development of energy (*viriya-saṁvara*), which means strenuous mental exertion, to prevent the arising of demeritorious thoughts, such as sensuous thoughts (*kāma-vitakka*), thoughts of ill-will (*byāpāda-vitakka*), thoughts of cruelty (*vihiṁsā-vitakka*). Purification of livelihood (*ājīva-pārisuddhi-sīla*) is also included under this type.

The morality of avoiding transgression (*avitikkama-sīla*) is the morality cultivated through avoidance of physical and verbal transgression of precepts which one has undertaken to observe.

From the above descriptions of five kinds of morality of restraints (*saṁvara-sīla*) and avoiding transgression (*avitikkama-sīla*), it could be inferred that, in essence, restraint through following the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara-sīla*) means a group of mental factors (*cetasika*) including volition and the three abstentions of non-greed (*alobha*), non-hate (*adosa*) and non-delusion (*amoha*). Restraint through mindfulness (*sati-saṁvara*) means the mental factor of mindfulness (*sati*), which is also accompanied by volition. Restraint through knowledge (*ñāṇa-saṁvara*) means the mental factor of wisdom, which is also accompanied by volition. Restraint through forbearance (*khanti-saṁvara*) means a group of moral consciousnesses and mental factors headed by non-hate, which has the characteristic of not losing one's temper, in other words, the mental factor of non-hate. Restraint through development of energy (*viriya-saṁvara*) means the mental factor of energy, which is also accompanied by volition.

As for avoiding transgression (*avitikkama-sīla*), in the ultimate sense, it is a group of moral consciousnesses and mental factors which lead one to avoid transgression of precepts which one is observing. In the case of generosity (*dāna*), volition forms its basis. For morality too, volition serves as a main factor, but in addition to it, the group of moral consciousnesses and mental factors led by the three abstentions, the three mental factors of non-greed, non-hate, non-delusion and the three mental factors of mindfulness, wisdom, energy also play their respective roles.

2. Why is it called Morality?

The Pāḷi word *sīla* is translated as "morality" or "virtue." *Sīla* has two meanings: first, it is employed to convey the sense of [1561] natural character, behaviour or

habit. We find it used in this sense in such expression as *pāpa-karaṇa-sīla*, "one who is in the habit of doing evil;" *dubbhāsana-sīla*, "one who is in the habit of speaking evil;" *abhivādana-sīla*, "one who is in the habit of showing reverence to those worthy of homage;" *Dhamma-kathana-sīla*, "one who is in the habit of teaching the Dhamma." It is also employed to describe natural phenomena: *vassāna-samaye rukkha-rūhana-sīlā*, "trees usually grow during the rainy season;" *gimhāna-samaye patta-patana-sīlā*, "leaves usually fall in summer." In this first sense, *sīla* is employed to describe the habits of both moral and immoral persons, and also natural events which are outside the domain of morality, good or bad.

Secondly, it has the meaning of a good practice which implies only that practice which is noble, moral and ethical. This is the sense employed in this chapter on the Perfection of Morality. And in this sense also, there are two meanings: orientating and upholding.

1. Orientating means controlling one's physical and verbal actions and steering them towards the right direction so that they do not get out of hand. In a person who does not observe the precepts, physical and verbal actions take place in a haphazard manner, like loose yarn, not properly wound in a roll, which is uncontrolled and undirected. But a person who observes the precepts watches closely over his physical and verbal actions to see that they take place in an orderly manner under his proper control. Even a person of ill-humour, who is easily irritated and loses temper at the slightest provocation, can manage to keep his physical and verbal actions under control when he is observing the precepts.

2. Upholding because no act of merit can be accomplished without accompaniment of moral virtue. Meritorious acts can arise only in persons of morality; thus morality (*sīla*) serves as the basis or foundation of all deeds of meritoriousness; it facilitates the arising of meritoriousness through performance of meritorious deeds that would lead to rebirth in the four planes of existence (*catu-bhūmaka*), that is, the sensuous world, the fine material world, the non-material world and the supermundane states.

In this chapter on the Perfection of Morality, it is mentioned that the recluse Sumedha, having received the definite prophecy that he would become a Perfectly Self-Awakened One, admonished himself to establish first the perfection of generosity. But this does not imply that he should practise generosity first without observance of precepts. In his investigation of the Buddha-making factors, by the exercise of perfection investigating wisdom (*pāramī-pavicaya-ñāṇa*), it was the perfection of generosity that appeared first in his mind's eye, followed, in succession, by perfection of morality, perfection of renunciation, etc. The order of the perfections given in the text is the order in which they appeared in the mind's eye of recluse Sumedha. It was not possible for him to discern all the ten perfections (*pāramī*) simultaneously; they were investigated one after another and were mentioned accordingly. The first perfection reviewed happened to be the perfection of generosity; hence it heads the list of the perfections (*pāramī*), but this does not mean that the order in the list is the order in which the perfections are to be fulfilled.

In actual practice, an act of giving is pure only when the supporter is established in morality; generosity is made more fruitful when it is preceded by an observance of precepts. That is the reason why, when they are invited by lay people to accept robes and other gifts, the monastics see to it that the lay people are first established in the precepts, even though taking of precepts is not mentioned when making the invitation.

Thus, to the question: "Why is it called morality (*sīla*)?" the plain, clear-cut answer is: It is called morality because it does not permit physical and verbal actions to take place in a violent, disorderly manner; it controls and directs them so they are quiet and gentle; and it serves as a foundation for the arising, by stages, of the four classes of moral consciousness: the moral consciousnesses pertaining to the sensuous world, the form world, the formless world and the supermundane [1562] consciousness. Out of these discussions may arise the following questions:

1. If both morality (*sīla*) and concentration (*samādhi*) are orientating, how do they differ in their functions? Morality promotes calm and peace by keeping physical and verbal actions under proper control, whereas concentration prevents the mind and mental factors that are associated with it from distraction by directing them to converge on a single object.

In this manner, morality differs from concentration in its function of orientating.

2. If both morality and the element of solidity (*pathavī*) are upholding, what is the difference in their functions? Morality is the fundamental cause of the arising of the four classes of moral consciousness, hence it is said to serve as the foundation for the arising of the moral consciousnesses pertaining to the sensuous world, the material world, to the immaterial world and the supermundane consciousness.

Just as a royal wet-nurse holds the infant prince in her arms to keep him from crawling all over the royal chamber, so also does the element of solidity hold together other elements that arise along with it, preventing them from dispersing and scattering in all directions. In this manner, morality and the element of solidity differ in their respective functions of upholding and facilitating.[418]

> The Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) mentions only two grammatical meanings as explained above. But there are different views expressed by other teachers. According to them, the Pāḷi word *sīla* meaning morality is derived from the words *sira* or *sīsa* both meaning "head." When the head is cut off, the whole body of a being is destroyed; so also when morality is ruined, all forms of meritoriousness come to ruins. Thus morality is like the head of the body of meritoriousness and is termed *sīla*, a derivative of *sira* or *sīsa* by replacing the letter "r" or "s" with "l."
>
> But the author opines that this alternative view is far-fetched since it draws only upon the similarity of the sounds produced by uttering the words *sira*, *sīsa* and *sīla* and does not deal with the intrinsic meaning of the word *sīla* as defined in the Light on the Dictionary (*Abhidhānappadīpikā*, vs 1092).
>
> He concludes that morality is called *sīla* because, according to the the Light on the Dictionary, it conveys two meanings: Natural characteristic and good practice.

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[418] See the sub-commentary on the Path to Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*), in the Chapter on Morality.

Although natural characteristics refer to both good and bad ones, as explained above, since we are dealing with the habit and practices of ancient sages or of Bodhisattas, Arahats, etc., we should take it that morality (*sīla*) refers only to good aspects. For instance, although Dhamma may be meritorious or demeritorious when we say: "I take refuge in the Dhamma," the Dhamma here can only be the meritorious Dhamma. So also, although Saṅgha means "a group," "an assemblage" in such words as *manussa-saṅgha*, "a group of people," *sakuṇa-saṅgha*, "a flock of birds," when we say: "I take refuge in the Saṅgha," it implies only the Saṅgha of monastics.

Considered in this manner, *sīla* should also be taken in the sense of the Light on the Dictionary (*Abhidhānappadīpikā*) definition of "natural characteristic." Thus, it should be stated that it is called morality because it is the natural characteristic of ancient sages, Bodhisattas, Arahats, etc.

3. What are its Characteristic, Function, etc.?

Morality has the characteristic of controlling one's physical and verbal actions and orientating them towards the right direction; it also serves as a basis or foundation of all meritoriousness.

Its function is to prevent one from becoming immoral through uncontrolled physical and verbal actions. It helps one to remain spotless in conduct, free from blame by the wise.

Morality is manifested as purity in thought, word and deed. When the wise reflect on the nature of morality, they come to realise that it is purity of physical action, purity of [1563] verbal action and purity of mental action.

The proximate cause for the arising of morality is conscience about doing an immoral act (*hiri*) and concern about doing an immoral act (*ottappa*). Although listening to the Dhamma promotes the arising of morality, it serves only as a remote cause. It is only through conscience and concern that the precepts are observed.

4. What are the Benefits of Morality?

A man of virtuous conduct enjoys many benefits such as a gladdening of the heart, which leads to joy and happiness (*pāmojja*). This in turn results in delightful satisfaction (*pīti*). In one who enjoys delightful satisfaction, there

arises calmness of mind and body (*passaddhi*), followed by bliss (*sukha*). The tranquil state of mind and body brings about the development of concentration (*samādhi*), which enables one to see things as they really are (*yathā-bhūta-ñāṇa*). When one gains this knowledge of things as they really are, one gets wearied of, and detached from, the ills and suffering of the cycle of rebirths. In him arises powerful insight into reality (*balava-vipassanā-ñāṇa*). With this insight, he becomes detached from craving and achieves the knowledge of the path, which leads to full liberation (*vimutti*) through the knowledge of fruition. After gaining the paths and fruitions knowledge, he develops reflective knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*), which enables him to see that the cessation of phenomena of the aggregates of mind (*nāma*) and matter (*rūpa*) has taken place in him. In other words, he has realised perfect peace, Nibbāna. Thus morality has many benefits, including the realisation of Nibbāna.

In several discourses (DN 16, AN 4.22), etc., the Buddha mentions the following five benefits gained by one who observes the precepts and who is established in morality:

1. Based on mindfulness through morality, he acquires great wealth.
2. He gains fame and good reputation.
3. He approaches and enters any assembly of nobles, Brahmins, householders or recluses with complete self-assurance born of his morality, without any indication of an inferiority complex.
4. He lives the full span of life and dies unconfused.

   An immoral person repents on his death bed that he has not done meritorious deeds throughout his life; a man of moral habits never suffers from any remorse when death approaches him; instead, memories of good deeds previously performed by him flash past his mind's eye making him fearless, mentally lucid, unconfused to face death even as someone who is about to acquire a golden pot gladly abandons an earthen pot.

5. He is reborn after that in the happy realms of Devas and human beings.

In the Discourse about how One might Wish (*Ākaṅkheyya-sutta*, MN 6), the Buddha enumerates 13 benefits which come from practising morality; such benefits range from reverence and respect shown by fellow followers of the teaching to becoming an Arahat, that is, attainment of Awakening.

5. How Many Types of Morality are There?

Morality in Groups of Twos:

1. There are precepts involving a performance of certain actions (*cāritta*); and precepts of abstention (*vāritta*). Of these two kinds, the precept laid down by the Buddha saying: "This should be done," is morality that should be done (*cāritta-sīla*). For example, performance of duties towards a preceptor (*upajjhāya-vatta*) or duties towards a teacher (*ācariya-vatta*) is fulfilment of morality that should be done through practice.

Not doing what is prohibited by the Buddha, saying: "This should not be done," is fulfilment of morality that should not be done (*vāritta-sīla*). For example, observance of the Exclusion (*Pārājika*) Vinaya rules, which [1564] prohibit monastics from indulgence in sexual intercourse, stealing, killing and falsely claiming attainments to the paths (*magga*) and fruitions (*phala*), is observance of morality that should not be done through avoidance.

Some people casually misinterpret these disciplinary rules, saying that morality that should be done is the precept which would lead to no offence if it is not fulfilled, but its observance contributes to purifying one's morality. In interpreting thus, they make no distinction between monastics and laymen.

Actually, the Buddha has laid down definite disciplinary rules concerning duties to be performed by a pupil towards his preceptor or teacher. Any co-resident pupil who fails to abide by these rules not only fails to fulfil the morality that should be done but is also guilty of breaking the disciplinary rules concerning the performance of duties (*vatta-bhedaka-dukkaṭa-āpatti*).

Thus, for monastics, it cannot be said that non-fulfilment of morality that should be done would lead to no offence; for them, morality that should be done is a mandatory observance of the precepts laid down by the Buddha.

As for the lay person, it may be said that avoidance of wrong deeds, which would definitely give rise to rebirths in lower planes of existence, falls under the category of morality that should be done. On the other hand, abstinence from wrong deeds, morality that should not be done (*vāritta-sīla*), showing reverence to the aged, which may or may not result in such rebirths, should be classified as morality that should be done (*cāritta-sīla*).

For example, there are five precepts to be observed by laymen: abstinence from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and taking intoxicants. Indulgence in these deeds, instead of avoiding them, leads definitely to lower planes of existence. Therefore, abstaining from these five wrong deeds which will certainly result in such rebirths constitutes morality that should not be done.

A lay person can also observe the eight precepts which are the avoidance of killing, stealing, lying and taking intoxicants – these four precepts, falling under the category of morality that should not be done – and the additional four precepts of total sexual abstinence, abstaining from eating in the afternoon, abstaining from dancing, singing, playing music and entertainments, and abstaining from using high and luxurious beds.

Actions included in these four additional precepts do not necessarily lead to the lower planes of existence. Noble lay persons, such as Stream-enterers (*Sotāpanna*) and Once-returners (*Sakadāgāmī*), enjoy lawful sexual relations with their own spouses, eat in the afternoon, dance, sing, etc. and sleep on high and luxurious beds. But, since they do so with mind unassociated with wrong view (*diṭṭhi-vippayutta-citta*), their actions will not result in rebirths in the lower planes of existence.

But an ordinary worldling may do these acts with minds either associated with wrong view (*diṭṭhi-sampayutta*) or unassociated with wrong view (*diṭṭhi-vippayutta*). These actions may or may not lead to rebirths in the lower plane of existence. Therefore, the four precepts: total sexual abstinence, abstaining from eating in the afternoon, abstaining from dancing, singing, playing music, etc., and abstaining from using high and luxurious beds should be called morality that should be done.

When a person who has taken refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Saṅgha, observes the five precepts with meticulous care, he would be a lay disciple (*upāsaka*) of the Buddha. If he makes further efforts to observe the eight precepts, it is for the purpose of practising the holy life at a higher level of endeavour. But the Buddha has not said that the observance of the eight precepts will save one from the lower destinations. Observance of the five precepts alone is not enough to secure safety from the danger of falling into the lower planes of existence.

In this sense, therefore, the four additional observances included in the eight precepts should be considered to belong to the category of morality that should be done. For monastics, however, the Buddha has strictly forbidden them from indulging in these four acts; hence for monastics, avoidance of these acts constitutes definitely morality that should not be done.

Morality to be Done and not Done

A cursory reading of the above distinction between morality that should be done (*cāritta-sīla*) and morality that should not be done (*vāritta-sīla*) or a superficial consideration of the fact of indulgence by noble disciples such as Visākhā in [1565] lawful sexual relations, eating in the afternoon, dancing, singing, playing music, etc., and, in using high and luxurious beds, could lead one to wrong conceptions. One could easily take the wrong view that all such deeds are faultless, blameless, and, therefore, one is then liable to indulge in them more and more with the accompaniment of wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*). It is most important that one should not fall into such errors of conception.

By killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and taking intoxicants, doing demeritorious wrong deeds, one is invariably led to the lower planes of existence. There is no escape from their ill consequences. That is why noble persons (*ariya*) will never do such deeds, even if they are under the threat of death to do so. They will willingly give up their lives rather than acquiesce to do such deeds because they have uprooted, through path (*magga*) insight, all traces of a latent tendency (*anusaya*) to do demeritorious deeds. Just because nobles (*ariya*), such as Stream-enterers, Once-returners and Non-returners, indulge in taking food in the afternoon, etc. just as ordinary persons do, it is not correct to say that they do so with identical mental attitudes in their various deeds. The noble ones (*ariya*) do not look upon objects of sense pleasure in the same way an ordinary worldling does; their manner of indulgence in sense pleasure is also different from that of worldlings.

The commentary to the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) says that the noble ones' attitude towards pleasurable sense objects is like that of a clean Brahmin, who, pursued by an elephant in rut, seeks refuge with loathing and much reluctance in a dumping ground of excreta. When oppressed by craving for sensual pleasures, the defilement that has not been eradicated by the knowledge of the path, the Stream-enterer or the Once-

returner deals with objects of sensual pleasures with a mind unassociated with wrong view, just to pacify and subdue the burning heat of the defilement.

This exposition deserves careful consideration. Citing the example of a noble (*ariya*) person such as Visākhā, the worldling is liable to say wrongly that the noble ones indulge in sense-pleasures exactly in the same way as he does. As pointed out in the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) commentary, the noble ones enjoy sense pleasures, with mind unassociated with wrong view, just to calm the burning desire, which is the defilement they have not yet destroyed with the knowledge of the path, whereas the worldling indulges in sense pleasures generally with mind associated with wrong view.

To summarise, one may have a sexual relationship with one's spouse, take meals in the afternoon, dance, sing, play music and use high and luxurious beds, etc. with mind associated with wrong view resulting in rebirths in the lower planes of existence or with mind unassociated with wrong view, not resulting in rebirth in the lower planes of existence. Therefore, abstinence from these four actions which may not lead to the lower planes of existence should be classed as morality that should be done and not as morality that should not be done.

The division of the eight precepts into four moralities that should be done (*cāritta-sīla*) and four four moralities that should not be done (*vāritta-sīla*) is tenable only when the vow of abstinence is made, separately for each individual precept as is current now. Should the vow be taken for the whole group of the eight precepts, saying: "I observe the eight precepts," it would simply be an observance of morality that should be done (*cāritta-sīla*) because the eight precepts constitute a code of morality which one may or may not observe.

As for the five precepts, whether the vow is taken for the five precepts as a whole or as separate individual precepts, its observance is definitely the practice of morality that should not be done (*vāritta-sīla*).

> A more detailed treatment of what should not be done (*vāritta-sīla*) and what should be done (*cāritta-sīla*) is given below.

Of the two categories of morality (*sīla*), observance of morality that should be done (*cāritta-sīla*) can be accomplished only when one is endowed with faith and energy. Faith is believing that good results will follow the good deeds of practising morality, and energy means the relentless effort with which one observes the precepts in keeping with his faith.

No special effort is needed to become accomplished in the observance of morality that should not be done (*vāritta-sīla*). It requires only faith. Mere refraining through faith from doing deeds which the Buddha has taught are demeritorious is sufficient for the fulfilment of morality that should not be done.

2. The group of moral practices (*abhisamācārika-sīla*) which promotes good conduct and [1566] which includes all forms of virtuous deeds other than those classed as a set of eight precepts with right livelihood as the eighth (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*). All forms of moral practices which are taught for the fulfilment of the paths and the fruitions come under this classification.

Eight Precepts including the Practice of Right Livelihood

Since it forms the beginning of the life of purity consisting in the path, the set of eight precepts including the practice of right livelihood (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*) is also termed morality which forms the beginning of the life of purity (*ādi-brahma-cariyaka-sīla*).

Precepts with right livelihood as the eighth (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*) include three moral physical actions: abstaining from killing, stealing and indulging in wrongful sexual intercourse; four moral verbal actions: abstaining from lying, malicious speech, using harsh, abusive words and frivolous talk; and, finally, abstaining from wrong livelihood.

The Path to Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) states that the set of eight precepts including right livelihood (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*) may also be termed morality which forms the beginning of the life of purity (*ādi-brahma-cariyaka-sīla*) as it includes precepts which are to be fulfilled in the initial stage of developing the noble path.

This commentary statement is likely to be misinterpreted by some as to mean that only the eight precepts including right livelihood (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*) are the precepts which should be observed first for the attainment of the path. There have even appeared some groups which maintained that the five precepts, the eight precepts and the ten precepts, which are generally observed at present, are not the initial precepts which should be observed for the attainment of the path.

On the other hand, there are some people who say that they have not even heard of this strange code of morality called the eight precepts including right

livelihood (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*); it could not have been taught by the Buddha; it may be a later accretion of no particular worth.

As a matter of fact, the eight precepts including right livelihood is certainly a precept taught by the Buddha himself. The Path to Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) quotes the Great Discourse on the Six Sense Spheres (*Mahā-saḷāyatanika-sutta*, MN 149): *Tenāha pubbeva kho panassa kāya-kammaṁ vacī-kammaṁ ājīvo suparisuddho hotī ti*, "therefore it was said their actions of body, speech and livelihood have been properly purified earlier," to show that the Buddha taught the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth.

The Buddha made his appearance in the world at a time when it was enveloped in the dark mass of evil forces. People were depraved, bereft of morality, steeped as they were in evil thoughts, words and deeds. When the Buddha wanted to inculcate in those wild, debased beings a sense of gentle civility through the practice of morality, he had to select a moral code from amongst various sets of precepts which would best suit their coarse minds. He thus taught them at the initial stages the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth. When the grosser forms of evil had been removed from the habits of the untamed beings by teaching them the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth, the Buddha no longer made use of it; instead he taught the five precepts and the eight precepts in his further civilizing endeavours.

Having thus been set aside by the Buddha when a certain stage of moral purification has been reached by the people, successive teachers from the time of the Buddha till the present time have not given much attention to the eight precepts including right livelihood; lay people also have not made a special effort to observe it because the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth was originally meant for people of debased morality only.

A question arises here: Since the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth forms the initial practice for the path, and since it had been used at the time when the Buddha first appeared, would it not be even more suitable to observe it at the present time?

The term "initial practice for the path" is applicable only when the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth is observed by those who have no code of morality whatsoever at the start to serve as the precepts for the path. Those who have only recently given up wrong views and begun to embrace the

Buddha's teaching should no doubt start to purify themselves by observing this set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth but when they have become well established in the Buddhist practice after being well trained in morality (*sīla*), it should no longer be [1567] termed "the initial practice for the path."

Even children of Buddhist parents have been taught to understand the dire consequences of gross misdeeds such as taking the life of sentient beings, and they refrain from doing so. Accordingly, when they grow up and begin to observe precepts, there is no need for them to keep the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth. They should gradually advance in their training from the five precepts to the eight precepts and onto the ten precepts.

In other words, observance of the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth is the necessary step which those steeped in immorality should take to rid themselves of debased habits; but for those who have been well brought up under the guidance of Buddhist parents, it is clear that they already possess a modicum of moral conduct. Therefore, there is no special need for them to observe the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth. What has been said above applies to the present time when the Buddha's teaching is widely extant.

Although brought up in a Buddhist environment and taught to refrain from gross misdeeds, if one judges oneself to be deficient in moral conduct and to have committed all kinds of grave transgressions, one has no alternative but to start with the initial purification process of observing the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*) for the practice of the noble path.

Those inclined to follow the line of least resistance are likely to find this set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth attractive if someone points out that in observing this morality (*sīla*), one does not have to refrain from indulging in intoxicating drinks and drugs, one does not have to refrain from dancing, singing, enjoying shows, that it is easily observed, being free from difficult restraints and that it serves as the basis for the attainment of the paths and the fruitions.

It is a weakness of human nature to look for easy means of acquiring wealth. People forget or ignore the fact that even with hard labour and diligent work it is not always possible to have one's dream of riches fulfilled. Many of them have

become a prey to fraudulent villains who claim to possess magical secrets of multiplying one's wealth. By seeking an easy way of becoming rich, people have fallen a victim to their own avarice.

Just as there are deceivers in worldly affairs, there are also frauds in religious matters, especially concerning the attainment of the paths and fruitions which is, of course, not easy at all to come by. Many are those who, inclining to seek shortcuts, have followed to their great loss the spurious teachings of self-acclaimed masters who promise them the stage of a Stream-enterer within seven days of practising their technique, or that of a Once-returner if one has adequate intellectual development. After finishing their seven days' course of practice, the master announces the pseudo-attainments of his pupils as a Stream-enterer or a Once-returner, and they consequently are delighted with their illusory achievements.

Here, we would like to sound a note of caution. The metal copper, if it could be converted into the precious metal of gold, through practice of alchemy, would become possessed of the properties of gold which are vastly different from those of the original base metal of copper. Likewise, a noble person who has achieved the first path and fruition only as a Stream-enterer is easily distinguished from an ordinary worldling by means of his physical, verbal and mental demeanour. Instead of placidly accepting the announcement of the master as having attained the stage of a Stream-enterer or a Once-returner, one should, by self-introspection, examine one's true nature to see if one has changed for the better and has truly benefited by the seven days' course of practice. Only by self-evaluation in this manner could one save oneself from being misled by dubious teachers of religion.

Thus, in matters of observing the precepts or in other pursuits there is no shortcut or easy way to achieve one's cherished object. A person addicted to drink will not [1568] be able to observe even the five precepts, not to speak of the higher practices such as the eight precepts.

The group of moral precepts other than the said set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*) is classified as precepts which promote good conduct (*abhisamācārika-sīla*). Even the five precepts are to be considered as superior to the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth.

It may be questioned: "How could the five precepts, which have only the one restraint, out of the four verbal restraints, not to speak lies, be superior to the eight precepts including right livelihood (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*), which requires the observance of all the four verbal restraints involving lying, gossiping, using abusive language and engaging in frivolous talks?"

The answer lies in the fact that of the four verbal restraints, lying forms the basis of the breach of all the verbal restraints. The Buddha teaches that for one who commits falsehood, there is no misdeed which he is not liable to perpetuate; and one who can abstain from lying can easily observe the remaining precepts.

How could one who does not speak lies engage in slandering, abusing and frivolous talks? This explains why only the restraint of falsehood is included as the main verbal restraint in the five precepts. The question never arises, therefore, that the eight precepts including right livelihood is superior to the five precepts.

Again, it may be asked: "Since the precept to refrain from wrong livelihood, which does not feature in the five precepts, forms the eighth precept of the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth, surely it should be deemed superior to the five precepts."

The answer in brief to this question is: For one who observes the five precepts, no special effort is needed to refrain from wrong livelihood. After all, wrong livelihood means earning one's living through wrong means of killing, stealing and lying. By observing the five precepts meticulously, one is automatically avoiding the misdeeds of killing, stealing and lying. Thus, the precept to refrain from wrong livelihood as an additional observance in the set of precepts with right livelihood as the eighth (*ājīvaṭṭhamaka-sīla*) does not justify the claim of its superiority over the five precepts. What has been discussed above applies only to lay devotees.

Monastic Morality

For members of the Saṅgha, the rules of discipline laid down by the Buddha for them as expounded in the Basket of Discipline (*Vinaya-piṭaka*) are known as training rules (*sikkhāpada*). The offences, for which penalties are imposed, may be classified under seven categories depending on their nature:

1. Expulsion offenses (*pārājika*).

2. Offenses requiring a meeting of the Saṅgha (*Saṅghādisesa*).
3. Grave offenses (*thullaccaya*).
4. Confession offenses (*pācittiya*).
5. Acknowledgements (*pāṭidesanīya*).
6. Wrongdoings (*dukkaṭa*).
7. Wrong speech (*dubbhāsita*).

Offences in the first category of offences (*pārājika*) and in the second category (*saṅghādisesa*) are classified as grave offences (*garukāpatti*). The remaining five categories consist of light offences (*lahukāpatti*).

The group of moral precepts observed by monastics so that there is no breach of lesser and minor offences classified under light offences is known as good conduct (*abhisamācārika-sīla*); those observed to avoid transgression of grave offences (*garukāpatti*) is known as morality which forms the beginning of the life of purity (*ādi-brahma-cariyaka-sīla*).

Of the five volumes of the Basket of Discipline (*Vinaya-piṭaka*), the Section about Expulsion (*Pārājika-kaṇḍa*) and the Section about Confession (*Pācittiya-kaṇḍa*), also known as the Twofold Analysis (*Ubhato-vibhaṅga*), deal with codes of morality which belong to the fundamental morality which forms the beginning of the life of purity (*ādi-brahma-cariya*) category of morality (*sīla*); the Great Division (*Mahā-vagga*) and the Short Division (*Cūḷa-vagga*), which are collectively termed the Division containing Chapters (*Khandhaka-vagga*), describe the group of morality which has been classified as good conduct (*abhisamācārika-sīla*).[419]

> Monastics become accomplished in the fundamental morality which forms the beginning of the life of purity (*ādi-brahma-cariyaka-sīla*) only after completing observance of good conduct (*abhisamācārika-sīla*). When a monastic meticulously avoids transgression of even a minor fault, a light offence, it goes without saying that he will take the greatest care not to be guilty of grave offences. [1569]

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[419] The last volume of the Vinaya, the Summary (*Parivāra*), gives a summary and classification of the rules in the four previous volumes.

Morality based on the Abstinences or other Factors

1. The mental concomitants of three abstinences (*virati-sīla*), that is, right speech, right action and right livelihood is explained under the subtitle "What is morality?"

2. Precepts associated with various mental concomitants (*avirati-sīla*), such as volition, and so on, other than the mental factors of the three abstinences.

Morality that is Dependent or Independent

1. Morality practised depending upon craving or upon wrong view (*nissita-sīla*). When one observes precepts with the aim of achieving a happy existence in the future, abounding in wealth and property, one's morality is called morality of dependence upon craving. Observance of precepts or rituals such as imitating cows or dogs in the wrong belief that they are conducive to spiritual purification is called morality of dependence upon wrong view.

   Those who have embraced Buddhism are not likely to practise the morality of dependence upon wrong view; but they should guard themselves against practising the morality of dependence upon craving, which they are still liable to do.

2. Morality practised without depending upon craving or upon wrong view (*anissita-sīla*), with the sole aim of cultivating the noble practice. This means practice of mundane morality which is a prerequisite for that supermundane morality.

Time-Bound Morality and Life-Bound Morality:

1. Morality observed for a limited period (*kāla-pariyanta-sīla*).

2. Morality observed for life (*apāṇa-koṭika-sīla*).

In describing morality observed for a limited period, the Path to Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) mentions only in a general way the limit of the observing period, saying: Having made a limit to the time, he establishes his precepts (*kāla-paricchedaṁ katvā, samādinnaṁ sīlaṁ*). But its sub-commentary is more specific in prescribing the time limit: a whole day or a whole night, etc. (*kāla-*

paricchedaṁ katvā ti imañ-ca rattiṁ, imañ-ca divan-ti ādinā viya kāla-vasena paricchedaṁ katvā).

Nowadays, many people take the precepts without mentioning any time limit; so it seems for life. But as the intention is to observe a certain precept for a day or a limited period only, it is certainly classed as a temporary morality. As the formula in the commentary and the sub-commentary for taking the vow or precept, mentioned above, requires the stating of the period of observance, one should mention the period during which one would observe the precept. However, neglecting to do so constitutes no fault; it would still be a temporary practice of morality.

The intention, though unspoken, is generally assumed to be for the whole period of a day, or a night or a whole day and night. But it is not necessarily so, according to the commentary on the Path of the Analytic Knowledges (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*), which states that one may observe the precepts for one sitting, like lay devotees who, having established themselves in the Three Treasures, observe a set of precepts while making a donation to an invited monastic in their home. They observe the precepts only for the duration of the ceremony of alms giving. Or they may undertake to observe a set of precepts during their sojourn at a monastery for a day or two or more. These are all observances of temporary morality.

Thus, according to this commentary, it is beneficial to observe precepts even for a very short period. Therefore, teachers explain that it is quite proper to encourage children, who are not used to go without an evening meal, to take the eight precepts on Observance (*Uposatha*) days and observe them all throughout the morning only. One always gains merit for doing the good deed of observing precepts, however short the duration of the observance may be.

Two stories in the Stories about Petas (*Peta-vatthu*) illustrate this point. During the time of the Buddha (see Pv 3.7), there was, in Rājagaha, a hunter who earned his living by killing deer day and night. A friend of his was a disciple of the Buddha, being established in the Three Treasures. The friend advised the hunter to refrain from the evil act of killing animals. But his [1570] advice fell on deaf ears. Undaunted, he suggested to the hunter to refrain from killing at least during the nighttime and instead to engage himself in the meritorious act of observing precepts. The hunter finally gave in to his friend's persistent

persuasion and abandoning all acts of preparations for killing during the nighttime, he spent his time observing precepts.

After his death, the hunter gained rebirth near Rājagaha as a Vemānika Peta, who was subjected to great suffering during the day but lived a happy life at night, enjoying fully the pleasures of the senses.

Ven. Nārada, encountering this Peta in the course of his wanderings, enquired of him as to what kind of meritorious deeds he had performed in his previous lives. The Peta recounted his life as a hunter, how he earned his living by killing; how his friend, who was established in the Three Treasures, counselled him to give up his wrong mode of living; how he refused his friend's good advice at first but finally succumbed to his persuasion by giving up hunting at nighttime and devoting himself to the good deed of observing the precepts. For his cruel misdeeds in the day time, he was suffering intensely during the day while at night he lived the blissful, sensuous life of Devas.

The second Peta story is similar (see Pv 3.8), but it concerns a wealthy sportsman who hunted deer, day and night, as a pastime for sheer enjoyment, not for livelihood. He also paid no heed to a friend of his who proffered him good advice for his benefit. Ultimately, he was won over by an Arahat, who came on an alms round to his friend's house, who instructed him to devote at least the nighttime to meritorious deeds instead of the full-time pursuit of sport. He suffered the same fate after death as the hunter of the previous story.

We learn from these two stories that we reap the benefit of meritorious deeds even if they were performed only for the limited period of during the nighttime. Accordingly, we should make an endeavour to observe the precepts for whatever time we could afford, however short it may be.

Broken Observance and Unbroken Observance

Morality, the observance of which is brought to an end before a stipulated time for some reason (*sapariyanta-sīla*), such as being coaxed or tempted with an offer of wealth or servants and attendants to break the observance or being threatened with the destruction of one's life and limbs or of one's relatives to do so. In this type of morality, it should be noted that although its observance is brought to an end through outside interference, nevertheless, merit has been

already gained, commensurate with one's precepts. Morality observed before is not rendered fruitless by its termination.

Morality, the observance of which is not cut short by any outside influence (*apariyanta-sīla*) but is maintained till completion of the intended period.

Worldly Morality and Supermundane Morality

Morality subject to, or accompanied by, the pollutants (*āsava*) such as sensual desire, desire for future existence, wrong view and ignorance (*lokiya-sīla*). Morality not subject to, or not accompanied by, the mental pollutants (*lokuttara-sīla*).

Morality subject to the pollutants is conducive to happy future rebirth as a human being or a Deva and is a prerequisite for escape from the cycle of rebirths. Morality not subject to the pollutants brings about escape from Saṁsāra; it is also an object for contemplation with reflective knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa-ñāṇa*).

Morality in Groups of Threes

Low, Middle and Finest Morality

When the precepts are observed with the four elements – will (*chanda*), energy (*viriya*), consciousness (*citta*) and investigative knowledge (*vimaṁsā*) – of inferior quality it is low morality (*hīna-sīla*); when they are of medium quality it is middle morality (*majjhima-sīla*); when they are of superior quality it is finest morality (*paṇīta-sīla*). [1571]

1. When morality is observed through desire for fame, it is low morality (*hīna-sīla*). Such an observance is an act of hypocrisy, a deceptive show of sham piety, without pure volition for doing a genuine meritorious deed. Hence it is low (*hīna*).

2. Observance of morality through desire for a good destination is no doubt associated with a certain amount of greed, but it is a wholesome wish for beneficial results of one's good deeds and is accompanied by volition and faith. Hence it is nobler than the one observed through desire for fame. On the other hand, since the motivating force here is still tainted with the expectation of beneficial results from one's

meritoriousness, it is not ranked as a superior kind but only as a middle (*majjhima*) morality.

3. The morality observed not through desire for fame nor through desire for reaping beneficial results of one's good deeds but through understanding that the observance of precepts is a noble practice for a pure life, and through realization that one should indeed cultivate these practices solely for their nobleness, is known as the finest morality. Only such a morality of superior quality observed with pure wholesome volition, unassociated with any form of greed, is reckoned as the genuine perfection of morality (*sīla-pāramī*).

When the Bodhisatta took existence as a Nāga, during his two lives as Campeyya Nāga (Ja 506) and Bhūridatta Nāga (Ja 543), he could not exert himself for the superior kind of morality but observed precepts only in the hope of attaining rebirth as a human being. In that sense, the morality he observed was of medium quality. Nevertheless, since he did not break the precepts and persisted in their observance even at the risk of his life, his effort is to be regarded as fulfilment of the perfection of morality.

Again:

1. When morality is defiled by demeritorious thoughts of self-praise and disparagement of others, such as: "I am virtuous; others are not virtuous and inferior to me," it is a low morality.

2. The morality which is not tainted with such defilements but is a mundane morality is a middle morality.

3. When the morality is free from all taints and is associated with the supermundane paths and fruitions, it is classed as the finest morality.

Again:

1. Low morality (*hīna-sīla*) is the morality that is observed with a view to attain happy prosperous rebirths.

2. Middle morality (*majjhima-sīla*) is the morality practised for self-liberation from the cycle of suffering, such as that practised by future ordinary disciples of the Buddhas or by future Paccekabuddhas.

3. The finest morality (*paṇīta-sīla*) is observed by Bodhisattas for the purpose of liberating all beings from the cycle of rebirths and it qualifies as a perfection of morality (*sīla-pāramī*).

This commentarial statement is made with reference to the noblest type of morality. But this does not mean that morality observed by Bodhisattas alone qualifies as such; morality belonging to Paccekabuddhas and disciples of a Buddha, though it is not the noblest type, should also be recognized as a perfection of morality.

Self-regarding, World-regarding, and Respecting Dhamma

1. Morality that is self-regarding (*attādhipateyya-sīla*), is the morality observed out of self-respect and to satisfy one's conscience by abandoning what is unbecoming and unprofitable.

2. Morality that is world-regarding (*lokādhipateyya-sīla*), is the morality observed out of regard for the world and to ward off censure of others.

3. Morality that respects Dhamma (*Dhammādhipateyya-sīla*), is the morality observed in reverence to the glory of the Buddha's teaching. One who practises this morality is convinced that the discourses of [1572] the Buddha on the subjects of the paths, the fruitions and Nibbāna truly show the way to liberation from the cycle of rebirths and that the way to pay respect to the Dhamma and to honour the Dhamma is through observance of precepts.

Morality that is Grasping, Non-grasping, and Calming

1. Grasping morality (*parāmaṭṭha-sīla*) is the same as dependent morality (*nissita-sīla*), which was mentioned in the groups of twos; it is observed with adherence to craving or wrong view. Because of craving, one is pleased with the thought that his morality would result in the happy destination he longs for, and thinks it is superior to that of others. Because of wrong view, he holds that his morality is the soul or substance. In either case, that morality falls under the category of grasping morality (*parāmaṭṭha-sīla*).

Even while practising it, this morality burns with the fires of craving and wrong view. The fires of craving and wrong view burn not only when enjoying sense pleasures but even while practising alms giving and

morality. Only when the practice of good deeds reaches the state of meditation does it becomes immune from the ravages of these fires. By practising insight (*vipassanā*) meditation till one comes to realize that this body is not self, not a personality but mere phenomenon of matter and mind, one can become free from the fires of personality-belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*).

2. Non-grasping morality (*aparāmaṭṭha-sīla*) is morality observed by a virtuous worldling (*kalyāṇa-puthujjana*), who is established in the Three Treasures and who has started cultivating the noble path of eight constituents with a view to attain the paths and fruitions. This is also the morality of a learner (*sekkha*) who, through cultivating the noble path of eight constituents, has attained one of the four paths or the first three fruitions but still has to work for the final goal of the fourth fruition.

3. Calming morality (*paṭippassaddha-sīla*) is morality that becomes calm on attaining the four fruition states of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti*), Once-returning (*Sakadāgāmī*), Non-returning (*Anāgāmī*) and becoming an Arahat (*Arahatta*).

Morality that is Pure, Not Pure and Doubtful

1. Morality that is pure (*visuddha-sīla*) is the morality of a monastic who has not committed a single offence against the Discipline or who has made amends after committing an offence.

2. Morality that is not pure (*avisuddha-sīla*) is the morality of a monastic who has committed an offence, and has not made amends after committing it.

3. Morality that is doubtful (*vematika-sīla*) is the morality of a monastic who has doubt or misgivings about the alms food he has accepted, whether it is bear meat, which is not allowable, or pork, which is allowable for him; who has doubt about the offence he has committed, for instance, whether it is a confession offense (*pācittiya-āpatti*) or a wrong-doing offense (*dukkaṭa-āpatti*) and who is uncertain whether the act he has done constitutes an offence or not.

A monastic engaged in meditation should endeavour to purify his morality if it is impure. Should he be guilty of a light offence, for instance one of

the 92 confession (*pācittiya*) offences, he should remedy it by admission of the offence to a monastic and thus purify his morality. Should he be guilty of a grave offence, for instance one of the thirteen offences that require a meeting of the Saṅgha (*Saṅghādisesa*), he should approach the Saṅgha and confess his offence. Then, as ordered by the Saṅgha, he should first observe probation (*parivāsa*)[420] and then carry out the penance (*mānatta*).[421] Then only would his morality become pure, and he is fit for practice of meditation. Should he have doubts about the nature of the alms food he has accepted or of any of the actions he has done, he should carefully scrutinize them or consult a Vinaya specialist who is learned in the [1573] Vinaya rules and thus remove his scruples and purify his morality.

Morality of One under Training, Beyond Training or Neither

1. Morality of one under training (*sekha-sīla*) is the morality observed by one who is still undergoing training. It is the morality associated with those who have attained the four paths and the first three fruition states.
2. Morality of one beyond training (*asekkha-sīla*) is the morality observed by one who no longer requires any training. It is the morality associated with those who have attained the fruition state of an Arahat.
3. The group of mundane precepts not falling under either of these two is morality that is neither while under or beyind training (*nevasekkhānāsekkha-sīla*). It is the morality observed by one who is neither a learner nor a non-learner; it is the morality of an ordinary worldling (*puthujjana*).

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[420] Probation (*parivāsa*): a penalty for a Suspension (*Saṅghādisesa*) offence requiring him to live under suspension from association with the rest of the Saṅgha for as many days as he has knowingly concealed his offence. At the end of this probationary observance, he undergoes a further period of penance (*mānatta*).

[421] Penance (*mānatta*): a period of penance for at least six days to gain approbation of the Saṅgha, after which he requests the Saṅgha to reinstate him into full association with the rest of the Saṅgha.

Morality in Groups of Fours

Declining, Stagnating, Gaining Distinction and Penetrating

1. The morality that is bound to decrease is called declining morality (*hāna-bhāgiya-sīla*). A certain monastic associates with immoral persons only and does not associate with the virtuous; he does not know or see the fault of committing an offence, he often dwells with wrong thoughts and does not guard his faculties. The morality of such a monastic makes no progress, instead it decreases day by day.

2. The morality that remains stagnant is called stagnating morality (*ṭhiti-bhāgiya-sīla*). A certain monastic remains satisfied with the morality he is already established in and does not wish to practise meditation for further advancement. He is quite content with mere morality and does not strive for any higher state; his morality neither makes progress nor decreases, it just stagnates.

3. The morality that will gain distinction is called gaining distinction morality (*visesa-bhāgiya-sīla*). A certain monastic, having established himself in morality, is not content with mere morality but strives for concentration of mind. The morality of that monastic is called gaining distinction morality or the morality that will gain the special benefit of concentration of mind.

4. The morality that penetrates and dispels the darkness of defilements is penetrating morality (*nibbedha-bhāgiya-sīla*). A certain monastic is not content with mere morality but strives hard to get through insight (*vipassanā*) meditation strong insight knowledge (*balava-vipassanā-ñāṇa*), which is the knowledge of disgust with the sufferings of the cycle of rebirths. The morality of that monastic is the one that penetrates and dispels the darkness of defilements through the paths and fruitions.

Precepts of Monks, Nuns, Novices and Householders

1. The rules of discipline promulgated by the Fortunate One for male monastics and those which should also be observed by them although promulgated for nuns are called the rules for monks (*bhikkhu-sīla*).

2. The rules of discipline promulgated for nuns and those which should also be observed by them although promulgated for monks are called the rules for nuns (*bhikkhunī-sīla*).

3. The ten precepts observed by male (*sāmaṇera*) and female (*sāmaṇerī*) novices or neophytes are called rules for those without higher ordination (*anupasampanna-sīla*).

   Only novices are taken as monastics without higher ordination (*anupasampanna*) by the commentator. Yet there is another kind called in training (*sikkhamāna*). As those in training are elder female novices who undergo a special training as probationers to become nuns, they are not mentioned here separately but are reckoned as female novices. [1574]

4. The morality observed by the laity is called the householder rules (*gahaṭṭha-sīla*). With regard to the householder rules, the Path to Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) says: The five precepts as a permanent undertaking, the ten precepts when possible, and the eight precepts as a special observance on an Observance Day (*Uposatha*), come under the householder rules which should be observed by male and female followers (*upāsaka-upāsikānaṁ nicca-sīla-vasena pañca-sikkhāpadāni, sati vā ussāhe dasa, uposathaṅga-vasena aṭṭhā ti idaṁ gahaṭṭha-sīlaṁ*).

There are different views on the meaning of the Pāḷi phrase: *sati vā ussāhe*, "when possible" of the Path to Purification. Some teachers take the view that not only the five precepts but also the ten precepts are to be observed as a permanent undertaking. They wrongly apply to the ten precepts the attribute of a permanent undertaking (*nicca-sīla*), which is only meant for the five precepts.

These teachers say: "To observe the five precepts, it is not necessary to consider whether a person has the ability; he should observe the five precepts forever. Regarding the ten precepts, even though it is urged that the ten precepts should be observed as a permanent undertaking, only persons with the ability should observe them. Ability here means the ability to abandon his treasure of gold and silver with no more attachment to it; giving up his possessions in this manner, he should observe the ten precepts for the whole of his life, not just for some days and months only. If his intention is to avoid handling gold and silver during the period of observance only and to use them again afterwards, then he should not observe them at all."

Again, some people erroneously think and say: "It is difficult for people to abandon their own possessions of gold and silver; therefore, laymen are not fit to observe the ten precepts."

Also, according to the sub-commentary on the Path to Purification *Visuddhi-magga*), the term ten (*dasa*) should be taken as the ten precepts of novices. It is commented upon further that rules (*sīla*) here is meant to be like the rules observed by Ghaṭikāra the pot-maker and others. This commentarial statement makes for more confusion in the already mistaken view of these people. They take the extreme view that it is not enough for people to merely refrain from acquiring and accepting new wealth; they should be able to abandon all that they have already possessed, just as Ghaṭikāra in the Discourse about Ghaṭikāra (*Ghaṭikāra-sutta*, MN 81) refrained from using gold and silver for his whole life. And only when they are like Ghaṭikāra in this respect, they can be fully established in the ten precepts. Thus, they have made an overstatement.

Their view is that only when a person can "abandon his treasure of gold and silver with no more attachment to it" should he observe the ten precepts. It is mistaken as it arises with reference to the training rule about gold (*jāta-rūpa-sikkhāpada*) of the ten precepts. According to this interpretation, only when people can abandon all the wealth they possess, without clinging any more, they will be fully established in the precepts. Ghaṭikāra is a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*) who has already abandoned all his wealth without clinging any more. Nowadays, although the laity do not acquire fresh wealth on the day of observance of the ten precepts, they have stored up at home and elsewhere all the wealth they have made previously, and so it is against the training rule about gold (*jāta-rūpa-sikkhāpada*). Hence, they should not observe the ten precepts unless they abandon all their wealth with no more attachment. Even if they take the ten precepts, they fail to keep them.

The interpretation of these teachers is not sustainable because there is for monastics the training rule concerning handling and possession of money (*rūpiya-sikkhāpada*), which is more subtle and noble than the training rule about gold and silver of the laity (*jāta-rūpa-sikkhāpada*). According to that training rule (*sikkhāpada*), a monastic should not accept money nor let others do so for him; if it is left near him in the absence of someone to receive it, he should not remain complacent but raise his objection saying: "Gold and silver is not allowable for monastics; we do not accept it." If he does not [1575] raise any

objection, then he commits an offence and the gold and silver should be abandoned by him too. This is the disciplinary rule laid down by the Buddha.

Suppose a supporter (*dāyaka*) comes to a monastic and offers money, even though the monastic, following the Discipline, forbade him and refuses to accepts it, but he leaves it all the same and goes away; if another supporter comes along, and the monastic tells him about the money and the supporter says: "Then please show me a safe place for keeping the money," the monastic may go up to the seventh terrace of the monastery, taking the supporter with him, and say: "Here is a safe place." But he should not say: "Keep it here." However, when the supporter has gone away after keeping the money safely in the place shown by the monastic, the monastic can close the door of the room carefully and keep watch on it. In doing so, the monastic is not guilty of infringement of any disciplinary rule. The commentary states this clearly when considering the training rule about money (*rūpiya-sikkhāpada*).

If possession of gold and silver is not allowable for the laity observing the training rule about gold (*jāta-rūpa-sikkhāpada*), it will, by no means, be allowable for the monastic who observes the subtler and nobler precepts to keep watch on his gold and silver. Thus, it should be noted that if such a monastic is free from offence, so is the laity who is not affected in the observance of the training rule about gold by his possession of wealth left in a place of security.

In the sub-commentary on the Path to Purification, the example of Ghaṭikāra the pot-maker is not cited to convey the meaning that "the laity should observe the ten precepts only when they can abandon all their wealth without clinging any more," like Ghaṭikāra. Actually, the example of Ghaṭikāra, a superior observer of the ten precepts, is cited just to exhort the people not to be content with their ordinary observance of the ten precepts, that they should make efforts to become observers of a higher type following Ghaṭikāra's example. Even though they cannot be equal to him, the citation is made in order to encourage them to emulate Ghaṭikāra as far as possible.

The authority for this remark is in the commentary to the Thus-Saids (*Iti-vuttaka-aṭṭhakathā*) by Acariya Dhammapāla, who is also the author of the sub-commentary on the Path to Purification: *Sīlam-ayanti nicca-sīla-uposatha-niyamādi-vasena pañca, aṭṭha, dasa vā sīlāni samādiyantassa*. The commentary mentions three kinds of morality: 1) The five precepts observed permanently

(*nicca-sīla*); 2) the eight precepts observed on Observance Days (*Uposatha-sīla*); and 3) the ten precepts observed occasionally (*niyama-sīla*). It is clear that, according to this commentary, the ten precepts are not observed permanently; they are observed occasionally.

Again, in the Discourse about Worshipping Householders (*Gahaṭṭha-vandanā-sutta*, SN 11.18), we find the following account. Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, came down from Vejayanta Palace to go to the royal garden. When he was about to get onto his chariot, he paid homage to the eight directions. Then the Deva Mātali said: "To whom do you pay homage, sir?" Sakka said:

> *Ye gahaṭṭhā puñña-karā, sīlavanto upāsakā,*
> *Dhammena dāraṁ posenti, te namassāmi Mātali.*
>
> Mātali, some people perform meritorious deeds; they are also endowed with morality; they take refuge in the Three Treasures of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha, and they support their wives and children righteously. To them I pay homage.

The term endowed with morality (*sīlavanto*) in Sakka's reply is explained by the commentator thus: *Sīlavanto ti upāsakatte patiṭṭhāya pañca hi pi dasa hi pi sīlehi samannāgatā*, "those who are endowed with morality means those who take refuge in the Three Treasures and become established in the five precepts and the ten precepts."

According to this commentary, it is clear that the people to whom Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, pays homage are the people who, living with their families, observe the five and ten precepts.

Also, in the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*) sub-commentary, it is commented thus: *Nicca-sīla-vasena pañcahi,* [1576] *niyama-sīla-vasena dasahi*, "the five precepts should be taken as permanent rules (*nicca-sīla*), the ten precepts as delimited rules (*niyama-sīla*)."

In the Light on the Dictionary (*Abhidhānappadīpikā*, vs 444), the meaning of delimited rules is briefly shown thus:

> *Yaṁ deha-sādhanāpekkhaṁ, niccaṁ kamma-mayaṁ yamo,*
> *āgantu-sādhanaṁ kammaṁ, aniccaṁ niyamo bhave.*

> The morality which must be observed forever is unlimited rules (*yāma-sīla*). The morality which is not observed forever but only occasionally is called delimited rules (*niyāma-sīla*).

The expressions unlimited rules and delimited rules have their origins in Brahmanism, see Amara's Dictionary (*Amara-kosa-abhidhāna*, vs 49):

> Not harming, not speaking lies, not stealing, not indulging in ignoble sexual acts, not accepting alms food: these five are unlimited rules (*yama-sīla*), which must be observed forever; purifying, being easily content, practising austerity, reciting the Vedas, recollecting Brahma; these five are delimited rules (*niyama-sīla*), which should be observed occasionally.

According to the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*) and its commentary, it is clear that even the people who are supporting their families by right livelihood can observe the ten precepts. Hence the view: "People should observe the ten precepts only when they can abandon their gold and silver without clinging anymore, like Ghaṭikāra, the pot-maker," is not a right one; it is an overstatement.

Moreover, of the ten duties of a king, mentioned in the Long Birth Story about the Golden Goose (*Mahā-haṁsa-jātaka*, JA 534), the commentary says that by the term morality (*sīla*) is meant both for the five and the ten precepts. Therefore, it is evident that kings observe also the ten precepts as one of their duties. If it is maintained that "the ten precepts should be observed only when they can be observed forever," then kings who have chief queens, lesser queens, maids of honour and a treasury filled with gold and silver would not be able to observe the ten precepts because of the training rules about celibacy (*abrahma-cariya-sikkhāpada*) and gold (*jāta-rūpa-sikkhāpada*). Had it been impossible for kings to observe, then the commentator would not have included the ten precepts in his comment on morality (*sīla*) of the ten kingly duties. But the commentator has definitely mentioned them in his comment. Therefore, the ten precepts are not permanent morality (*nicca-sīla*); they are the morality limited to whenever one is able to do so.

Moreover, the Supplementary Readings (*Khuddaka-pāṭha*) commentary explains how the eight precepts are derived from the ten training rules (*sikkhāpada*). The ten precepts (*dasa sikkhāpada*) are refraining from:

1. Killing living creatures (*pāṇātipāta*).
2. Taking what has not been given (*adinnādāna*).
3. Unchastity (*abrahmacariya*).
4. False speech (*musā-vāda*).
5. Liquor, wines or intoxicants which cause heedlessness (*surā-meraya-majja-pamādaṭṭhāna*).
6. Eating at the wrong time (*vikāla-bhojana*).
7. Dances, songs, music and watching shows (*nacca-gita-vādita-visūka-dassana*).
8. Adorning or ornamenting oneself by wearing garlands, scents, or ointments (*mālāgandha-vilepana-dhāraṇa-maṇḍana-vibhūsanaṭṭhāna*).
9. Lofty or grand beds (*ucccā-sayana-mahā-sayana*).
10. Accepting gold or money (*jāta-rūpa-rajata-patiggahaṇā*).

Of the ten precepts, the first two, the training rule about not taking life (*pāṇātipāta-sikkhāpada*) and about not taking what has not been given (*adinnādāna-sikkhāpada*), are to be observed by the laity or novices as permanent precepts (*nicca-sīla*). The third precept, about celibacy (*abrahmacariya-sikkhāpada*), is not mentioned as a permanent precept (*nicca-sīla*) for the laity. It is the precept to be observed only when one is able to do so. Again, out of the ten precepts, the seventh one: the training rule about dance and songs (*nacca-gīta-sikkhāpada*) and the eighth one about garlands and perfumes (*mālā-gandha-sikkhāpada*) merge into one factor; and the last training rule about gold is excluded.

In accordance with this commentary also, those out of the ten precepts which the laity should observe permanently are four: refraining from killing, stealing, lies and taking intoxicants. The laity cannot always observe the precept about celibacy (*abrahmacariya-sikkhāpada*). They are also unable to observe permanently the precepts about food at the wrong time (*vikālabhojana,*) dance and songs (*nacca-gīta*), etc. Thus it is clear that all these ten precepts are a limited (*niyama*) type of morality (*sīla*) to be observed only when able.

Although it is mentioned in the Supplementary Readings (*Khuddaka-pāṭha*) commentary that the training rule about money (*jāta-rūpa-sikkhāpada*) is a special precept for novices, breaking it will not entail falling from novicehood. Because in the Great Chapter (*Mahā-khandhaka*, Vin Mv 1), although the Fortunate One laid down the ten factors (*dasaṅga*) which will make the novices fall from their novicehood, only the first five of the ten precepts are included in them. The last five are not included. Therefore, in spite of breaking one of these last five factors, the novices will not fall from their novicehood; they are only guilty of a breach of the rules which entail due punishment. If they take the punishment imposed by their teachers they will become again good novices, duly absolved from guilt. [1577]

Thus, even novices for whom the ten precepts are mandatory will not fall from their novicehood in spite of the training rule about money (*jāta-rūpa-sikkhāpada*). It is clear, therefore, that of the ten precepts, the last five are not so important as the first five for novices. Thus, it is not proper to say and write exhorting strict observance of the money precept for the laity when it is not regarded as so important even for novices.

It is accepted that both the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) and the Supplementary Readings (*Khuddaka-pāṭha*) commentaries are written by Ven. Mahā Buddhaghosa. As the two books are written by one and the same author, the exposition should not be different. The passage from the Path of Purification which says: *Upāsaka-upāsikānaṁ nicca-sīla-vasena pañca-sikkhāpadāni, sati vā ussāhe dasa*, "the ten precepts are not permanent morality (*nicca-sīla*) for the laity; they are delimited (*niyama-sīla*), and to be observed only when able" should thus be noted to be in line with the Supplementary Readings (*Khuddaka-pāṭha*) and Thus-Saids (*Iti-vuttaka*) commentaries.

With respect to a breach of precepts, the Short Readings commentary, after dealing with matters concerning novices, states: "Whereas, in the case of the laity, after taking the vow of the five precepts, if one of them is broken, only that one is broken, and if that one be observed by taking a new vow, the five precepts are complete again." But some teachers (*apare*) maintain this: "If the five precepts are taken separately, one after another, a breach of one will not cause the breach of the rest." However, if they say, at the beginning of taking the precepts: *Pañcaṅga-samannāgataṁ sīlaṁ samādiyāmi*, "I vow to observe the complete five precepts," then, if one of them is broken, all are broken because

the vow was initially taken to keep the precepts together. As to the result of a breach of precepts, each breach will have its own consequences, not affecting others.

But some teachers rationalize this view by saying that after vowing to observe the complete five precepts, if one of them is broken, all are not broken; others remain unaffected. If we thus accept this rationalization, there will be no difference at all in their views. In this connection, the Analsis of the Training Rules (*Sikkhāpada-vibhaṅga*) of the Dispeller of Delusion (*Sammoha-vinodanī*, VibhA) states:

> *Gahaṭṭhā yaṁ yaṁ vītikkamanti, taṁ tad-eva khaṇḍaṁ hoti bhijjati, avasesaṁ na bhijjati. Kasmā? Gahaṭṭhā hi anibaddha-sīlā honti, yaṁ yaṁ sakkonti taṁ tad-eva gopenti.*
>
> After taking the precepts, if the laymen break one of them, only that one is broken; the rest are not; because for the laity there is no mandatory permanent precepts to observe like novices.

Of the five precepts, they may observe whichever they can; one, two or three, but not necessarily all five. We should not say that because they observe only partially and do not observe the complete five precepts, it does not amount to observance of the precepts and that they will not get any merit for it.

It should be noted thus that even though the laity cannot observe all five precepts but only as many as possible, they will get merit and that their morality (*sīla*) is genuine. In this connection, the Path of the Analytic Knowledges (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*) commentary comments on *pariyanta-pārisuddhi-sīla*:[422] "There are two kinds of limit regarding morality (*sīla*): the limit to the number of precepts observed and the limit to the duration of observance. The laity may observe one precept, or two, three, four, five, eight or ten precepts. But the trainees (*sikkhamāna*, *sāmaṇera* and *sāmaṇerī*) have to observe the ten precepts in full. This is the limit to the number of precepts observed."

The essential meaning here is: If the laity take precepts numbering one, two, three, four, five, eight or ten and observes them properly, their morality will

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[422] This morality is described fully under morality in the groups of fives.

become a pure morality with a limit in number (*sikkhāpada-pariyanta-pārisuddhi-sīla*).

Therefore, although in practice one does not vow to take one, two, three or four but all five precepts, it is not mandatory to observe all of them. If they can observe only one precept, they should observe that one. If they can observe two, they should observe those two, and so on.

It may be questioned: When the laity have the right to observe any number of precepts they wish, why the five precepts alone are prescribed in the commentary to the Path to Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) thus: For lay men and women regarding the permanent precepts, these are the five training rules (*upāsaka-upāsikānaṁ nicca-sīla-vasena pañca-sikkhāpadāni*)? [1578]

The answer is that the commentary is here concerned mainly with the principle of morality, which requires that all the five precepts must be observed permanently (*nicca-sīla-vasena pañca-sikkhāpadāni*). We have no right to leave out any precept we wish. It is wrong to break any one of the five precepts. It is not only in the Path to Purification but also in other texts that the five precepts are shown as permanent precepts (*nicca-sīla*) in the light of the principle of morality.

The Five Precepts with Celibacy as Fifth

In addition to the five, eight and ten precepts, there are also the precepts which have celibacy as the fifth (*brahma-cariya-pañcama-sīla*), which can be observed by the laity. However, the precepts which have celibacy as the fifth are, in reality, the five precepts. The third precept of the original five, undertaking to not behave wrongly in sexual matters (*kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī-sikkhāpadaṁ samādiyāmi*), is replaced by undertaking to observe celibacy (*abrahmacariyā-veramaṇī-sikkhāpadaṁ samādiyāmi*) in order for it to be the precepts which have celibacy as the fifth.

The precepts which have celibacy as the fifth was observed at the time of Buddha Kassapa by the layman Gavesi, as recorded in the Discourse concerning Gavesi (*Gavesi-sutta*, AN 5.180). At the time of Buddha Gotama, this morality (*sīla*) was observed by Ugga, the rich man of Vesālī and Ugga, the rich man of Hatthigāma in the Vajjian country; see the First Discourse about Ugga (*Paṭhama-ugga-sutta*, AN 8.21) and the Second Discourse about Ugga (*Dutiya-*

ugga-sutta, AN 8.22). The two Uggas took the precepts which has celibacy as the fifth from the Fortunate One and observed them; of the four wives they each possessed, the eldest ones were given away in marriage to the men they loved, and the remaining ones were abandoned likewise, and thereafter they remained single for life; they were lay Non-returners. It should not be misunderstood that married persons who want to observe the precepts which have celibacy as the fifth at the present time have to abandon their wives with no more attachment to them. In other words, it should not be taken that they may not observe this morality (*sīla*) unless they are prepared to renounce their wives altogether. Because in the words of the Supplementary Readings (*Khuddaka-pāṭha*) commentary, mentioned above: "Of the ten precepts, only four: those restraining from the taking of life, taking what is not given, lying and intoxicants are regarded as permanent precepts (*nicca-sīla*)."

Hence it is evident that the training rule about celibacy (*abrahma-cariya-sikkhāpada*) and the remaining precepts, such as not eating at the wrong time (*vikāla-bhojana*), etc., are not permanent; they are delimited morality (*niyama-sīla*), to be observed occasionally. Even though they cannot observe the precepts exactly like Ghaṭikāra the pot-maker, they can observe them occasionally as far as possible. So also, with regard to the precepts which have celibacy as the fifth, the two Uggas, being Non-returners, abandoned their wives without any attachment and observed the precepts for life. If other people can follow their example and observe this precept, it is all well and good, but if they cannot emulate them fully, they should observe the precept according to their ability.

The Five Precepts with Celibacy as Fifth and One Time Eating

Furthermore, there are also the precepts which have celibacy as the fifth and one time eating, or simply the one time eating morality (*eka-bhattika-sīla*). One time eating means taking only one meal a day, in the morning. So, if lay people want to observe this morality (*sīla*), they may, after making the vow of the precepts which has celibacy as the fifth, take one more precept by saying they undertake to refrain from eating at the wrong time: *vikāla-bhojanā veramaṇī-sikkhāpadaṁ samādiyāmi*. Or, if they wish to take the vow as a whole, they may do so by saying they undertake the precepts which has celibacy as the fifth and will refrain from eating at the wrong time: *brahma-cariya-pañcama-eka-bhattika-sīlaṁ samādiyāmi*. This morality (*sīla*) was observed by the layman

Dhammika and laywoman Nandamātā, at the time of the Fortunate One, according to the commentary on the Discourse concerning Dhammika (*Dhammika-sutta*, Snp 26). At the time of Buddha Kassapa, the layman Gavesi also observed this morality (*sīla*); so did 500 laymen; see the Discourse concerning Gavesi (*Gavesi-sutta*, AN 5.180).

The Eightfold Observance Day Precepts

It may be questioned why, regarding the five precepts, the term five (*pañca*) alone is used, and, regarding the ten precepts, the term ten (*dasa*) is used, whereas in describing the eight precepts, not only the term eight (*aṭṭha*) but the additional term Observance (*Uposatha*) is used?

The term Observance (*Uposatha*) has five meanings:

1. Recitation of the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*).
2. A proper name for persons or animals. [1579]
3. Observance.
4. The morality (*sīla*) which should be observed.
5. The day for observing morality (*sīla*).

Of these five, the first meaning 1) is concerned only with the monastic, and the second meaning, 2) being the name for a Prince (e.g. Prince Uposatha, or of an elephant, e.g. the Uposatha elephant, etc.), has no connection with this chapter on morality (*sīla*); only the remaining three meanings are to be considered here.

The three meanings are derived from the Pāḷi term *upavāsa* which means observing or fulfilling the precepts. The third meaning 3) is the act of observing the precepts. The fourth meaning 4) is the precepts which should be kept. The fifth meaning 5) is the day on which the precepts are kept.

No particular day was fixed by the virtuous people in the past for observance of the five precepts and the ten precepts; only the eight precepts were observed on a specially fixed day; hence the special epithet of Observance Day (*Uposatha*) for these eight precepts.

There is another point to consider. The five precepts are not as numerous as the eight precepts, and as it is to be kept everyday, no special day was named for their observance. But as the ten precepts are higher than the eight precepts, the

virtuous people in the past should have fixed a special day for their observance. If so, why had they not done so? The probable reason is that the eight precepts are specially suitable for the laity, whereas the ten precepts are not. According to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*), the ten precepts are for novices. The Supplementary Readings (*Khuddaka-pāṭha*) commentary also states that the last precept of the ten precepts, regarding not using money (*jāta-rūpa-sikkhāpada*) is a special one for novices. It is, therefore, evident that the ten precepts are specifically for novices, not for laymen.

Therefore, the learned and virtuous in the past selected, out of the two kinds of morality (*sīla*) which concerned them, the eight precepts, which is of a higher form, to be observed on a specially appointed day. Only the eight precepts are therefore called *Uposatha* as explained in the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*).

The virtuous are not content with the observance of morality (*sīla*) only; they also wish to do meritorious deeds through giving alms, which entail acquiring, buying and shopping for things to offer. Consequently, they cannot properly observe the training rule about gold and silver (*jāta-rūpa-sikkhāpada*). Therefore, the ancient people fixed a special day for observance of the eight precepts only.

The Ninefold Observance

In the Discourse on the Ninefold Observance Day Precepts (*Navaṅguposatha-sutta*, AN 9.18), there is an exposition on the ninefold Observance Day precepts (*navaṅguposatha-sīla*) given with this introduction: "The nine precepts are beneficial, advantageous and powerful." In enumerating them, the Fortunate One expounds the usual eight precepts from the precept about killing (*pāṇātipātā-sikkhāpada*) up to the precept about high and luxurious beds (*uccā-sayana-mahā-sayana-sikkhāpada*) but ends with the formula for the practice of loving-kindness thus: *Mettā sahāgatena cetasā ekaṁ disaṁ pharitvā viharāmi*, "I abide with thoughts of loving-kindness directed to beings in one direction."

According to the discourse, to keep the ninefold Observance Day precepts (*navaṅguposatha-sīla*), after taking the usual eight precepts, one develops loving-kindness. A man who observes the eight precepts without any breach and keeps on developing loving-kindness is called an observer of the nine precepts. Loving-kindness is to be developed, whereas morality (*sīla*) is to be observed.

Therefore, to practise the nine precepts, one need not recite the nine precepts when taking the vow. It is sufficient to take the usual eight precepts and to develop loving-kindness as much as possible, then one is said to be practising the nine precepts (*navaṅguposatha*).

With regard to loving-kindness, as the Fortunate One particularly mentioned one direction (*ekaṁ disaṁ*), diffusing loving-kindness with one direction in mind is more effective than doing so without minding the direction. One should direct one's thought to all beings in the ten directions, the four cardinal points, the four intermediate points, plus above and below, one after another, beginning from whichever direction one wishes. [1580]

Even though there are four sublime mental states,[423] the Fortunate One takes only loving-kindness and adds it to the eight, thus prescribing the nine precepts because loving-kindness has great power. That is why the Fortunate One has expounded the Discourse on Friendliness Meditation (*Metta-sutta*), recorded in both the Supplementary Readings (*Khuddaka-pāṭha*, Khp 9) and the Discourse Collection (*Sutta-nipāta*, Snp 8).

In the Discourse on the Advantages of Loving-Kindness (*Mettānisaṁsa-sutta*, AN 11:16) eleven advantages are expounded that accrue to him who repeatedly develops loving-kindness:

1. He sleeps in peace.
2. He wakes up in peace.
3. He has no bad dreams.
4. He is dearly loved by human beings.
5. He is dearly loved by non-human beings (Yakkhas and Petas).
6. He is protected by Devas.
7. He is not afflicted by fire, poison and weapons.
8. His mind is easily concentrated.
9. His face is calm and clear.

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[423] The four sublime mental states: loving-kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), sympathetic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*).

10. He dies unconfused.

11. If he cannot penetrate to any higher Dhamma, such as the path and fruition of Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-phala*), in this life, he will take rebirth in the Brahma world.

Therefore, it is clear that loving-kindness is more powerful than the other three sublime mental states.

Three Kinds of Observance Day Morality

Observance Day morality (*Uposatha-sīla*) is of three kinds:

1. The cowherd's observance (*gopāla-uposatha*).

2. The naked ascetic's observance (*nigaṇṭha-uposatha*).

3. The noble one's observance (*ariya-uposatha*).

As expounded by the Fortunate One in the Discourse about the Observance Day (*Uposatha-sutta*, AN 3.70), the essential meanings are:

1. The Observance Day morality (*uposatha-sīla*), observed with thoughts of a cowherd, is called the cowherd's observance (*gopāla-uposatha*). After grazing the cattle all day long, the cowherd returns them to the owner in the evening. On reaching home, he thinks in this way: "Today, I have grazed the cattle in such-and-such a field and taken them to water at such-and-such a place. Tomorrow, I'll take them to such-and-such field for food and to such-and-such a place for water." Similarly, the observer of the Observance Day morality (*Uposatha-sīla*), having greedy thoughts of food, thinks: "Today, I have taken such-and-such a kind of food. Tomorrow, I'll take such-and-such a kind." If he spends the day in this way like the cowherd, his observance is called the cowherd's observance (*gopāla-uposatha*).

2. The Observance Day morality observed by a naked ascetic who holds wrong views is called the naked ascetic's observance (*nigaṇṭha-uposatha*). For example, according to their practice with regard to the precept of not killing (*pāṇātipāta*), killing living beings beyond a distance of 100 leagues east, west, north and south must not be done. Within such-and-such a distance killing is allowed, thus giving a chance of committing evil. Differentiating between forbidden and unforbidden

places for doing wrong, they practise their Observance Day. The observance practised by the holders of such a view is called the naked ascetic's observance (*nigaṇṭha-uposatha*).

3. If the Observance Day is observed after purifying the mind of defilements through recollection of the special attributes of the Buddha, etc. it is called the noble one's observance (*ariya-uposatha*).

Again, the noble observance (*ariya-uposatha*) is of six kinds: [1581]

1. The highest[424] observance (*Brahmuposatha*). The Observance Day that is observed by taking the eight precepts and repeatedly recollecting the special attributes of the Buddha, such as being Worthy (*Arahaṁ*), etc., is called the highest observance (*Brahmuposatha*).

2. The Dhamma Observance Day (*Dhammuposatha*). The Observance Day that is observed by taking the eight precepts and repeatedly recollecting the special attributes of the Dhamma is called the Dhamma Observance Day (*Dhammuposatha*).

3. The Saṅgha Observance Day (*Saṅghuposatha*). The Observance Day that is observed by taking the eight precepts and repeatedly recollecting the special attributes of the Saṅgha is called the Saṅgha Observance Day (*Saṅghuposatha*).

4. The moral Observance Day (*Sīluposatha*). The Observance Day that is observed by taking the eight precepts, without breaking any of them and repeatedly recollecting the special attributes of morality (*sīla*), is called the moral Observance Day (*Sīluposatha*).

5. The Devatā Observance Day (*Devatuposatha*). Reflecting that "there are in the world Devas and Brahmas who have endowed themselves with noble qualities of pure faith, morality, learning, generosity and wisdom in their previous births and as a result are reborn in the realm of Devas and Brahmas; such noble qualities are present in me, too," one

[424] Here Brahma refers to the Buddha, the Highest of Beings.

observes the Observance Day, comparing oneself with Devatās. Such an observance is called the Devatā Observance Day (*Devatuposatha*).[425]

6. The Observance Day with eight precepts (*aṭṭhaṅguposatha*). After taking the eight precepts, one reflects thus: "Just as Arahats never kill or harm any living being and always have compassion for them, so also do I not kill or harm any living being and have compassion for them; by this practice, I am following the way of the Arahats." The Observance Day observed in this manner reflecting on each of the eight precepts is called the Observance Day with eight precepts (*aṭṭhaṅguposatha*).

It should be noted that the division of the Observance Day into the three and the six kinds is in reference to the manner of keeping it. Primarily, however, the morality (*sīla*) which is observed is of two kinds only: The eightfold Observance Day precepts (*aṭṭhaṅga-uposatha-sīla*) and the ninefold Observance Day precepts (*navaṅguposatha-sīla*) as already stated above.

Three Kinds of Observance Day

The classification below is made in the light of the Discourse about the Four Great Kings (*Catu-mahā-rāja-sutta*, AN 3.37), which says: Observing and keeping vigil during the Observance day (*Uposathaṁ upavasanti paṭijāgaronti*) … and:

> *Cātuddasiṁ pañca-dasiṁ, yā ca pakkhassa aṭṭhamī,*
> *pāṭihāriya-pakkhañ-ca, aṭṭhaṅga-susamāgataṁ.*
>
> Those which are the fourteenth, the fifteenth, and the eighth of the lunar phase, and the wonderful lunar phase is the eightfold gathering.

1. Ordinary Observance Day (*pakati-uposatha*).

In the verse above, the lines reading *Cātuddasiṁ pañca-dasiṁ, yā ca pakkhassa aṭṭhamī* "the fourteenth, the fifteenth, and the eighth of the lunar phase," refer to ordinary Observance Days. In accordance with this, each fortnight of a month, waxing or waning, has three Observance Days: the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth days. Therefore, a month has six Observance Days, which are called ordinary Observance Days. In the commentary, however, the waxing

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[425] Here Devatā stands for both Devas and Brahmas.

fortnight has four Observance Days, [1582] namely, the fifth, the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth waxing days; the waning fortnight has four Observance Days, too: the fifth, the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth waning days; altogether there are eight Observance Days in a month. These eight are ordinary Observance Days usually observed by the laity.

> Whereas, nowadays, the lay people observe only four Observance Days in each month, these are the eighth waxing, the full moon, the eighth waning and the new-moon days.

2. The vigilant Observance Day (*paṭijāgara-uposatha*).

The vigilant Observance Day (*paṭijāgara-uposatha*) means the eight ordinary Observance Days observed with one additional day before and after each of them. *Paṭi* here means "repeatedly;" *jāgara* means "waking." Therefore, *paṭijāgara-sīla* may be interpreted as morality which repeatedly wakes up from the slumber of the defilements. To calculate the number of days: The fifth waxing Observance Day is preceded by the fourth waxing and followed by the sixth waxing Observance Day; the eighth Observance Day is preceded by the seventh waxing and followed by the ninth waxing Observance Day; the fortnight waxing Observance Day is preceded by the thirteenth waxing Observance Day, but there is not an Observance Day to follow; the full moon day is not preceded by an Observance Day but is followed by the first waning Observance Day.

Hence, serially there are the fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, thirteenth and fourteenth waxing; the full moon and the first waning days. Thus there are ten days in the waxing fortnight and ten days in the waning fortnight of the month, making altogether eight ordinary Observance Days (*pakati-uposatha*) and twelve vigilant Observance Days (*paṭijāgara-uposatha*) days in a month.

3. The wonderful Observance Day (*pāṭihāriya-uposatha*).

The Observance Day which is more powerful than the vigilant (*paṭijāgara*) is called wonderful (*pāṭihāriya*). The vigilant Observance Day has intervening days in the waxing and waning fortnight. The wonderful Observance Day has no such days, morality (*sīla*) being observed continuously.

If the laity wants to observe the wonderful Observance Day, they should observe for the whole three months of the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*) without a break; but if

they cannot observe for the whole three months, they should do so for one month, from the full moon of October (*Assayuja*) to the full moon of November (*Kattikā*); but if they cannot observe for one month, they should do so for fifteen days from the full moon to the new moon of October (*Assayuja*). This is stated in the commentary to the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*).

However, according to the commentary to the Discourse concerning Dhammika (*Dhammika-sutta*, Snp 26), the Observance Day observed for five months of July (*Āsāḷha*), August (*Sāvaṇa*), September (*Poṭṭhapāda*), October (*Assayuja*) and November (*Kattikā*) without a break is a wonderful Observance Day (*pāṭihāriya-uposatha*), whereas other teachers say that the Observance Day observed for each of the three months of July (*Āsāḷha*), November (*Kattikā*) and March (*Phagguṇa*) without a break is called the wonderful Observance Day.

Still other teachers say that, according to the Pāḷi texts, there are three ordinary observance (*pakati-uposatha*) days: the eighth, the fourteenth and the fifteenth of each fortnight of a month. If, in addition to those three ordinary Observance Days (*pakati-uposatha*), four more days: the seventh before the eighth and the ninth, the thirteenth before the fourteenth and the first day after the fifteenth are observed, such Observance Days are called wonderful Observance Days (*pāṭihāriya-uposatha*). The commentator remarks that for the benefit of the good people, who wish to acquire good merit, all kinds of precepts are mentioned to enable them to observe whichever they like.

Of the three views shown in the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*) commentary, the commentator's own view was that: "The Observance Day observed for five months is the wonderful Observance Day (*pāṭihāriya-uposatha*)," and he agrees in essence with the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*) commentary, where the period of continuous observance is shown as three months, whereas in the Anthology of Discourses commentary, it is five months. That is the only difference.

The third view from the Anthology of Discourses commentary is in agreement with that of the commentaries on the Birth Story about King Nimi (*Nimi-jātaka*, Ja 541), the Story about Uttara's Heavenly Mansion (*Uttara-vimāna-vatthu*, Vv 15), the Verses of the Elder Monks (*Thera-gāthā*, no further ref. given) and the Birth Story about Suruci, King of Mithilā (*Suruci-jātaka*, Ja 489).

However, according to the commentary on the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*, PTS 1.307), the wonderful Observance Day in each fortnight of the month are the seventh, the ninth, the thirteenth, and the first waning or waxing day after the fifteenth and the half month after the Rains Retreat (*Vassa*), i.e., from the first waning to the new-moon day of October (*Assayuja*). [1583]

Herein, there is one thing to consider: Even though the commentaries on the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*), the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*), the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*), and the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*) are written by the same commentator, Ven. Mahā Buddhaghosa, they are different from one another regarding the Observance Days. Why is this?

That the Buddha actually described the three kinds of Observance Days are clear from the Discourse about the Uposatha Day (*Uposatha-sutta*, AN 3.71), but there is no discourse delivered by the Buddha to set aside specific days, three or six, as Observance Days. The fourteenth observance, the fifteenth observance, the eighth observance and the wonderful Observance Day (*pāṭihāriya-uposatha*) mentioned before are not prescribed by the Fortunate One as Observance Days. Indeed, it was Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, who said to the Tāvatiṁsa deities: "People observe the Observance Days on the fourteenth, the fifteenth, and the eighth. On the days called wonderful (*pāṭihāriya*), too, they observe Observance Days." He was given this information by the Catumahārājika Devas, who went round in the human world preparing a list of the virtuous. The Buddha was only reproducing the words of Sakka. The classification of the fourteenth, the fifteenth and the eighth Observance Days is merely a statement of the Observance Days traditionally observed by people. There is no special discourse expounded by the Fortunate One to enjoin that the Observance Days must be observed on these days or must not be observed on other days.

Thus the fourteenth, the fifteenth and the eighth Observance Days were the Observance Days prescribed by the ancient people. So, traditionally, there were only three ordinary Observance Days (*pakati-uposatha*), but later on, people observed the fifth day also, and therefore there come to be four Observance Days in each fortnight of a month. Thus the fifth Observance Day is mentioned in the commentary. Nowadays, people observe only four Observance Days in a month.

The Buddha did not prescribe any specific Observance Days because people can observe the precepts on whichever day they like. In mentioning vigilant (*paṭijāgara*) and wonderful (*pāṭihāriya*) Observance Days as special days for observance, the commentators are merely recording the various customary practices of the people, hence these seeming differences in the commentaries.

Moreover, the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (*Aṅguttara-nikāya*), the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*), the Collection of the Thematic Discourses (*Saṁyutta-nikāya*) and the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*), which make expositions of morality (*sīla*), are known as the teachings in the discourses; they are also known as common-usage teachings (*vohāra-desanā*) because, in these discourses, the Buddha, who is incomparable in the usage of the world, employs the terms and expressions of the people, which can never be uniform. Thus, with regard to different classifications of the Observance Days, as all are meant to develop merit, it is not necessary to decide which view is right and which view is wrong. In the Anthology of Discourses commentary, the three views are described advising readers to accept whichever they like.

Those who observe morality select suitable days which they prefer, and they observe the Observance Days accordingly in many ways. And all their observance develops merit, so the commentators write, recording the ways employed by the people. In the teaching in the discourses (*suttanta-desanā*), even the Buddha expounded the following usages of the people. Why did the Fortunate One expound in this manner? It was because he did not wish them to violate traditional customs which are not demeritorious.

The principal objective of the Fortunate One is to expound only such ultimate realities as mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa-paramattha-dhamma*) that would facilitate the attainment of the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna. Teaching in such abstruse terms could be beneficial to those with the right perception, but it could make those lacking right perception commit wrong deeds which would lead them to the four lower worlds. For example, those who have a wrong perception of mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*) would think thus: “In this world, there is mind and matter only; there is neither ‘I’ nor ‘others;’ if there are no ‘others’ there will be no harm in killing them, and there will be neither ‘mine’ nor ‘others;’ therefore, there will be no harm in stealing things, in committing adultery, etc.” In this manner, they will freely break the rules of society and do such unwholesome deeds which will cause rebirths in the lower planes of existence.

In terms of ultimate truth (*paramattha-sacca*), there is neither "I" nor "others," neither "man" nor "woman," etc. There are only aggregates of mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*) which are mental and physical phenomena. For those incapable of understanding the terms of ultimate truth, the Buddha employed terms of conventional truth (*sammuti-sacca*) when giving discourses (*suttanta-desanā*). [1584] Though all is a mass of mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa*), by conventional usage, it is determined for easy discrimination that such-and-such a mass is "I," such and such a mass is "they," such-and-such a mass is "mother," "father," etc. If people deviate from the norms set up by conventional usage, they will go astray doing wrong deeds. It is to prevent them from falling into the lower planes of existence as a consequence of their misdeeds that the Buddha teaches the discourses in conventional terms.

If, however, only discourses were delivered, people would take such terms as "I," "they," "my son," "my daughter," "my wife," "my property," etc., as ultimate realities and their belief in a permanent personality (*sakkāya-diṭṭhi*) would become so great that they would not attain the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna, hence the teaching of ultimate reality of mind and matter (*nāma-rūpa-paramattha-dhamma*) by the Buddha.

Some teachers write: "In the Basket of Discipline (*Vinaya-piṭaka*) there is an injunction for monastics not to observe the monastic Observance Days, or recitation of the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) on non-Observance Days. If they do so, they commit the offence of wrong-doing (*dukkaṭa-apatti*). Likewise, laymen should not observe the eight precepts on non-Observance Days."

Such writing shows that they are not accomplished in interpreting the teaching of the Buddha. The Teaching of the Discipline (*Vinaya-desanā*) is called a teaching of the rules (*āṇā-desanā*) in Buddhist literature; it means the authoritative injunction laid down by the Fortunate One. If a monastic commits, even with good intention, a forbidden act, he is guilty because he goes against the command of the Fortunate One and transgresses the Discipline. To assume that such a Vinaya rule is also applicable to laymen in their observance of Observance Days, to say that people must not observe precepts on non-Observance Days and that doing so will be an offence, is a clear misinterpretation of the teaching. In brief, a pure and noble observance can be fulfilled on any day. The more it is observed the greater will be the beneficial results.

Therefore, the sub-commentary on the Discourse about King Mahā Suddasana (*Mahā-sudassana-sutta*, DN 17) says: The Observance Day (*Uposatha*) is said to be the precepts (*sīla*) with eight factors that can be observed by laymen on all days (*uposathaṁ vuccati aṭṭhaṅga-samannāgataṁ sabba-divasesu gahaṭṭhehi rakkhitabba-sīlaṁ*).

This sub-commentary is written by Ven. Dhammapāla who has also written the sub-sub-commentary (*Anuṭīkā*) of the root sub-commentary (*Mūla-ṭīkā*) to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*), the Thus-Saids (*Iti-vuttaka*) commentary and other sub-commentaries.

Natural, Traditional, Lawful and Because of the Past Precepts

1. Non-transgression of the five precepts by inhabitants of the northern continent is called natural morality (*pakati-sīla*).

   By nature, these inhabitants refrain from wrong deeds, such as killing, without taking the vow of the five precepts. Non-breaking of the five precepts by them is not a matter of restraint through a vow (*samādāna-virati*) but of natural restraint even when transgression is demanded by circumstances (*sampatta-virati*).

2. Following the traditional practices of one's family, locality or sect is called traditional morality (*ācāra-sīla*).

   Refraining from evil because it is done so by one's ancestry is called family tradition (*kula-ācāra*); refraining from evil because it is generally done so in one's locality is called district tradition (*desa-ācāra*); refraining from evil because it is done in one's sect is called sectarian tradition (*pāsaṇḍika-sīla*).

3. The kind of morality kept by the mother of a Bodhisatta since she conceived her son, by virtue of which she has no thought for a man, is called natural morality according to Dhamma (*Dhammatā-sīla*).

   A Bodhisatta's mother regularly observes the five precepts and desires no man, not even her husband, from the moment of conception. This is because an extremely noble being, the Bodhisatta, is lying in her womb. As the morality is kept as a rule by the mother of a Bodhisatta, it is called natural morality according to Dhamma (*Dhammatā-sīla*).

4. The observance of morality by chaste persons, such as the youth Pippali, who later became Mahā Kassapa, and the Bodhisatta as King Mahā

> Sīlava, through natural inclination and without anyone's instruction, is called morality by reason of past habit (*pubba-hetu-sīla*).
>
> As a result of habitual observance of morality in their former births, they are by nature inclined to observe morality in this life. [1585]

The Four Realms of Morality

These four are chiefly concerned with the monastic. When the Bodhisatta Sumedha the ascetic, reflected on the perfection of morality, he said to himself (Bv 2.124): Likewise, you should fulfil the four realms of morality (*tatheva tvaṁ catūsu bhūmisu sīlāni paripūraya*).

1. Morality according to restraint by the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara-sīla*).

The morality that liberates its observer from suffering in the four lower worlds is called morality according to restraint by the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara-sīla*); *pāti*, "observe," *mokkha*, "to set free," or, "set free by observing the rules."

The observer of this morality 1) Should have proper conduct; 2) should have blameless, wholesome resorts; 3) should see great danger in the slightest fault; the offence may be small like a particle of dust but one should see in it a danger as big as Mount Meru, which has a height of 168,000 leagues above and under water; and 4) should observe and practise the precepts properly. To explain further:

1. In the world, there is what should be practised (*ācāra-dhamma*), and there is what should not be practised (*anācāra-dhamma*). The three wrong physical actions of killing, stealing and unlawful sexual intercourse, the four wrongs of telling lies, backbiting, abusing and babbling, altogether being seven wrong doings (*duccarita*) and other deeds that cause a breach of morality constitute what should not be practised (*anācāra*).

To give some examples of unwholesome actions that would cause a breach of morality: In the world, some monastics earn their living by making gifts of bamboo, leaves, flowers, fruits, soap powder and toothpicks to the laity; they degrade themselves by approving of the wrong speech of the laity, flattering them to gain favour, telling much falsehood mixed with a little truth just like a lot of uncooked peas mixed with a few cooked ones in a pot. They look after

children of the laity as nurse-maids, embracing them, dressing them, etc. They serve as messengers running errands for their lay supporters; they give medical treatment to the laity, look after their properties, exchange food and beverage with them. Such wrong livelihood, as well as every other resort of wrong livelihood condemned by the Buddha, is called wrong conduct (*anācāra-dhamma*).

It is improper for a monastic to give bamboo, leaves, etc. even if the laity comes and asks for their use; more so, therefore, when they are not asked for. Such acts of giving are not the business of monastics. If they do so, they would be destroying the faith of the laity (*kula-dūsana*) in the Vinaya.

In this connection, it might be asked whether the laity's faith would not be destroyed if the monastic does not give them what they want, or if the monastic gave them what they want, their faith would develop with the thought: "This is a monastic who satisfies our needs." The laity's faith in the monastic as a disciple of the Fortunate One has been genuine and pure even before receiving gifts from the monastic; after their reception, the laity will see him as the giver of bamboo, the giver of leaves, etc., and as a result attachment will arise in them. Therefore, their faith in the monastic becomes tainted with attachment. The genuine faith has been destroyed. Accordingly, the Fortunate One has condemned the giving of gifts by the monastic, naming such deeds as corruption of the laity (*kula-dūsana*). All practices which are the opposite of the aforesaid wrong conduct (*anācāra*) are right conduct (*ācāra*) practices, which should be cultivated.

2. Resort is of two kinds: wrong resort and right resort. Some monastics, in the teachings of the Buddha, have intimate dealings with prostitutes, widows, divorced women, spinsters, eunuchs and nuns; or they frequent ale-houses, which is unbecoming for a monastic. They mingle with kings, ministers, heretics and their followers like ordinary laymen. They associate with people who have no faith, who abuse and threaten the disciples of the Buddha, monks, nuns, male and [1586] female lay devotees and who wish them ill. All these intimate associates of monastics and places frequented by them are wrong resort for monastics.

"Wrong resorts" here refers to unwholesome friendship and association and improper places for monastics to visit. But if a prostitute invites monastics for

an alms offering, they can go and receive it, maintaining steadfast mindfulness. Herein, prostitutes, widows, divorced women, spinsters, eunuchs and nuns are regarded as unwholesome resorts because they form the bases for the five sensual pleasures. Ale-houses, taverns, etc. are dangerous to the noble practice of Dhamma. Association with kings and ministers are also not beneficial; offerings made by them may prove destructive like a thunderbolt. And the houses where there is no faith, where people are abusive and threatening, are unwholesome resorts because they discourage faith and cause fear in the monastic.

People and places as opposed to those described above constitute the monastic's wholesome resort. Some lay people have faith and confidence in the Three Treasures; they believe also in productive deeds (*kamma*) and their results; they are like wells or lakes where the monastic may enjoy an inexhaustible supply of water. Their houses are brightened by the colour of the robes of monastics who visit them frequently. The atmosphere of such a place is filled with the breeze which is caused by the movements of monastics. Here, people wish them well, wish for the welfare of male and female monastics, and male and female lay devotees; such a house is a wholesome resort for monastics.

To explain improper conduct (*anācāra*), proper conduct (*ācāra*) and proper resort (*gocara*) further.

Improper conduct (*anācāra*): There are two kinds of improper conduct: improper bodily conduct (*kāyika-anācāra*) and improper verbal conduct (*vācasika-anācāra*).

Improper bodily conduct (*kāyika-anācāra*): After entering the Saṅgha, a monastic acts disrespectfully towards the Saṅgha. He stands jostling the elders, sits jostling them, stands or sits in front of them; takes a seat higher than those of the elders; sits with his head covered with the robe; speaks while standing; waves his hands while talking; walks with his footwear on while the elders are walking bare foot; takes a higher path while the elders are taking a lower path; walks on a path while the elders are walking on the ground; sits pushing the elders; stands pushing them and gives no place to the younger monastics.

At the bath house, he puts faggots into the stove without permission of the elders and closes the door; at the bathing place, he pushes the elders and gets into the water in front of them, pushes them and bathes before they do; comes out jostling them before they do and goes out before them, overtaking the elders

ahead of him; on reaching the village and town, he hurries into the laity's private and secret chambers and ladies' rooms; he strokes children's heads showing signs of fondness. This is called improper bodily conduct (*kāyika-anācāra*).

Improper verbal conduct (*vācasika-anācāra*): After entering the Saṅgha, a monastic acts disrespectfully towards the Saṅgha. He talks about Dhamma without asking for permission from the elders; answers questions or recites the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) without permission; talks while standing; waves his hands while talking. On reaching the village and town, without restraining himself, he speaks to the women or young girls: "You so and so of such and such a family, what do you have? Is there rice gruel? Is there cooked rice? Is there hard food to eat? What shall we drink? What hard food shall we eat? What sort of food shall we eat? What will you offer me?" etc. This is called improper verbal conduct (*vācasika-anācāra*).

Proper conduct (*ācāra*): Proper conduct should be understood as the reverse of the said improper conduct (*anācāra*). Furthermore, a monastic is reverential, obedient, possessed of conscience and concern; wears his lower robe properly; wears his upper robe properly; his manners inspire reverential faith whether moving forwards or backwards, looking sideways, bending or stretching; his eyes are downcast, he guards the doors of his sense-faculties; he knows the right measure [1587] in eating; he strives to be always wakeful; possesses mindfulness with full comprehension; he wants little, is easily contented; is strenuous in the practice of wholesome Dhamma; observes with meticulous care the proper conduct (*abhisamācārika-sīla*) described above. This is called proper conduct (*ācāra*).

Proper resort (*gocara*) is of three kinds: the resort that serves as a powerful support for one's moral development (*upanissaya-gocara*); the resort that serves as a guardian of the mind (*ārakkha-gocara*); and the resort that serves as an anchor of the mind (*upanibandha-gocara*).

A good friend who always uses the ten kinds of right speech conducive to liberation from Saṁsāra is called a support (*upanissaya-gocara*). By depending upon such a friend, he hears the Dhamma which is unheard of before, dispels doubts, rectifies his views, gains clearness of mind. In addition to these benefits, he grows in faith, morality, learning, generosity and wisdom. Hence that good

friend is a powerful support (*upanissaya-gocara*) for developing wholesome qualities, such as morality, etc. The ten kinds of speech conducive to liberation:

1. Speech about wanting little (*appiccha-kathā*).
2. Speech about contentment with what one has in hand (*santuṭṭhi-kathā*).
3. Speech about living in solitude (*paviveka-kathā*).
4. Speech about living in seclusion (*asaṁsagga-kathā*).
5. Speech about making effort (*viriyārambha-kathā*).
6. Speech about morality (*sīla-kathā*).
7. Speech about concentration of the mind (*samādhi-kathā*).
8. Speech about insight (*vipassanā*) and the knowledge of the paths (*paññā-kathā*).
9. Speech about the fruition states or liberation (*vimutti-kathā*).
10. Speech having reflective knowledge (*paccavekhaṇā-ñāṇa*) of the paths and fruitions (*vimutti-ñāṇa-dassana-kathā*).

In brief, the person who uses the ten kinds of speech relating to liberation from the suffering of Saṁsāra thus brings five advantages, such as hearing the Dhamma unheard of before, and so on; the good friend, who can make others progress in five attributes: faith, morality, learning, generosity and wisdom, is called a proper resort (*upanissaya-gocara*), the resort which provides the strong sufficing condition for the development of wholesome qualities, such as morality.

Mindfulness (*sati*) that guards the mind is called a resort that guards the mind (*ārakkha-gocara*). A monastic who takes resort in mindfulness goes for alms round into the village and town with downcast eyes, only looking the length of a plough yoke in front of him, and guarding his sense faculties. He goes without looking at the troops of elephants, or troops of horses, troops of chariots, infantry soldiers or at women or men. He does not look up or down or towards any of the eight directions and keeps going.

A monastic who does not take resort in mindfulness (*ārakkha-gocara*) when going round for alms food in the village and town looks this way and that way, everywhere, like a crow kept in a covered basket. Hence, mindfulness is the

resort that protects the mind of the monastic from the danger of evil thoughts. [1588]

As the four foundations of steadfast mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna-kammaṭṭhāna*) are the resort to which the mind is anchored, it is called the anchoring resort (*upanibandha-gocara*) from *upanibanda*, "where the mind is anchored;" *gocara*, "resort."

The monastic who wants to make his restraint according to the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara-sīla*) completely pure, should have proper conduct, wholesome resort and look upon the slightest fault as an enormous danger.

2. Restraint of the sense faculties (*Indriya-saṁvara-sīla*).

Guarding of the faculty of the senses (*indriya-saṁvara-sīla*); the six sense bases: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind are here called faculties (*indriya*). The faculties means governing (*indriya*) the senses. In seeing a sight, the eye (*cakkhu-pasāda*) is the governing organ. If the eye is defective, it cannot see an object because eye-consciousness cannot arise; therefore, the Buddha says that the eye is the eye-faculty (*cakkhundriya*).

Similarly, in hearing a sound, the ear (*sota-pasāda*) is the governing organ. If the ear is defective, it cannot hear a sound because ear-consciousness cannot arise; therefore, the ear is the ear-faculty (*sotindriya*).

In smelling an odour, the nose (*ghāna-pasāda*) is the governing organ; if the nose is defective, it cannot smell an odour because nose-consciousness cannot arise; therefore, the nose is the nose-faculty (*ghānindriya*).

In tasting a flavour, the tongue (*jivhā-pasāda*) is the governing organ. If the tongue is defective, it cannot taste a flavour because tongue-consciousness cannot arise; therefore, the tongue is the tongue-faculty (*jivhindriya*).

In touching a tangible object, the body (*kāya-pasāda*) is the governing organ. If the body is defective, it cannot feel a tangible object because body-consciousness cannot arise; therefore, the body is the body-faculty (*kāyindriya*).

In cognizing a mental object, the mind (*mana*) is the governing organ. Without mind, there cannot arise mind-consciousness; therefore, mind is the mind-faculty (*manindriya*).

Thus it is called guarding these six faculties (*indriya-saṁvara-sīla*). This is how to guard the six sense faculties: When seeing a visible object with the eye, one should be aware of it only as a visible object; one should not cognize even the general aspect of what is seen, e.g., "this is a woman," "this is a man," "this is beautiful," that will cause the arising of defilements. Nor should one give attention to details (*anubyañjana*) regarding the sign or image of that woman, man, etc., such as the shape of the hands and the legs. The manner of smiling, laughing, talking, etc. looking aside, etc., which will cause repeated arising of defilements.

Ven. Mahā Tissa

With regard to guarding the faculty of the eye, Ven. Mahā Tissa who lived on the top of Mount Cetiya should be shown as an example. One day, Ven. Mahā Tissa went into Anurādhapura for alms food. That day, a woman, who had quarrelled with her husband, left her house to go back to her parents' place. She had dressed herself in fine clothes. Seeing Ven. Mahā Tissa, who was coming with his faculties restrained, she laughed loudly with the thought: "I will make him my husband after tempting him." Ven. Mahā Tissa looked up to see what it was. Seeing the bones of her teeth, he developed the perception of foulness (*asubha-saññā*) and contemplating on it, he became an Arahat. Her husband, who was going after her, saw Ven. Mahā Tissa and asked: "Venerable sir, did you see a woman on the way?"

> *Nābhijānāmi itthi vā, puriso vā ito gato,*
> *api ca aṭṭhi-saṅghato gacchatesa mahā-pathe.*
>
> Friend, I didn't notice whether it was a man or a woman that went by, I was only aware that a skeleton had gone along the road.

Even though Ven. Mahā Tissa saw the sight of a woman, he just saw it but was not aware that it was a woman; instead, he simply developed his meditation and became an Arahat. That incident should be taken as a good example.

Without control of the sense of sight, when a monastic sees a pleasant object, covetousness (*abhijjhā*) will arise in him; if he sees an unpleasant object, unhappiness, grief (*domanassa*), will arise in him. Therefore, one should exercise control over one's sense of sight through [1589] mindfulness to prevent the arising of such unwholesome states of mind.

With regard to the remaining sense doors, similar control is to be maintained so that no defilement arises from hearing a sound, smelling an odour, tasting a flavour, touching a tangible object or cognizing a mental object.

3. The morality of purity of livelihood (*ājīva-parisuddhi-sīla*).

The morality of purity of livelihood (*ājīva-parisuddhi-sīla*) means avoiding the six kinds of livelihood which the Vinaya prohibits and avoiding of all other kinds of wrong livelihood. The six training rules (*sikkhāpada*) promulgated by the Buddha with regard to livelihood are:

1. Having evil wishes and being oppressed by them, if a monastic boasts to a layperson of absorption (*jhāna*), path (*magga*) and fruition (*phala*) attainments which are not present in him, and which have never been present before, he is guilty of expulsion from the Saṅgha (*pārājika-āpatti*).
2. For the sake of livelihood, if he acts as a go-between, arranging marriages, he is guilty of an offense requiring a meeting of the Saṅgha (*Saṅghādisesa-āpatti*).
3. Without mentioning directly: "I am an Arahat," if he says, for the sake of livelihood: "A certain monastic lives at your monastery and that monastic is an Arahat," and if the supporter of the monastery understands that he means himself, he is guilty of a grave offense (*thullaccaya-āpatti*).
4. For the sake of livelihood, if he asks for and eats sumptuous food, such as food mixed with ghee, butter, oil, honey, molasses, fish, milk and curd, without being ill, he is guilty of an offense requiring confession (*pācittiya-āpatti*).
5. For the sake of livelihood, if a nun asks for and eats sumptuous food, without being ill, she is guilty of an offence requiring an acknowledgement (*pāṭidesanīya-āpatti*).
6. For the sake of livelihood, if a monastic asks for and eats curry or boiled rice, without being ill, he is guilty of an offense of wrong doing (*dukkaṭa-āpatti*).

Other kinds of wrong livelihood, in addition to the above six, are:

1. Hypocrisy (*kuhanā*).
2. Flattery (*lapana*).
3. Hinting (*nemittikatā*).
4. Belittling (*nippesikatā*).
5. Seeking gain with gain (*lābhena lābhaṁ nijigīsanatā*).

1. Hypocrisy (*kuhanā*) is of three kinds: Hypocrisy in the use of requisites (*paccaya-paṭisevana*); hypocrisy in talk on subjects close to attainments of the path and the fruition states (*samanta-jappā*); hypocrisy in change of postures to deceive lay devotees (*iriyāpatha-saṇṭhapana*).

When lay devotees offer a monastic robes, bowls, etc., although he wants them, having evil desires to pretend and pose as if he has attributes which are non-existent, he says, in order to get even more: "What is the use of such expensive robes for a monastic? Only robes made of refuse rags (*paṁsu-kūlika*) is proper for him."

He says: "What is the use of such expensive food for a monastic? Only food obtained on alms round is proper for a monastic;" or "What is the use of such a fine dwelling place for a monastic? Only dwelling at the foot of a tree or in the open air is proper for him;" or "What is the use of such expensive medicine for a monastic? Cow urine or a portion of gall nut or myrobalan is proper for him as medicine."

Accordingly, to practise what he teaches, he uses only coarse robes, coarse dwelling places and coarse medicines. Lay devotees think so highly of him thus: "This venerable one has few wishes; he is easily contented; he is free from desires for material goods and sense pleasures; he does not mix with lay people; he is also very diligent in the practice of Dhamma." Then they invite him to accept more and more requisites.

Then the monastic with evil desires boastfully says: "Supporter, when these three things: Faith, material goods to offer and the person to receive them are present, then the good person who has [1590] faith can develop much merit. Here, you devotees surely have faith; you have things to give away in generosity, and indeed, I am a worthy recipient. If I do not accept your alms, your merit will decline. So out of compassion for you, I should accept your alms, although I am

not in need of them." So saying, he accepts cartloads of robes and food, numerous dwelling places and large quantities of medicine. Thus, though he is avaricious, he pretends to be of little wants and uses coarse requisites to make others think highly of him. This is called hypocrisy in use of requisites (*paccaya-paṭisevana-kuhanā*).

Without saying directly: "I have already attained the absorptions, paths and fruitions," he makes other people think that he is already in possession of them by insinuating: "The monastic who wears such kinds of robes is powerful; the monastic who carries such a bowl, water filter, water strainer, waist-band, sandals, etc., is powerful." This is called hypocrisy in talk on subjects close to the attainments of the absorptions, paths and fruitions (*samanta-jappā*).

Determined on gaining the praise and high esteem of lay devotees, the monastic thinks: "If I were to walk like this, people will praise me and think highly of me," and effects the deportment of noble ones in going, standing, sitting and lying down. This is called hypocrisy in change of posture to deceive lay devotees (*iriyā-patha-saṇṭhapana*).

2. Talking with an evil motive (*lapanā*). When the monastic sees people coming to the monastery, he speaks to them first: "Supporter, for what purpose do you come here? Do you come here to invite monastics? If so, you go ahead, I will follow you carrying the bowl," or he says: "I am Ven. Tissa, even the king reveres me. The ministers revere me," etc. While talking with the people, he takes care not to go against them or to bore them, thus avoiding their displeasure. He flatters them, calling them "a great banker," "a great miller," etc. Talking thus in many ways to wheedle alms from lay devotees is called talking with an evil motive (*lapanā*).

3. Hinting by making signs or giving indications with an evil motive to induce generosity (*nemitti-katā*). For example, seeing a man carrying some food, he gives an indication that he also wants some food by saying: "Have you already got food? Where have you got it from? How do you manage to get it?" etc. Seeing cowherds, he points to the calves and says: "Do these calves grow up on milk or water?" The cowherds reply: "Venerable sir, the calves grow up on milk." "I don't think so. Should the calves get milk, the monastics would have got it, too," etc. thus sending the message through to their parents to offer them milk, hinting thus to induce generosity (*nemitti-katā*).

The form of talk which gives more direct and glaring indications of what one wants is called roundabout talk (*sāmanta-jappā*). Both hinting (*nemitti-katā*) and roundabout talk (*sāmanta-jappā*) are different kinds of talking with an evil motive (*lapanā*).

In describing the roundabout talk (*sāmanta-jappā*), which indicates unmistakably the object of desire, the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) gives the story of a monastic who habitually visited lay people (*kulupaka*).

A Monastic who Visits Lay People

Wanting a meal, a monastic, who was in the habit of visiting lay people, entered a house and took a seat uninvited. Seeing the monastic and unwilling to give food to him, the woman of the house grumbled: "I haven't got any rice," went out as though to look for some and stayed at a nearby house. The monastic then stealthily went into an inner room and looking everywhere saw sugarcane in the corner behind the door, lumps of jaggery in a bowl, a flattened piece of dried fish in a basket, rice in a pot and butter in a jar. Thereafter, he returned to his seat and sat there as before.

The woman came back murmuring: "I didn't get any rice." The monastic then said: "Supporter, this morning I saw some signs suggesting that I would get nothing to eat." – "What signs, venerable sir?" the woman asked. "As I came to this house for alms food, I saw on the way a snake as big as sugarcane in the corner behind the door. To drive it away, I looked for something and found a stone which was as big as the lump of jaggery in your bowl. When I hurled the stone at the snake, its hood spread out to the size of the piece of flattened dried fish in your basket. When the snake opened its mouth to bite the stone, it [1591] showed its teeth and fangs which were like the rice-grains in your pot. The foamy saliva mixed with poison of the angry snake was like the butter in your jar." Caught inextricably in the web of words which glaringly indicates his wish, the woman thought to herself: "There is no way to deceive the shaven headed one!" And she reluctantly gave him the sugarcane, cooked the rice and offered it to him together with the butter, jaggery and dried fish.

4. Another form of wickedness means pursuit of gain by wiping off or grinding or pulverising the virtuous qualities of a lay devotee (*nippesi-katā*), as in the pursuit of perfume by grinding or pulverising scented materials. Such pursuit is made in many ways: the use of abusive language to compel one to give;

reproaching, by saying: "You are a fellow with no faith at all" "You are not like other devotees." Sarcasm, by saying to one who does not give: "Oh, what a supporter! Oh, what a great supporter;" ridiculing remarks made to a non-giver in the midst of people by saying: "Why do you say so when this man does not offer anything? He always says: 'I have nothing,' to everyone who comes for alms." Such pursuit of gain by belittling the virtuous qualities of lay devotees is called belittling (*nippesi-katā*).

5. Pursuit of gain with gain motivated by covetousness (*lābhena lābhaṁ nijigīsanatā*). For example, after receiving some food offered at a supporter's house, a monastic gives it away to the children in the neighbourhood. He does so just to make the families of children give him more in return to express their thanks and delight for his seeming interest in their children. In brief, seeking for more alms from another house by giving away the few offerings he has already received is called pursuit of gain with gain (*lābhena lābhaṁ nijigīsanatā*).

The five kinds of wrong livelihood, such as hypocrisy, described above, are different from one another only in the manner of the pursuance in their nature; they are all the same, in the sense that they beguile lay devotees into giving offerings, even though they are reluctant.

Thus living on things obtained by infringing the six training rules (*sikkhāpada*) laid down by the Buddha with regard to livelihood and things obtained by evil practices of hypocrisy, talking, hinting, belittling and pursuing gain with gain, is called wrong livelihood (*micchājīva*). Refraining from all forms of wrong livelihood and becoming pure in means of living is called purification of livelihood (*ājīva-pārisuddhi-sīla*).

4. Morality from dependence on the requisites (*paccaya-sannissita-sīla*).

Morality fulfilled by depending on the four requisites (*paccaya-sannissita-sīla*), where the four requisites are robes, food, dwelling places and medicines; they are indispensable; living is impossible without them. But when using them, one should reflect on the nature of the requisite concerned so that such evils as greed, hatred, etc. do not arise.

The way in which one should reflect while using robes, without considering it as an embellishment, which will cause the arising of demeritorious thoughts, one thinks on it wisely: "For the purpose of protection from the cold, from the heat

of the sun, from contact with mosquitoes, gad-flies, wind, snakes, scorpions, fleas, etc., for concealing the private parts of the body that would disturb conscience, I wear this robe."

While using alms food, one reflects wisely: "I take this alms food not for amusement as children do; I take this alms food not for intoxication with manliness; I take this alms food not for development of bodily beauty; I take this alms food not for a clear skin and complexion; I take this alms food only for long endurance and maintenance of the body; I take this alms food for warding off the oppression of hunger; I take this alms food for facilitating the noble practice. By thus taking alms food, the old suffering of hunger and thirst will diminish; I will also ward off the new suffering of indigestion due to overeating, etc. By moderate eating, the old suffering of hunger and thirst and the new suffering of indigestion due to over-eating cannot arise, and my body will be maintained. This alms food is sought properly and eaten in a blameless manner and by taking it moderately, I shall live in comfort." [1592]

With regard to living in comfort by eating moderately, Ven Sāriputta[426] said (Thag 982-983):

> *Cattāro pañca ālope, abhutvā udakaṁ pive,*
> *alaṁ phāsu-vihārāya, pahitattassa bhikkhuno.*
>
> With four or five morsels still to eat, a monastic should finish off his meal by drinking water. This is sufficient to abide in comfort for the monastic who has resolute will for meditation.

Even though this discourse was expounded primarily to meditating yogis, it is also beneficial to non-meditators. By following this instruction, they can abide in ease, free from the discomfort of immoderate eating.

While using a dwelling place, one reflects: "I use this dwelling place for the purpose of protection from the cold, from the heat of the sun, from mosquitoes, gadflies, wind, snakes, scorpions, fleas, etc., to ward off the perils of extreme climates and for enjoying a secluded living."

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[426] [The learned author attributed this verse to the Buddha, but it seems the only canonical reference is to Ven Sāriputta's verse.]

While using medicine, one reflects: "I take this medicine for the purpose of countering illness, for the protection of life and for immunity from afflictions that have arisen or are arising." This elaborate manner of reflection is called the great reflection (*mahā-paccavekkhaṇā*).

How to Fulfil these Four Kinds of Morality?

Of these four kinds, the restraint according to the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara-sīla*) should be fulfilled with faith and confidence (*saddhā*) in the Buddha, thinking thus: "The Fortunate One, who has promulgated the training rules (*sikkhāpada*), is truly a Buddha who realizes all the laws of nature without exception; that is, by having a clear vision of the Buddha." Faith and confidence in the Dhamma can be fulfilled, thinking thus: "The training rules (*sikkhāpada*) to be practised by the Saṅgha are indeed those promulgated by the Buddha, that is, by having a clear vision of the Dhamma." Faith and confidence in the Saṅgha can be fulfilled, thinking thus: "Members of the Saṅgha are the disciples of the Buddha, all of whom are practising these training rules (*sikkhāpada*) well, that is, by having a clear vision of the Saṅgha."

Thus, if one has faith and confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha, one would be able to fulfil the restraint according to the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara-sīla*).

Therefore, the training rules as promulgated by the Buddha should be observed without exception, with faith and confidence, and should be fulfilled even at the cost of one's life. This,[427] indeed, has been expounded thus (Vism 1, *Catu-pārisuddhi-sampādana-vidhi*):

> *Kikīva aṇḍaṁ, camarīva vāladhiṁ,*
> *piyaṁ va puttaṁ, nayanaṁ va ekakaṁ.*
> *Tatheva sīlaṁ, anurakkhamānā,*
> *supesalā hotha, sadā sagāravā.*

Just as the female pheasant guards her eggs, even sacrificing her life, just as the yak (*camari*) guards its tail, even sacrificing its life, just as the

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[427] [Again the author attributes this to the Buddha, though it only appears in the Collection of the Long Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*) commentary, PTS 1.56, and the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*).]

householder guards his only son with loving-kindness, just as the one-eyed man protects his only eye with meticulous care, even so the observers of moral precepts in all three ages should have a high regard for morality and guard it with affection.

Elders who were Restrained according to the Rules

Once, in the Mahā Vattani forest grove of Śrī Laṅkā, robbers caught a venerable and bound him with creepers and made him lie down. Even though he could free himself with his effort, if he so desired, he feared that should he make a struggle, the black creepers would break and he would be guilty of the confession offence against the destruction of plants (Pāc 11). So he developed insight by meditation for seven days in his lying posture and attained the fruition state of a Non-returner (*Anāgāmi-phala*), and passed away on that very spot. He was reborn in the Brahma world.

Also in Śrī Laṅkā, a venerable was similarly mistreated by robbers. At that time a forest fire broke out. Even though he could manage to free himself, he feared that he might be guilty of the destroying of plants confession rule (Pāc 11). By developing insight without cutting the creepers, he became an Arahat, whose defilements and lifespan ended at the same [1593] time (*sama-sīsī*), and attained Parinibbāna. Then Ven. Abhaya, the Collection of the Long Discourses reciter (*Dīgha-nikāya-bhāṇaka*), together with 500 monastics, arrived on the scene. Seeing the body, he had it cremated properly and a shrine built. Therefore, it is thus stated in the commentary (Vism 1, *Catu-pārisuddhi-sampādana-vidhi*):

Pātimokkhaṁ visodhento, appeva jīvitaṁ jahe,
paññattaṁ loka-nāthena, na bhinde sīla-saṁvaraṁ.

The good man who maintains the purity of the restraint according to the Monastic Rules would sacrifice his own life rather than break the precepts laid down by the Buddha.

Just as the restraint according to the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha-saṁvara-sīla*) is fulfilled with faith and confidence, so should the restraint of the senses (*indriya-saṁvara-sīla*) be fulfilled with mindfulness. Only when the restraint of the senses is well-guarded by mindfulness, the restraint according to the Monastic Rules will endure long. When the restraint of the senses is broken, the restraint according to the Monastic Rules will be broken too.

At the time of the Buddha, a newly ordained monastic, Ven. Vaṅgīsa, while going on alms round, broke the restraint of the senses and was filled with lust on seeing a woman. He said to Ven. Ānanda: "Ven. Ānanda, I am burning with sensual lust, my mind is consumed by the flames of lust. Out of compassion, please teach me the Dhamma to extinguish the burning flames."

Then Ven. Ānanda replied: "As you perceive wrongly, the burning flames consume your mind. Dispel your perception of pleasantness in what you see for it leads to lust; see foulness there to purify your mind." Ven. Vaṅgīsa followed Ven. Ānanda's advice, and the burning fires of lust died down.

There are two other examples which should be followed by one who wishes to fulfil the restraint of the senses.

The Story of Ven. Cittagutta

In the great cave Kurandaka, in Śrī Laṅkā, there was a lovely painting depicting the renunciation of the Seven Buddhas, such as Vipassī, Sikhī and so on. A number of guest monastics while wandering amidst the dwellings saw the painting and said: "Venerable sir, what a lovely painting it is in your cave!" Ven. Cittagutta replied: "For more than 60 years, friends, I have lived in the cave, and I did not know whether there was a painting here or not. Today, I come to know about it through you who have keen eyesight."

> Though Ven. Cittagutta had lived there for more than 60 years, he had never raised his eyes and looked up at the cave even once. And, at the entrance of his cave, there was a great ironwood tree. Ven. Cittagutta had never looked up at the tree either. But seeing the flower petals on the ground each year, he knew it was in bloom.

Hearing Ven. Cittagutta's strict observance of the restraint of the senses, the King of Mahāgāma sent for him three times, desiring to pay homage to him. When Ven. Cittagutta did not go, the king had the breasts of all the women with infants in the village bound and sealed off, saying: "As long as Ven. Cittagutta does not come, let the children go without milk." Out of compassion for the children, Ven. Cittagutta went to Mahāgāma.

Being informed that Ven. Cittagutta had arrived, the king said: "Go and bring the venerable into the palace. I want to take the precepts." In the inner chamber, the king paid homage to Ven. Cittagutta and provided him with a meal, after

which he said: "Venerable sir, it is not opportune for me today to take the precepts. I shall do so tomorrow." Carrying Ven. Cittagutta's bowl, he followed him for a short distance and paid homage with the queen. Whether it was the king or the queen who paid homage to him, Ven. Cittagutta gave the blessing: "May the king be happy!" Seven days went by in this manner.

The fellow monastics asked him: "Venerable sir, why it is that, whether it is the king or the queen who pays homage, you say: 'May the king be happy?' " Ven. Cittagutta replied: "Friends, I have no particular awareness whether it is the king or the queen." At the end [1594] of seven days, when the king found that Ven. Cittagutta was not happy living there, he allowed him to leave. He went back to the great cave at Kurandaka. When night came, he went out onto his walk.

A Deva, who dwelt in the Ironwood tree, stood by with a torch, and Ven. Cittagutta's meditation was so pure and bright it gladdened him. Immediately after the middle watch, he became an Arahat, making the whole mountain resound with a thunderous roar. This story gives a good example of how the restraint of the senses (*indriya-saṁvara-sīla*) should be observed.

The Story of Ven. Mahā Mitta

Ven. Mahā Mitta's mother was sick with a breast tumour. She told her daughter, who also had gone forth as a nun: "Go to your brother. Tell him my trouble and bring back some medicine." She went and told him, but he said: "I do not know how to gather herbs and concoct a medicine from them. But I will rather tell you a kind of medicine: 'Since I became a recluse, I have not broken my morality regarding the restraint of the senses (*indriya-saṁvara-sīla*) by looking at the bodily form of the opposite sex with lustful thoughts. By this declaration of truth, may my mother recover,' go back and repeat the words of truth I have just uttered and rub her body." She went back and reported to her mother what her brother had told her and did as she had been instructed. At that very moment, the mother's tumour vanished like a lump of froth breaking into pieces. She got up and uttered with joy: "If the Fully Awakened One were still alive, why should he not stroke with his net-adorned hand the head of a monastic like my son!"

A net-adorned hand is one of the 32 distinctive marks of a Great Man (*Mahā-purisa-lakkhaṇa*). For details, refer to the Collection of the Long

Discourses (*Dīgha-nikāya*, DN 30) and the section on these marks given in the Miscellaneous Topics above.

Ven. Mahā Mitta's way of restraint of the faculties is somewhat different from that of the former Ven. Cittagutta. Ven. Cittagutta restrained his faculties with downcast eyes so as not to look at any of the objects even by chance, whereas Ven. Mahā Mitta did not restrain with downcast eyes, and he looked at things as they presented themselves. Even when he caught the sight of the opposite sex, he restrained his faculty of eye to prevent lust from arising.

Ven. Cittagutta's way of restraint of the faculties is like the closing of the door of the house completely, not letting any robbers come in. Ven. Mahā Mitta's way of restraint is not closing the door, but keeping the robbers from entering the house even once. Both types of restraint are marvellous and worthy of emulation.

While restraint of the faculties is to be undertaken with mindfulness (*sati*), purification of livelihood is to be practised with energy (*viriya*). This is because one is able to abandon wrong livelihood only by applying right energy. Therefore, avoiding unbefitting, improper means, purification of livelihood should be undertaken with the right kind of search, like going on alms round with energy.

No hint, roundabout talk, indication or intimation is allowable to acquire such requisites as robes and alms food. But, as regards acquiring a dwelling place, only intimation is not allowable.

When a monastic who is preparing the ground, etc. as if to build a dwelling place, is asked: "What is being done, venerable sir? Who is having it done?" and he replies: "No one," such a reply of his is a "hint" implying that there is no supporter yet for the dwelling place. All other actions which communicate his need for a residence also constitute "hinting."

A monastic asks a lay devotee: "What kind of a house do you live in?" – "In a mansion, venerable sir." – "But, supporter, is a mansion not allowed for monastics?" This and any such expressions constitute "roundabout talk."

Saying: "The dwelling place is too small for the community of monastics," or any other such suggestive talk constitutes an "indication."

All four forms of talk, such as hinting, roundabout talk, etc., are allowed in the case of medicine. But when [1595] the disease is cured, is it or is it not allowed

to use the medicine obtained in this way? Herein, the Discipline specialists say that since the Buddha has opened the way for its use, it is allowable. But the Discourse specialists maintain that though there is no offence, nevertheless the purity of livelihood is sullied; therefore, it is not allowable. But one who wishes to live a completely pure noble life should not use hinting, roundabout talk, indication or intimation, even though these are permitted by the Fortunate One. Endowed as he is with special qualities such as having few wants, he should make use only of requisites obtained by means other than hinting, etc., even when he is to risk his life. Such a one is called a person of extremely noble, austere practice like Ven. Sāriputta.

The Story of Ven. Sāriputta

Once, Ven. Sāriputta, wishing to cultivate the noble life, lived in a solitary place in a certain forest with Ven. Mahā Moggallāna. One day, an affliction of colic arose in him, causing him great pain. In the evening, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna went to confer with him and found him lying down. He asked: "What is the matter?" When Ven. Sāriputta explained, he asked again: "What had helped you in the past?" Ven. Sāriputta said: "When I was a layman, friend, my mother gave me rice gruel prepared with a mixture of ghee, honey, sugar and so on. That used to help me recover." Then Ven. Mahā Moggallāna said: "So be it, friend, if either you or I have accumulated enough merit, perhaps tomorrow we shall get some."

Now a Deva, who lived in a tree at the end of the walkway, overheard their conversation. Thinking: "I will find rice gruel for Ven. Sāriputta tomorrow," he went immediately to the family who was supporting Ven. Mahā Moggallāna and entered the eldest son's body to cause him discomfort. Then he told the boy's family, who had gathered, that if they would prepare rice gruel of such and such a kind on the next day for Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, he would set the boy free. They replied: "Even without being told by you, we regularly offer alms food to Ven. Mahā Moggallāna." The next day they prepared rice gruel.

Ven. Mahā Moggallāna went to Ven. Sāriputta in the morning and told him: "Stay here, friend, till I come back from the alms round." Then he went into the village. The people met him, took his bowl, filled it with rice gruel, prepared as required, and gave it back to him. When Ven. Mahā Moggallāna wanted to leave, they said: "Eat, venerable sir, we shall give you more." When Ven. Mahā

Moggallāna had eaten, they gave him another bowlful. Ven. Mahā Moggallāna left taking the alms food to Ven. Sāriputta and told him to eat.

When Ven. Sāriputta saw it, he thought: "The rice gruel is very nice. How was it got?" He then reflected and, seeing how it had been obtained, said: "Friend, the alms food is not fit to be used." Instead of feeling offended and thinking: "He does not eat the alms food brought by someone like me," Ven. Mahā Moggallāna at once took the bowl by the rim and turned it over.

As the rice gruel fell on the ground, Ven. Sāriputta's affliction vanished, and it did not reappear during the remaining 45 years of his life. Then he said to Ven. Mahā Moggallāna: "Friend, even if one's bowels come out and fall to the ground through hunger, it is not fitting to eat gruel got by verbal intimation."

Herein, it should be noted: The Fortunate One prohibited only verbal intimation about the food. Ven. Sāriputta did not use verbal intimation to get the food. When Ven. Mahā Moggallāna wanted to know was, what had cured his affliction before, he only related the relief given by rice gruel in the past. However, he was not pleased that a verbal intimation had been made at all and did not accept the rice gruel.

Ven. Ambakhādaka Mahā Tissa

Let alone a venerable of Ven. Sāriputta's stature during the lifetime of the Buddha, even little-known Ven. Mahā Tissa of Ciragumba in Śrī Laṅkā, long after the demise of the Buddha, had strictly observed the disciplinary rules. Once, Ven. Mahā Tissa, while travelling during a famine, became weary and weak owing to lack of food and a tedious journey. So he [1596] lay down at the foot of a mango tree, which was full of fruit. Several mangoes fell everywhere on the ground near him. But he would not think of picking up some to eat in spite of his hunger.

At that time, an old man came near him and, seeing him in the state of exhaustion, prepared some mango juice and offered it to him. Then, carrying him on his back, the man took him where he wanted to go. While being carried thus, Ven. Mahā Tissa thought to himself: "This man is not my father, nor my mother, nor any relative of mine. Yet, he carries me on his back; this is only because of the morality I possess." Reflecting thus he admonished himself to keep his morality and concentration of mind intact without blemish. He then

developed insight and while still being carried on the back of the man, he became an Arahat through successive stages of the path. This venerable is a noble person whose abstemiousness in food serves as an example for emulation.

While purification of livelihood (*ājīva-pārisuddhi-sīla*) is to be practised with energy (*viriya*), morality which depends upon the four requisites (*paccaya-sannissita-sīla*) should be fulfilled with wisdom (*paññā*). Since only men of wisdom can discern the advantages and dangers of the four requisites, morality which depends upon the four requisites is the morality which is fulfilled through wisdom. Therefore, one should make use of the four requisites which have been obtained lawfully without craving for them and after reflecting with wisdom in the aforesaid manner.

Two Kinds of Reflection

There are two kinds of reflection (*paccavekkhaṇa*) on the four requisites; reflection at the time of receiving them and reflection at the time of using them. Not only at the time of using the requisites but also at the time of receiving them, one reflects on them either as mere elements (*dhātu-paccavekkhaṇa*) or as repulsive objects (*paṭikūla-paccavekkhaṇa*) and put them away for later use.

1. Reflection as elements: This robe is a mere aggregate of eight elements which arises when conditions are present. So is the person who uses them.

2. Reflection as repulsive objects: Reflection on food as in meditation on perception of foulness in nutriment (*āhāre paṭikūla-saññā*), and reflection on robes, etc. in this way: "All these robes, which are not in themselves disgusting, become utterly repulsive when associated with this filthy body."

> To recapitulate, reflection is of three kinds in all: A great reflection (*mahā-paccavekkhaṇa*), as described in detail regarding the use in general of the four requisites; reflecting on the four requisites as mere elements (*dhātu-paccavekkhaṇa*); and reflection on them as repulsive objects whether in their own nature or when put in use (*paṭikūla-manasikāra-paccavekkhaṇa*).

If a monastic reflects on the robes, etc. at the time of receiving them and if he does again at the time of use, his use of the requisites is blameless from beginning to end.

Four Kinds of Use

To dispel doubts about the use of requisites, one should take note of four kinds of their use:

1. Usage that is like a thief (*theyya-paribhoga*).

The use of requisites by an immoral person in the midst of the Saṅgha is called usage that is like a thief (*theyya-paribhoga*).

> The Fortunate One has permitted the use of the four requisites for men of morality. Lay devotees also make their offerings to virtuous persons only, expecting great benefit for their good deeds. Therefore, immoral persons have no right whatsoever to enjoy the requisites. Hence, using them without such right by immoral persons resembles an act of theft.[428] [1597]

2. Usage that is like owing a debt (*iṇa-paribhoga*).

The use of requisites by a moral person without due reflection is like owing a debt. One should reflect every time a robe is used; every time a morsel of food is eaten. If one fails to do so at the time of using these requisites, one should reflect on them in the morning, at dusk, during the first watch, middle watch and last watch of the night. If dawn breaks without his making such a reflection, he finds himself in the position of one who owes a debt.

Every time he passes under the roof to enter the dwelling place and after entering it, every time he sits, every time he lies down, he should make due reflection. In receiving a requisite of medicine and in using it, he should make reflection. But if he reflects while receiving and fails to do so when using it, he is guilty of an offence. On the other hand, even if he fails to make reflection when receiving but does so when using it, he is free from guilt.

Four Kinds of Purification of Morality

If a monastic happens to have committed an offence, he should take a recourse to one of the four kinds of purification of his morality as mentioned below:

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[428] So says the sub-commentary to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*).

1. Purification by admission of fault (*desanā-suddhi*): Restraint according to the Monastic Rules (*Patimokkha-saṁvara-sīla*) is purified by an open declaration of its breach.

2. Purification by restraint (*saṁvara-suddhi*): Restraint of the senses (*indriya-saṁvara-sīla*) is purified by making the resolution: "Never will I do it again."

3. Purification by search (*pariyeṭṭhi-suddhi*): Purification of livelihood (*ājīva-pārisuddhi-sīla*) is purified by abandoning wrong search and seeking requisites in a lawful manner.

4. Purification by reflection (*paccavekkaṇa-suddhi*): morality which depends upon the four requisites (*paccaya-sannissita-sīla*) is purified by reflection according to the manner mentioned above.

3. Usage that is like receiving an inheritance (*dāyajja-paribhoga*).

Use of the requisites by the seven kinds of learners, meaning noble ones who have realized the three lower paths and three lower fruition states and the path, but not the fruition, of an Arahat. These seven kinds of learners are sons of the Buddha. Just as a son is an heir to his father, these noble persons, as heirs, make use of the requisites allowed by the Buddha.

> Although the requisites are, in practice, given by the laity, they are allowed by the Buddha, and thus they are to be considered as the Buddha's requisites.

4. Usage like a master (*sāmi-paribhoga*).

Usage that is like a master is usage by an Arahat (*sāmi-paribhoga*). Worldlings (*puthujjana*) and learners (*sekkha*) are not free from craving, accordingly, they remain subject to craving, and their use of requisites is not as masters but as slaves of craving. On the other hand, Arahats have been liberated from servitude to craving, and their use of requisites is as masters with full control over craving. Therefore, they can use disgusting things, reflecting on their non-disgusting nature, or use non-disgusting things, reflecting on their disgusting nature, or use them reflecting that they are neither disgusting nor non-disgusting things.

Of these four kinds of use, use like a master by an Arahat, and use like getting an inheritance are allowable to all. Herein, as said before, use of requisites like a master is applicable only to Arahats, but if trainees (*sekkha*) and worldlings

(*puthujjana*) use the requisites by abandoning craving through perception of their foulness, it is like being liberated from the servitude to craving; therefore, this kind of use may also be classed as use like a master (*sāmi-paribhoga*). In the same way, Arahats and worldlings may also be considered as inheriting sons of the Buddha.

Use that is like owing a debt is not allowable, more so is the usage like an act of thieving which is certainly not allowable. Use of requisites after reflection by one endowed with morality is opposite to use that is like owing a debt (*iṇa-paribhoga*), and is thus called use without owing a debt (*ānaṇya-paribhoga*). At the same time, worldlings [1598] endowed with morality who use the requisites after due reflection may be reckoned as trainees (*sekkha*) or noble persons. Therefore, use of requisites after due reflection by such worldlings endowed with morality is also reckoned as use like getting an inheritance.

Of these four kinds of use, use that is like a master by an Arahat is the noblest; a monastic who wishes to use the requisites like a master should fulfil the morality which depends upon the four requisites (*paccaya-sannissita-sīla*) by using the four requisites only after due reflection.

Morality in Groups of Fives

1. Morality is of five kinds:

1. Morality that is limited in purity (*pariyanta-pārisuddhi-sīla*).
2. Morality that is unlimited in purity (*apariyanta-pārisuddhi-sīla*).
3. Morality that is fulfilled in purity (*paripuṇṇa-pārisuddhi-sīla*).
4. Morality that is irreproachable in purity (*aparāmaṭṭha-pārisuddhi-sīla*).
5. Morality that is calmed in purity (*paṭippassaddhi-pārisuddhi-sīla*).

1. Morality that is limited in purity (*pariyanta-pārisuddhi-sīla*). Morality observed by lay devotees and novices is called morality consisting in limited purification, because it is limited by the number of precepts to be kept.

The Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) does not explain the limit by the number of the precepts in the morality that is limited in purity. But the Path of the Analytic Knowledges (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*) commentary explains, as has been mentioned before, two kinds of limit: The limit regarding the number of

precepts observed (*sikkhāpada-pariyanta*) and the limit regarding the period of observance of the precepts (*kāla-pariyanta*).

The limit regarding the number of precepts observed refers to the number of precepts traditionally observed by lay devotees: one, two, three or four precepts; five, eight or ten precepts or whatever number of precepts they can observe. Probationers and novices keep the ten precepts. This is the limit regarding the number of precept observed.

The limit regarding the period of observance of precepts refers to when lay devotees make a ceremonial offering of alms, and also observe precepts within the limited period of the ceremony; whenever they go to monastery too, they observe precepts before returning home or for a few days or more during the daytime or nighttime. This is the limit regarding the period of observance of precepts.

2. Morality that is unlimited in purity (*apariyanta-pārisuddhi-sīla*). The Two Summaries (*Dve Mātikā*), which are the summary of the Twofold Analysis (*Ubhato-vibhaṅga*), enumerate 227 training rules (*sikkhāpada*) for members of the male Saṅgha. When expanded, these training rules total up to 9,185,036,000 rules. These disciplinary rules for monastics are promulgated by the Buddha and were recorded in brief by the convenors of the First Council. The whole group of these disciplinary rules is called morality that is unlimited in purity (*apariyanta-pārisuddhi-sīla*).

Though the disciplinary rules are laid down by the Buddha in a definite number, the Saṅgha has to observe all of them without exception; furthermore, it is impossible to foresee the termination of the observance of morality (*sīla*) through the five kinds of destruction: that due to gain, fame, relatives, impairment of body and loss of life. For these reasons, these disciplinary rules are collectively called morality that is unlimited in purity. This is the kind of morality observed by Ven. Mahā Tissa of Ciragumba described above.

3. Morality which is completely purified by a worldling who is striving for the spiritual good is called morality that is fulfilled in purity (*paripuṇṇa-pārisuddhi-sīla*). His morality, since the time of admission to the Saṅgha, has been very pure, like a bright ruby properly cut or like well-refined gold. Therefore, it is devoid of even the stain of impure thoughts and becomes the approximate cause for Awakening. Hence it is called morality that is fulfilled in

purity. Ven. Mahā [1599] Saṅgharakkhita and his nephew, Ven. Saṅgharakkhita, are examples of how such morality is to be observed.

The Story of Ven. Mahā Saṅgharakkhita

While Ven. Mahā Saṅgharakkhita of over 60 years standing in the Saṅgha at the age of 80 was lying on his death bed, monastics enquired of him: "Venerable sir, have you attained the supermundane states?" Ven. Mahā Saṅgharakkhita replied: "I have not made any such attainment yet." At that time a young monastic attendant of Ven. Mahā Saṅgharakkhita addressed him: "Venerable sir, people living within twelve leagues have assembled here thinking that the venerable one has passed into Parinibbāna. If they come to know that you have passed away as an ordinary worldling, they will be much disappointed."

Then Ven. Mahā Saṅgharakkhita said, "Friend, thinking I will see the coming of Buddha Metteyya, I have not striven for insight meditation. If it will be a disappointment for many, help me to sit up and give me a chance to contemplate with mindfulness." The young monastic helped Ven. Mahā Saṅgharakkhita to sit up and went out. As soon as the young monastic left the room Ven. Mahā Saṅgharakkhita became an Arahat and gave a sign by a snap of his fingers. The young monastic then returned and made him lie down as before.

He reported the matter to the Saṅgha who assembled and addressed Ven. Mahā Saṅgharakkhita: "Venerable sir, you have performed such a difficult task of attaining the supermundane state even when so close to death." Ven. Mahā Saṅgharakkhita replied: "Friends, it is not difficult for me to become an Arahat when the hour of death is drawing near. Rather, I will tell you what is really difficult to perform. Friends, I see no action which I have done without mindfulness and full comprehension since the time of my admission into the Saṅgha. Such actions, which are always accompanied by mindfulness and full comprehension, are far more difficult to do." Ven. Mahā Saṅgharakkhita's nephew also became an Arahat like him when he completed his 56th year as a monastic.

4. Morality unaffected by wrong view and observed by trainees, noble persons and morality untarnished by lust and observed by worldlings is called morality that is irreproachable in purity (*aparāmaṭṭha-pārisuddhi-sīla*), the kind of morality observed by Ven. Tissa, the householder's son.

The Story of Ven. Tissa, the Son of a Householder

A householder in Śrī Laṅkā had two sons. After the death of their father, the elder son, Tissa, gave all inheritance to his younger brother and became a monastic, practising meditation in a jungle monastery. Then the younger brother's wife thought to herself: "Now we get all the wealth because my brother-in-law became a monastic. If he decides to return to the layman's life, we will have to give him back half the wealth. There is no knowing whether he will do so or not. We will have peace of mind only when he dies." With this thought she engaged some men to kill her brother-in-law.

The men went to the jungle monastery and seized Ven. Tissa in the evening. He told them that he possessed nothing which they might want. The men explained: "We do not come here to get your wealth. We come here to kill you at the instance of your sister-in-law." Ven. Tissa said: "I possess pure morality, but I haven't yet become an Arahat (*Arahatta-phala*). As I want to achieve Awakening depending on this pure morality, allow me to practise insight meditation before dawn." – "We cannot grant your request. If you run away during the night, we will have to take the trouble of catching you again." Saying: "I will let you see clearly how I cannot run away," Ven. Tissa broke his two knees himself with a big stone.

When both knees were completely broken thus, Ven. Tissa said: "Now you have seen my condition. By no means can I run away from you. I abhor to die as a worldling, tainted with sensual lust. I feel ashamed of it." Only then did the men give him permission to practise meditation. Then Ven. Tissa, depending upon his morality, which was not tarnished by lust, made efforts throughout the night until dawn when he became an Arahat. [1600]

The Story of a Senior Monk

Once there was a senior monk who was very ill and unable to eat with his hands. He lay rolling around, smeared with his own urine and excrement. Seeing him, a young monastic exclaimed: "Oh, how painful is the life process!" The senior monk said: "Friend, if I die now, I will surely achieve divine bliss. I have no doubt of that. The bliss obtained by breaking[429] this morality is like forsaking

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[429] To break morality (*sīla*) means to die without becoming an Arahat.

becoming a monk and becoming a layman. But I am determined to die with my morality intact."[430] So saying, he lay in the same place, contemplating the same illness inherent in the five aggregates of mind and matter and became an Arahat. The morality of both these noble venerables is irreproachable (*aparāmaṭṭha-sīla*).

5. Morality of Arahats, etc.[431] which is purified through subsidence of the fires of defilements is called morality that is calmed in purity (*paṭippassaddhi-pārisuddhi-sīla*).

Morality is of five kinds:

1. Morality through abandoning (*pahāna-sīla*).
2. Morality through abstaining (*veramaṇi-sīla*).
3. Morality through intention (*cetanā-sīla*).
4. Morality through restraint (*saṁvara-sīla*).
5. Morality through non-transgression (*avitikkama-sīla*).

1. Morality observed by abandoning killing, stealing, etc. is called morality through abandoning (*pahāna-sīla*).

> Here, "etc." covers not only the wrong deeds of sexual misconduct and so on but also abandoning of everything that ought to be abandoned through successive stages of meritorious deeds. In terms of the Abhidhamma, abandoning (*pahāna*) means a group of wholesome consciousnesses together with their mental concomitants which are characterised by their function of abandoning everything that is to be abandoned wherever necessary.

2. Morality observed by abstaining from killing, stealing, etc. is called morality of abstention (*veramaṇi-sīla*). In terms of the Abhidhamma, it is a group of wholesome consciousnesses together with their mental concomitants headed by abstinence (*virati-cetasika*).

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[430] "Morality intact," means passing away only after attaining the Arahat fruition.

[431] Here, "etc." refers to other Awakened Ones, namely, Paccekabuddhas and Sammā-sambuddhas.

3. Morality observed by volition which associates avoidance of killing with consciousness is called morality of volition (*cetanā-sīla*).

4. Morality observed by preventing thoughts of wrong deeds, such as killing, from defiling the mind is called morality of restraint (*saṁvara-sīla*). In terms of Abhidhamma, it is a group of wholesome consciousnesses together with their mental concomitants headed by mindfulness (*sati-cetasika*).

5. Morality observed by not committing wrong deeds, such as killing, is called morality of non-transgression (*avitikkama-sīla*). In terms of Abhidhamma, it is the wholesome consciousnesses together with their mental concomitants.

> These five kinds of morality beginning with morality through abandoning are not separate ones like other sets of morality; observance of one, e.g. by abandoning killing (*pahāna-sīla*), etc., means observance of all the remaining ones as well. [1601]

What is the Defilement and Purification of Morality?

In answering these questions, defilement and purification of morality should be explained together. Defilement of morality means impairment of morality; and in reverse, non-impairment of morality is purification of morality. Impairment of morality may arise through destruction due to gain, fame, etc. or through seven minor acts of sexuality.

To explain further, there are seven groups of trangressions:

1. Explusion (*pārajika*).
2. Requiring a meeting of the Saṅgha (*Sanghādisesa*).
3. Grave offenses (*thullaccaya*).
4. Confession (*pācittiya*).
5. Requiring an acknowledgement (*pāṭidesanīya*).
6. Wrong doing (*dukkaṭa*).
7. Wrong speech (*dubbhāsita*).

Of these seven groups of transgression (*āpatti*), if a training rule (*sikkhāpada*) of the first or the last group is impaired due to craving for gain, fame, etc. a monastic's morality is said to be torn like the cloth which is cut at the edge.

If a training rule in the middle group is impaired, his morality is said to be rent like the cloth having a hole in the middle. If two or three training rules are impaired serially, his morality is said to be blotched like a cow having irregular marks of brown, red and other colours on her back or belly. If the training rules are impaired at intervals, his morality is said to be mottled like a cow having variegated spots of different colours on her body. Thus impairment of morality through tearing, rending, blotching or mottling due to gain, fame, etc. are defilements of morality.

Even in the absence of an impairment of morality through tearing, rending, blotching or mottling, there can be a defilement of morality through the seven minor acts of sexuality.

The seven minor acts of sexuality are expounded elaborately by the Buddha in the Discourse about Sexual Intercourse (*Methuna-sutta*, AN 7.50[432]). They may be mentioned briefly as follows:

1. An ascetic or a Brahmin claiming to be leading the noble life does not have actual sexual intercourse with a woman but enjoys being caressed, massaged, bathed and rubbed down by her. He loves to be attended upon in person by a woman.
2. He does not have sexual intercourse with a woman, he does not enjoy being attended upon in person by her, but he enjoys joking and laughing with her.
3. Or else he enjoys staring and gazing at a woman eye to eye.
4. Or else, he enjoys listening to a woman on the other side of a wall or a fence as she laughs, talks, sings or cries.
5. Or else, he enjoys recollecting frequently how he has formerly talked, laughed and played with a woman.

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[432] [The author mentions this discourse under the name the Discourse concerning Jāṇussoṇi (*Jāṇussoṇi-sutta*). It does indeed feature the brahmin Jāṇussoṇi, but it is called the Discourse about Intercourse (*Methuna-sutta*) in Cst4.]

6. Or else, he enjoys seeing a householder or his son who possesses five kinds of worldly pleasures and who is being served by a host of servants and attendants.

7. Or else, he enjoys longing for a divine abode and leads the noble life with the wish: "With this morality, with this practice, with this effort and with this noble life, may I be reborn as a great Deva or as some Deva."

Thus, impairment of morality through tearing, rending, blotching or mottling due to gain, fame, etc. and also through seven minor acts of sexuality is a defilement of morality. Purification of morality is characterized by non-tearing, non-rending, non-blotching or non-mottling of morality and is brought about in the following manner:

1. Not transgressing any of the training rules (*sikkhāpada*).

2. Taking proper remedial measures whenever there is a transgression. [1602]

3. Avoiding the seven minor acts of sexuality.

4. Protecting oneself against the arising of anger, grudges, disparagement, rivalry, jealousy, meanness or stinginess, deceit, hypocrisy and such evils.

5. The development of such attributes as fewness of wishes, being easily satisfied and through the practice of austerity.

These types of morality (*sīla*) which are not torn, rent, blotched or mottled, also assume other names such as liberating morality (*bhujissa-sīla*) because they set one free from the servitude of craving. They are extolled by the wise (*viññupasaṭṭha-sīla*) because they are praised by the wise. They are irreproachable (*aparāmaṭṭha-sīla*) because they are not driven by craving: "My morality is very pure, it will produce great beneficial results in the future" or by wrong personality belief: "This morality is mine; my morality is very pure; no one possesses morality like mine." It leads to concentration (*samādhi-saṁvattanika-sīla*) because it is conducive to advancement towards access concentration (*upacāra-samādhi*) and absorption concentration (*appanā-samādhi*).

As stated above, these seven factors: not torn, not rent, not blotched, not mottled, liberating, praised by the wise and not tarnished by craving and wrong view, are the factors conducive to purification of morality. Only when morality is complete with these seven factors can it develop the aforesaid two kinds of concentration. Therefore, a noble person wishing to develop these two kinds of concentration should earnestly endeavour to make his morality (*sīla*) complete with all these seven factors.

3. The Perfection of Renunciation

Renunciation (*nekkhamma*) is here synonymous with emancipation. Emancipation is of two kinds: emancipation from Saṁsāra, or the cycle of existences, and emancipation from sense-desires (*kāma*); the former being the result of the latter. Only when emancipation from sense-desires has been achieved through practice, can one gain emancipation from Saṁsāra. Of these two kinds of emancipation, it is for the purpose of the resultant emancipation from existences that the Buddha in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) likens the three states of existence to prisons.

> The three states of existence are: 1) The state of sensual existence (*kāma-bhava*); 2) the state of fine material existence (*rūpa-bhava*); and 3) the states of formless, non-material existence (*arūpa-bhava*).

According to the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*) commentary, the perfection of renunciation, in terms of Abhidhamma, is wholesome consciousness together with mental concomitants that arise by virtue of emancipation from sense-desires and from the three states of existence.

The Great Exposition (*Mahā-niddesa*) describes two kinds of sense-desire: pleasant objects of sense-desire (*vatthu-kāma*), and the mental defilement of greed, which is desire for pleasant objects (*kilesa-kāma*). With reference to the perfection of renunciation, emancipation from sense-desires means emancipation from both kinds.

How to be Mindful to achieve Emancipation

How to achieve emancipation from the defilement of sense-desires (*kilesa-kāma*) is explained in the Great Exposition (*Mahā-niddesa*):

Addasaṁ kāma te mūlaṁ, saṅkappā kāma jāyasi,
na taṁ saṅkappayissāmi, evaṁ kāma na hohisi.

Sensuality, I have seen your source; you arise from thoughts of pleasant objects of sense (*kāma-vitakka*). No more will I think of any pleasant object of sense. Then, Sensuality, you will arise no more.

In this connection, three kinds of wrong thought and three kinds of right thought should be understood. The three kinds of wrong thought are: [1603]

1. Sensuous thoughts (*kāma-vitakka*), i.e., thinking of pleasant objects as desirable things.
2. Hateful thoughts (*byāpāda-vitakka*), i.e., thinking of harming others.
3. Cruel thoughts (*vihiṁsā-vitakka*), i.e., thinking of torturing others.

The three kinds of right thought are:

1. Thoughts of renunciation (*nekkhamma-vitakka*), i.e., thinking of emancipating oneself from sensuous objects.
2. Thoughts of hatelessness (*avyāpāda-vitakka*), i.e., thinking of others with loving-kindness.
3. Thoughts of non-violence (*avihiṁsā-vitakka*), i.e., thinking of others with compassion.

The source of greed (*kilesa-kāma*), on close examination, is found to lie in sensuous thoughts (*kāma-vitakka*), which is one of the three wrong thoughts. As long as one keeps on thinking sensuous thoughts, greed continues to multiply and there is no emancipation from that mental defilement of greed. Only when one ceases to think of the pleasant objects of sense-desire, will greed not arise and one achieves emancipation. Therefore, as stated above, one should be mindful to be free from the mental defilements of greed. Just as freedom from sense-desire leads to freedom from the cycle of Saṁsāra even so making efforts to free oneself from greed results in freedom from the pleasant objects of sense-desire.

The characteristics, functions, manifestations and proximate causes of this perfection of renunciation and of the remaining ones are dealt with later.

Relation between Renunciation and Monastics

The Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*) commentary defines renunciation (*nekkhamma*) in this way: *nekkhammaṁ pabbajja-mūlakaṁ*. This definition can be interpreted in two ways: "Renunciation has a monastic's life as its cause" and "renunciation is the cause of a monastic's life." The first interpretation: A monastic's life as a cause of renunciation is in consonance with the narration in the Birth Story about King Mahā Janaka (*Mahā-janaka-jātaka*, Ja 539). King Mahā Janaka first acquired the requisites of robes, a bowl etc. without the knowledge of his queen, lesser queens and royal attendants and then went up to the upper terrace of his palace and became a monastic; thereafter, he renounced the world. In this instance, the Bodhisatta Mahā Janaka became a monastic before he made the renunciation. Therefore, it may be said that the monastic's life is the cause and renunciation is the effect.

The second interpretation: Renunciation as a cause of a monastic's life, is in consonance with the stories of the wise Sumedha, the Hatthipāla brothers, etc. the wise Sumedha first went forth and reaching Dhammika Mountain, found a dwelling place readily prepared by Sakka, the Lord of the Devas. Then only he became a monastic. Similarly, the Hatthipāla brothers went forth first and when pursued by the whole country led by royal parents, they became monastics. Therefore, it may be said the renunciation of the wise Sumedha, the Hatthipāla brothers, etc. is the cause, and the monastic's life is the effect.

The Basket of Contuct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*) commentary gives the exposition in accordance with the first interpretation. This is mentioned in detail below. Though the wise Sumedha, the Hatthipāla brothers, etc. renounced the world first and became monastics afterwards, they did so only because they wanted a monastic's life. Therefore, even though renunciation took place first, it may be said that a monastic's life which follows later is the real cause.

> For example, to construct a building, the wood is cut first. Although the cutting of wood precedes construction, the wood is cut with the intention of constructing the building, therefore, it should be said that the desire to build the building is the cause and the cutting of the wood is the effect.

Five Kinds of Forest Dwelling

As expounded in the Vinaya Summary (*Parivāra*, 7.5.56, PTS 5.131), forest dwelling is of five kinds:

1. Dwelling in the forest because of stupidity, dullness of mind, not knowing the [1604] advantages and their causes.
2. Dwelling in the forest with an evil desire: "If I go and dwell in the forest, people will support me generously as a forest dweller."
3. Dwelling in the forest because of insanity.
4. Dwelling in the forest because the practice is praised by the Buddhas and the virtuous.
5. Dwelling in the forest because one has few wishes, contentment and such virtues.

Only the last two of these kinds of forest dwelling are praiseworthy.

Perfection of renunciation is not a matter of where one lives. The defilement of sense-desires (*kilesa-kāma*), craving for pleasant sensuous objects, is liable to arise anywhere. This defilement of sense-desires should be eradicated wherever it appears and not be permitted to thrive. Emancipation from the defilement of sense-desires by eradication in this way is the true characteristic of renunciation.

As for emancipation from pleasant objects of sense-desire, there are examples of the wise Sumedha, the Hatthipāla brothers etc., who went forth as far as the Himālayas. Therefore, it may be asked whether it is necessary for those who wish to fulfil the perfection of renunciation, and gain the emancipation from pleasant objects of sense-desire, to go forth as far as the Himālayas. One should do so if possible, if one wishes to, or if circumstances favour it. In the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) concerning renunciation, the majority went forth to the Himālayas. They did so as circumstances were favourable to them.

According to the Birth Story about King Maghadeva (*Maghadeva-jātaka*, Ja 9) and the Birth Story about King Nimi (*Nimi-jātaka*, Ja 541), the continuous line of rulers, numbering 84,000, beginning with King Maghadeva and up to King Nimi, went forth from household life to a homeless life as soon as a single hair on the head turned grey. However, none of them went to the Himālayas. They repaired only to the royal Mango Grove near their capital city of Mithilā. It is said that by the strenuous practice of meditation they attained the absorptions (*jhāna*) and were reborn in the Brahma realms. It is evident from these stories that, although not travelling as far as the Himālayas, just leaving the palace, where the mental defilement of greed thrives, is sufficient for the successful

fulfilment of the perfection of renunciation. The 84,000 kings, such as Maghadeva, completely abandoned their luxurious palaces, and by living in the Mango Grove, their perfection of renunciation was fulfilled.

Therefore, the perfection of renunciation can be fulfilled by anyone who abandons completely the place where his mental defilement of greed flourishes and without establishing such new resorts, as long as he dwells in a suitable place free from such defilements.

Two Kinds of Renunciation

Renunciation of Bodhisattas is of two kinds: Renunciation when they are young and single; renunciation when they are old and married. The wise Sumedha, the Hatthipāla brothers, etc. renounced the worldly life to escape from the bonds of pleasant objects of sense-desire: luxuries of palaces or homes. Although the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) referred to them as examples of those who fulfilled the perfection of renunciation, they were then mere youths, still unmarried. They were possessors of pleasant objects of sense-desire, but it may be said that their ties to them were not so strong.

Only older people living a household life with wife and children are tightly bound with these fetters of the objects of sense-desire (*vatthu-kāma*). In this connection, it may be said that renunciation by old married people is more difficult than that by younger persons. But some could point out that the renunciation by the Bodhisatta Prince Temiya, made at a time when he was only sixteen and unmarried, was really an arduous one. But his difficulty arose not from the bonds of pleasant objects of sense-desire but from the great troubles of having to pretend to be crippled, deaf and dumb to make his renunciation possible. Therefore, although he faced much difficulty when contriving to make his renunciation, when he actually did so, he encountered little difficulty because he had only a few fetters of pleasant [1605] objects of sense desire.

The Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) gives, in the chapter on the perfection of renunciation, full accounts of the perfections (*pāramī*) that had been fulfilled by the Bodhisatta when he was Prince Somanassa, Prince Hatthipāla, Prince Ayoghara, etc. in innumerable existences. The commentary gives the special name of supreme perfection (*paramattha-pāramī*) to the perfection of renunciation fulfilled by King Cūḷa Sutasoma.

Prince Somanassa, Prince Ayoghara, Prince Hatthipāla and Prince Temiya were youthful persons at the time of their renunciation. The renunciation by King Mahā Janaka was more difficult than theirs because he was an older and married man. He became a monastic without the knowledge of his queen, lesser queens and royal attendants, and at the time of renunciation, he faced difficulty, as he was pursued by his queens and retinue to persuade him to return to them. They had not taken any measures to ensure that he would not go forth as a monastic or renounce the worldly life.

As for the 84,000 kings, such as Maghadeva, they openly and publicly declared their intention to renounce. In spite of the entreaties of their families, they refused to yield and made their renunciation. But they did not go very far. They dwelt in their own Mango Groves near their palaces.

In contrast to them, King Cūḷa Sutasoma announced his intention of leaving the world as he was deeply stirred by a spiritual sense of urgency (*saṁvega*) on seeing a grey hair on his head. Although his queens, royal parents and the assembled citizens prayed in tears for him to give up his plan, he remained firm and indifferent to their earnest pleas and went away till he reached the Himālayas. Therefore, the renunciation of King Cūḷa Sutasoma was far more powerful than those of King Maghadeva, etc. On this account, the commentator has described the perfection of renunciation fulfilled by King Cūḷa Sutasoma as of the highest type (*paramattha-pāramī*).

4. The Perfection of Wisdom

Three Kinds of Wisdom[433]

The Analyses (*Vibhaṅga*) of the Abhidhamma, in the section on the Analysis of Knowledge (*Ñāṇa-vibhaṅga*), mentions three kinds of wisdom (*paññā*):

1. Wisdom arising from thought (*cintā-maya-paññā*).
2. Wisdom arising from hearing (*suta-maya-paññā*).
3. Wisdom arising from meditation (*bhāvanā-maya-paññā*).

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[433] [This section seems to have been misplaced in the original translation and was included in the section on renunciation. I have moved it to its proper place.]

1. Knowledge of various kinds, whether low or noble, including various crafts and professions, etc., which are acquired through one's own reasoning and not through asking others or hearing about it from them (*cintā-maya-paññā*). From *cinta* "thinking," *māyā* "formed of," hence, literally, wisdom formed of thinking.

This kind of wisdom includes not only thoughts on mundane affairs but also on things concerning Dhamma matters. Therefore, it comprises the knowledge of ordinary worldly things, such as carpentry, agriculture, etc., as well as the knowledge of things of a Dhamma nature, such as generosity, morality, concentration and insight meditation. The omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*) of the Buddhas may even be called wisdom arising from thought (*cintā-maya-paññā*), if one wishes to do so, because the Bodhisatta, as Prince Siddhattha had thought out by himself the practice leading to omniscience without hearing of it from anyone, and he became omniscient.

However, wisdom as the fourth perfection to be fulfilled by the Bodhisatta should be considered as only the group of fundamental knowledges necessary for the attainment of knowledge of the paths and fruitions state and omniscience. We are not concerned here with the group of wisdom which is acquired in the final existence of a Bodhisatta, entitling him to becoming a Buddha. Bodhisattas, fulfilling the perfection of wisdom before their last life, practised only up to the first part of the [1606] ninth stage, the knowledge of equanimity about formations (*saṅkhārupekkhā-ñāṇa*), out of the ten stages of insight (*vipassanā*). The final part of this knowledge of equanimity about formations leads on directly to the knowledge of the path. So, Bodhisattas do not attempt to go beyond the first part until their last life, for should they do so, they would have accordingly attained paths and fruitions and become noble ones (*ariya*) and passed into Nibbāna in those existences; they would not become a Buddha though. Therefore, it should be noted that as a Bodhisatta, the perfection of wisdom is fulfilled only up to the first part of the knowledge of equanimity about formations.

2. Knowledge gained by listening to the wise who talk either on their own or at one's request when one is unable to think out or reason by oneself (*suta-maya-paññā*). From *suta* "hearing," *māyā* "formed of," hence, wisdom formed of hearing. Like wisdom arising from thinking (*cintā-maya-paññā*), this kind of wisdom is of a very extensive nature. The only difference between the two is

that in the first wisdom is gained through one's own thought or reasoning and in the second by hearing it from others.

3. The kind of wisdom gained at the time when one is actually experiencing the absorption (*jhāna*) or fruition (*phala*) states (*bhāvanā-maya-paññā*).

The Analyses (Vibhaṅga) in the Abhidhamma, in the chapter on the Analysis of Knowledge (*Ñāṇa-vibhaṅga*), gives types of wisdom in groups of one kind, two kinds, etc., up to ten kinds.

All these groups of wisdom, however, may be taken as coming under the three types of wisdom given above. For example, in the Analyses, after the group of the three kinds of wisdom: wisdom arising from thought (*cintā-maya*), and so on, are enumerated wisdom arising from giving (*dāna-maya-paññā*), wisdom arising from morality (*sīla-maya-paññā*) and wisdom arising from meditation (*bhāvanā-maya-paññā*).

Wisdom arising from giving is wisdom formed of generosity. Volition associated with generosity is of three kinds: volition that arises before, during and after the offering. The wisdom associated with these volitions in each case is wisdom arising from giving. Similarly, in the case of observance of morality, wisdom that arises with the intention: "I will observe the precepts," wisdom that arises while observing them and wisdom that arises on reflection after observing the precepts are wisdom arising from morality.

If the wisdom arising from giving and wisdom arising from morality have been deduced through one's process of thinking and reasoning, then it is to be classed as wisdom arising from thought (*cintā-maya-paññā*); if it has been gained through hearing from others, they are to be included in wisdom arising from hearing (*suta-maya-paññā*). Other kinds of wisdom can similarly be classified under the same three headings of wisdom arising from thought (*cintā-maya-paññā*), and so on.

The teaching: Accomplishing the perfection of wisdom by learning from the wise (*paripucchanto budhaṁ janaṁ, paññā-pāramitaṁ gantvā*) in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*, Bv 2.134) clearly indicates that the Buddha regards wisdom arising from hearing (*suta-maya-paññā*) as being the basic wisdom. This is because in this world, one who has not yet acquired basic wisdom cannot know anything through thinking it through for himself; he has to

learn it first from the wise by listening to them. Therefore, the Buddha has expounded that one who wishes to fulfil the perfection of wisdom should first acquire knowledge from the wise before he can have any basic wisdom. In brief, wisdom through hearing (*suta-maya-paññā*) should be acquired before wisdom through thinking (*cintā-maya-paññā*).

The commentaries, such as the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA), describe the innumerable lives of the Bodhisatta, for example, as the wise men Vidhura, Mahā Govinda, Kudāla, Araka, Bodhi the wandering ascetic, Mahosadha, etc., when he had to fulfil the perfection of wisdom. In these lives, the Bodhisatta had already acquired basic wisdom; he also possessed, and therefore he had, wisdom arising from thought (*cintā-maya-paññā*). As his basic wisdom, it was already great enough so that acquiring wisdom arising from hearing was no longer his chief concern in those existences.

Four Kinds of Wise Person

> The term *kavi* is derived from the root *kava*, which means "to praise;" so a person who praises things worthy of praises is called *kavi*, meaning a "wise person." A *kavi* is also a poet, one who is wise in words.

The Discourse about Poets (*Kavi-sutta*, AN 4.231) describes four kinds of wise persons (*kavi*):

1. Wise in thinking (*cintā-kavi*).
2. Wise in hearing (*suta-kavi*).
3. Wise in meaning (*attha-kavi*). [1607]
4. Wise in improvisation (*paṭibhāna-kavi*).

1. One who is capable of knowing a given matter by thinking it out for himself is called wise in thinking (*cintā-kavi*), a wise man of original thinking. It is the province of such persons to sing verses lauding those deserving praise. Thus, one wise in thinking, is one who composes poems relying solely on his own thinking.

2. One who puts into verse what one knows through hearing is called wise in hearing (*suta-kavi*).

3. One who does not know through his original thinking or through learning from others but interprets the meaning of a difficult point based upon the knowledge he already possesses of similar problems is called wise in meaning

(*attha-kavi*), a wise man who explains meaning. He writes verses based on a given subject-matter.

4. One who, without having recourse to thinking out himself, or listening to others, or referring to what is already known, has the ability to penetrate at once the meaning of a given subject is called wise in improvisation (*paṭibhāna-kavi*), a wise man of ready speech, like Ven. Vaṅgīsa during the Buddha's time.

Wisdom is a separate mental concomitant, one of the ultimate realities. In the Enumeration of Phenonema (*Dhamma-saṅgaṇī*), various names, such as the faculty of wisdom (*paññindriya*), wisdom (*paññā*), being wise (*pajānanā*), etc., are given to wisdom because it is the characteristic of the Abhidhamma to give complete details of everything that should be taught about each subject. The principal term for wisdom is the faculty of wisdom (*paññindriya*), made up of the words wisdom (*paññā*) and faculty (*indriya*).

It is called wisdom (*paññā*) because it is conducive to understanding in all aspects the four truths or the three characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anatta*).

It is called faculty (*indriya*), a controlling or governing faculty, because it can overcome ignorance (*avijjā*) and delusion (*moha*), or because it dominates in understanding real nature. Wisdom (*paññā*) has the characteristic of creating light. Just as darkness is dispelled as soon as light appears in a dark room, even so, where ignorance blinds us, as soon as wisdom appears, ignorance is dispelled enabling us to see clearly. Therefore, the Buddha has said (SN 1.13): There is no light like wisdom (*natthi paññāsamā ābhā*).

Wisdom has the characteristic of perceiving things with discrimination. Just as a clever physician discerns which food is suitable for his patient and which food is not, so when wisdom arises, it enables one to distinguish between what is meritorious and what is not. Wisdom also has the characteristic of penetrating real nature as it is. It may be likened to an arrow which, shot by a clever archer, penetrates the target unerringly.

An important point to note with regard to this characteristic of wisdom: Genuine wisdom is knowing a thing as it really is, and such a knowledge is blameless. That is why in the Collection of Meaning in the Abhidhamma

(*Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha*), the mental concomitant of wisdom (*paññā-cetasika*) is included in the beautiful (*sobhaṇa*) types of mental concomitants.

The Birth Story about the Courtesan Sulasā

Questions arise concerning wisdom with reference to the actions of the courtesan Sulasā in the Birth Story about the Courtesan Sulasā (*Sulasā-jātaka*, Ja 419).

In Bārāṇasī, a courtesan by the name of Sulasā saved the life of the robber Sattuka who was about to be executed. She made him her husband, and they lived together. Wanting to possess her jewellery, the robber persuaded her to put on her jewelled ornaments, which were worth 100,000 pieces of money, and she went up a mountain with him. On reaching the top of the mountain, he told her to take off all her jewellery and prepared to kill her. Then Sulasā thought to herself: "He is sure to kill me, I must strike first and kill him by a ruse." So she begged him: "My dear, even though you are going to kill me, I lose no love for you. Nearing my death, may I pay my respects to you from the four quarters, [1608] front, back and the sides?" Not suspecting her stratagem, the robber allowed her to do so. After paying respects to the robber, who was standing on the edge of a precipice, from the front and the sides, she went behind him and pushed him over the precipice with all her might and killed him. The Bodhisatta, who was a Deva then, living in the mountain, remarked:

Na hi sabbesu ṭhānesu puriso hoti paṇḍito;
itthī pi paṇḍitā hoti tattha tattha vicakkhaṇā.

Not in all circumstances is the man the wise one; a woman is also wise and farsighted.

Some raise the question as to whether it is proper for the Bodhisatta to praise Sulasā as being wise. Sulasā's intention to kill the robber is a matter of committing a wrong deed of killing and cannot be associated with wisdom (*paññā-cetasika*).

In reply to that, some say that Sulasā's knowledge was not true wisdom (*paññā*). Of the three kinds of knowledge: knowledge through perception (*saññā*), knowledge through consciousness (*viññāṇa*) and knowledge through wisdom (*paññā*). Sulasā's was knowledge through consciousness only, that is to say,

through exercise of imagination. That knowledge through consciousness has been referred to, here, as wisdom (*paññā*).

Others wrongly assert that of the two views: Wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) and right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*), Sulasā had wrong view and the Bodhisatta was referring to her view as wisdom (*paññā*) and not praising her because of the faculty of wisdom, and, therefore, it is not against Abhidhamma. Both these answers, taking consciousness (*viññāṇa*) and view (*diṭṭhi*) as wisdom (*paññā*) contrary to the principles of Abhidhamma, are entirely wrong.

Sulasā's knowledge that she would defeat the robber, if she adopted a ruse, was true knowledge and was, therefore, wisdom. One should not doubt whether genuine wisdom can be involved in matters connected with evil actions. For example, it is blameless to know discriminatingly about alcoholic drinks which should not be indulged in, and which lead to immoral actions, as to which ones contain more or less alcohol, how much each costs, what will happen if one drinks them, etc. It begins to be immoral only from the moment one thinks of drinking the intoxicant.

Similarly, one can make a thorough study of all the various views and beliefs in the world without any exception, differentiating between what is correct and reasonable and what is wrong. Thus, studying and getting to know about them as they really are, whether right or wrong, is entirely faultless. Only when one misconstrues a wrong view to be a right view is one at fault.

So in Sulasā's case, knowing: "I will defeat him, if I use a ruse," is knowing rightly; it is knowing through wisdom and therefore blameless. But, since the moment of her decision to kill her husband by means of a stratagem, her action had become blameworthy, immoral. It is only with reference to the correct knowledge which initially arose in her, before the deed of killing, that the Bodhisatta praised her, saying she is wise.

As has been said above, we should distinguish clearly between the knowledge about evil on one hand and the commission of evil such as killing on the other. If one persists in the belief that knowledge about evil is not true wisdom, one would make the error of thinking that the great omniscience of the Buddha itself is not free from blemish.

Through his supreme wisdom, the Buddha knows all there is to know, everything moral or immoral, hence the name of omniscience. If true wisdom

has nothing to do with anything evil, then the Buddha would have no knowledge whatsoever of evil things; indeed, the Buddha's wisdom is very extensive, infinite and is thus known as omniscience.

In brief, the Buddha knows everything, good or evil. But since he has uprooted all latent defilements, he has no desire to commit anything evil, not to say of the actual deed. Thus reflecting on the attributes of knowing everything that is evil, of having abandoned what should be abandoned and of refraining from doing any evil, we should develop faith in the Buddha.

Again, we should also examine the story of the wise Mahosadha as described in the Birth Story about the Tunnel [1609] (*Umaṅga-jātaka*, Ja 542). In this story, Cūḷanī Brahmadatta, with rulers of his vassal states, surrounded and attacked the royal city of King Videha, who had as his right-hand man the wise Mahosadha. Mahosadha masterminded the defense of the city by devising various stratagems. These tactics were aimed at deceiving the enemy hordes, breaking down their morale, and ultimately forcing them to retreat in all directions in a disorderly rout. Should we opine that deceptive measures adopted by Mahosadha, not being moral undertakings, do not count as wisdom, there would be no occasion for the Bodhisatta to fulfil the perfection of wisdom. As a matter of fact, all the strategems employed by Mahosadha are the products of the Bodhisatta's wisdom. The Buddha has therefore specifically mentioned the story of Mahosadha as an example of how the Bodhisatta had fulfilled his perfection of wisdom.

In view of what has been said, it should be noted that in the story of Sulasā, the mountain Deva praised Sulasā as a wise person because she indeed had wisdom.

This is an explanation on doubtful points with regard to the characteristics of wisdom.

The Kinds of Wisdom

The definition of "wisdom" given in the commentaries, such as the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) etc., as the knowledge of, or the knowledge leading to, full comprehension of the four noble truths and the three characteristics refers to the highest (*ukkaṭṭha*) type of wisdom. There are also certain types of wisdom which are much lower.

The commentary on the Abhidhamma Analyses (*Vibhaṅga*), in expounding on wisdom arising from thought (*cintā-maya-paññā*) and wisdom arising from hearing (*suta-maya-paññā*), describes the kinds of wisdom involved in "manual labour in earning one's livelihood" (*kammāyatana*) and in "skills for earning one's livelihood" (*sippāyatana*). Each is again divided into two kinds, lower and higher. Carpentry is an example of a lower type of manual labour. Farming and trading are of a higher type. Mat-making, weaving, etc. are lower forms of skill for earning one's living, and writing, calculating, etc. are higher forms of skill for earning one's living.

The essential distinction between the forms of livelihood is that when manual labour is done for the sake of livelihood without taking special training, it is of the manual labour in earning one's livelihood type and when skill for earning a livelihood is acquired after special training, it is called skills for earning one's livelihood. When special training is for skill in vocal accomplishments, it is called study of the arts and sciences (*vijjāṭṭhāna*).

When we discriminate one fire from another, our discrimination is not based on the quality of the fuel used for burning but on the quantity of the fuel, and we say "a small fire" or "a big fire." So also in the case of wisdom, discrimination should be done not on the basis of the quality of what is known, but rather on the basis of the degree or extent of what is known and we should speak of wisdom as "weak" or "powerful," in other words, "simple" or "profound." We should not restrict ourselves to higher forms of knowledge as expounded in the commentary, but also recognize the lower forms as wisdom.

Therefore, one who wishes to fulfil the perfection of wisdom should do so irrespective of the standard of wisdom, whether low or high, and regarding things unknown, one should approach the wise for learning from them. Therefore, it is said in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*, Bv 2.134): Questioning the wise, he accomplishes the perfection of wisdom (*paripucchanto budhaṁ janaṁ, paññā-pāramitaṁ gantvā*)."

Seven Ways of Developing Wisdom

The Dispeller of Delusion (*Sammoha-vinodanī*, PTS 276) commentary to the Abhidhamma Analyses (*Vibhaṅga*), gives seven ways of developing wisdom in the chapter on the foundations of steadfast mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*):

1. Asking the wise again and again (*paripuccha-katā*).[434]

2. Making objects, both inside and outside the body, pure (*vatthu-visada-kiriyā*).

   For internal cleanliness, one's hair, nails and beard should not be too long. The body [1610] should not be soiled with sweat and dirt. For external cleanliness, one's clothes should not be old and bad smelling; one's dwelling should be kept clean. When there is impurity inside and outside the body, the wisdom that arises is like the thick flame produced from a dirty wick soaked in the turbid oil of an unclean lamp. In order to have clean and bright wisdom, which is like the flame of a clean lamp, one should keep one's body clean both internally and externally.

3. Bringing the faculties, such as faith, energy, etc., into perfect balance (*indriya-samatta-paṭipādanā*).

There are five faculties which control consciousnesses and mental concomitants of beings:

1. Faith (*saddhā*).

2. Energy (*viriya*).

3. Mindfulness (*sati*).

4. Concentration (*samādhi*).

5. Wisdom (*paññā*).

Each of these has its own function: Faith enables one to give devoted attention to the object of reverence; energy gives support and encouragement enabling one to exert and strive hard; mindfulness keeps track of the object of attention; concentration prevents distraction of mind; and wisdom enables one to see and understand. These faculties must be kept in balance, for if one is in excess, the others would suffer and fail to do their functions.

If the faith faculty is too strong, the other four faculties are bound to be weak; consequently, the energy faculty cannot exercise its function of giving support and encouragement to exertion; the mindfulness faculty cannot fulfil its task of minding the object of attention; the concentration faculty cannot prevent

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[434] This is in accordance with the Pāḷi phrase quoted above.

distraction of mind; and the wisdom faculty fails to discern. When the faith faculty is in excess, an attempt should be made to moderate it and bring it into line with the others, either by reflecting on the Dhamma that will normalise it or avoiding reflecting on the Dhamma that will promote and strengthen it.

If the energy faculty is too strong, the faith faculty will not be able to perform its function; the rest of the faculties also cannot perform their respective functions. This excess of energy should be corrected by developing tranquillity. The same holds true in the case of each of the remaining faculties.

What is particularly praised by the wise and virtuous is balancing faith with wisdom and concentration with energy. If one is strong in faith and weak in wisdom, one will have faith in unworthy ones to no purpose.

Being weak in wisdom, one is unable to discern critically who is deserving of reverence and who is not; mistaking what is not true "Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha" for the genuine ones, one's devotion is then of no avail and fruitless.

Mistaken belief of those who wrongly devote themselves to a false Buddha or a false Dhamma is not true faith but only a wrong and harmful conclusion (*micchādhimokkha*).

If wisdom is strong and faith is weak, one will miss the correct path and follow the wrong one, which leads to the side of cunning. To bring such a person to the right path is as hard to cure as a patient suffering from the ill-effects of wrong medicine. For example, these are two kinds of giving: the gift of volition (*cetanā-dāna*) and a gift of material objects (*vatthu-dāna*). A person who has cunning ways of thinking might consider that it is only volition, not the material objects, that would be fruitful in the future; therefore, it is not necessary to actually offer material things as gifts (*dāna*); thinking to give gifts of volition are sufficient. Such a person, who fails to do meritorious deeds of alms giving, because of his cunning, would be reborn in the lower planes of existence.

Only when faith and wisdom are in balance can one have proper faith in deserving ones, and with the absence of cunning, there can develop many advantages. Energy and concentration should also be in balance; when energy is weak and concentration strong, idleness (*kosajja*) will result: without any activities but assuming an air of calmness as if in good concentration, one is overwhelmed by indolence.

When energy is strong and concentration weak, there will be agitation and excitement but no steadiness. Overwhelmed by restlessness (*uddhacca*), one may be distracted with the thought: "If this work does not yield any good result as [1611] expected, it will not be suitable for me. I would abandon it and try something else."

When energy and concentration are in equilibrium, idleness (*kosajja*) and restlessness (*uddhacca*) get no chance to arise; the balancing of these two leads to the quick attainment of absorption (*jhāna*).

However, the mindfulness-faculty can never be in excess; there may be only its shortage. In the text, it is likened to salt, a necessary ingredient of all food preparations, or to a prime minister who attends to all the royal business. Therefore, while maintaining the maximum possible mindfulness, the faculties in each of the two pairs: faith and wisdom, energy and concentration, should be kept in perfect balance with each other. Excess of any is a disadvantage. In this connection, Ven. U Budh has made the following comment in his Assistance with Steadfast Mindfulness (*Mahā-satipaṭṭhāna-nissaya*):

> Excess of faith leads to over-enthusiasm; excess of wisdom leads to craftiness; excess of energy leads to restlessness; excess of concentration leads to mental weariness; but there is never an excess of mindfulness.

4. Avoiding persons without wisdom (*duppaññā-puggala-parivajjānaṁ*).

   A person without wisdom (*duppaññā*) means an individual who has no wisdom to discern penetratingly such groups of phenonema (*dhamma*) as the aggregates (*khandha*), the bases (*āyatana*), etc. One should keep oneself far away from such people.

5. Associating with the wise (*paññavanta-puggala-sevana*).

   The wise means persons who are possessed of the 50 characteristics of the knowledge of arising and falling (*udaya-bhaya-ñāṇa*); for details of the 50 characteristics of arising and falling, please consult the Path of the Analytic Knowledges (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*), or see the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) as translated by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli (Chapter XX, paras. 93-104).

Concerning both items 4 and 5 the commentator is only describing the developments of the highest (*ukkaṭṭha*) type of wisdom. In item 4 a person without wisdom means one who cannot discern penetratingly the group of

phenomena, such as the aggregates and the bases; a person with penetrating knowledge of such phenomena can only be one who is of great wisdom. But there are those who, though not possessing wisdom to discern such subtle phenomena as aggregates and bases, know ordinary matters concerning the practice of Dhamma: "It is proper to make such an offering; it is not proper to do so; precepts should be observed thus, they should not be observed otherwise." They also know matters concerning worldly living: "This act will prolong one's life; this act will shorten one's life." Such persons cannot be said to be entirely devoid of wisdom. One should cultivate association with them too.

In item 5 also, by defining a wise person as one who is possessed of the 50 characteristics of the knowledge of arising and falling (*udayabbaya-ñāṇa*), the commentator is referring by way of excellence (*ukkaṭṭha-naya*) only to the wise who are most highly advanced in insight meditation.

But with regard to acquiring knowledge, the Buddha had expounded in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*): "Taking the example of a monastic going on alms round to all the houses in serial order without discrimination, a learner should approach whoever can answer his questions, regardless of his social or educational status. Therefore, he should avoid only a totally ignorant one and approach all who can help him in his quest of knowledge."

In short, avoiding only those who are completely incapable of answering any questions, one should associate with those who can furnish him with even the slightest information he is seeking. [1612]

According to the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*), in acquiring wisdom, one should first ask and learn from the wise to develop wisdom through hearing (*suta-maya-paññā*). Then, if one is not clear about any point, one should reflect on it and think about it, and thus develop wisdom by means of thinking (*cintā-maya-paññā*).

In the discourse to the Kālāmas (*Kesa-mutti-sutta*, AN 3.66), the Buddha was told by them that many teachers visited their place, that all of these visiting teachers praised only their own doctrines, denouncing and condemning others and that they had doubt and perplexity as to which doctrine to accept and follow. The Buddha's reply to them may be summarized as "you should accept the doctrine which you find, after due consideration, to be free of fault."

This discourse shows that one should first acquire wisdom through hearing (*suta-maya-paññā*) by listening to the talks of teachers and then think over which doctrine is blameless by using wisdom by means of thinking (*cintā-maya-paññā*).

Moreover, in the Long Birth Story about Dhammapāla (*Mahā-Dhammapāla-jātaka*, Ja 447), when the great teacher of Takkasilā went in person to the village of Dhammapāla to find out why the young people of the village did not die before the end of their lifespan, Mahā Dhammapāla, the village headman, who would be reborn as King Suddhodana in times to come, replied: "We listen to all who come and teach. After listening, we ponder upon their teaching. We do not heed what the immoral persons teach, instead we forsake them. We accept only the teachings of the moral persons with which we are delighted and which we follow. Therefore, in our village, the young ones never die before the end of their lifespan."

This Birth Story (Jātaka) also clearly shows that one acquires wisdom first by means of wisdom through hearing (*suta-maya-paññā*) and then accepts only what is confirmed to be true by wisdom by means of thinking (*cintā-maya-paññā*).

Associating with the Wise

The expression "associating with the wise" does not mean merely approaching a wise person and staying with him day and night. It implies learning and acquiring some knowledge from the person who is possessed of wisdom.

The advice "do not associate with the fool," given as one of the blessings in the Discourse on the Blessings (*Maṅgala-sutta*, Khp 5, Snp 2.4), does not necessarily prevent staying with a foolish person. One may even live with him for the purpose of coaxing and persuading him onto the right path. In such a case, one is not going against the advice of the Discourse on the Blessings. An example is the sojourn of the Buddha in the Uruvelā Grove in the company of ascetics of wrong view to help them abandon their wrong path.

Thus, only when one accepts the view and follows the practices of a foolish person is one said to be associating with a fool. Likewise, the advice given in the Discourse on the Blessings exhorting one to associate with the wise is well taken,

not by merely keeping company with him but only when one acquires some form of knowledge from him, be it only a little.

6. Reflecting on the nature of the Dhamma, which is the resort of profound wisdom (*gambhīra-ñāṇa-cariya-paccavekkhaṇa*).

Herein, wisdom is like fire, which burns all inflammable things, whether big or small. Depending on the size of what is burning, fire is said to be a small fire or a big one. In the same way, wisdom knows everything there is to know; it is called small, manifest or profound depending on what is known as small, manifest or profound. The Dhamma, which is the resort of profound wisdom, comprises aggregates, bases, etc. The wisdom which arises from the knowledge of these profound subjects is what is meant by profound wisdom. Such profound wisdom is as numerous as there are profound phenomena. An analytical review of all these numerous profound phenomena leads to the development of wisdom.

7. Having the inclination towards developing wisdom (*tadādhimuttatā*).

In all four postures of lying, sitting, standing and walking, one should be only inclined to the development of wisdom. Having such a mind is one of the causes of developing wisdom.

A summary in verse by U Budh, of the seven ways of developing wisdom:

1. Asking again and again. [1613]
2. Keeping things clean.
3. Having faculties in balance.
4. Avoiding fools.
5. Associating with the wise.
6. Pondering deeply.
7. Having a mind bent on the development of wisdom.

The Qualities of Wisdom

1. When wisdom takes a predominant place in performing multifarious functions, it acquires the name of one of the four predominance-conditions (*vimaṁsādhipati*).

2. Forming the constituent parts of the 22 controlling faculties are four different faculties which are concerned with wisdom: the wisdom that is included in the 39 mundane consciousnesses associated with knowledge (*loka-ñāṇa-sampayutta-citta*) is called the faculty of wisdom (*paññindriya*); the wisdom accompanying the consciousness that arises with the path at the first stage of Awakening, the path of Stream-entry (*Sotāpatti-magga*), is known as the faculty that senses: "I will know the unknown" (*anaññātaññassāmītindriya*); the wisdom that arises with the fruition state of an Arahat (*Arahatta-phala*) is called the faculty of one with perfect knowledge (*aññātāvindriya*); the wisdom that is associated with the six intermediate supermundane consciousnesses that comes between the Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*) and Arahat (*Arahatta-phala*) stages is termed the faculty of knowledge (*aññindriya*).

The wisdom that should be fulfilled as a perfection is concerned only with mundane consciousness; thus it is included in the thirteen kinds of moral consciousness (*kusala-ñāṇa-sampayutta-citta*) of the 39 worldly knowledges (*loka-ñāṇa-sampayutta-citta*).

> The non-functional consciousness (*kiriya-citta*) belongs only to Arahats; it is not the concern of Bodhisattas who are still worldlings; the resultant consciousness (*vipāka-citta*) arises without any special effort as a consequence of one's past productive deeds (*kamma*). Therefore, the wisdom that is associated with these two types of consciousness does not count as perfection. Bodhisattas concentrate only on the mundane wisdom so as to fulfil the perfection of wisdom to its highest degree.

The five controlling faculties (*indriya*) are included in the 37 constituents of Awakening (*Bodhipakkhiya-dhamma*), one of them is the faculty of wisdom (*paññindriya*); this faculty of wisdom is of two kinds: mundane and supermundane. The supermundane kind is not included in the perfection of wisdom developed by a Bodhisatta. Only the wisdom that is associated with mundane moral consciousness which arises while undertaking purification of morality and purification of mind previous to the attainment of the path and fruition states is the perfection of wisdom fulfilled by Bodhisattas.

3. Similarly, in the other four constituents of Awakening are included factors of wisdom (*paññā*) under different names. Thus, in the five powers (*bala*), it is known as the power of wisdom (*paññā-bala*); in the four psychic powers (*iddhi-pāda*), as accomplishment by examination (*vīmaṁsiddhi-pāda*); in the seven

factors of Awakening (*Bojjhaṅga*) as investigation of Dhamma (*Dhamma-vicaya-sambojjhaṅga*); and in the eight constituents of the noble path (*ariya-maggaṅga*) as right view (*samma-diṭṭhi*).

As with the faculty of wisdom (*paññindriya*), these various factors of wisdom, under different names, are developed at two different levels: mundane and supermundane. Contemplating on these special qualities of wisdom, may you fulfil the perfection of wisdom to its highest possible stage. [1614]

5. The Perfection of Energy

In matters of the perfection of energy, the texts give the example of a maned lion whose nature is to put forth maximum effort whether in hunting a rabbit or in hunting an elephant. He does not exert himself less in hunting a rabbit because it is a small animal, nor does he strive more in hunting an elephant because of its great size. In both cases, he uses an equal degree of exertion.

Following the ways of a maned lion, a Bodhisatta, while fulfilling the perfection of energy, does not make less effort for ordinary tasks nor puts forth more energy for more arduous ones. He always makes the same amount of maximum exertion, whether the task is small or great.

Deep Impression of Past Exertions on the Buddha

As a result of the habit of employing uniform energy whether attending to big or small affairs in past lives as a Bodhisatta, when he finally became an Awakened One, the Buddha made equal efforts when giving discourses. He did not reduce his effort when delivering an address casually to a single person, neither did he put forth more energy to enable the audience at the extreme end to hear him when addressing a huge assembly as, for example, at the time of delivering the first discourse. He maintained an even voice, putting forth equal energy on both occasions.

The Buddha being blessed with unthinkable majestic glory, his voice, uttered with uniform exertion, reaches all who listen. If there is only one person listening to him, only that person hears the discourse. When there are many people, each person, whether near or far from the Buddha, hears him clearly. This is the special glory of the Buddha.

> When the chief disciple, the great elder Sāriputta, gave the discourse of the Discourse on the Even-Minded (*Sama-citta-sutta*, AN 2.37), as the audience was very large, his normal voice could not reach all of them; he had to make them all hear him with the help of his supernormal psychic powers of accomplishments (*iddhi-vidha-abhiññā*). However, it was not necessary for the Buddha to do so to make everyone in the audience hear him.

Every Buddha exerts himself to fulfil the perfection of energy in all his previous lives as a Bodhisatta. In addition, in his last birth, when he would gain Awakening, he renounces the world and makes strenuous efforts to practise austerities (*dukkara-cariyā*) at least for seven days. Having performed the austerities, as the time draws near for becoming a Buddha, he sits on a seat of grass at the foot of the Bodhi tree and makes a resolute effort with a firm determination: "Let only my skin remain; let only my sinews remain; let only my bones remain; let all the blood and flesh dry up, I will not rise from this seat until I have attained omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*)."

Through this effort, he developed the knowledge of insight as powerful as a great diamond insight knowledge (*mahā-vajira-vipassanā-ñāṇa*), which enables him to realize first the law of dependent origination, followed by the knowledge of the three characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and unsubstantiality (*anatta*) of all material and mental phenomena (*nāma-rūpa*).

Energy (*viriya*), like wisdom (*paññā*), is a mental concomitant, but whereas wisdom is always associated with moral consciousness, energy being a miscellaneous type of concomitant (*pakiṇṇaka-cetasika*) is associated with both moral and immoral consciousness and is of the indeterminate type (*abyākata*), which is neither moral nor immoral. Consequently, energy can be wholesome, unwholesome or indeterminate. Effort which is wholesome is known as right effort (*sammā-vāyāma*); effort employed for wrong purpose is unwholesome and is called wrong effort (*micchā-vāyāma*). It is only the right effort which should be cultivated to the fullest extent as the perfection of energy.

Right Exertion

Right effort (*sammā-vāyāma*) is also known as right exertion (*sammappadhāna*). The [1615] meaning is the same. In the expositions of right exertion of the

Abhidhamma Analyses (*Sammappadhāna-vibhaṅga*, Vibh 8), the Buddha explains the four kinds of right exertion:

1. The endeavour to prevent the arising at any time, any place, of any object of evil which has not yet arisen or which one cannot call to mind of having arisen at a certain time, at a certain place, on a certain object.

2. The endeavour to put away the evil that has arisen.

   As a matter of fact, it is impossible to abandon evil that had already arisen or that had arisen and passed away. The evil that had arisen in the past has ceased, so it is no longer existing. What does not exist cannot he removed. What is to be understood here is that one should strive to prevent arising of new evil which is of similar nature to the one that has arisen before.

3. The endeavour to bring about the arising of the good which has not yet arisen or which one cannot call to mind as having arisen at a certain time, a certain place, on a certain object.

4. The endeavour to maintain and further develop the good that has arisen or that is arising.

   Here also, what is to be understood is that one should strive to bring about the repeated arising of the good similar to the one that has already arisen.

Eleven Factors of Developing Energy

The commentaries to the Analysis of Steadfast Mindfulness (*Satipaṭṭhāna-vibhaṅga*, Vibh 7) and the Long Discourse on Steadfast Mindfulness (*Mahā-Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*, DN 22) describe eleven factors in the development of energy.

1. Reflecting on the dangers of the lower worlds of existence (*apāya-bhaya-paccavekkhaṇatā*).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: "If I am lax in making an effort, I may be reborn in the realms of misery (*apāya*). Of the four realms of misery, if I am reborn in the realm of continuous suffering (*avīci*), I will suffer intense pains resulting from numerous, terrible tortures; if I am reborn in the animal world, I may be subjected to all forms of ill-treatment by human beings; if I am reborn in the ghost realm (*peta-loka*), I will be tormented by hunger for the long periods of the aeons between the appearance of one Buddha and of another; if I am reborn in the Asura world (*Asura-loka*), with a huge body, 60 or 80 cubits in length, of bones and skins only, I will suffer from heat, cold or winds. In any of

these terrible rebirths, I will get no chance of developing the four right exertions. This life is my only opportunity to do so."

2. Perceiving the benefits accruing from the development of energy (*ānisaṁsa-dassāvitā*).

Energy will develop in him who, reviewing and seeing the advantages of developing energy, reflects thus: "A lazy man can never get out of Saṁsāra and attain the supermundane paths and fruition states. Only the industrious can attain them. The beneficial result of making effort is the attainment of the supermundane path and fruition states which are so difficult to realize."

3. Reviewing the path to be trod (*gamana-vīthi-paccavekkhaṇatā*).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: "All Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and noble disciples of a Buddha realize their goals by being industrious. Exertion is the straight path trod by the noble ones. No idle person can follow this road. Only the industrious take to this path."

4. Honouring the alms food of devotees (*piṇḍapātāpacāyanatā*).

This factor is the specific concern of monastics. Energy will develop in him who, regarding with esteem and appreciation the rich food offered by devotees, reflects thus: "These devotees are not my relatives; they give me this alms food not because they want to make their living by depending on me; they do so only because of the great merit that accrues from giving to the Saṅgha. The Buddha does not allow us to eat alms food in a light-minded, irresponsible manner or to live an easy-going life. He permits it only for the [1616] purpose of practising the Dhamma to achieve liberation from Saṁsāra. Alms food is not for the lazy or the indolent. Only men of diligence are worthy of it."

5. Reflecting on the nobility of the inheritance (*dāyajja-mahatta-paccavekkhaṇatā*).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: "The heritage of the Buddha known as "the treasures of the virtuous" to be received by his disciples is of seven kinds: faith (*saddhā*), morality (*sīla*), learning (*suta*), charity (*cāga*), wisdom (*paññā*), conscience (*hiri*) and concern (*ottappa*).

The indolent are not entitled to inherit from the Buddha. Just as bad children, disowned by their parents, cannot inherit from them, even so those who are lazy

cannot receive the "treasures of the virtuous" as a heritage from the Buddha. Only men of diligence deserve this inheritance.

6. Reflecting on the nobility of the Teacher, the Buddha (*Satthu-mahatta-paccavekkhaṇatā*).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: "My Teacher, the Buddha, is so noble that the 10,000 world-element shook when he took conception as the Bodhisatta for his last life, renounced the world, became an Awakened One, expounded the first discourse (*Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta*), when he performed the twin miracle at Sāvatthī to defeat the heretics (*titthiya*), when he descended from the Tāvatiṁsa realm to Saṅkassa, when he renounced the vital principle (*āyu-saṅkhāra*) and when he passed into Parinibbāna. Being a true son or daughter of such a noble Buddha, should I remain care-free and lazy without exerting myself to practise his teachings?"

7. Reflecting on the nobility of one's own lineage (*jāti-mahatta-paccavekkhaṇatā*).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: "My lineage is not humble; I am descended from the first King Mahā Sammata of pure and high caste; I am the brother of Rāhula who is the grandson of King Suddhodana and Queen Mahā Māyā, who belonged to the House of King Okkāka, one of the descendants of Mahā Sammata; Rāhula is the Buddha's son; since I have also taken the name of being a Buddha's son of Sakyan ancestry, we are brothers. Being of such noble ancestry, I should not live a life of indolence but exert myself to practise the noble teaching."

8. Reflecting on the nobility of companions in the holy life (*sabrahmacāri-mahatta-paccavekkhaṇatā*).

Energy will develop in him who reflects thus: "My companions in the holy life, the great elders Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, as well as the other great disciples, who practised the noble Dhamma, have already realized the supermundane paths and fruition states. I should follow the way of these venerable companions in the holy life."

9. Keeping away from those who are indolent (*kusīta-puggala-parivajjanatā*).

Energy will develop in him who avoids idle people, those who forsake all physical, verbal and mental activities to lie down and roll in sleep like a python that has eaten its fill.

10. Associating with people who are industrious and energetic (*āraddha-viriya-puggala-sevanatā*).

Energy will develop in him who associates himself with industrious and energetic people who are whole-heartedly devoted only to their task.

Men of dedication (*pahitatta*) are always determined not to leave their efforts in carrying out a set task until success is achieved or if not successful until death. Those lacking dedication hesitate even before beginning a work with the thought. "Shall I succeed or not?" While carrying out the work, if the expected goal is not easily achieved, he flinches with the thought: "Even though I carry on with the work, I shall not succeed," and thus they stop putting forth effort.

11. Inclination towards the development of energy in all four postures (*tad-adhimuttatā*).

Energy will develop in him who is intent on and inclined to cultivating it in all four [1617] postures of lying down, sitting, standing and walking.

These are the eleven factors which develop energy.

The Main Foundation of Energy

The main foundation of energy is spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*). It is of three kinds:

1. Urgency that disturbs the mind (*cittutrāsa-saṁvega*).

Disturbance of mind through urgency because of the dangers of elephants, tigers, weapons, such as swords, spears, etc. is known as urgency that disturbs (*cittutrāsa-saṁvega*). In terms of the Abhidhamma, it is the mental concomitant of aversion (*dosa*). Through weak aversion arises fear; through strong aversion arises aggressiveness.

2. Urgency from concern (*ottappa-saṁvega*).

Concern about doing evil is urgency from concern (*ottappa-saṁvega*). It is a wholesome type of mental concomitant (*sobhana-cetasika*).

3. Urgency from knowledge (*ñāṇa-saṁvega*).

Dread that arises as urgency through reflecting on cause and effect is known as urgency from knowledge (*ñāṇa-saṁvega*). It is the kind of fear of Saṁsāra felt by the virtuous. In the texts, urgency from knowledge is described also as the knowledge that is accompanied by concern about evil.

One should also include the wisdom of Arahats that arises accompanied by concern on seeing the dangers of conditioned phenomena (*dhamma-saṁvega*), then there will be four kinds of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*).

Of these types of spiritual urgency, only urgency from knowledge (*ñāṇa-saṁvega*) should be considered as the main spring of energy. When one sees the dangers of Saṁsāra through wisdom and is stirred by concern, one would certainly work arduously for liberation from these dangers. Without such wisdom, one will not work for it at all.

Even in everyday mundane life, a student who is struck with fear of poverty, that is, one who has urgency from knowledge, will work hard reflecting thus: "Without education, I will be faced with poverty when I grow up." Another one, who is not moved by such anxiety, that is, one who has no urgency from knowledge, will put forth no effort whatsoever to acquire knowledge.

Similarly, motivated by a fear of poverty, workers assiduously devote themselves to work which provides them with the necessities of life; whereas those who do not consider their future will remain indolent and carefree. It should be surmised from what has been said that only urgency from knowledge can cause the development of energy.

But this applies only to the development of energy which serves as a perfection. As already mentioned, there are two kinds of energy: energy which is developed for a wholesome act and energy developed for an unwholesome act. The energy necessary for an unwholesome act is also caused by the stirring of spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*), but it is urgency that disturbs the mind (*cittutrāsa-saṁvega*) and not urgency from knowledge (*ñāṇa-saṁvega*) that serves as its foundation.

An indigent person in need of money will make an effort to steal; he cannot take up a proper mental attitude (*yoniso-manasikāra*). This is an example of how wrong effort arises through an unwholesome urgency that disturbs the mind. A person who does not possess a proper mental attitude will have recourse to wrong efforts to prevent possible dangers falling upon him. But a person with

the right frame of mind will not exert himself to do wrong actions; he always strives for good ones.

Thus, whereas the main foundation of energy is the spiritual urgency (*saṁvega*), it is the mental attitude which determines the kind of energy, whether wholesome or unwholesome, to develop. As a perfection, unwholesome energy is not to be considered; it is only blameless, wholesome energy that is reckoned as a perfection.

When we consider the four right exertions, it would seem that only energy that causes wholesome deeds serves as a perfection. But, although an effort may not result in wholesome [1618] deeds, if it is neither a wrong effort nor the kind that would produce unwholesome deeds, it should be counted as a perfection of energy.

As an example of a super effort for perfection, the commentary cites the story of Mahā Janaka. The Bodhisatta, as Prince Janaka, made the effort of swimming for seven days in the ocean when the ship he was travelling in sank. His strenuous endeavour was not motivated by a desire to perform wholesome deeds or to practise generosity, observe morality or cultivate meditation. It does not result in the arising of unwholesome states such as greed, hatred, delusion either and may thus be regarded as blameless. Prince Janaka's supreme exertion, being blameless and free from unwholesomeness, counts as a fulfilment of the perfection of energy.

When the ship was about to be wrecked, 700 people on board wept and lamented in desperation without making any attempt to survive the disaster. Prince Janaka, unlike his fellow travellers, thought to himself: "To weep and lament in fear when faced with danger is not the way of the wise; a wise man endeavours to save himself from an impending danger. A man with wisdom such as I am, must put forth an effort to swim my way through to safety." With this resolve and without any trepidation, he courageously swam across the ocean. Being urged by such a noble thought, his performance was laudable, and the effort he put forth for this act was also extremely praiseworthy.

Bodhisattas in every existence undertake what they have to do bravely and without flinching; not to say of rebirths in the human world, even when he was born as a bull, the Bodhisatta performed arduous tasks. Thus, as a young bull

named Kaṇha (Ja 29), the Bodhisatta, out of gratitude to the old woman who had tended him, pulled 500 carts loaded with merchandise across a big swamp.

Even as an animal, the development of energy as a perfection by the Bodhisatta was not slackened; when reborn as a human, the tendency to put forth effort persisted in him. Extreme hardships he went through as King Kusa (Ja 531), in his endeavours to win back the favours of Princess Pabhāvatī who ran away from him because of his ugly appearance, are examples of the Bodhisatta's determined effort, unyielding in the face of difficulties. The latent tendency to develop such energy remained with the Bodhisatta throughout all his various existences.

The Life of Mahosadha

The texts give the story of Mahosadha (*Umaṅga-jātaka*, Ja 542) to show the Bodhisatta's fulfilment of the perfection of wisdom. But, in that very life, the Bodhisatta also developed the perfection of energy. On the whole, Mahosadha made use of wisdom as a guide in attending to his multifarious duties, but once a careful decision had been made, it was put into execution by making a continual effort. Such endeavours of Mahosadha, even though they were not intended to develop meritorious deeds of generosity, morality or meditation, should be considered as a perfection of energy since they were made for the welfare of others.

It may be asked whether some of Mahosadha's endeavours did not cause suffering to others. For example, when King Cūḷani Brahmadatta laid siege to Mithilā with 18 divisions of his indestructible (*akkhobhaṇī*) army, Mahosadha, devising a stratagem, brought about a complete rout of the great army, causing much suffering to King Cūḷani Brahmadatta and his hordes. Should we not blame Mahosadha then for his attempts to make his opponents suffer?

In answer to that, take the simile of scaring a snake which is about to catch a frog. Some people take the view that such an attempt is blameworthy because by so doing the frog will no doubt get out of harm's way but the snake will go hungry. The Buddha teaches that volition is the deciding factor in such a situation. If one frightens away the snake in order to make it suffer from hunger, it is blameworthy; on the other hand, if one acts only to get the frog out of danger, without giving any thought to the snake's hunger, it is quite blameless.

Again, in the Questions of King Milinda on the [1619] Question about Devadatta's Going-Forth (*Devadatta-pabbajja-pañha*, Mil 4.3, PTS 107), the king asked Ven. Nāgasena: "Venerable sir, is it not a fact that the Buddha knew that Devadatta would create a schism if he was permitted to become a monastic. Knowing thus, why did the Buddha admit him into the order? If he did not receive the going forth, he would not be able to cause the schism."

Ven. Nāgasena replies: "King, the Buddha indeed foresaw that Devadatta would create a schism among monastics, but he also knew that if Devadatta did not gain admission into the Saṅgha, he would commit unwholesome deeds, such as holding a "wrong view with a fixed destiny" (*niyata-micchā-diṭṭhi*), for which he would suffer worse than he would for causing a schism. Creating the schism would no doubt lead him to the lower realms (*apāya*), but there is a time limit for suffering in these realms. Staying outside the Saṅgha, however, through his unwholesome deeds, such as holding wrong views with a fixed destiny, he would be doomed to unlimited misery in the realms of intense suffering, Niraya. Foreseeing this possible limit to his suffering, the Buddha, out of compassion, admitted him into the Saṅgha, thus mitigating his agony to a certain extent.

In the same way, by putting to rout the great army of King Cūḷani Brahmadatta, without causing suffering to his country, Mahosadha was saving his own country of Mithilā from complete destruction. He acted thus to serve the best interest of both and was free of any blame.

The Qualities of Energy

1. When Energy takes a predominant place in performing multifarious functions, it acquires the name of the predominance of energy (*viriyādhipati*), one of the four predominance-conditions (*adhipati*).

2. It forms a constituent part of the 22 controlling faculties (*indriya*) and is known as the faculty of energy (*viriyindriya*). But only the energy that is associated with mundane moral consciousness is reckoned as the perfection of energy. In the five controlling faculties (*indriya*) of the things on the side of Awakening (*Bodhipakkhiya-dhamma*) also, the faculty of energy, just as in the case of faculty of wisdom, is counted as a perfection only when it is included in the mundane purifications of morality and mind.

Likewise, concerning the four kinds of right exertion (*sammappadhāna*), it is only the energy included in the mundane purification that is considered a perfection.

3. The factor of energy included in the five powers (*bala*) is known as the strength of energy (*viriya-bala*); in the four psychic powers (*iddhi-pada*) as psychic power of energy (*viriyiddhi-pāda*); in the seven factors of Awakening (*bojjhaṅga*) as the energy factor of Awakening (*viriya-sambojjhaṅga*) and in the eight constituents of the noble path (*ariya-maggaṅga*) as right endeavour (*sammā-vāyāma*). These various factors of energy under different names are reckoned as perfections of energy only in association with mundane moral consciousness which arises while undertaking mundane purification.

Contemplating these special qualities of energy, may you fulfil the perfection of energy to its highest possible stage.

6. The Perfection of Forbearance

The Chronicles of the Buddhas (Bv 2.144) exhorts one to bear praise and disdain with patience (*sammānāvamānakkhama*). One should neither be elated when meeting with pleasant objects nor upset when encountering unpleasant objects. It is no tolerance of pleasantness if we develop greed under fortunate circumstances or of unpleasantness if we develop hate under unfortunate circumstances. The essential meaning here is: We are truly patient only when favourable situations are faced without greed and unfavourable ones without hate.

However, with regard to the perfection of forbearance, in illustrative stories the commentaries generally use the term perfection of forbearance (*khanti-pāramī*) only for tolerance to acts of physical or verbal aggression by others without giving way to anger. The commentary to the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*) expounds in the Chapter on Miscellany: The group of consciousnesses and its concomitants associated with tolerance of wrongs done by others, predominated by the mental factor of non-aversion (*adosa-cetasika*) and grasped by compassion and skill in means is called the perfection of forbearance (*karuṇūpāya-kosalla-pariggahitaṁ satta-saṅkhārāparādha-sahanaṁ adosappadhāno* [1620] *tad-ākārappa-vatta-cittuppādo khanti-pāramitā*). That is,

the group of consciousnesses and its concomitants formed in such a mode of tolerance to faults of beings is called the perfection of forbearance.

The sub-commentary to the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) in commenting on the five restraints of morality, mindfulness, wisdom, forbearance and energy, briefly explained in the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA), defines the restraint of forbearance as: Forbearance means enduring; that forbearance is actually the four mental aggregates formed in such a mode of tolerance; some teachers say it is wisdom (*paññā*) or only the mental factor of non-aversion (*khantī ti adhivāsanā, sā ca tathā-pavattā khandhā; paññā ti eke, adoso eva vā*).

Some scholars take the view: "The exhortation in the Pāḷi texts to bear praise and disdain with patience, seems to imply that one should tolerate praise as well as disdain. But, in actual experience, one is liable to be displeased and angry only when one is insulted and despised; no one shows such emotions when treated with honour and veneration. Therefore, the term forbearance should be used only when one shows no anger in a situation which would normally provoke anger to many others. To take the Pāḷi text exhortation literally is to equate the perfection of forbearance with the perfection of equanimity, seeing no difference between the two."

As the authority quoted by these scholars is the aforesaid commentary to the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*) and the sub-commentary to the Path to Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*), their view may not be set aside.

It should be noted, however, that forbearance is considered to be tolerance of others' treatment whereas equanimity is indifference towards beings, without hate or love.

Ven. Ledi Sayādaw, in his Assistance to the Discourse on the Blessings (*Maṅgala-sutta-nissaya*), defines forbearance as: "Not feeling exalted when encountering pleasantness and remaining patient without giving vent to anger when encountering hardships." This definition is in agreement with the exhortation to bear praise and disdain with patience (*sammānāvamānakkhama*).

To reconcile the commentary's exposition and the text: Bodhisattas are by nature serious-minded; pleasant experiences or happy circumstances do not make them excited with greed; they are accustomed to remaining unmoved by

them without having to make a special effort to discipline their mind. When faced with an unhappy turn of events, however, they have to make special endeavour to bear it patiently so as to fulfil their perfection of forbearance.

Bodhisattas, who are fulfiling the perfection of forbearance, have to put up with both pleasant and unpleasant experiences so as not to develop greed and ill-will, hence the exhortation given in the text to bear praise without developing greed and to tolerate insults and ill-treatments without generating hate. But it is nothing strange for Bodhisattas, who are serious-minded, to experience pleasantness without being moved by greed; therefore, the commentary comments only upon tolerance, which is to be cultivated as the perfection of forbearance in unpleasant situations which are unbearable to ordinary persons. Viewed in this way, there is no disagreement between the exposition in the commentary and the teaching in the text.

The Nature of Forbearance

Forbearance being the group of consciousnesses and its concomitants led by the mental factor of non-hate (*adosa-cetasika*), which has the characteristics of lack of ill-will or anger, is not a separate ultimate reality like wisdom or energy. However, when considered by itself as non-hate, it is of course an ultimate reality like wisdom or energy. [1621]

Although forbearance (*khantī*) is non-hate (*adosa-cetasika*), every case of non-hate is not forbearance. The non-hate accompanies every arising of a beautiful (*sobhana*) type of consciousness, but it is called forbearance (*khantī*) only if it serves as a deterrent to anger when provoked by others. If the beautiful consciousness arises due to any other cause, the non-hate that accompanies it is not called forbearance.

Ven. Puṇṇa's Forbearance

Ven. Puṇṇa's mental attitude serves as a good example of the forbearance one should develop. It is, therefore, briefly described here, based on the Discourse giving Advice to Puṇṇa (*Puṇṇovāda-sutta*, MN 145).

Once during the Buddha's time, Ven. Puṇṇa approached and informed the Buddha that he would like to go to the Sunāparanta district and live there. The Buddha said to him: "Puṇṇa, the people in Sunāparanta are rough and brutal. How would you feel should they abuse and revile you?"

The venerable replied: "Venerable sir, should the people of Sunāparanta abuse and revile me, I would regard them as good people, control my temper and bear it patiently with the thought: 'These are good people, extremely good people; they merely abuse and revile me, but they do not assault me with their fists and elbows.' "

The Buddha asked him further: "Puṇṇa, suppose the people of Sunāparanta assault you with their fists and elbows, how would you feel?" – "Venerable sir, I would regard them as good people, control my temper and bear it patiently with the thought: 'These are good people, extremely good people; they merely assault me with their fists and elbows, but they do do not stone me.' "

> The Buddha asked him further how he would feel if people stoned him, beat him with a stick, cut him with a sword or even kill him.

The venerable replied: "Venerable sir, I would control my temper and bear it patiently with the thought: 'The disciples of the Fortunate One, such as Ven. Godhika, Ven. Channa, being weary and ashamed as well as being disgusted with the body and with life, had to commit suicide (*satthahāraka-kamma*); how fortunate I am. I need not kill myself.' " The Buddha then approved of his replies and blessed him.

Again, in the Birth Story about the Teacher Sarabhaṅga (*Sarabhaṅga-jātaka*, Ja 522), Sakka, the Lord of the Devas, asked the recluse, Sarabhaṅga:

> "Recluse of Koṇḍañña ancestry, what may one slay without having to repent? What may one abandon to gain praise from the virtuous? Whose abusive, harsh words should one bear with patience? Give me answers to these questions."

The Bodhisatta, Sarabhaṅga the recluse, replied:

> "One may slay anger without having to repent; one may abandon ingratitude to gain praise from the virtuous; one should bear with patience abusive, harsh words from everyone, whether superior, equal or inferior; the virtuous call this the highest form of patience."

Again, Sakka asked:

> "Recluse, it may be possible to put up with the abusive, harsh words of those who are superior or one's equal, but why should one tolerate the rude words coming from one's inferiors?"

The Bodhisatta answered:

> "One may bear with patience the rudeness of one's superior through fear or the abusive language from those who are equal to ward off the danger of rivalry. Both cases are not superior types of patience. But the wise say that to put up with the rude language coming from one's inferiors, with no special reason to do so, is the supreme form of forbearance."

Sakka's Forbearance

Once, in a battle between the Devas of Tāvatiṁsa and the Asuras, the Devas captured [1622] Vepacitti, King of the Asuras, and brought him into the presence of Sakka. As he entered or left the assembly, he reviled Sakka with abusive words, but Sakka endured his behaviour without showing anger (SN 11.4).

Then Mātali, Sakka's charioteer, asked his master why he remained calm, without showing any resentment in the face of such insults. Sakka's reply in verse included the following:

> *Sadattha-paramā atthā, khantyā bhiyyo na vijjati,*
> *yo have balavā santo dubbalassa titikkhati,*
> *tam-āhu paramaṁ khantiṁ.*
>
> Of all kinds of interest, self-interest is supreme, and amongst acts that promote self-interest, forbearance is the best. He who is strong himself endures the weak; the virtuous call this the supreme forbearance.

Explanation with Quotations from the Texts

Although the above quotations, from the Thematic Discourses about Sakka (*Sakka-saṁyutta*, SN 11) and the Birth Story about the Teacher Sarabhaṅga (*Sarabhaṅga-jātaka*, Ja 522), refer particularly to forbearance to verbal insults, it should be understood that enduring physical assaults is also meant. The texts mention verbal insults because these are more commonly met with than physical attacks. This is borne out by the example of the aforesaid story of Ven. Puṇṇa, which included physical ill-treatments in ascending order of grievousness.

Also, in the Birth Story about Khantivādī (*Khantivādi-jātaka*, Ja 313), is found the story of the recluse Khantivādī, who set an example of supreme forbearance

when King Kalābu tortured him, not only verbally but also physically, causing his death.

Anger and Forbearance

As has been stated above, forbearance is controlling oneself not to resent it when being attacked by others, either verbally or physically. But there is another form of anger which is not connected with verbal or physical wrongs done by others. Suppose a man employs someone to do a certain job and the workman performs it to the best of his ability. But the employer is not satisfied with his work and bursts out with anger. If one controls one's temper in such a situation, it is not forbearance (*khantī*) it is just giving no vent to anger (*akkodha*).

In the Long Birth Story about the Golden Goose (*Mahā-haṁsa-jātaka*, Ja 534), the Buddha teaches the ten duties of kings (*dāsa-rāja-dhamma*), which include both non-anger (*akkodha*) and forbearance (*khantī*).

In carrying out various orders of a monarch, his executives may have performed their tasks well with the best of intentions, but not to his satisfaction. Non-anger (*akkodha*), as one of the ten duties of kings, forbids him from giving way to royal anger in such a situation. In contrast, forbearance (*khantī*) which is bearing verbal or physical insults without losing temper is laid down separately as another duty of the king.

Nine Causes of Anger

There are nine causes of anger which arise in relation to oneself, to friends, loved ones or to one's enemies. It may also arise regarding actions in the past, present or future. Thus there are nine causes of anger arising with regard to individuals and with regard to time (*Āghāta-vatthu-sutta*, AN 9.29):

1. One is angry in relation to oneself, thinking: "He has caused damage to my interests."
2. One is angry in relation to oneself, thinking: "He is causing damage to my interests."
3. One is angry in relation to oneself, thinking: "He will cause damage to my interests."

4. One is angry in relation to one's friends, thinking: "He has caused damage to the interests of my friend."
5. One is angry in relation to one's friends, thinking: "He is causing damage to the [1623] interests of my friend."
6. One is angry in relation to one's friends, thinking: "He will cause damage to the interests of my friend."
7. One is angry in relation to one's enemies, thinking: "He has promoted the interests of my enemies."
8. One is angry in relation to one's enemies, thinking: "He is promoting the interests of my enemies."
9. One is angry in relation to one's enemies, thinking: "He will promote the interests of my enemies."

In addition to the above nine causes of anger, one can also become angry if it is raining too heavily or if it is too windy, too hot, etc. Losing one's temper over matters about which one should not get angry is called irrational anger (*aṭṭhāna-kopa*). It is the mental factor of ill-will (*dosa-cetasika*), which arises mostly in those having no reasoning ability. To restrain such irrational anger (*aṭṭhāna-kopa*) is to remain without anger (*akkodha*).

Eight Kinds of Strength

In a list of eight kinds of strength of the noble and virtuous is included forbearance (*Paṭhama-bala-sutta*, AN 8.27). The eight kinds of strength are:

1. Crying is the strength of children.
2. Anger is the strength of women.
3. A weapon is the strength of robbers.
4. Sovereignty over wide territories is the strength of kings.
5. Finding fault with others is the strength of fools.
6. Careful scrutiny is the strength of the wise.
7. Repeated consideration is the strength of the learned.
8. Tolerance to wrongs done by others is the strength of ascetics and Brahmins.

Ascetics and Brahmins

With reference to the terms ascetics and Brahmins (*samaṇa-brāhmaṇa*) in number 8 of the above list, it may be asked whether ascetics are of equal status.

Outside of the teaching, *samaṇa* means an ascetic. Within the teaching, it is understood as a monastic, a member of the Saṅgha, a son of the Buddha. The term *samaṇa* is thus well-known and needs no further explanation.

What requires elaboration is the word *brāhmaṇa*. The Discourse on the Highest Knowledge (*Aggaññа-sutta*, DN 27) gives an account of how the appellation Brahmin (*brāhmaṇa*) came to be used first.

At the beginning of the world, after humans had lived on earth for aeons, evil ways had appeared amongst them, and they elected a certain individual to rule over them as King Mahā Sammata "the Great Elected One." At that time, some people, saying: "The world is being overwhelmed by forces of evil; we do not wish to live in association with people who are so corrupt as to be governed by a king. We will repair to the forest and drive away, wash away, these evil ways," went to the forest and stayed there meditating and being absorbed in absorption (*jhāna*). Because they lived in this manner, they were called Brahmins (*brāhmaṇa*).

Brahmins (*brāhmaṇa*) is also a Pāḷi word which means "one who has done away with evil." Brahmins (*brāhmaṇa*) did not cook their own food; they lived on fruits which had fallen from trees or on alms food collected from towns and villages. They were called Brahmins (*brāhmaṇa*) because they led a pure, holy life in keeping with the literal meaning of the Pāḷi word "one who has done away with evil." They were [1624] thus Brahmins by virtue of their holy practice (*guṇa-brāhmaṇa*).

After a lapse of many aeons, some of these Brahmins by virtue of their holy practice failed to keep up the practice of meditation and absorption (*jhāna*). They settled down on the outskirts of towns and villages; they composed and taught the Vedas to those eager to learn them. They no longer practised meditation to attain absorption (*jhāna*) and to cast off evil. But they still retained the name of Brahmins, but they were not Brahmins of strict practice (*guṇa-brāhmaṇa*) since they no longer possessed the attribute of holy practice.

They could only claim to be Brahmins by birth (*jāti-brāhmaṇa*), being descended from the Brahmins of strict practice (*guṇa-brāhmaṇa*). As they could not practice meditation to attain absorption (*jhāna*), they are regarded to be of an inferior class. But with the lapse of time, writing Vedic books and teaching, they came to be considered as quite respectable and noble. Although these Brahmins by birth would not actually cast off and wash away mental defilements by cultivation of absorption (*jhāna*), they immersed themselves in the waters of rivers and streams to deceive people, calling their deceptive performances acts of ablution to wash away impurities.

A reference to this practice of washing out one's sins by Brahmins is found in the Birth Story about Prince Bhūridatta (*Bhūridatta-jātaka*, Ja 543). Bhūridatta, King of the Nāgas, used to visit the human world to observe the precepts. On one such visit, he failed to return to the Nāga land at the expected time. His two brothers went in search of him.

They were able to retrieve him in time from the captivity of a snake charmer who ill-treated him. He was betrayed by a Brahmin named Nesāda, who saw him observing precepts on top of an ant-hill.

His younger brother, Subhoga Nāga, while following the course of the River Yamunā in search of him, came across the Brahmin Nesāda who was responsible for his capture by the snake charmer. The Brahmin was found immersed in the River Yamunā in order to wash out the impurities of his betrayal.

The Buddha had in mind only Brahmins of strict practice when he said that tolerance is the power of ascetics and Brahmins. The ascetics of the Discourse on the Origins (*Aggañña-sutta*, DN 27), who, wearing white clothes, practised to rid themselves of defilements were ordinary Brahmins or Brahmins by birth. But when the Buddha made his appearance and started teaching, he described the attributes only by virtue of which one may be called a Brahmin. In the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*), the Buddha devoted the entire Division about the Brahmin (*Brāhmaṇa-vagga*) of 41 verses (Dhp 383-423) to fully explain the noble qualities possession of which would entitle one to be called a Brahmin. Such Brahmins are all Brahmins of strict practice (*guṇa-brāhmaṇa*); there is no

division of this class. The Brahmins by birth, however, are split into many divisions.[435]

7. The Perfection of Truthfulness

> The opening paragraphs of this chapter deal with how the Pāḷi words for forbearance (*khantī*) and truth (*sacca*) are adopted with some change in the Myanmar language and how truthfulness is likened in the Myanmar literature to the morning star, which never deviates from its course. We have left them out of our translation.

Just as the morning star always goes straight without deviating from its course, so one should speak straight and truthfully; such speech alone means truthfulness.

Two Kinds of Truth

Truth (*sacca*) is not a separate ultimate principle like wisdom (*paññā*) or energy (*viriya*). It is truthfulness without having a trace of falsehood. It involves such mental concomitants as restraint (*virati-cetasika*) and volition (*cetanā-cetasika*). As truthfulness varies under [1625] different circumstances, truth is basically of two kinds: conventional truth (*sammuti-sacca*) and ultimate truth (*paramattha-sacca*).

> Only these two kinds of truth are taught by the Buddha; there is no such thing as a third truth; there is no truth other than these two in the entire world.

Of these two kinds, the conventional truth is the truth which agrees with what has been named by people. People generally name things according to their shapes. They call a thing of this shape a "human," a thing of that shape a "bull," a thing of another shape a "horse." Again, among humans, one of this shape is called a "man" and one of that shape a "woman." There are, in this way, as many names as there are things.

If you call a thing named "man" a man, it is a conventional truth; it is conventionally correct for you to say so. If you call what has been named "man"

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[435] The last four paragraphs dealing with the etymology of the Myanmar word for *brāhmaṇa* are left out from our translation.

a bull, it is not a conventional truth; it is not conventionally correct for you to say so. If you refer to someone who has been named "woman" as a "man," it is not a conventional truth; it is not conventionally correct for you to say so. In this way, one should differentiate between the two truths.

That which not only has been named by people but which really exists in its ultimate sense is called ultimate truth. For example, when it is said: "The thing that knows various sense objects is mind (*citta*)," the knowing principle is an ultimate truth because it truly exists in its ultimate sense. When it is said, "the thing that changes owing to opposite phenomena, such as heat and cold, is matter (*rūpa*)," the changing principle is an ultimate truth because it truly exists in its ultimate sense. In this way, mental concomitants (*cetasika*) and Nibbāna should also be known as ultimate truths because they also truly exist in their ultimate sense.

Of the two kinds of truth, the conventional truth is associated with perception (*saññā*); in other words, the conventional truth depends on perception. Recognition of things according to their respective shapes as one has been saying since one's childhood, "such a shape is a man," "such a shape is a woman," "such a shape is a bull," "such a shape is a horse," and so on, is perception. A person seeing through perception will say, "there exists a human body," "there exists a man," "there exists a woman," etc.

The ultimate truth is the object of wisdom. In other words, it manifests itself through wisdom. The greater the wisdom, the more discernable is the ultimate truth. Wisdom makes an analysis of everything and sees its true nature. When it is said: "The thing that knows various sense objects in the mind," wisdom investigates whether a knowing principle exists or not and decides that it does. If there were no such thing as knowing, there would never be beings; all would have been sheer matter, such as stones, rocks and the like. Material things are far from knowing. But all beings do cognize various sense objects. When wisdom thus ponders, there manifests itself the principle (*citta*) which knows sense objects.

Therefore, that mind exists, in an ultimate sense, is clear to those who think through wisdom; the more they think, the clearer they comprehend. But to those who see things through perception, it will not be clear; it will remain indiscernible, because, as has been said before, perception is an identification of

shapes. When you say there is mind, the perceptionist may ask, “Is the mind round, flat or square? Is it a powder, a liquid, or a gas?” But you cannot answer that it is round, flat, or square, nor can you say that it is a powder, a liquid or a gas. If you cannot say anything, he may argue that there is no such thing as mind; because if there were such a thing, it must be round, flat or square; it must be a powder, a liquid or a gas. To the perceptionist, who is preoccupied with the idea of concrete forms, mind does not exist simply because it does not assume any concrete form.

Just as the perceptionist cannot see the ultimate truth, so the intellectual cannot see [1626] conventional truth. When the intellectual takes a look at what has been named “man” by the perceptionist, he does so with an analytical mind and makes 32 portions of this person, such as hair on the head, hair on the body, fingernails, toenails, etc. “Is the hair on the head called man?” “Is hair on the body called man?” The answers to these questions cannot be in the affirmative. In the same way, when a similar question on each of the remaining portions of the human body is asked, the answer will be no every time. If none of these portions can be called “man,” the intellectual will say: “Well, there really does not exist such a thing called man.”

Conventional truth appears only when it is seen through perception, but when seen through wisdom, it disappears, so also the ultimate truth, which appears when it is seen through wisdom; when seen through perception, it disappears.

In this connection, what is particularly noteworthy is the fact that Nibbāna is an ultimate truth. This ultimate truth is peace through cessation of all kinds of sorrow and suffering. This peace can be discerned only when it is examined by means of sharp insight but not by means of perception.

Nowadays, some people might like to ask: “Are there palatial buildings in Nibbāna?” “How do those who have passed into Nibbāna enjoy themselves there?” They ask such questions because of their perception of Nibbāna, which, as ultimate truth, lies in the sphere of wisdom.

To be sure, there are no palatial buildings in Nibbāna, nor are there any individuals that pass into Nibbāna. Those who have realized the peace of Nibbāna with their attainment of Awakening are no longer subject to rebirth, and their minds and bodies cease to exist when demise takes place in their final

existence, like a great flame of fire goes extinct. Such a cessation is called passing into Parinibbāna. No living entity exists in Nibbāna.

"If that were the case, such a thing as Nibbāna would not exist," the perceptionist would say, "it is, therefore, useless and unnecessary." In order to encourage him, others would assert: "Nibbāna is a place where beings are immortal, assuming special mental and physical forms and enjoying incomparable luxury in palaces and mansions." Then only is the perceptionist satisfied because the assertion agrees with what he has preconceived.

If one looks through perception at something and sees the appearance of its concrete form, it is not absolute (*paramattha*), but merely a conventional designation (*paññatti*). So also, if one looks through wisdom at something and sees the disappearance of its form that is not absolute either but merely a conventional designation too. Only when one looks through wisdom and sees its true nature, then is it absolute. The more one looks thus, the more one sees such reality. Therefore, Nibbāna, which is just peace, highly unique absoluteness, should not be sought through perception, which tends to grasp form and substance. Instead, it should be examined through wisdom, which tends to remove form and substance and delve into their true nature so that the peace that is Nibbāna manifests itself.

Conventional truth and ultimate truth are both acceptable, each in its own context, as has been shown above. Suppose a person takes an oath saying: "I declare that there really exist a man and a woman. If what I have declared is not correct, let misfortune befall me," and suppose another person would also take an oath saying: "I declare that there really do not exist a man and a woman. If what I have declared is not correct, let misfortune befall me;" never will misfortune befall either of them. The reason is: Though the two declarations are against each other, both are correct from their respective points of view. The former, correct from the point of view of conventional usage, is conventional truth; the latter, correct from the point of view of ultimate sense, is ultimate truth.

Although Buddhas intend to teach only the nature of absolute reality, they do not exclude the conventional terms from their teaching. Instead, they mention them side by side with those of ultimate truth. For instance, even in the first discourse, though the emphasis is on [1627] the two extremes and the middle

path, it is taught that "the two extremes should not be taken up by a monastic," in which "monastic" is a mere designation.

> [The translators had here written "a recluse," which implies that the underlying word was *samaṇa*. The latter, however, is not mentioned in the relevant section, only monastics (*bhikkhu*) are mentioned there. It should further be noticed that none of the Group-of-Five had been ordained at this time, but they were still referred to by the Buddha as *bhikkhu*.]

When the Buddha teaches ultimate truth, he uses conventional designations wherever necessary. He does so not just to make a contrast. For ordinary persons, the conventional truth is as important as the ultimate truth. Had the Buddha taught things only in ultimate terms, those with the proper mental attitude will understand that "whatever exists in the world is impermanent, unsatisfactory and unsubstantial," and they will make efforts to cultivate insight (*vipassanā*) meditation, which will directly lead them to Nibbāna.

On the other hand, those with an improper mental attitude will hold thus: "It is said that there are only aggregates of mind and matter, which are subject to impermanence, suffering and unsubstantiality in this world. There is no self, nor are there other persons. Then there cannot be such things as 'my wealth, my son, my wife,' nor can there be such things as 'his wealth, his son, his wife.' One can make use of anything as one desires. Because there is no such thing as 'he,' there can be no such thing as 'killing him,' no such thing as 'stealing his property,' no such thing as 'doing wrong with his wife.' " Thus will they commit evil according to their wild desires. So, upon their death, they will be reborn in states of suffering. To prevent this, the discourses are delivered embodying conventional terms. The discourse teachings thus form effective measures for beings to prevent them from falling into the four states of suffering.

Besides, the discourse teachings lead beings to such happy states as the human world, the celestial world and the Brahma world because the virtues, namely: generosity, morality and tranquillity meditation, which are conducive to rebirth in those states, are most numerously taught in the discourses.

For example, to accomplish a meritorious act of generosity, there must be the supporter, his volition, the recipient and the object to offer. Of these factors, volition alone is an ultimate reality, but the rest are just designations, exclusion

of which makes generosity impossible. The same is true of morality and tranquillity meditation.

Therefore, it should be stated without any doubt that conventional truth leads to happy abodes as has been noted. Exclusion of conventional truth, to say the least, will deter fulfilment of the perfections which are required for becoming a Buddha.

Although it is true that the Buddha's teachings of discourses alone would make beings avoid wrongdoings, since the Buddha himself has said that there exist "I," "he," "mine," "his," "my wife and children" and "his wife and children," etc. There is a danger of beings becoming strongly attached to the wrong notion that there really exist such things and becoming gradually removed from the paths, fruitions and Nibbāna. In order to help them reach these paths, fruitions and Nibbāna, the Buddha had to teach ultimate truth as embodied in the Abhidhamma.

The discourses' teaching of the existence of individuals and things belonging to them is made in agreement with designations which are universally used. But by means of the Abhidhamma, the Buddha had to remove their wrong notions, saying that there is no such thing as "I," "he," "man," "woman," etc.; therefore, because of their conventional terms it should not be grasped that they really exist; all is but impermanent, unsatisfactory and unsubstantial.

In this way, the Buddha explained that there exist "I," "he," "man," "woman," etc. only as mere designations or as conventional truth and that these things do not exist in their ultimate sense, hence the need for him to teach both kinds of truth.

Ultimate truth is of two kinds: natural truth and noble truth. All the four ultimate realities: mind, mental concomitants, matter and Nibbāna, constitute natural truth because they are real in the absolute sense. [1628]

In the field of mundane affairs, there are both physical happiness (*sukha*) and mental happiness (*somanassa*), which constitute natural truth. If one is in contact with a pleasant object, because of that touch, there arises happiness in one's person. None can deny that, saying: "No, it is not true," or "No, it is not good to be in contact with a pleasant object." Nobody can say so because of the fact that one is really happy to be in contact with a desirable body as a sense object (*iṭṭha-phoṭṭhabbārammaṇa*).

Similarly, if one's mind is in contact with a pleasant mind object, one enjoys mental happiness. Such a feeling is called a pleasant feeling (*somanassa-vedanā*). This is irrefutable because the arising of mental happiness is a reality. Thus, it should be held that both happiness (*sukha*) and pleasure (*somanassa*) exist in mundane affairs.

The Noble Truths

The Noble Truth of Suffering

In terms of the noble truths, one does not see either happiness (*sukha*) or pleasure (*somanassa*) in mundane affairs. If one clings to the view that there exist both happiness and pleasure as natural truth, one cannot be detached from having a worldly outlook; one cannot then attain the state of a noble one (*ariya*). Therefore, one who aspires to become a noble one (*ariya*) should make efforts to see that the mental states called happiness and pleasure, in terms of natural truth, are all suffering. These feelings, called happiness and pleasure, are things which cannot remain without change forever; indeed, they are subject to change every second.

Worldlings crave the pleasures of human and divine abodes, wrongly believing that they are a source of happiness and delight. They do so because they do not know such pleasures to be transitory and subject to constant change. They are ignorant of the true nature of these pleasures because they have little intelligence but great craving. Such ignorant people will look upon them as enjoyable and delightful before the process of decay and deterioration sets in. But it is in their nature to change, and when that happens, these people become sad much more than they had been happy.

For example, a poor man will become very happy the moment he hears that he has won a lottery prize. Then he starts daydreaming how to spend and enjoy his wealth to make up for his former poverty. While he is building castles in the air, he loses all his money through some misfortune. It may be imagined how unhappy he will be then. His sorrow at the loss of his wealth will be far greater than his happiness on becoming suddenly rich.

In the field of worldly affairs, everything is associated with both enjoyment and sorrow. The five sense-pleasures are enjoyable to worldlings. But the Buddha says that they are more suffering than enjoyment. Unlike worldlings, however,

the Buddha's disciples do not find them enjoyable, much less the Buddha. Yet, the Buddha does not say that they are totally devoid of pleasantness; he only says that there is little pleasantness but much sorrow in them.

In any situation, the wise and virtuous always consider first whether there is fault or no fault but never whether there is pleasantness or unpleasantness. If there is fault, they take no interest in it, even if there is pleasantness. They decide it is undesirable to them. If there is no fault, they take it to be desirable even if pleasantness is absent.

Supposing someone is told that he could rule a country as a Universal Monarch just for one day, but that the next day he would be executed. Then there would be none who dares or desires to rule. From the point of view of a worldling, a Universal Monarch's life for one day, which has never been enjoyed before, may be entirely attractive. But as there is the impending death on the following day, which is a great disadvantage, there would be nobody who will enjoy one day's life of such a Universal Monarch.

In the same way, seeing that everything is perishable, the noble ones cannot hold temporary pleasure, which occurs just before it vanishes, as enjoyment. One can become a noble person only through contemplation that "there is no such thing as happiness in this world; everything is impermanent; as there is no permanence, there is no happiness; there is but sorrow."

Only by developing insight through the contemplation that everything in the world is of the nature of suffering, it is possible to become a noble one (*ariya*). The aggregates of phenomena, which [1629] are the objects of such meditation, is called a noble truth. In other words, since the noble ones meditate on this aggregate of mundane phenomena as they really are, it is called a noble truth.

The insight that, in the cycle of existence which are called the three worlds, there is no enjoyment at all but only suffering, according to the right view held by those who are working for the attainment of the noble state and by those who have already attained the same, is a truth; it is therefore called the noble truth of suffering.

In short, the five aggregates of clinging (*pañcūpādānakkhandha*), also named the phenomena of the three mundane planes of existence, are all suffering, and they are nothing but suffering. The five aggregates of clinging are: the aggregate of matter (*rūpa*), the aggregate of feelings (*vedanā*), the aggregate of

perceptions (*saññā*), the aggregate of volitions (*saṅkhāra*) and the aggregate of consciousness (*viññāṇa*), which form objects of attachments as "I," "mine," "myself." These five aggregates are called the noble truth of suffering.

The Noble Truth of the Cause of Suffering

The five aggregates that are clung to (*pañcūpādānakkhandha*), which form the noble truth of suffering, do not arise by themselves. They have reasons for their arising, the most fundamental and important being craving for sense objects.

In the world, every being is subject to suffering because he or she is to toil daily for the essentials of living, and all this is motivated by craving. The more one craves for good living, the greater one's suffering is. If one would be satisfied with a simple life, living very simply on bare necessities, one's misery would be alleviated to a corresponding extent. It is clear, therefore, that suffering, wrongly believed to be good living, is caused by craving.

Beings do all kinds of acts for wanting better things, not only for the present life but also for coming existences. When a new birth appears as a result of those acts, the real cause for this new birth is found to be the craving that motivates those acts.

Craving is called the noble truth of the cause of suffering because it is truly that craving which is the origin of suffering (*upādānakkhandha*) in the new birth. In other words, craving is the true cause of the aggregates, which causes suffering. This noble truth of the cause of suffering (*dukkha-samudaya-sacca*) is also referred to, in short, as the truth of the cause (*samudaya-sacca*).

The Noble Truth of the Cessation of Suffering

Craving, called the truth of the cause of suffering, like the gum of the Ironwood tree, clings to various mundane sense objects, but, like flies which cannot approach a burning iron, it cannot form an attachment to Nibbāna.

The reason for this is that the ultimate reality, Nibbāna, the unconditioned element, is unattractive from the point of view of craving. To explain: Craving arises from feeling, as the Buddha has stated: With sensation as condition there is craving (*vedanā-paccayā taṇhā*) in the doctrine of dependent origination (*paṭicca-samuppāda*), and accordingly craving owes its existence to feeling. But the unconditioned Nibbāna has nothing to do with feeling as it is not the kind of happiness that is to be felt; it is but peaceful happiness (*santi-sukha*).

Then the question arises: Totally devoid of sensation, can Nibbāna be likeable and desirable? If somebody asked like this, he does so because he thinks feeling is real happiness, or he does not consider that peaceful happiness is real happiness.

The answer is: There are two kinds of happiness; happiness derived from feeling (*vedayita-sukha*) and happiness derived from peace (*santi-sukha*). Here is a simile: Suppose there is a rich man who is fond of food. He expends much to nourish himself with sumptuous delicacies. But a Vijjādhara, one who is sustained by magical power, may find a rich man's food disgusting, let alone finding it attractive, as he is endowed with the power of living without eating. When asked: "Of these two, who is happier as far as food [1630] is concerned?" a man of craving will say a rich man is happier because he enjoys highly sumptuous food whenever he desires, while the latter enjoys nothing. They will say so because, being overwhelmed by craving, they believe that feeling which stimulates craving is something to be esteemed.

Men of intelligence, on the other hand, will say that the Vijjādhara is happier. A rich man, having a refined palate, must go in quest of elaborate foodstuffs. Having acquired them, he is flooded with the troubles of making the necessary preparations (*paṭisaṅkhāraṇa-dukkha*) and longing for novelty (*āsā-dukkha*). To enjoy happiness derived from feeling (*vedayita-sukha*) is to be burdened with these twin sufferings (*dukkha*); there is no escape from them. The Vijjādhara has no such suffering; he lives happily having nothing to do with food. There is no trace of worries in his happiness, which is absolute. Thus, they will say he is happier.

Men of craving say that a rich man is happier because they do not see any of his troubles; what they do see is his enjoyment of food. They have no good impression of the peaceful life of the Vijjādhara who does not need to eat at all. Instead, they envy a rich man's way of living and want to become rich themselves. In the same way, craving has no high opinion of, and no desire or yearning for the happiness derived from peace (*santi-sukha*), the unconditioned Nibbāna, which is devoid of feeling and which indeed is peace.

In this connection, the Discourse on the Happiness of the Peace of Nibbāna (*Nibbāna-sukha-sutta*, AN 9.34) says: "Once, Ven. Sāriputta, while staying in the midst of monastics, said: 'Friends, Nibbāna is indeed happiness; Nibbāna is

indeed happiness.' " Then Ven. Udāyi asked: "How can Nibbāna be happiness, friend Sāriputta, if there is no feeling?" Ven. Sāriputta replied: "Friend Udāyi, Nibbāna being devoid of feeling is in itself happiness."

Worldly people who lack intelligence view the five aggregates, the truth of suffering, as happiness. Intelligent worldly people and the noble ones view the cessation of the five aggregates, like the extinction of a great fire, as happiness.

A simile to illustrate the superiority of happiness derived from cessation and extinction for those worldly people of poor intelligence is as follows: A patient, who is suffering from chronic, acute flatulence takes medicine from a good physician. Consequently, he gets completely cured of his disease. It may be imagined how happy he would be. At that moment, he has no pleasant sensation whatsoever; what he experiences is simply the extinction of the flatulence trouble. He will certainly be delighted, knowing: "Now my trouble is gone!" as his suffering has ceased to trouble him. The flatulence is nothing when compared with the suffering of Saṁsāra. If one takes delight in the extinction of that insignificant trouble, why will he not find happiness in the extinction of the great suffering of Saṁsāra. He certainly will be overjoyed.

Nibbāna

What is Nibbāna, the cessation of suffering? When the unconditioned element (*asaṅkhata-dhātu*), the unique ultimate reality, which has the characteristics of peace, is realised with the fourfold knowledge of the path, all the defilements, numbering 1,500 are completely eradicated and never will they rise again. In any existence, when the path to becoming an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga*) is attained, the suffering, in the form of the five aggregates, ceases once and for all immediately after death, just as a heap of fire has been extinguished. There is no more rebirth in any realms of existence. That unconditioned element, the unique ultimate reality, which has the characteristics of peace is called Nibbāna.

The worldlings do not know well the nature of Nibbāna as the noble ones do. If they, without knowing it, say or write to let others understand it as the noble ones do, they could go wrong. Let alone speaking of Nibbāna, when they speak even of a mundane object which they know of only from books, as though they have seen it with their own eyes, they are likely to make mistakes. The common worldlings not being able to see every aspect of it like the noble ones do, should speak of Nibbāna only in the aforesaid manner. [1630]

When Nibbāna is considered as to what it is like, those who have not understood what it really is, are likely to regard Nibbāna as a kind of indestructible country or city. When Nibbāna is mentioned as a secure city in a discourse at a water-pouring ceremony, it is just a figurative usage. Nibbāna is not a city, nor is it a country. Yet there are some who believe and say that Nibbāna is a city where those who have passed into it live happily with mind and body free of old age, sickness and death. The truth is that the passing of Buddhas, Paccekabuddhas and Arahats into Nibbāna means the complete cessation of the five aggregates of an Arahat at his death in his last existence; they will no longer appear in any realm of existence. Nibbāna is the ultimate reality which is the object of the paths and fruitions. Parinibbāna is complete cessation of the material and mental aggregates which will never come into being again. Their passing into Nibbāna is not going into the city of Nibbāna. There is no such thing as the city of Nibbāna.

When people perform meritorious deeds, their teachers will admonish them to pray for Nibbāna. Though they do so accordingly, they generally do not know well what Nibbāna means. So they are not very enthusiastic about it. The teachers, therefore, should ask them to pray for the extinction of all suffering and sorrow because the devotees will understand thoroughly and pray enthusiastically and seriously.

Two Kinds of Nibbāna

Suppose there is a very costly garment. When its owner is still alive, you say: "It is an excellent garment with a user." When he dies, you say: "It is an excellent garment with no user." The same garment is spoken of in accordance with the time when the user is alive and when the user is no longer alive. Similarly, the unconditioned element, the ultimate reality of Nibbāna, which has the characteristic of peace and which is the object the venerable ones contemplate by means of the paths and fruitions, is called Nibbāna with the five aggregates remaining (*sa-upādisesa-nibbāna*) before his death; after his death, however, since there are no longer the five aggregates that contemplate Nibbāna, it is called Nibbāna with the five aggregates no longer remaining (*anupādisesa-nibbāna*).

The peace of Nibbāna is aspired for only when it is pondered on, after overcoming craving by wisdom. The peace of Nibbāna, which is something

which should really be aspired for, will not be understood if craving is foremost in one's thinking and not overcome by wisdom.

Three Kinds of Nibbāna

Nibbāna is also of three kinds according to its attributes which are clearly manifest in it: 1) Nibbāna which is void (*suññata-nibbāna*); 2) Nibbāna which is devoid of cause (*animitta-nibbāna*); and 3) Nibbāna which is devoid of craving (*appaṇihita-nibbāna*).

1. The first attribute is that Nibbāna which is devoid of all impediments (*palibodha*); hence it is called Nibbāna which is void (*suññata-nibbāna*).

2. The second attribute is that it is devoid of consciousness (*citta*), mental concomitants (*cetasika*) and matter (*rūpa*), which, as conditioned things, are the cause of defilements.

Conditioned things, whether mental or material, cannot only arise individually and without combining with one another. Material things arise only when at least eight of them form a combination. That is why they are called units of eight (*aṭṭha-kalāpa*). Mental things also arise only when at least eight elements make a combination. By this is meant the fivefold consciousness (*pañca-viññāṇa*). When such combinations of mental and material components brought together to form an aggregate are wrongly taken to be "myself," "my body," "a thing of substance," they give rise to mental defilements, such as craving, hatred, etc. Conditioned things are thus known as a ground or cause (*nimitta*). In particular, mundane consciousness, mental concomitants and matter are called a ground or cause. In Nibbāna, however, there are no such things of substance as "myself," "my body," which cause the emergence of defilements; hence, the name Nibbāna which is devoid of cause (*animitta-nibbāna*). [1632]

3. The third attribute is that Nibbāna is devoid of craving (*taṇhā*). As has been said before, Nibbāna has nothing to crave for. Nibbāna is not to be craved for. Therefore, it is also called Nibbāna which is devoid of craving (*appaṇihita-nibbāna*). In this way, there are three kinds of Nibbāna according to its attributes.

This truth of the cessation of suffering is, in short, called the truth of cessation (*nirodha-sacca*). This truth of cessation is the unconditioned (*asaṅkhata*) element. It is not conditioned by any factor. Therefore, this truth of cessation,

the unconditioned element, the ultimate reality of Nibbāna, is called an uncaused phenomenon (*appaccaya-dhamma*) or unconditioned phenomenon (*asaṅkhata-dhamma*) in the the Enumeration of Phenonema (*Dhamma-saṅgaṇī*).

The Noble Truth of the Path

Though Nibbāna is causeless, not conditioned by any cause and always exists, it is not possible to realise its peace without a cause. It can be realised only through a cause. That cause is nothing but the noble practice. Therefore, the noble practice that leads to Nibbāna, the cessation of suffering, is termed the course of practice that leads to the cessation of suffering (*dukkha-nirodha-gāminī-paṭipadā*).

The Middle Path

Living in the enjoyment of sensual pleasures in the world, fulfilling the demands of craving, is not the path for the attainment of Nibbāna, which is the cessation of suffering. It is just an ignoble practice called devotion to the pleasure and happiness in sense pleasures (*kāma-sukhallikānuyoga*). Efforts to make oneself suffer by exposure of one's body to fire or to the sun, by keeping one's hand raised continuously, with a view to preventing mental defilements from appearing, do not form the way to Nibbāna, the cessation of suffering. It is another ignoble practice called devotion to self-mortification (*atta-kilamathānuyoga*). Avoiding self-indulgence in sensual pleasures on the one hand and self-mortification on the other, following only the middle path which is neither too comfortable nor too arduous, like the string of a harp which is neither too taut nor too loose, is the practice that surely leads to Nibbāna. This practice which is neither easy nor difficult is called the middle practice (*majjhima-paṭipadā*).

This middle course is called the path (*magga*), the way leading to Nibbāna. Wrong view, etc. which are unwholesome, are called the path to a bad destination (*duggati-magga*) or simply the wrong path (*micchā-magga*) as they lead to the four suffering states (*apāya*). Right view, etc., which is mundane and wholesome, is called the path to a good destination (*sugati-magga*) or the right path (*sammā-magga*) as they lead to Nibbāna. The commentary on the Analysis of the Truths (*Sacca-vibhaṅga*, Vibh 4) explains that these factors, such as right view, etc. which constitute path consciousness are called path (*magga*) because they are sought by those who aspire for Nibbāna; because these factors lead to

Nibbāna and because they find their way to Nibbāna after eradicating mental defilements.

This path is not of one factor only; it is of eight factors, as will be shown below; hence it is called the path of eight constituents (*aṭṭhaṅgika-magga*), which are:

1. Right view (*sammā-diṭṭhi*), which is knowledge of the truth of suffering, knowledge of the truth of the cause of suffering, knowledge of the truth of the cessation of suffering and knowledge of the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering. Thus it is the fourfold knowledge.
2. Right thought (*sammā-saṅkappa*); there are three kinds of right thought: thought of liberating oneself from sensuous defilements (*kilesa-kāma*) and sensuous objects (*vatthu-kāma*), as has been explained in the section on the perfection of renunciation (*nekkhama-pāramī*); thought of not destroying others, and thought of not harming others.
3. Right speech (*sammā-vācā*), which is refraining from the four evil kinds of speech.
4. Right action (*sammā-kammanta*), refraining from the three evil actions.
5. Right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*), which is livelihood that is free of the seven evils.
6. Right exertion (*sammā-vāyāma*), exertion so as not to give rise to unwholesomeness that has not yet occurred; exertion so as to eradicate unwholesomeness that has occurred; exertion so as to give rise to wholesomeness that has not yet occurred and [1633] exertion so as to develop wholesomeness that has occurred.
7. Right mindfulness (*sammā-sati*), mindfulness so as to be aware of one's body, feelings, consciousness and mental hindrances, etc.
8. Right concentration (*sammā-samādhi*), the first, second, third and fourth absorptions (*jhāna*).

These eight constituents do not arise simultaneously in the mundane fields; they arise in combination with one another as far as possible. When they come to the supermundane field, however, all eight arise simultaneously. Only these eight constituents which arise simultaneously at the moment of attaining the supermundane path are collectively called the noble truth of the path. Thus, by

the noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering is meant the group of eight factors beginning with right view that arise as a whole and simultaneously. The path which is included together with the fruition and Nibbāna in the collection of supermundane phenomena stands for all these eight constituents which form the noble truth of the path.

Truth of Learning and Truth of Practice

The truths we have so far discussed are those learnt from the scriptures (*pariyatti-sacca*). But what really counts as a perfection of truth is the truth of practice (*paṭipatti-sacca*) fulfilled by the noble ones such as Bodhisattas and others. The truth of practice means truthful speech or telling the truth (*vacī-sacca*). Fulfilment of such a practice in one's self is fulfilment of the perfection of truth. It is the truth that Bodhisattas and other noble persons fulfil in particular, and this truth is of three kinds:

1. The truth told so that one will be believed by others (*sadda-hāpana-sacca*).
2. The truth told so that one's wish may be fulfilled (*icchā-pūraṇa-sacca*).
3. The truth told so that telling lies may be avoided (*musā-viramaṇa-sacca*).

1. The Truth told so that one will be Believed by Others

Of these three truths, the way Bodhisattas fulfil the truth told so that one will be believed by others is mentioned in the Birth Story about the Lotus Stalks (*Bhisa-jātaka*, Ja 488). The full story of the Birth Story about the Lotus Stalks may be read in the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) book. The story in brief is as follows.

The Birth Story about the Lotus Stalks

Once upon a time, a Brahmin youth, Mahā Kañcana by name, who was born in the city of Bārāṇasī, went forth in renunciation into a forest, together with ten companions, including his young brothers, one young sister, a male servant, a female servant and a friend. They made their lodgings at a suitable distance near a lotus pond and lived on gathered fruits.

In the beginning, they all went out together to look for fruits; talking to one another, they behaved like townsfolk or villagers, not like forest-dwellers. To stop this unpleasant situation, the eldest brother Mahā Kañcana said: "I alone

will go out for fruits. You all stay behind to practise Dhamma in peace." Then the other brothers said: "You are the chief of us all. It is not proper for you to gather fruits. The sister and the female servant should not do so either for they are women. But the eight of us will do so by turns." This was agreeable to everyone and the remaining eight male persons gathered fruits on rotation to feed them all.

As time went by, they became so content that they did not care for fruits but took lotus sprouts from the nearby pond and shared amongst themselves in this manner. The one on duty brought lotus sprouts into the leaf hut and divided them into eleven portions. The oldest of them took his portion first and, after striking the stone drum, went back to his place to eat it peacefully and carried on with his practice. When the next senior member heard the sound of the stone drum, he took his share and struck the drum in turn. In this manner, they took their food one after another, went back to their place to eat and continued to practise. Thus, they did not see one another unless there was a special reason.

As their practice was so severe, causing Sakka's seat to tremble, the Lord of the Devas [1634] sought out the reason and came to know it. He became doubtful that these people were really detached from sensual pleasures. In order to investigate the matter, he kept the eldest brother's share of food hidden by his supernormal power for three days continuously.

When the oldest brother came to take his share on the first day, he did not see it and thought that it must have been left out through forgetfulness; he then said nothing and went back to his place to continue his meditation.

On the second day also he found his share missing; thinking that his share was purposely left out as a punishment because of someone thinking that he was guilty of something, he remained quiet as on the first day.

On the third day, when he did not find his share, he thought that he should apologize if he was guilty, and in the evening, he summoned the others by striking the stone drum. He said: "Why did you not give me my share of food? Please speak out if I am guilty. I will give an apology to you." Then the first younger brother stood up and, after paying his respects to the eldest brother, said: "Sir, could I get your permission to speak only for myself?" On getting the permission, he took an oath, saying: "Sir, if I had stolen your share of food, may I come into possession of horses, cattle, silver, gold and a beautiful wife here at

this place and stay with my family enjoying a mundane life." This form of oath suggests that as much as objects of desire give us pleasure when we are in possession of them, we feel grieved and distressed when we are bereft of them. The oath was taken to despise the objects of desire.

The eldest brother said: "You have taken a very severe oath. I believe you did not take my food. Go and sit in your place." The rest of the group, covering their ears, also said: "Brother, please do not say so. Your word is very serious and terrible." They covered their ears because as meditators, they found sense pleasures disgusting; sensuality was so dreadful that they could not bear even to hear something associated with it.

Then the second younger brother said: "Sir, if I have stolen your lotus sprouts, may I become one who wears flowers, puts on sandalwood paste from Kāsi, has many children and who is very much involved in and attached to sensuality." In this way, the remaining eight persons took similar oaths individually.

In this Birth Story (*Jātaka*), the ascetic Mahā Kañcana, leader of the group, was the Bodhisatta, and the rest were destined to became foremost disciples of the Buddha in their own right. Therefore, having attained spiritual maturity, they really abhorred sensuality. Each of them was bold enough to take such a dreadful oath to convince the others.

Since that oath was based on what was true, it was the same as the truth (*vacī-sacca*) fulfilled by Bodhisattas. In their individual oaths, the main point was: "We did not steal your share of lotus sprouts." Since it was a true statement, it amounts to truth.

Such words as: "May I also have this or that," which in effect means: "May I encounter this or that," are included as proposed punishment for oneself in the oath, just to make the others believe him or her. Accordingly, this truth is called the truth told so that one will be believed by others (*sadda-hāpana-sacca*). The oath that has been taken from the times of ancient Mahā Sammata kings down to the present governments are all truths told so that one will be believed by others (*sadda-hāpana-sacca*).

Taking of a Corporal Oath

Before the subject-matter of an oath was put into writing as a sacred text, the taking of an oath was done verbally and was called "swearing an oath." From

the time when written sacred oaths came into existence, purely verbal taking of an oath has been replaced by holding the sacred text or placing it on one's head; thus, taking of a corporal oath by holding a sacred text has come into use. This gives rise, in Myanmar parlance, to "holding the sacred text" for taking a corporal oath and "administering the corporal oath" for making someone else hold the sacred text. Only the form of taking an oath for oneself, whether it is taken verbally or by holding the sacred text, in order to convince others, saying: "What I have said is the truth; if not, may such and such a misfortune befall me," etc. should be named the truth told so that one will be believed by others (*sadda-hāpana-sacca*). [1635]

An utterance not based on truth but made just to consign others to destruction is not an oath but merely a curse. An example may be seen in the following story, which is based on a section of the Dhamma Verses (*Dhammapada*) commentary (on Dhp 3).

The Story of Devila and Nārada

In the past, while King Brahmadatta was reigning in the city of Bārāṇasī, a recluse, Devila by name,[436] was living in the Himālayas. On his visit to Bārāṇasī, in order to obtain vinegar and salt, with the owner's permission he stayed in a potter's hut near the city. Soon, another recluse called Nārada came for a similar purpose and stayed at the same place. At night, when the time for sleeping came, the newcomer noted Devila's sleeping place as well as the door at the entrance to the hut and went to bed. But, after lying down at his place, Devila moved to the entrance and slept crosswise in the middle of the doorway.

When Nārada went out in the dead of the night, he happened to tread on Devila's matted hair. Devila then said: "Who has stepped on my hair?" Nārada replied gently: "Sir, I have, because I did not know that you were sleeping here. Please accept my apology," and he left the hut while Devila was grumbling.

Then, just in case Nārada should do it again when he came back, Devila completely reversed his lying position and went to sleep. When Nārada returned, he thought: "When I went out, I wrongly stepped on his hair because I did not know where his head lay; I shall now go in by the other way." Thus, he

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[436] [The name is also written Devala.]

happened to tread on his neck. Devila asked: "Who trod on my neck?" – "It is I, sir," said Nārada. "You wicked recluse!" said Devila, "The first time, you stepped on my hair. This time you stepped on my neck. Curse you, I will." – "Sir, I am not guilty," said Nārada, "The first time I was wrong because I did not know the way you were sleeping. Now I came by another way so as not to wrong you again. Please pardon me," said Nārada in apology.

"Wicked recluse, I will curse you," threatened Devila. Then despite Nārada's plea, Devila uttered a curse: "Tomorrow morning, as soon as the sun rises, may your head split into seven pieces!" – "In spite of my apologies you cursed me," said Nārada, "May the guilty one's head be split into seven pieces." Thus Nārada put Devila under a similar curse in retaliation.

> Unlike Devila's curse, Nārada's was free of anger and volition to harm him. He cursed him just to make him fear and admit his wrong. He was so powerful that he could see over 80 aeons of time, i.e., the past 40 and the future 40 aeons.

When he looked into Devila's future, he foresaw that the latter would be destroyed. So out of compassion for Devila, he tried with his power to prevent the sun from rising.

When the sun did not rise at the time it was due to, people thronged to the palace and shouted in unison: "King, the sun does not rise while you are ruling over us. Please improve your conduct so that the sun reappears. The king pondered on his conduct and did not see anything wrong. He thought that there must be some other reason, such as a quarrel among ascetics in his country. On enquiry, he came to know about the quarrel between the two recluses. The king then went overnight to the recluses. Under instructions from Nārada, he placed a solid mass of earth on Devila's head and made him plunge into a pond by force. When Nārada withdraw his power, no sooner had the sun risen than the solid mass of earth was split into seven pieces. Devila then moved to another place in the water and came out of it safe and sound.

Devila's curse in this story: "Tomorrow morning, as soon as the sun rises, may your head be split into seven pieces!" is for Nārada, uttered with anger. Thus it was not an oath but a mere curse.

Like the curse in this story, there are curses recorded in the Myanmar inscriptions of old. For instance, the Nadaungtat relic shrine (*stūpa*) inscription,

dated 1175. CE, on the northern side of the Cūḷamuni Shrine of Bagan, reads near the end: "For he who destroys my work of merit, may seven generations of his descendants be destroyed. May he suffer in Avīci hell, and may he not be liberated but become rooted there even when Buddhas of successive aeons come and try to save him." Such a curse is something that is not done by Bodhisattas. In [1636] fact, it is a verbal evil called "harsh speech" (*pharusa-vācā*). In other words, it is the kind of abusive words uttered by mean persons.

Birth Stories illustrating Aspects of Truth

Truth told so that one will be believed by others (*sadda-hāpana-sacca*) may be understood not only from the Birth Story about the Lotus Stalks but also from the Birth Story about Mahā Sutasoma (*Mahā-sutasoma-jātaka*, Ja 537). A summary of this latter story runs as follows.

The Birth Story about Mahā Sutasoma

Once, the cannibal Porisāda, who formerly was the King of Bārāṇasī, but who was now living in a forest, made a vow to bathe the trunk of a banyan tree with the blood of 101 kings if his foot, which had been pierced by an acacia thorn, was healed in seven days. The foot healed, and he succeeded in capturing 100 princes. At the command of the deity of the tree to make the number of captured kings complete, he was to catch King Sutasoma of Kuru. He managed to do so while Sutasoma was returning from the Migājina Park and carried him away on his shoulder.

Then Sutasoma said: "I have to go home for a while, because, on my way to the Migājina Park, I met a Brahmin called Nanda, who offered to teach me four verses worth four hundred pieces. I have promised him I would learn them on my way back from the Park and asked him to wait for me. Let me go and learn the verses and keep my promise. After that, I will come back to you." – "You sound like you are saying: 'Having been freed from the hands of death, I will come back to death!' " replied the man-eater. "I do not believe you."

Then Sutasoma said: "Friend Porisāda, in the world, death after living a virtuous life is better than a long life full of wickedness, as it is blamed by others. Words uttered not truthfully cannot protect one from rebirth in a state of suffering after one's death. Friend Porisāda, you may rather believe if somebody were to say: "The strong winds blew away rocky mountains into the sky," or "The sun

and the moon have fallen to earth," or "All rivers flow upstream," but never believe it if somebody says: "Sutasoma tells lies." Friend Porisāda, if somebody says: "The sky has been split up," or "The ocean has dried up," or "Mount Meru has been wiped out without a trace," you may believe it. But never believe if somebody says: "Sutasoma tells lies."

But still Porisāda was not fully convinced. As Porisāda remained adamant, Mahā Sutasoma thought: "This Porisāda still does not believe me. I will make him believe me by taking an oath." So he said: "Friend Porisāda, please put me down from your shoulder. I will convince you by taking an oath." Porisāda then put him down from his shoulder. "Friend Porisāda, I will hold the sword and the spear and take the oath. I will take leave of you for a short time and will fulfil my promise given to Brahmin Nanda to learn the verse from him in the city. Then I will come back to you to keep my promise. If I do not say the truth, may I not gain rebirth in a royal family, well protected by weapons such as this sword and this spear."

Then Porisāda thought: "This King Sutasoma has taken an oath which ordinary kings dare not do. No matter whether he comes back or not, I too am a king. If he does not come back, I will get the blood out of my arm to sacrifice it for the deity of the banyan tree." Thus thinking, Porisāda set Bodhisatta Sutasoma free.

This truth of King Mahā Sutasoma uttered to convince Porisāda is also the truth told so that one will be believed by others (*sadda-hāpana-sacca*). This is the kind of perfection of truthfulness which Bodhisattas have to fulfil.

2. The Truth told so that One's Wish may be Fulfilled

This second truth spoken to have one's desire fulfilled (*icchā-pūraṇa-sacca*) may be learnt from the Birth Story about the Wise Suvaṇṇasāma (*Suvaṇṇasāma-jātaka*, Ja 540) as well as from other stories.

The Birth Story about the Wise Suvaṇṇasāma

In the Birth Story about the Wise Suvaṇṇasāma, the Bodhisatta Suvaṇṇa, looking after his blind parents, went to fetch water from a river. King Pīḷiyakkha, who was out hunting, saw him and shot him with an arrow, mistaking him for a supernatural being. Being overcome by the poisonous effect of the arrow, the Bodhisatta became unconscious. King Pīḷiyakkha brought the Bodhisatta's father and mother to the place where the Bodhisatta was lying in a

dead faint. On their arrival there, his father Dukūla sat down and lifted his head, while his mother Pārikā sat down, held his feet, placing them on her thigh, and cried. They [1637] touched their son's body and feeling the chest, which still had body heat, the mother said to herself: "My son has not died yet. He is just unconscious because of the poison. I will remove that poison by my words of solemn truth." Accordingly, she made an asseveration comprising seven points:

1. Formerly, my son Sāma has practised righteousness (*Dhamma-cāri*). If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son be withdrawn.
2. Formerly, my son Sāma has engaged in noble practice. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son be withdrawn.
3. Formerly, my son Sāma has spoken only truth. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son be withdrawn.
4. My son Sāma has looked after his parents. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son be withdrawn.
5. My son Sāma has shown respect to the elders in the family. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son be withdrawn.
6. I love my son Sāma more than my life. If this be true, may the poison that afflicts my son be withdrawn.
7. May Sāma's poison disappear by virtue of the meritorious deeds done by his father and by me.

Then Suvaṇṇasāma, who was lying on one side, turned over to the other side. The father, thinking: "My son is still alive, I will also say words of solemn truth," made an asseveration comprising the same seven points as the mother's. Then the Bodhisatta changed his lying position again.

At that moment, a goddess, Bahusundarī by name, who had been Suvaṇṇa's mother in the past seven existences and who was now staying at Gandhamādana hill, came from the hill to the spot where Suvaṇṇasāma was lying and made her own asseveration: "I have long been dwelling at Gandhamādana hill in the Himālayas. Throughout my life, there is none whom I love more than Suvaṇṇasāma. If this is true, may Sāma's poison vanish. In my abode at Gandhamādana hill, all the trees are scented ones. If this be true, may Sāma's

poison vanish." While the father, the mother and the goddess were thus lamenting, the handsome and youthful Bodhisatta Suvaṇṇasāma quickly sat up.

In this story, the words of truth are uttered by his mother, Pārikā, his father, Dukūla and the goddess Bahusandarī in order to have their wish of eradicating the poison inside Suvaṇṇasāma and helping him recover, were fulfilled and are, therefore, called the truth told so that one's wish may be fulfilled (*icchā-pūraṇa-vacī-sacca*).

The Birth Story about the Wise Mariner Suppāraka

The truth told so that one's wish may be fulfilled (*icchā-pūraṇa-vacī-sacca*) occurs also in the Birth Story about the Wise Mariner Suppāraka (*Suppāraka-jātaka*, Ja 463).

The story in brief is this: In days gone by, the Bodhisatta, Suppāraka by name, who was highly learned, was living in the sea-port town of Kurukaccha, or as is sometimes written, Bhārukaccha. He had long worked as the captain of a ship and had become blind through his eyes being in contact with the sea-water, and so he had retired. However, at the request of certain merchants, he took control of a ship sailing out into the sea. After seven days, because of an unseasonal gale, the ship could not hold its course and wandered astray on the sea for four months. It then went beyond such seas as Khuramālisamudra, Aggimālisamudra, Dadhimālisamudra, Kusamālisamudra and Nalamālisamudra, and was about to reach the most terrible sea of Balavāmukhasamudra. At that moment, captain Suppāraka said that whoever came to this sea was not able to retreat but would drown. This made all the merchants cry in fright.

Thinking: "I will save all these people by an asseveration," the Bodhisatta made a solemn declaration: "Since I came of age, I have never ill-treated even a single person; I have not stolen another's property, even a blade of grass or a piece of split bamboo; I have not eyed even with an iota of lust another person's wife; I have not lied; I have not taken any [1638] intoxicating drink, even with the tip of a grass blade. On account of this truthful declaration of mine, may the ship get home safe and sound." Then the ship that had wandered aimlessly for four months turned back to Kurukaccha as though it were a mighty being and arrived at Kurukaccha port within one day by virtue of the Bodhisatta's asseveration.

This truth of Suppāraka the wise is also the truth told so that one's wish may be fulfilled (*icchā-pūraṇa-vacī-sacca*) as it was made to have his wish of saving the lives of all fulfilled.

The Birth Story about King Sivi

This story is told in the Birth Story about King Sivi (*Sivi-jātaka*, Ja 499): In the city of Ariṭṭhapura, in the Sivi country, the Bodhisatta, King Sivi, gave away 600,000 pieces daily in generosity. Even then, he was not content and thought that he would like to give away parts of his body. In order to fulfil the king's desire, Sakka came down in the guise of a blind Brahmin and said to the king: "King, both your eyes can see but mine cannot. If you would give me one of yours, you can see with the remaining one, and I will also see with the eye given by you. So kindly give me one of your eyes." The king was delighted, for someone had come to him the very moment he was thinking of giving. He summoned his surgeon Sīvika and ordered: "Take out one of my eyes." The surgeon, ministers and queens all tried to dissuade him, but he stood by his order, and Sīvika could do nothing but take out one of the king's eyes. Looking at the extracted eye with the one remaining, the king happily expressed his aspiration for Perfect Self-Awakening (*Sammā-sambodhi*) and handed the gift of his eye over to the Brahmin.

When the Brahmin, who in reality was Sakka, put the eye into his eye-socket it fitted like it was original. King Sivi, seeing this, was so delighted that he asked Sīvika: "Take also my other eye out." Despite protests from his ministers, the king had his remaining eye taken out and given to the Brahmin. The latter put the king's eye into the socket of his other eye which became as good as the original. He then gave his blessings and disappeared as though he had returned to his home.

As King Sivi became totally blind and was not fit to rule, he moved to a dwelling place near a pond in the royal gardens, where he reflected on his act of generosity. Sakka then came to him and walked to and fro nearby so that the king would hear his footsteps. When the king heard him, he asked who it was. Sakka replied: "I am Sakka. Ask for any boon you want." – "I have plenty of wealth, such as gems, gold and silver. I want only death, for both my eyes are gone now," said the king. "King, you say you want death. Do you really desire to die? Or do you say so only because you are blind?" When the king answered he

desired so because he was blind, Sakka said: "King, I am not able to make you see again. You can see only with the power of your truthfulness. Make a solemn declaration of truth." The king then uttered:

> "I adore those many people who came to me for gifts, and I also adore those who actually asked for what they needed. By virtue of this truth, may my eyesight be restored to me."

No sooner had he said so than the first eye appeared in him. Then again, he made another declaration of truth:

> "When the blind Brahmin came to me for my eye, I gave him both of mine. In so doing, my heart was full of joy. By virtue of this truth, may the other eye be restored to me."

Accordingly, he regained his second eye. These two eyes were not the ones which were with him at his birth, neither were they divine eyes. In fact, they were the eyes which appeared by the power of his verbal perfection of truthfulness. This truth of King Sivi was also the truth told so that one's wish may be fulfilled as it was spoken to have the wish for the restoration of his eyesight fulfilled.

The Birth Story about the Fish

In the Birth Story about the Fish (*Maccha-jātaka*, Ja 34), the Bodhisatta, when reborn as a fish, made an asseveration because the water in the pond had dried up as a result of a draught, and the fish in it were eaten by crows. He declared solemnly: "Although I was born as a fish whose species survives by living upon one another, I have never eaten even a fish of the size of a rice-grain. By virtue of this truth, may there be a great [1639] thunderous downpour." No sooner had he declared this than there occurred a heavy rain.

The Birth Story about the Young Quail

Again, in the Birth Story about the Young Quail (*Vaṭṭaka-jātaka*, Ja 35) the Bodhisatta was born into a quail family. When he was still unable to fly or walk, there broke out a great forest fire and both of his parents fled. Thinking: "In this world there are such things as the virtues of pure morality, truthfulness and compassion. I have no other recourse to make but an oath of truth," he uttered:

> "I have wings, but I cannot fly. I have legs, but I cannot walk. My parents have fled. O forest fire, please pass me by."

The forest fire then went back a distance of sixteen acres and became extinct after leaving the young quail unharmed.

In this connection, there is something that calls for clarification. In the aforesaid Suvaṇṇasāma story and others, asseverations were based on meritoriousness, and it is, therefore, appropriate that the respective wishes were fulfilled. But the young quail's asseveration was not so based. What he said was simply: "I have wings, yet I cannot fly; I have legs, yet I cannot walk. My parents have fled." His asseveration is in fact based on what is not meritorious. Why then had his wish been fulfilled?

The basis of an asseveration is truthfulness whether it is meritorious or not. Even if a speech is connected with meritoriousness but not spoken truthfully, it is not a truth; it has no power nor does it bear fruits. Truthfulness, which is a truthful speech alone, has power and bears fruits.

Being truthful, the Bodhisatta's speech amounted to a truth and achieved what was desired. Though it was not a speech of meritoriousness, it was not demeritorious either. Even if a speech is connected with demeritoriousness, but spoken truthfully, it amounts to a truth and achieves what is desired.

The Birth Story about the Ascetic Kaṇha Dīpāyana

This is known from the Birth Story about the Ascetic Kaṇha Dīpāyana (*Kaṇha-dīpāyana-jātaka*, Ja 444). Once, the Bodhisatta Dīpāyana, together with a friend, after giving away their wealth, became ascetics in the Himālayas. He later came to be known as Kaṇha Dīpāyana. One day, Kaṇha Dīpāyana was visited by the householder Maṇḍavya, the supporter of his dwelling place, his wife and son Yaññadatta. While the parents were engaged in a conversation with their teacher, Yaññadatta was playing with a top at the end of a walk. The top rolled into the hole of a mound, which was the abode of a snake. When the boy put his hand into the mound to retrieve his toy, he was bitten by the snake and fell down suddenly, being overcome by the snake's poison.

Learning what had happened to their son they brought him and placed him at the feet of Kaṇha Dīpāyana. When the parents requested him to cure their son of snake bite, he said: "I do not know any remedy for snake bite. But I will try to

cure him by a declaration of an oath." Placing his hand on the boy's head, he uttered: "Being tired of human society, I became an ascetic. But I could live the happy life of an ascetic only for seven days. Since my eighth day as an ascetic, I have not been happy up till now for 50 years. I have reluctantly struggled along only with self-restraint. By the power of this truthful saying, may the poison vanish so that the boy survives." Then the poison drained away from the boy's chest and seeped into the earth.

Yaññadatta opened his eyes; seeing his parents, he called out just once: "Mother, Father," and went to sleep again writhing. The ascetic said to the father: "I have done my part. You, too, should do yours." Then the father said: "I have never been pleased whenever ascetics and Brahmins visited me. But I have not let this be known to anybody else. Instead, I have hidden my feeling. When I give alms, I do it reluctantly. By this truthful saying may the poison vanish so that my little son, Yaññadatta, survives." The poison remaining above the waist drained away into the earth.

The boy sat up, but he still could not rise. When the father asked the mother to follow suit, she said: "I have something to declare as an oath. But I dare not do it in your presence." When the father insisted, she obliged, saying: "I hate the snake that has bitten my son. I hate the boy's father as much as I hate the snake. By this truthful saying may the [1640] poison vanish so that my son survives." Then all the poison drained away into the earth and Yaññadatta stood up and played again with his top.

> The basis of the respective asseverations of the ascetic teacher and his two devotees was an unwholesome matter which each had long kept to themselves. Now, he or she had revealed it boldly saying what was true. As this was truthfulness their wish was completely fulfilled by its power.

In this connection, it may be asked: "If the truth, whether it is based on a wholesome or unwholesome matter, was fruitful, as has been mentioned, can it be similarly efficacious nowadays?"

The answer is: Of the three kinds of truthfulness, avoidance of telling lies or speaking truthfully in every matter (*musā-viramaṇa-sacca*) is something that is always spoken by the virtuous. The ancient persons of virtue who had made asseverations, as mentioned in the texts, had lips which were the domain of truthfulness where the avoidance of telling lies dwelt forever. Such a domain

was so pure and noble that truthfulness which was born in it was wish-fulfilling. In ancient times, when truthfulness prospered and shone forth, an evil thing such as falsehood would quickly result in an undesirable punishment; so also truthfulness would result in a desirable reward.

More Birth Stories

Falsehood would quickly bring about punishment in those days, as is known from the Birth Story about the King of Cetiya (*Cetiya-jātaka*, Ja 422). According to this story, King Cetiya knowingly lied, saying one of the two candidates for the post of royal chaplain was senior and the other junior, although the reverse was true; in consequence, he was swallowed up by the earth.

But nowadays, adhering to the maxim: "No lie, no rhetoric," people mostly tell lies. Thus, the evil domain of falsehood has been created and truthfulness born in this domain cannot produce beneficial results in a visible manner. Similarly, consequences of falsehood are not conspicuous either.

Other stories which contain fruitful asseverations are as follows:

The Birth Story about Cane Juice (*Naḷa-pāna-jātaka*, Ja 20) tells of the reeds which became hollow throughout because of the truthfulness shown by the Bodhisatta, the monkey king.

The Birth Story about Queen Sambulā (*Sambula-jātaka*, Ja 519) tells of the complete cure of Prince Sotthisena's leprosy because of the truthful words spoken by crown Princess Sambulā.

The Birth Story about the Wise Mūgapakkha (*Mūga-pakkha-jātaka*, Ja 538) tells of the birth of the Bodhisatta, Prince Temiya, to the Chief Queen Candā Devī when she made an oath of truth after her observance of morality (*sīla*).

The Birth Story about King Mahā Janaka (*Mahā-janaka-jātaka*, Ja 539) tells of the escape of the Crown Prince Polajanaka from his bondage of iron chains and from prison because of his words of truth.

The Birth Story about the Wood Gatherer (*Kaṭṭha-hāri-jātaka* , Ja 7) tells of an asseveration made by a mother, a chopper of fuel wood. In order to convince the king that he was the father of her child, she threw the child into the sky taking an oath of truth, by which the boy remained sitting cross-legged in the sky.

The Long Birth Story about the Peacock (*Mahā-mora-jātaka*, Ja 491) tells of the escape of birds from their respective cages because of an oath of truth declared by a Paccekabuddha, who, formerly as a hunter, had caught the Bodhisatta, the peacock king, in a square. On hearing the Dhamma talk of the Bodhisatta, he gained Awakening and became a Paccekabuddha. As advised by the Bodhisatta, he made an asseveration thus: "I am now liberated from the bondage of defilements. May all the birds that I have kept in cages at home go free the way I do." How powerful the asseveration is in these stories should be understood.

Truthfulness during the Buddha's Time

Once during the Buddha's time, there was a threefold misfortune of disease, demons and famine in the city of Vesālī. The Buddha went there accompanied by monastics and taught [1641] Ven. Ānanda how to recite the verses of oath. Ven. Ānanda spent the whole night walking within the three walls of the city, chanting the verses by virtue of which all three misfortunes vanished. This story is mentioned in detail in the commentary of the Discourse about the Treasures (*Ratana-sutta*, Khp 6, Sn 2:1). The verses of oath, comprising a number of verses, forms a protection (*paritta*) discourse called the Discourse about the Treasures. It begins with an attribute of a Buddha: "In the worlds of Devas, humans, Nāgas and Garuḷas, there exist various treasuress, but none is comparable to the treasures of the Buddha. By virtue of this truth, may all beings be free of the threefold misfortune and be happy." In the Discourse about the Treasures, there are twelve verses of asseveration which reveal the various attributes of the Three Treasures, i.e., the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha, and together with the three verses ascribed to Sakka, there are fifteen verses of asseveration. This discourse was recorded in the Buddhist Councils.

The Discourse concerning Aṅgulimāla (*Aṅgulimāla-sutta*, MN 86) contains another story that also took place in the lifetime of the Buddha. While the Buddha was sojourning at the Jetavana monastery in Sāvatthī, Ven. Aṅgulimāla told the Buddha about a woman in confinement who had difficulty in delivering a baby. Under instructions from the Buddha, Ven. Aṅgulimāla went to the woman to help her by means of an oath of truth. "Since the day I became a noble one," declared Ven. Aṅgulimāla, "I have never intentionally taken the life of a sentient being. By virtue of this truth may the mother and the son be well." The mother then gave birth to her son without any more trouble and both were well.

In this way, in the lifetime of the Buddha, too, solemn declarations of truth were efficacious and fruitful.

Truthfulness in Śrī Laṅkā

When Buddhism had spread to Śrī Laṅkā after the Parinibbāna of the Buddha, Ven. Mahā Mitta's mother was suffering from breast cancer. The mother sent her daughter, a nun, to Ven. Mahā Mitta for some medicine. "I know nothing of normal drugs," said Ven. Mahā Mitta, "I will tell you a certain form of medicine: 'Since the moment of my ordination, I have never looked at a woman with a lustful eye. Because of this truthful declaration, may my mother become well again.' When you get back to my mother, run your fingers over her body while repeating what I have just said." The sister went back to the ailing mother and carried out his instructions. No sooner had she done so than the mother's cancerous affliction dissolved like foam. So says the chapter giving the Exposition of Morality (*Sīla-niddesa*) in the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*, Vism 1).

A similar story is told in the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) PTS 103) commentary. While explaining the word *sampatta-virati*, "abstinence by custom," it says that a woman was suffering from a certain disease. Being told by the physician that hare's meat was needed for a cure, the older brother sent the younger one, Jaggana, to a farm to look for a hare. On seeing Jaggana, a hare ran away in fright and was caught in a tangle of creepers. It then screamed. Jaggana rushed there and seized the hare. But he thought: "It is not justified to kill this little creature just to save my mother's life," and set the hare free and went home. "Have you got one?" asked the older brother. When Jaggana told his brother what he had done, the latter scolded him vehemently. Then Jaggana approached his mother and while standing by her, he uttered: "Since my birth, I have never known any instance of the intentional killing of a creature by me. By virtue of this truth, may my mother become well and happy." At that very moment, the mother became well and happy again.

In this way, it should be noted that the truth told so that one's wish may be fulfilled (*icchā-pūraṇa-sacca*) was individually performed also after the Parinibbāna of the Buddha. [1642]

3. The Truth told so that telling Lies may be Avoided

Stories related to the truth told so that telling lies may be avoided (*musā-viramaṇa-sacca*) are known from the Birth Story about the Wise Vidhura (*Vidhura-jātaka*, Ja 546) and other Birth Stories. The following is a summary of the long narration of the Vidhura story.

The Birth Story about the Wise Vidhura

When King Korabya and Puṇṇaka the Yakkha were playing a game of dice, they agreed to bet as follows: Should the king lose, Puṇṇaka would take anything from the king, except the king's person, the Chief Queen, and the white parasol. Should Puṇṇaka lose, on the other hand, the king would take from him the Manomaya Gem and the thoroughbred horse. The king lost the contest and Puṇṇaka asked: "I have won, O king, give me the stakes as agreed."

As it was a fact that the king had lost, he could not refuse, but allowed Puṇṇaka to take anything he wanted. Puṇṇaka said he would take Vidhura the minister. Then the king pleaded: "The minister is my person. He is also my refuge. Therefore, he should not be compared with other treasures of mine, such as gold, silver, etc. He should be compared only with my life. Thus, I cannot surrender him."

Then Puṇṇaka said: "We shall not get anywhere if we are arguing whether he belongs to you or not. Let us go to him and abide by his decision." The king agreed, and they went to the minister, whom Puṇṇaka asked: "Minister, as the minister of the Kurus, you are praised even by Devas for standing by righteousness. Is it true? Are you King Korabya's servant? Are you a relative of the king's and of equal rank? Or are you a relative of the king's but of higher rank? Is your name Vidhura meaningful (*anvattha*) or without meaning (*rūḷhi*)?"

> The last question means to say like this: In this world, there are two kinds of names. The first is a name the meaning of which does not agree with what it represents (*rūḷhi*); instead, it is a name given at random. The other is a name the meaning of which agrees with what it represents (*anvattha*). For example, if some ugly person is named Pretty Boy, it is just a name given at random because the name does not suit the boy. If some handsome person is named Pretty Boy, it is a name the meaning of which agrees with what it represents because it goes well with the appearance.

When Puṇṇaka asked whether Vidhura's name was a name without meaning or a name the meaning of which agrees with what it represents, he wanted to verify whether the minister was righteous or not, for the name Vidhura means unequalled, and signifies a virtuous person who eradicates evils. Should the minister not abide by righteousness, his name would then be a name given at random (*rūḷhi*). Should he abide by righteousness, his name would then be a name in harmony with his true nature (*anvattha*).

Then the minister thought to himself: "I can say that I am a relative of the king, I am of higher rank or I am not at all related to the king. But in this world there is no refuge like truthfulness. I should speak out what is true." So he said: "Friend, there are four kinds of servitude in the world:

1. The servitude of one born of a female slave.
2. The servitude of one bought by money.
3. The servitude of one who serves voluntarily.
4. The servitude of a prisoner of war.

Of these four servitudes, I am a servant who comes to serve the king voluntarily." So the minister answered truthfully. Such an answer given truthfully, without deceit, was a speech of truth but not a truth told so that one will be believed by others (*sadda-hāpana-sacca*) because the speech was made not to convince others; nor was it a truth told so that one's wish may be fulfilled (*icchā-pūraṇa-sacca*) because it was made not to get one's wish fulfilled. It was made just to avoid telling lies and therefore was avoidance of telling lies (*musā-viramaṇa-sacca*) only.

The Birth Story about the Wise Suvaṇṇasāma

Similarly, in the Birth Story about the Wise Suvaṇṇasāma (*Suvaṇṇasāma-jātaka*, Ja 540), when King Pīḷiyakkha asked Suvaṇṇasāma: "What is your clan? Whose son are you? Tell me the clan to which you and your father belong." He would have believed it if Suvaṇṇasāma were to say: "I am a Deva," "a Nāga," "a Kinnara," "of a royal family" or if he were to give any other answer. But he thought he should say nothing but the truth; so he said truthfully: "I am a fisherman's son." Suvaṇṇasāma's [1643] speech was like Vidhura's, it was not to make others believe nor was it to get his wish fulfilled. In fact, it was a speech made to avoid falsehood (*musā-viramaṇa-sacca*).

The Birth Story about Prince Bhūridatta

In the Birth Story about Prince Bhūridatta (*Bhūridatta-jātaka*, Ja 543) also, when the Brahmin Nesāda approached the Bodhisatta, a Nāga who was observing the precepts, and asked him: "Who are you? Are you a powerful god? Or are you a mighty Nāga?" – "This man will believe me," thought the Nāga King, and thinking: "I could say I am a divine being, but I ought to tell him the truth," he told him that he was a powerful Nāga. This speech of the Nāga King, like Vidhura's, was made not to make others believe, nor was it to have one's wish fulfilled. But it was made to avoid falsehood and to reveal the truth (*musā-viramaṇa-sacca*).

What constitutes the sixth of the ten perfections is this avoidance of falsehood (*musā-viramaṇa-sacca*). Bodhisattas of old always made it a point to cultivate this kind of speech which is an avoidance of falsehood, so they fulfilled the perfection of truthfulness by speaking truthfully, existence after existence. If they kept silent to avoid having to tell lies and to observe truthfulness, it was not pure truth (*vacī-sacca*) because there was no speech at all. It was only avoidance of falsehood (*virati-sacca*).

Only when circumstances demand to convince others did Bodhisattas use truth of the first kind, the truth told so that one will be believed by others (*sadda-hāpana-sacca*); otherwise they did not. Similarly, only when they were required to get their wish fulfilled, did they make use of the truth of the second kind, the truth told so that one's wish may be fulfilled (*icchā-pūraṇa-sacca*). As regards the third kind, the truth told so that telling lies may be avoided (*musā-viramaṇa-sacca*), they always resorted to it on all occasions. Following their examples, those who are virtuous should speak truth that avoids falsehood (*musā-viramaṇa-sacca*) and make efforts to cultivate it.

Two More Kinds of Truth

The aforesaid truths may be classified under two headings only, namely:

1. Truth that accomplishes something the moment one speaks (*vacī-bheda-siddhi-sacca*).
2. Truth that entails a follow-up after one has spoken (*pacchānurakkhaṇa-sacca*).

As has been mentioned before, the truth told so that one will be believed by others of the Birth Story about the Lotus Stalks; the truth told so that one's wish may be fulfilled of the Wise Suvaṇṇasāma (Ja 540), the Wise Mariner Suppāraka (Ja 463), King Sivi (Ja 499), the Fish (Ja 34), the Young Quail (Ja 35), Kaṇhadīpāyana (Ja 444), Naḷapāna (Ja 20), Sambulā (Ja 519), Temiya (Ja 538), Janaka (Ja 539), Kaṭṭhavāhana (Ja 7) and the Peacock (Ja 491) and the truth told so that telling lies may be avoided by Vidhura (Ja 545), Suvaṇṇasāma (Ja 540) and Bhūridatta (Ja 543), produced results as soon as they were individually spoken out. There was nothing more to be performed to achieve results. Therefore, such truths are to be known as truth that accomplishes something the moment one speaks (*vacī-bheda-siddhi-sacca*).

But the truthfulness shown by King Sutasoma to Porisāda in the above-mentioned the Birth Story about Mahā Sutasoma (Ja 537) was different. It was a truth told so that one will be believed by others (*sadda-hāpana-sacca*), spoken to convince Porisāda that he would definitely return to him. This promise would be fulfilled when the king returned to the cannibal, and only then would his truthfulness be established. For this, he had to make special arrangements to effect his return to the Bodhisatta. This truthfulness of King Sutasoma was therefore of the truth that entails a follow-up after one has spoken (*pacchānurakkhaṇa-sacca*).

In the same way, the truthfulness practised by King Jayaddisa in the Birth Story about Prince Jayaddisa (*Jayaddisa-jātaka*, Ja 513) and that practised by Prince Rāma in the Birth Story about Rāma's Father, King Dasaratha (*Dasaratha-jātaka*, Ja 461) are both truths that entail a follow-up after one has spoken (*pacchānurakkhaṇa-sacca*).

The Birth Story about Prince Jayaddisa

With reference to King Jayaddisa's truthfulness, here is the story in brief (*Jayaddisa-jātaka*, Ja 513). While King Jayaddisa of the city of Uttara Pañcāla, in the kingdom of Kapila, was going on a hunting spree, on the way, he met the Brahmin Nanda, who had come back from Takkasilā and who wished to deliver a discourse. The king promised to hear the discourse from him on his return and went to the forest.

On arrival in the forest, the king and his ministers divided the hunting ground among themselves, each one had his own allocated area to catch deer. But one

escaped through the king's location, and the king had to pursue it with all his might. After a long pursuit, he [1644] managed to catch the deer; he cut it into two halves and carried them, hanging from a pole on his shoulder. Having taken a rest for a short while under a banyan tree, he stood up to continue his journey. At that moment, the Yakkha-like human Porisāda, who was dwelling at the banyan tree, prevented him from going, he said: "You have now become my prey. You must not go."

> The Yakkha-like human was not a real Yakkha. He was, in fact, the king's older brother, who, while an infant was caught by a Yakkhinī. But she had no heart to eat the baby and brought him up as her own son. So he had a Yakkha's mental and physical behaviour. When his foster mother, the Yakkhinī, died, he was left alone and lived like a Yakkha.

Then King Jayaddisa said: "I have an appointment with a Brahmin who has come back from Takkasilā. I have promised him to hear his discourse. Let me go and hear it, after which I will come back and be true to my word." The Yakkha-like human set him free, readily accepting the king's assurance.

> The Yakkha-like human and the king were brothers in reality. Because of their blood relationship, which was not realized by either of them, the former had some compassion for the latter and let him go.

The king went to hear the Brahmin's discourse and was about to return to the Yakkha-like human. At that moment, his son, Prince Alīnasattu, the Bodhisatta, pleaded with the king that he should go on behalf of his father. As the son insisted, the father allowed him to go. The king's word: "I will come back," had to be kept and made true after it had been spoken; so it was a truth that entails a follow-up after one has spoken (*pacchānurakkhaṇa-sacca*).

The Birth Story about Rāma's Father, King Dasaratha

The Birth Story about Rāma's Father, King Dasaratha (*Dasaratha-jātaka*, Ja 461), in brief: After giving birth to an older son, Rāma, the younger son, Lakkhaṇa and the daughter, Sitā Devī, King Dasaratha's Chief Queen passed away. The king took a new queen, of whom Prince Bhārata was born. The new queen repeatedly pressed the king to hand over the throne to her own son Bhārata. The king summoned his two senior sons and said: "I am worried about you, you might be in danger because of the new queen and her son Bhārata. The astrologers have told me that I would live twelve more years. So you should stay

in a forest for twelve years after which you should come back and take over the kingship."

Then Prince Rāma promised his father that he would obey him, and the two brothers left the city. They were joined by their sister, as she refused to be separated from them. In spite of the astrologers' prediction, the king died early, after only nine years, because of his worries about his children. Then the ministers, who did not want to have Bhārata as their king, went after the royal children. They told them of the king's death and requested them to return to the city and rule over the people. But Prince Rāma said: "I have promised my father to return only after twelve years as my father had ordered. If I return now, I will not be keeping my promise to my father. I do not want to break my word. Therefore, take my brother, Prince Lakkhaṇa and my sister, Sitā Devī, and make them Crown Prince and Crown Princess, and you ministers should rule the country yourselves." Here, Prince Rāma had to wait for the end of the time limit so that what he had agreed upon with his father would be substantiated. This too was truth that entails a follow-up after one has spoken (*pacchānurakkhaṇa-sacca*).

Truth concerning Time

In order to make an easy distinction between truth that accomplishes something the moment one speaks (*vacī-bheda-siddhi-sacca*) and truth that entails a follow-up after one has spoken (*pacchānurakkhaṇa-sacca*), there are four kinds of truth according to a brief classification:

1. Truth concerning the past only.
2. Truth concerning the past and the present.
3. Truth concerning the future only.
4. Truth concerning no particular time.

Of these four, the one concerning the future is truth that entails a follow-up after one has spoken, and the remaining three are truth that accomplishes something the moment one speaks.

Of the truths in the Birth Story about the Wise Suvaṇṇasāma (*Suvaṇṇasāma-jātaka*, Ja 540), the collection of truths uttered by the Bodhisatta's parents concerned the past, for they said: "Sāma had formerly practised Dhamma; he

used to cultivate only noble practices; he used to speak only the truth; he had looked after his parents; he had shown respect to the elders."

The truth uttered by his parents that: "We love Suvaṇṇasāma more than our lives and the truth uttered by Queen Bahusundarī that: "There is no one whom I love more than [1645] Sāma," were truths which concern no particular time.

The collection of truths told so that one's wish may be fulfilled (*icchā-pūraṇa-sacca*) in the Wise Mariner Suppāraka (Ja 463) and King Sivi (Ja 499) Birth Stories concerned the past. Similarly, that contained in Kaṇhadīpāyana (Ja 444) and Naḷapāna (Ja 20) Birth Stories also concerned the past.

In the Young Quail (Ja 35) Birth Story, the utterance, "I have wings, but I cannot fly; I have legs, but I cannot walk," concerned both the past and the present.

The truth saying: "There is none whom I love more than you," in the Sambulā (Ja 519) and that of the Chief Queen, Candā Devī, in the Birth Story about the Wise Temiya (*Temiya-jātaka*, Ja 538) concerned no particular time.

In this way, the relationship between the truths and their respective times referred to may be considered and noted.

The Supreme Perfection of Truthfulness

With reference to the perfection of truthfulness, the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) commentary and the commentary on the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*) explain that King Mahā Sutasoma's perfection of truthfulness was the supreme perfection because, in order to keep his word true, the king went back to Porisāda as promised at the risk of his own life. In this case, the vow was made in the presence of Porisāda, but as it was a mere utterance, its purpose had not yet been fulfilled; to fulfil it, the vow still remained to be kept. As he had promised: "I will come back," he returned even after he had been back in the city of Indapattha. At first, when he promised: "I will come back," his sacrifice of life did not appear imminent. It became so only when he returned to Porisāda from Indapattha. Therefore, in the commentaries, he is mentioned as "the king who protected his truthfulness, sacrificing his life (*jīvitaṁ cajitvā saccaṁ anurakkhantassa*)," but not as "the king who made an oath at the risk of his life (*jīvitaṁ cajitvā saccaṁ bhaṇantassa*)."

Reflections on the Two Kinds of Truth

In this connection, the truthfulness of King Mahā Sutasoma and that of minister Vidhura are worthy of a comparative study. The minister's truthfulness was his truthful saying: "I am a servant," as is told in vs. 102 of the Birth Story about the Wise Vidhura (*Vidhura-jātaka*, Ja 546). As soon as he said so, his truthfulness was accomplished. But, when he said that he had nothing to worry about, he could not die just being a servant. Therefore, one might say that Vidhura's truthfulness was inferior to Sutasoma's.

However, it may be considered that Vidhura was prepared to sacrifice his life, thinking to himself: "That young man may like to do away with me after taking me away. If he does so, I will accept death." For, as he was wise, he must have pondered like this: "This young man asked for me, but did not want to honour me. If he had a desire to honour me, he would have openly told me his purpose and invited me for the same, but he did not invite me. He won possession of me by gambling and would not set me free." Besides, though he was a young man, he was a Yakkha by birth. Seeing his behaviour, the minister must have noticed that he was a tough, wild person. Another thing that should be taken into consideration is this: When Vidhura had, by way of farewell, exhorted the king and his family members and said: "I have done my job," the young Yakkha, Puṇṇaka, replied (vs 196): "Do not be afraid. Firmly hold on to the tail of my horse. This will be the last time for you to see the world while you are living." Vidhura boldly retorted: "I have done no evil that would lead to states of suffering. Why should I be afraid?" From this word of the minister, it is clear he had decided to sacrifice his life.

All this points to the fact that Vidhura's truthfulness contained some risk to life and was thus not inferior to Sutasoma's; it should be concluded that it was, if not superior, it was at least of the same class as that of Sutasoma.

The unique feature of this perfection of truthfulness in contrast to the previous ones is that it possesses the power to have one's desire fulfilled because of the truth uttered. In the Birth Story about Mahā Sutasoma (*Mahā-sutasoma-jātaka*, Ja 537, vs 62) it is also said:

> "Of all the tastes which prevail on this earth, the [1646] taste of truth is the sweetest."

Therefore, one should exert great efforts in order to enjoy the delicious taste of truth.

8. The Perfection of Resolution

The Pāḷi word *adhiṭṭhāna* is usually translated as "resolution."[437] If one fulfils resolution as a perfection one has to establish it firmly and steadfastly in one's mind. That was why, when the Bodhisatta Sumedha reflected on the perfection of resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna-pāramī*), he likened it to a rocky mountain, which is unshaken by strong winds but remains firmly rooted at its own place.

From this comparison, it is clear that resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) means bearing in mind without wavering at all, as regards to what one is determined to do. Therefore, if one intends to attain the knowledge of the paths and fruitions or omniscience, i.e., if one is determined to become a Buddha, one's determination to practise for achieving them must be borne in mind as firmly as a rocky mountain.

Resolution has thus been likened to an unshaken mountain, and there are various kinds of resolution as described in the texts.

Resolution concerning the Observance Day

The Chapter about the Observance Day (*Uposathakkhandhaka*, Vin Mv 2) mentions three kinds of Observance Day:

1. The Saṅgha observance (*Saṅgha-uposatha*).
2. The group observance (*gaṇa-uposatha*).
3. The individual observance (*puggala-uposatha*).

1. The Saṅgha observance is the one that is observed at the meeting of a minimum of four monastics inside a monastic boundary hall (*sīma*) on the full moon and new-moon days. There, the Monastic Rules (*Pātimokkha*) are recited by one monastic to whom others listen respectfully. Such an observance is also

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[437] Then the author goes on to explain the Myanmar word, which is a translation, not only of *adhiṭṭhāna* but also of *samādāna* used in observing precepts. As the author's explanation, though elaborate, is chiefly concerned with the Myanmar word, we left it out from our translation.

called an Observance Day (*Uposatha*) with a summary recitation of the text of the disciplinary rules (*suttuddesa-uposatha*).

2. If there are only two or three monastics, they observe the group observance (*gaṇa-uposatha*) because the word Saṅgha is used only for a meeting of at least four monastics; when there are only two or three monastics, the word (*gaṇa*) is used. If the number of monastics is three in a group observance, a motion is put first, and if it is two, no motion is needed. Then each of the monastics declares in Pāḷi that he is free from any offences. Therefore, it is also known as an observance meeting where monastics declare their purity (*pārisuddhi-uposatha*).

3. If there is only one monastic, he observes an individual observance (*puggala-uposatha*). But before doing so, he should wait for other monastics to join him, provided there is still time. When the time has passed without other monastics arriving, he is to hold the Observance Day (*Uposatha*) alone. The Buddha has enjoined that he is to resolve: "Today is my Observance Day (*ajja me uposatho paṇṇaraso adhiṭṭhāmi*)." This means that he is mindful of this day constantly. Such an observance is known as an observance kept firmly in one's mind (*adhiṭṭhāna-uposatha*). This is the resolution concerning the Observance Day.

Resolution concerning the Robe

Monastics are required to perform a resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) or an assignation of ownership (*vikappana*) concerning the robe within ten days after its acquisition. If the robe is kept more than ten days without performing either, it is to be discarded according to the Vinaya. The monastic concerned also commits thereby a confession (*pācittiya*) offence; therefore, within ten days of its acquisition, he must resolve, saying: "I undertake to put on this robe." Then the robe is not to be discarded, and he does not commit the offence. Resolution concerning the robe means making up one's mind firmly to use the robe either as a lower garment, an upper garment, an outer garment or for general use (see Vin Np 1, PTS 3.195).

Resolution concerning the Bowl

Similarly, when a monastic acquires a bowl, he should resolve within ten days of its acquisition, saying: "I undertake to use this bowl." If he does not do so in ten days, he has to discard it as required by the Vinaya. He also commits a

confession (*pācittiya*) offence. Resolution [1647] concerning the bowl means determining firmly that "this receptacle is my bowl."

Resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) in these three cases is used as a technical term belonging to the Vinaya. It has nothing to do with the following three cases.

Resolution concerning Absorption

In the case of absorption (*jhāna*), when, for instance, the first absorption has been attained, one should cultivate and develop it in the five ways of mastery (*vasī-bhāva*), so it is said in the First Exposition of the Meditation Device (*Pathavī-kasiṇa-nidessa*) and in other places in the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*). When the first absorption has been attained, one is to continue practising it until one gains complete mastery of the absorption in all five ways.

1. Reflecting (*āvajjana*).
2. Entering (*samāpajjana*).
3. Resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*).
4. Rising (*vuṭṭhāna*).
5. Reviewing (*paccavekkhaṇā*).

1. The first kind is reflection (*āvajjana*), that is, a reflection as to what factors are contained in his first absorption and as to which factor is of what character. At the beginning, he does not discern them easily. There may be a delay, for he is not yet skilled in reflecting. As he gains experience, he discerns them more easily. Then, he is said to be endowed with mastery of reflection.

2. The second kind is entering (*samāpajjana*) absorption, consciousness being absorbed into the stream of one's consciousness, that is, absorption consciousness continuously arising in the stream of one's consciousness. After mastering reflection, he has to gain mastery of absorption. He can do so by repeatedly developing the absorption he has attained, just as by repeatedly reciting, one can master the literary piece that one has learnt by heart. If he tries for absorption before attainment of such mastery, absorption consciousness does not arise easily in the stream of one's consciousness. This becomes easier only after mastering the development of absorption. Then he is said to be endowed with mastery of absorption.

3. The third kind is resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*), determining as to how long he wants to remain in absorption (*jhāna*). If he tries to determine the duration of absorption before mastery of resolution, absorption consciousness may occur for either longer or shorter periods than that of his determination. Suppose he resolves: "Let absorption consciousness constitute my stream of consciousness for one hour," the absorption attainment may break off before or after one hour. This is because he is not yet skilled in making a resolution. Once he is skilful enough, he can remain in absorption for the exact length of the time he has resolved. Then he is said to be endowed with mastery of resolution.

4. The fourth kind is rising (*vuṭṭhāna*) from absorption (*jhāna*). Rising from absorption means change of absorption consciousness to the life-continuum (*bhavaṅga-citta*). He then has mastery of rising from absorption at the exact time of his determination (*vuṭṭhāna-vasī-bhāva*).

5. The fifth kind is reviewing (*paccavekkhaṇā*), recollecting all the factors contained in the absorption (*jhāna*). In thus recollecting, as in reflecting (*āvajjana*), they do not become manifest to him easily for lack of mastery on his part. Only when he gains mastery, they become manifest more easily. Reflection (*āvajjana*) is a stage in the process of reflection (*paccavekkhaṇā-vīthi*), and reviewing (*paccavekkhaṇā*) is the stage that immediately follows the stage of reflection. If he has mastered reflection, he has mastered reviewing as well. Therefore, he who is endowed with mastery of reflection is endowed with mastery of reviewing; so it is stated in the texts. Among the five kinds of mastery, what we are concerned with here is mastery of resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna-vasī-bhāva*).

Ten Kinds of Supernormal Power

The Exposition of the Kinds of Psychic Powers (*Iddhi-vidha-niddesa*) in the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*, Vism 12) enumerates ten kinds of supernormal power (*iddhi*).

1. The power of resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna-iddhi*).
2. The power concerning transformation (*vikubbana-iddhi*).
3. The power concerning creation (*mano-maya-iddhi*).
4. The power concerning imminent supermundane wisdom (*ñāṇa-vipphāra-iddhi*).

5. The power concerning pervasion of concentration (*samādhi-vipphāra-iddhi*).
6. The power of the noble ones (*ariya-iddhi*).
7. The power arising from deeds and results (*kamma-vipākajā-iddhi*).
8. The power arising from merit (*puññavanta-iddhi*).
9. The power arising from magicians (*vijjā-maya-iddhi*). [1648]
10. The power that accrues from various accomplishments (*sammā-payoga-iddhi*).

1. Power concerning resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna-iddhi*); when, for instance, one resolves: "Let there be 100 or 1,000 copies of myself," then the copies appear miraculously, and their number is exactly what one has determined. It is the power to project copies of oneself appearing. The copies may or may not be in the same posture.

2. Power concerning transformation of oneself into the form of a Nāga or of a Garuḷa (*vikubbana-iddhi*); here, *vi-* means "various" and *kubbana* "making." It is the power to make oneself assume various forms as one wishes.

3. Power concerning the creation of a mind-made image (*mano-maya-iddhi*), that is, to create a miniature copy of oneself inside one's own body. *Mano-maya* means "mind-made." It is neither the projection of copies as in the case of power concerning resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna-iddhi*) nor the transformation of one's form as in the case of the power concerning transformation of oneself into the form of a Nāga or of a Garuḷa (*vikubbana-iddhi*). It is the power to create a miniature copy of oneself inside one's own body.

4. Power concerning miraculous phenomena due to the influence of imminent supermundane wisdom (*ñāṇa-vipphāra-iddhi*). This power can be understood from the stories of Ven. Bākula and others.

Ven. Bākula

The story of Bākula occurs in the commentary on the Great Disciples in the Collection of the Numerical Discourses (AA 1.14.38; PTS 1.304, see also ch. 43.33). The following, in brief, is an extract from the same story.

Bākula was the son of a wealthy man of Kosambī. On the day his birth was celebrated, the infant was taken to the River Yamunā for a ceremonial bath, but he was swallowed by a fish. The fish, feeling very hot in the stomach, swam away. On its arrival at Bārāṇasī, a certain fisherman caught it and hawked it in the city. The wife of a wealthy man of Bārāṇasī bought the fish, and when its stomach was cut open, a beautiful baby was found inside the fish. Since she had no child of her own and was longing for one, she was extremely delighted, saying to herself: "This is my very own."

When the strange news reached the parents at Kosambī, they hurried to Bārāṇasī to claim their son. But the lady of Bārāṇasī refused to give him back, saying: "The baby came to us because we deserve him. We cannot return him to you." When they went to court to settle the dispute, the judges gave their verdict that the baby belonged equally to both pairs of parents. In this way, the baby had two mothers and two fathers, on account of which he was named Bākula, *bā* = two, *kula* = family, hence a boy of two families.

It was a miracle that the boy was not harmed though he was swallowed by a fish. The miracle was due to the power of the knowledge of the path of a Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*) which was certainly to be attained by Bākula in that very existence, or, maybe it was due to the influence of the glorious knowledge of the perfections (*pāramī-ñāṇa*) that was inherent in the boy and that would enable him to attain without fail the knowledge of the path of a Arahat in that very life. Such power is said to be the power concerning miraculous phenomena due to the influence of imminent supermundane wisdom (*ñāṇa-vipphāra-iddhi*).

Novice Saṅkicca

Novice Saṅkicca was conceived by the daughter of a householder of Sāvatthī. The mother died when she was about to give birth to the baby. While her body was being cremated, it was pierced with iron spikes so that it might burn better. A spike hurt the baby's eye, and the baby cried. Knowing that the baby was still alive, people took the body down from the funeral pyre, cut open the stomach and took out the baby. The baby grew up in due course and at the age of seven became an Arahat.

The boy's miraculous escape from death was also attributed to the power of the knowledge of the path of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*), or it was attributed to the influence of the power of the boy's inherent knowledge of the perfections

(*pāramī-ñāṇa*) that helped him attain the knowledge of the path of an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṇa*).

5. Power by the pervasion of concentration (*samādhi-vipphāra-iddhi*). The miraculous phenomenon that occurs when one is about to enter upon, is entering upon, or has [1649] just entered upon absorption (*jhāna*) is due to the pervasion of concentration (*samādhi*). The power that causes such a miracle is called the power by the pervasion of concentration (*samādhi-vipphāra-iddhi*). With reference to this power, the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) narrates a number of stories beginning with the story of Sāriputta, which alone will be reproduced here.

Ven. Sāriputta

One day, while Ven. Sāriputta was staying with Ven. Moggallāna at a gorge called Kapota, he had his head newly shaven and engaged himself in absorption (*jhāna*) in an open space during a moonlit night. When a mischievous Yakkha, who had come with a friend of his, saw Ven. Sāriputta's cleanly-shaven, shining head, he became desirous of striking it with his hand. His friend advised him not to do so, yet he struck Ven. Sāriputta's head with all his might. The blow was so hard that the sound of it roared violently like thunder. But Ven. Sāriputta felt no pain, as the power of concentration (*samādhi*) pervaded throughout his body.

6. When noble ones (*ariya*) desire to contemplate loathsome objects as though they were unloathsome or unloathsome objects as though they were loathsome, they can do so. Such a power of a noble one to contemplate any object in whatever way they wish is called the power of the noble ones (*ariya-iddhi*).

7. Creatures like birds fly in the sky. To possess that ability to fly, they do not have to make any special effort in the present life. It is a result of what they did in past existences (*kamma-vipākajā-iddhi*). Devas, Brahmas, the first inhabitants of the world and Asuras have also the ability to move about in space. The power to perform such feats is a result of what they did in past existences (*kamma-vipākajā-iddhi*).

8. Universal Monarchs (*Cakka-vatti*) and the like can travel in space. They can do so because they have accumulated merits for themselves (*puññavanta-iddhi*). Those who accompany the Universal Monarch in his aerial travels can do so because they are associated with the monarch, who is the real possessor of

merits. The riches and luxuries that belong to such wealthy persons as Jotika, Jaṭila, Ghosaka, Meṇḍaka and others (see chapter 45c) are also powers arising from merit (*puññavanta-iddhi*).

The difference between those powers that are a result of what they did in past existences (*kamma-vipākajā-iddhi*) and powers arising from merit (*puññavanta-iddhi*) is this: The powers that are a result of what they did in past existences (*kamma-vipākajā-iddhi*) are due not to one's deeds done in the present life but due according to one's deeds done in the past; it accompanies one's birth. The powers arising from merit (*puññavanta-iddhi*) are due not only to one's past deeds but also due to one's present efforts made in support of those deeds. It does not accompany one's birth; it becomes full and operative only when supported by one's deeds in the present life. To a Universal Monarch, the Treasure of the Wheel does not arise at his birth. It arises only when he has observed certain precepts and fulfilled the special duties of a Universal Monarch. So this particular power is due not entirely to one's past deeds but also due to one's present supporting efforts.

9. Aerial travels and such feats by Vijjādharas, those who bear magical knowledge (*vijjā-maya-iddhi*). The power acquired by means of the art of specially contrived mantras, medicine, etc.

10. The power that accrues from various accomplishments (*sammā-payoga-iddhi*). The scope covered by this power (*iddhi*) is vast. The path and fruition that are attained as a result of proper endeavours is the highest form of power that accrues from various accomplishments (*sammā-payoga-iddhi*). In short, all accomplishments that result from learning arts and crafts, the three Vedas, the Three Baskets (*Tipiṭaka*) or, to say the least, from agricultural activities, such as ploughing, sowing, etc. are all powers that accrue from various accomplishments (*sammā-payoga-iddhi*).

Of these ten powers (*iddhi*), the first, the power of resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna-iddhi*), is the power of resolution to project copies of oneself by the hundred or by the thousand, such as the power possessed by Ven. Cūḷapanthaka and others. Ordinary people who are not possessors of such power make similar resolutions, but because they lack the basic factor of absorption (*jhāna*) or concentration (*samādhi*), they do not realize what they have resolved; on the other hand,

possessors of such power have their resolution fulfilled because their absorption or concentration is strong enough to help them. [1650]

Resolution preceding the Attainment of Cessation

When a Non-returner (*Anāgāmī*) or an Arahat who is endowed with all eight attainments (*samāpatti*) is about to enter upon the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*), he resolves thus: "During the period of my absorption in the attainment, let no destruction befall my belongings that are kept apart from me. If the Saṅgha wants my presence, may I be able to rise from my attainment before the messenger comes to me. Promptly, may I be able to do so when the Buddha summons me." Only after resolving thus, he enters upon attainment.

In accordance with his resolution, during the period of his absorption in the attainment, his personal effects kept apart from him cannot be destroyed by the five kinds of enemy. When the Saṅgha wants him during that very period, he has already arisen from his attainment before the messenger's arrival. No sooner has the Buddha called for him, than he emerges from his attainment. No damage can be done by the five enemies, water, fire, kings, thieves and unloved heirs, to his possessions, such as robes, etc. that are on his body because of the power of his attainment, even though he has not previously resolved for their safety.

Three Kinds of Resolution

Resolution is of three kinds, according to context:

1. Resolution made so that signs occur if something is going to happen (*pubba-nimitta-adhiṭṭhāna*).
2. Resolution made so that one's wish comes true (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*).
3. Resolution made so that one's duties are fulfilled (*vata-adhiṭṭhāna*).

1. Resolution made so that portending signs appear before something happens (*pubba-nimitta-adhiṭṭhāna*); this kind of resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) may be understood from the Birth Story about the Nāga King Campeyya (*Campeyya-jātaka*, Ja 506) and other stories. The extract from the Birth Story about the Nāga King Campeyya, in brief, is given here.

The Birth Story about the Nāga King Campeyya

When the Nāga King Campeyya told his Queen Sumanā that he would go to the human abode to observe precepts, the queen said: "The human abode is full of dangers. If something happens to you by what signs should I know?" The Nāga King took her to the royal pond and said: "Look at the pond. Should I be caught by an enemy, the water will become dark; should I be caught by a Garuḷa, the water will boil; should I be caught by a snake-charmer, the water will turn red like blood." After that, the Nāga King left for the human abode to observe the precepts for fourteen days.

But the king was caught by a snake-charmer and could not return home even after a month. Worried about his safety, the queen went to the pond and saw the surface of the water had turned red like blood.

This resolution of the Nāga King Campeyya is a resolution made so that signs occur if something is going to happen (*pubba-nimitta-adhiṭṭhāna*) because he made the firm determination beforehand for the appearance of portending signs.

Similarly, according to the Introduction to the Birth Stories (*Jātaka-nidāna*) commentary, when Prince Siddhattha renounced the world, he cut off his hair and threw it up into the sky resolving: "May this hair remain in the sky if I will become Awakened; if not, let it fall back to the ground." The hair hung in the sky like a festoon. This resolution was made to know in advance whether or not he would become a Buddha, so it is a resolution made so that signs occur if something is going to happen (*pubba-nimitta-adhiṭṭhāna*).

Again, after six years of strenuous asceticism, after he had eaten the milk rice offered by Sujātā on the bank of the Nerañjarā, he set the golden bowl afloat on the river with the resolution: "If I will become a Buddha, may this bowl go upstream; if not, may it go downstream," and the bowl went upstream until it reached the Nāga King Kāḷa. The resolution on this account also is a resolution made so that signs occur if something is going to happen (*pubba-nimitta-adhiṭṭhāna*).

Similarly, any resolution made in the world to know beforehand by portent whether one's wish will be fulfilled or not is resolution made so that signs occur if something is going to happen (*pubba-nimitta-adhiṭṭhāna*). This kind of resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) is still practised today and is thus well known. Some

people are used to lifting the stone placed at a famous relic shrine (*stūpa*) or at a nat or spirit shrine after resolving: "If my plan will materialise, may the stone be heavy; if not, may it be light," or vice versa. After lifting the stone, they read the omen, whether they would succeed or not, from the feel of the stone's weight. [1651]

2. Resolution made so that one's wish comes true (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*). The resolution made so that one's wish comes true (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*) is a resolution made so that one's wish gets fulfilled. This kind of resolution may be known from the Birth Story about the Wise Vidhura (*Vidhura-jātaka*, Ja 546).

Vidhura, the minister, was taken away from King Korabya by Puṇṇaka the Yakkha, who had won the game of dice. It is stated in the commentary on vs 197 of this particular Birth Story that, having valiantly thundered: "Of death I am not afraid," Vidhura resolved: "May my lower garment not go off against my wish." Reflecting on his perfections, he tightened his garment and followed Puṇṇaka by catching hold of the tail of his horse fearlessly and with the dignity of a lion-king. This resolution made by Vidhura is a resolution made so that one's wish comes true (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*).

In the Birth Story about Cane Juice (*Naḷa-pāna-jātaka*, Ja 20), 80,000 monkeys headed by their king, the Bodhisatta, found it difficult to drink the water from a pond that was protected by a wild water-demon. The monkey king then took one of the reeds that grew around the pond, made an asseveration that the reed be rid of the joints and blew air into it. The reed became hollow throughout, with no joints. He thereby made it possible for his followers to drink the water through the hollow reeds. But there were too many monkeys, and the king was unable to provide each with a hollow reed. So he resolved: "Let all the reeds around the pond become hollow." This resolution made by the monkey king to fulfil his wish to let the monkeys drink the water individually is also a resolution made so that one's wish comes true (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*).

In the Birth Story about the Dog (*Kukkura-jātaka*, Ja 22), it is mentioned that the leather straps of the chariot of King Brahmadatta of Bārāṇasī were gnawed by the dogs bred in the inner city. Under the wrong impression that the leather-eating dogs were owned by the citizens living in the outer city, royal servants chased them in order to kill them. So the dogs dared not live in the city and gathered at a cemetery. Knowing the true reason of the trouble and realizing

that the leather straps of the royal chariot could have been eaten only by the dogs of the inner city, the leader of the pack, the Bodhisatta, asked them to wait while he went to the palace. While he entered the city, he concentrated his thoughts on the perfections, and diffusing his loving-kindness (*mettā*), he resolved: "May nobody be able to hurl stones or sticks at me." This resolution, too, made to fulfil his wish that the dogs of the outer city might be safe from harm, is a resolution made so that one's wish comes true (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*).

In the Birth Story about the Wise Outcaste Mātaṅga (*Mātaṅga-jātaka*, Ja 497), and during the reign of King Brahmadatta of Bārāṇasī, the Bodhisatta was born an outcaste (*caṇḍāla*) and was called Mātaṅga. The daughter of a wealthy man of Bārāṇasī was named Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā because she believed in the auspiciousness of pleasant sights. One day, she went to a garden to amuse herself with her maids. On the way, she saw Mātaṅga who went into the city. Though he kept himself aside, as he was of low birth, the sight of his person aroused displeasure in Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā, who, therefore, returned home thinking that it was not an auspicious day for her. Her followers were also annoyed, saying: "Because of you, we will have no fun today," they beat him until he became unconscious; thereafter they departed. When Mātaṅga regained consciousness after a while, he said to himself: "These people of Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā have tortured an innocent man like me." Then he went to the house of Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā's father and lay at the entrance with a resolution: "I will not get up until I win Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā's hand." This resolution of Mātaṅga made to humble Diṭṭha Maṅgalikā's pride is also a resolution made so that one's wish comes true (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*).

In the commentary on the Great Division (*Mahā-vagga*) of the Vinaya, too, it is said thus: Just after his Awakening, the Buddha stayed for seven weeks at seven different places in the vicinity of the Bodhi tree, spending a week at each place. At the end of the last seven day's stay at the foot of a Rājāyatana tree, the brothers Tapussa and Bhallika came to him and offered some cakes. The Buddha considered how to accept the offer of cakes. The bowl offered by Brahma Ghaṭikāra had disappeared the day the Buddha accepted the milk rice offered by Sujātā. Then the Four Great Kings presented the Buddha with four emerald bowls. But the Buddha refused to accept them. The Deva kings then offered the Buddha four stone bowls having the colour of kidney beans. To strengthen their faith, the Buddha accepted the bowls and resolved: "May the bowls merge into

one." Then the bowls became one with four concentric brims. This resolution of the Buddha also is a resolution made so that one's wish comes true (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*).

The Difference between Resolution and Truth

It seems that the resolution made so that signs occur if something is going to happen (*pubba-nimitta-adhiṭṭhāna*) and the resolution made so that one's wish comes true (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*) of this section on resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) and the truth told so that one's wish may be fulfilled (*icchā-pūraṇa-sacca*) of the section on truth (*sacca*) are one and the same because all these are concerned with fulfilment of one's wishes.

With regard to the truth told so that one's wish may be fulfilled (*icchā-pūraṇa-sacca*), when Suvaṇṇasāma's mother, father and the Devī Bahusundarī made their respective resolutions, they all wished for the disappearance of the poison from the arrow that struck Suvaṇṇasāma; with regard to the resolution made so that signs occur if something is going to happen (*pubba-nimitta-adhiṭṭhāna*), too, when the Bodhisatta made his resolution, throwing up the hair he had cut-off into the sky, he wished that the hair would hang in the sky if he would become a Buddha; with regard to the resolution made so that one's wish comes true (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*), too, when Vidhura made his resolution, his wish was to keep his dress intact. The connection of these resolutions with their respective wishes makes one think that they all are the same. That is why some people nowadays combine the two words, truth (*sacca*) and resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*), into one, saying: "We perform a truth-resolution (*saccādhiṭṭhāna*)."

In reality, however, truth (*sacca*) is one thing and resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) is another of the ten perfections. Therefore, they are two different things, and the difference is this: As has been said before, it is truth (*sacca*) whether it is of a good or evil nature. A wish based on that truth is told so that one's wish may be fulfilled (*icchā-pūraṇa*). But when one's wish is not based on some form of truth, the determination made of one's own accord to have one's wish fulfilled is resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*).

In the Birth Story about the Wise Suvaṇṇasāma (*Suvaṇṇasāma-jātaka*, Ja 540), when Suvaṇṇasāma's parents made an asseveration, they said: "Sāma has formerly practised only righteousness," which is the basic truth. And they added:

"By this truthful saying, may his poison vanish," which is their wish, thus expressing a wish based on what was true (*icchā-pūraṇa-sacca*).

When the Bodhisatta threw up the hair he had cut-off into the sky, resolving: "If I should become a Buddha, may the hair remain in the sky," he did so without any basis of truth. His truthfulness was made for portending signs, which would let him know beforehand of his becoming a Buddha.

The resolution made by Vidhura when he was about to follow Puṇṇaka by holding onto the tail of his horse: "May my dress remain intact," is also a resolution made so that one's wish comes true (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*) because it has no truth as a basis and is, therefore, a mere determination of his wish (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*).

Thus, the difference between truth (*sacca*) and resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) lies in the presence or absence of the basis of truth.

3. Resolution made so that one's duties are fulfilled (*vata-adhiṭṭhāna*). There are those who undertake the habits of a bull (*go-sīla*) and practices of a bull (*go-vata*): Cattle eat and discharge faeces and urine while standing; in imitation of cattle, some ascetics during the lifetime of the Buddha did the same, believing that by so doing they would be purified and liberated from Saṁsāra. That is not to say that cattle had that wrong view, but only those ascetics who imitated cattle had. This practice (*vata*) is connected with evil.

But resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) has nothing to do with such wrong practices, for it belongs to the noble practice of the perfections (*pāramī*). Here, practices (*vata*) refers to the observance of such noble practices as generosity, morality, etc.; when one resolves to observe these practices, such an action may be termed a practice of resolution (*vata-adhiṭṭhāna*), but mere resolution and mere designation do not amount to fulfilling the perfection of resolution. The reason is that resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) does not belong to the past nor does it belong to the present. One fulfils the perfection of resolution when one observes in the future exactly as one has resolved firmly now; and however ardently one resolves at present, if one fails to observe later, one's resolution is useless and meaningless.

This idea is expressed in the Signs of Intelligence (*Kavi-lakkhaṇā*). A line in it reads to the effect that resolution should be compared to the horn of a

rhinoceros, a beast which has one horn, not two. Just as a rhinoceros has only one horn, so should one stick to his resolution steadfastly and firmly, and not waveringly. This line of the Signs of Intelligence (*Kavi-lakkhaṇā*) agrees with such sayings as "like a rocky mountain (*yathā pi pabbato selo*)" as mentioned in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*, Bv 2.153). Its meaning has been shown above.

The different resolutions as classified before, such as resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) concerning the Observance Day (*Uposatha*), resolution concerning the robe, and resolution concerning the bowl, cannot be included under the resolution made so that portending signs appear before something happens (*pubba-nimitta-adhiṭṭhāna*), the resolution made so that one's wish comes true (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*) and the resolution of practice (*vata-adhiṭṭhāna*), for they are the [1653] resolutions made as required by the Discipline. On the other hand, the resolution of one of the five masteries (*vasī-bhāva*), and the resolution that precedes the attainment of cessation (*nirodha-samāpatti*) and that which belongs to the ten powers (*iddhi*) are a resolution made so that one's wish comes true (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*).

The Bodhisattas and the Three Kinds of Resolution

Of these three kinds of resolution, the Bodhisattas practise the resolution made so that portending signs appear before something happens (*pubba-nimitta-adhiṭṭhāna*) and the resolution made so that one's wish comes true (*āsīsa-adhiṭṭhāna*) not for fulfilling the perfection of resolution but for meeting some requirements under certain circumstances. On the other hand, it is this resolution of practice (*vata-adhiṭṭhāna*) that they practise to fulfil the perfection of resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) that leads to becoming an Arahat (*Arahatta-magga-ñāṅā*) and omniscience (*sabbaññutā-ñāṇa*).

In order to mention a little of the way they practise this particular resolution, here is an extract from the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*, Cp 1.51-52):

> *Nisajja pāsāda-vare, evaṁ cintesahaṁ tadā:*
> *"Yaṁ kiñci mānusaṁ dānaṁ, adinnaṁ me na vijjati,*
> *yo pi yāceyya maṁ cakkhuṁ, dadeyyaṁ avikampito."*

Sāriputta, when I was King Sivi, I thought to myself while in the palace: "Of the kinds of giving (*dāna*) that people give, there is nothing that I

> have not given. Should somebody ask for my eye, unshaken I will give it to him."

By this, King Sivi meant to say that he had firmly resolved: "If someone comes to me today and begs for my eye, without hesitation, I will offer it to him." When Sakka, in the guise of a Brahmin, went to ask for one eye, true to his resolution, he unhesitatingly gave away both his eyes to him. This resolution of King Sivi is to be understood with reference to giving (*dāna*).

In the chapter on Bhūridatta's practice, it is said (Cp 2.13-14):

> *Caturo aṅge adhiṭṭhāya, semi vammikam-uddhani.*
> *Chaviyā cammena maṁsena, nahāru-aṭṭhikehi vā,*
> *yassa etena karaṇīyaṁ, dinnaṁ yeva harātu so.*

This describes how the Nāga King Bhūridatta resolved when he observed the precepts. It means:

> Having resolved with regard to the four components of my body: skin, both thick and thin, flesh and blood, muscles and bones, I lay on the top of the anthill, he who has some use for any of these four components, let him take it, for I have already made a gift of them.

Wishing to promote his observance of the precepts, King Bhūridatta resolved: "I will guard my morality at the sacrifice of the four components of my body." This resolution of King Bhūridatta is in connection with morality (*sīla*).

Also in the Birth Story about the Nāga King Campeyya (*Campeyya-jātaka*, Ja 506) the Nāga King Campeyya went to observe the precepts after telling his queen of the signs that would show when he was in danger in the aforesaid manner; it is mentioned in the commentary: Having told of signalling signs and having resolved to observe the precept on the fourteenth day of the new moon, Campeyya left the abode of Nāgas for the human world and lay on the top of an ant-hill (*nimittāni ācikkhitvā cātuddasī-uposathaṁ adhiṭṭhāya nāga-bhavanā nikkhamitvā tattha gantvā vammikam-atthake nipajji*). This resolution of Campeyya was purely for observing morality (*sīla*).

In all these stories, giving (*dāna*) or morality (*sīla*) is one thing and resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*) is another. King Sivi's gift (*dāna*) occurred the moment he gave his eyes, but his resolution took place when he resolved to do so before the actual giving. Therefore, resolution came first, and it was followed by the act of giving.

Also in the case of morality (*sīla*) observed by the Nāga kings the resolution was first and then came the act of observance of morality (*sīla*). In the secular affairs, too, it is natural to do things only after making up one's mind: "I will do like this."

Prince Temiya's Resolution

The Bodhisatta was once the son of the King of Kāsi and named Temiya (*Mūga-pakkha-jātaka*, Ja 538). He was so named [1654] by his father because on the day he was born, it rained heavily in the whole country of Kāsi and people became wet (*temīya*) and happy. When the prince was one month old, while he was on the lap of his father, four thieves were brought to the king, who ordered them to be punished. The prince was shocked to see this and became sad, thinking: "What shall I do to escape from this palace."

The next day, while he was staying alone under the white parasol, he reflected on his father's action and was scared to become a king. To him, who was pale like a lotus flower crushed by the hand, the guardian goddess of the parasol, who was his mother in one of his previous births, said: "Do not worry, son, if you want to escape from this royal residence, pretend to be dumb, deaf and mute. Your wish will be fulfilled." Then the prince made a resolution and acted accordingly.

For sixteen years the prince was tested by various means, but he remained firm without deviating from his resolution. Then the father ordered: "My son is really dumb, deaf and mute. Take him to the cemetery and bury him there."

Although he was variously tested and presented with difficulties for sixteen long years, he remained resolute, as explained in the example of a rocky mountain mentioned in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*). His firm, unshaken determination is an act of tremendous resoluteness. Only when one fulfils one's practice (*vata*) of resolution with the kind of determination of Prince Temiya, with all might and valour and without wavering, will one be carrying out the fulfilment of the perfection of resolution as observed by the Bodhisattas.

9. The Perfection of Loving-Kindness

Three Kinds of Love

Teachers of old have translated the word *mettā* of *mettā-pāramī* as "love" or "loving-kindness." Similarly, they translate *pema* also as "love." Love meant by *mettā* is a specialised term, while love meant by *pema* is a general one. Therefore, *pema* is divided into three:

1. Love between men and women and is generated by craving (*taṇhā-pema*); this love is called an erotic sentiment (*siṅgāra*) in books on rhetoric.

2. Attachment between parents and children, among brothers and sisters, based on living together in the same house (*geha-sita-pema*). This kind of love is called affection (*vacchala*) in rhetoric.

   Both love generated by craving (*taṇhā-pema*) and love based on living together in the same house (*geha-sita-pema*) are not wholesome; the former is passion (*taṇhā-rāga*), while the latter is greed (*lobha*).

3. Loving-kindness or unbounded benevolence shown towards others for their well-being (*mettā-pema*). This love is entirely free from attachment or desire to live always together with others. People may be living poles apart, and yet one is happy to hear that those living far away are prospering. Such separation does not prevent one from feeling satisfied with their well-being. Therefore, loving-kindness (*mettā*) is pure and noble and has been also called a sublime abode (*Brahma-vihāra*). That is to say, developing such love is living in a sublime state of mind. Not only loving-kindness (*mettā*), but compassion (*karuṇā*), altruistic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*) are also sublime abodes (*Brahma-vihāra*).

So the sublime abodes (*Brahma-vihāra*) comprise all four virtues. They are also known as four noble practices (*brahma-cariyā*). Another name for the sublime abodes (*Brahma-vihāra*) is the immeasurables (*apamaññā*), for they are the mental qualities to be developed and extended towards all beings, whose number is limitless.

It should be carefully noted that development of loving-kindness is not development of impure craving-love (*taṇhā-pema*) and affection-love (*geha-sita-pema*) but that of pure and noble loving-kindness (*mettā-pema*); how to develop loving-kindness (*mettā*) will be shown later.

Loving-Kindness and Hatelessness

Loving-kindness (*mettā*) is a reality which exists in its ultimate sense (*paramattha*). But when ultimate realities are enumerated, loving-kindness is not shown as a separate item, for it is covered by the [1655] mental concomitant of hatelessness (*adosa-cetasika*), which has a wider connotation. Loving-kindness forms a part of that mental concomitant of hatelessness (*adosa-cetasika*).

According to the the Collection of Meaning in the Abhidhamma (*Abhidhammattha-saṅgaha*), the mental concomitant of hatelessness (*adosa-cetasika*) is associated with 59 beautiful thoughts (*sobhana-citta*). Whenever these 59 thoughts (*citta*) arise, there arises the mental concomitant of hatelessness (*adosa-cetasika*) too. Hatelessness can contemplate various objects, but loving-kindness (*mettā*) can have only living beings as its object. In performing different acts of giving (*dāna*) or observing various kinds of morality (*sīla*), there invariably arises hatelessness (*adosa*). But each time hatelessness arises in this way, it is not necessarily loving-kindness. Only when one contemplates living beings with the thought: "May they be well and happy," wishing them prosperity, can hatelessness (*adosa-cetasika*) be called loving-kindness (*mettā*).

With reference to the aforesaid, in the perfection of forbearance (*khantī-pāramī*), too, forbearance may mean hatelessness (*adosa-cetasika*), but not all hatelessness is forbearance; when one is wronged by others, one restrains oneself from showing hate or anger (*dosa*) to them, and only such hatelessness should be taken as forbearance. Similarly, not all hatelessness should be taken as loving-kindness but only that hatelessness that arises in the form of goodwill towards other beings should be.

Kinds of Loving-Kindness

With reference to loving-kindness, people say that loving-kindness is of 528 kinds. But in reality it is not so. It should be noted people say so because according to the Path of the Analytic Knowledges (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*), there

are 528 ways of developing loving-kindness. Of the 528 ways, five are without specifications of beings (*anodhiso*). They are:

1. All beings (*sabbe sattā*).
2. All breathing beings (*sabbe pāṇā*).
3. All existing creatures (*sabbe bhūtā*).
4. All persons or individuals (*sabbe puggalā*).
5. All those who have come into individual existences (*sabbe atta-bhāva-pariyāpannā*).

When one directs one's thought to all beings that exist in the 31 planes of existence in any one of these five ways, they all are embraced without any one of them being left out. Since everyone is covered by these five ways, these five are called the five unlimited (*anodhiso*) individuals. *Odhi* of *anodhiso* means "boundary, limit," hence *anodhiso* is "having no limit."[438]

When loving-kindness is directed towards beings who are specified, the classification is as follows:

1. All females (*sabbā itthiyo*).
2. All males (*sabbe purisā*).
3 All noble persons (*sabbe ariya*).
4 All ignoble persons, those who have not attained the state of being noble ones (*sabbe anariya*).
5. All Devas (*sabbe deva*).
6. All humans (*sabbe manussā*).
7. All Petas belonging to lower worlds (*sabbe vinipātikā*).

Each of these seven belongs to a separate category of beings, and accordingly, they are called limited (*odhisa*) or the seven limited beings. In this way, there are twelve kinds of beings, five unlimited (*anodhisa*) and seven limited (*odhisa*),

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[438] The next paragraph on the usage of *satta* and *puggala* deals only with the meaning of those words in Myanmar; it is, therefore, left out from our translation.

to whom loving-kindness (*mettā*) should be directed. How loving-kindness is directed to these twelve categories of beings is taught as follows:

1. May they be free from enmity (*averā hontu*).
2. May they be free from ill-will (*abyāpajjā hontu*). [1656]
3. May they be free from unhappiness (*anīghā hontu*).
4. May they be able to keep themselves happy (*sukhī attānaṁ pariharantu*).

When loving-kindness is suffused in these four ways on each of the above twelve categories of persons, the modes of suffusing loving-kindness become 48 in number. There is no mention of directions in these 48 modes.

When the four cardinal points, the four intermediate points and the upward and downward directions are mentioned in each of these 48 modes, there will be 480 modes altogether: "May those beings in the east be free from enmity, from ill-will, from suffering and may they be able to keep themselves happy." In this way, beings in other directions also should be suffused with loving-kindness thus the number of modes of suffusing loving-kindness become 480.

If 48 modes of suffusing without mention of directions are added to those 480 modes, the total becomes 528. These 528 modes of suffusing loving-kindness are named briefly as the "suffusion of loving-kindness" by teachers of old and composed as a traditional chant. If one desires to suffuse loving-kindness in the first way in Pāḷi, one should do so by reciting: *Sabbe sattā averā hontu*, "may all beings be free from enmity." Continuously repeating in this way means development of loving-kindness. If one desires to do so in the second way in Pāḷi, one should recite: *Sabbe sattā abyāpajjā hontu*, "may all beings be free from ill-will." Continuously repeating in this way also means the development of loving-kindness. In this manner, all the 528 ways of suffusing loving-kindness (*mettā*) should be understood.

The development of loving-kindness in these 528 ways, as shown above, is taught in the Path of the Analytic Knowledges (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*) and is well-known. In that text there is no mention of the development of compassion (*karuṇā*), altruistic joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekkhā*) at the end of that of loving-kindness (*mettā*) though. But, nowadays, suffusion of loving-kindness, as published in some books, contains at the end of the development of loving-kindness: 1) *dukkha-muccantu*, "may they be free from suffering," which is a

development of compassion (*karuṇā*); 2) *yathā laddhā sampattito māvigacchantu*, "may they not suffer loss of what they have gained," which is a development of altruistic joy (*muditā*); and 3) *kammassakā*, "they have their productive deeds (*kamma*), as their own property; each being is what his or her deeds makes," which is a development of equanimity (*upekkhā*). They are included by the ancient teachers so that those who wish to develop compassion, altruistic joy and equanimity may do so by taking the development of loving-kindness as a guide.

Therefore, if one desires to develop compassion, one should incline one's thoughts towards living beings like this: *Sabbe sattā dukkhā muccantu*, "may all beings be free from suffering;" if one desires to develop altruistic joy: *Sabbe sattā yathā laddhā sampattito māvigacchantu*, "may all beings not suffer loss of what they have gained;" if one desires to develop equanimity: *Sabbe sattā kammassakā*, "all beings have their productive deeds (*kamma*) as their own property."

But this does not mean that only this way, as mentioned in the scriptures, should be adopted but not others. Because for covering all beings without any classification, there are not only terms like: *satta, pāṇa, bhūta, puggala* and *atta-bhāva-pariyāpannā,* all of which indicate beings; but there are such words as *sarīrī, dehī, jīva, pajā, jantu, hindagu,* etc. which also mean beings. To suffuse beings with the thought: *Sabbe sarīrī averā hontu*, "may all those having bodies be free from enmity," etc. is also to direct loving-kindness (*mettā*) towards them.

The number of ways to direct loving-kindness is also given as four in the Path of the Analytic Knowledges (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*). But there are other ways as well, for instance: *Sabbe sattā sukhino hontu*, "may all beings be happy." *Sabbe sattā khemino hontu*, "may all beings be secure" and such thoughts are also loving-kindness. The fact that suffusing beings with one's loving-kindness by using other Pāḷi words and by adopting other ways also constitutes development of real loving-kindness is shown in the Discourse on Friendliness Meditation (*Metta-sutta*, Khp 9, Snp 1.8).

Development of Loving-Kindness

The Discourse on Loving-Kindness (*Mettā-sutta*) was delivered by the Buddha in connection with forest-dwelling monastics and was recited at the Councils and preserved in the Anthology of Discourses (*Sutta-nipāta*, Snp 1.8) and the

Supplementary Readings (*Khuddaka-pāṭha*, Khp 9). The discourse first describes fifteen virtues which those desirous of developing loving-kindness should be [1657] endowed with. These fifteen are known as the fifteen virtues to be endowed with before developing loving-kindness (*mettā-pubba-bhāga*).

The discourse says: He who is clever in what is noble and profitable and who desires to abide contemplating Nibbāna through wisdom, the Nibbāna which is peaceful and blissful, should endeavour to be endowed with the following:

1. An ability to execute what is good.
2. Uprightness in conduct.
3. Total straightforwardness.
4. Being receptive to the words of the wise.
5. Gentleness in manners.
6. Having no conceit.
7. Being easily content with what one has.
8. Being easy to support.
9. Not being burdened by unnecessary cares and duties.
10. Having frugal living.

    Not having too many personal belongings for one's travel; a monastic should travel light only with his eight requisites, just as a bird flies taking with it only its wings.

11. Having calm and serene sense-faculties.
12. Having mature wisdom with regard to faultless things.
13. Having modesty in one's deeds, words and thoughts.
14. Having no attachment to one's supporters, male or female.

    Which is particularly concerned with monastics, as the discourse is originally meant for them. Lay people also should not have attachment to friends.

15. Not doing even the slightest deed that would be reproved by the wise.

The discourse explains how to develop loving-kindness after becoming endowed with these fifteen virtues, saying: *Sukhino vā khemino hontu, sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā*, "may all beings be happy and secure, may all beings in their hearts be happy!" etc.

How to develop loving-kindness, as taught in the Discourse on Loving-Kindness (*Mettā-sutta*), should be briefly noted as follows:

1. Loving-kindness developed in an all-inclusive manner covering all beings (*sabba-saṅgāhika-mettā*).
2. Loving-kindness developed by dividing beings into two groups (*duka-bhāvanā-mettā*).
3. Loving-kindness developed by dividing beings into three groups (*tika-bhāvanā-mettā*).

1. Loving-kindness developed in an all-inclusive manner covering all beings (*sabba-saṅgāhika-mettā*). Of these three ways of development of loving-kindness, that of loving-kindness developed in an all-inclusive manner covering all beings is explained in Pāḷi as suffusing thus: *Sukhino vā khemino hontu, sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā*, "may all beings be happy and secure, may all beings in their hearts be happy!" If one wishes to develop loving-kindness according to this explanation, one should recite and contemplate as follows:

1. May all beings be happy physically (*sabbe sattā sukhino hontu*).
2. May all beings be secure (*sabbe sattā khemino hontu*).
3. May all beings be happy mentally (*sabbe sattā sukhitattā hontu*).

This is the development of loving-kindness developed covering all beings (*sabba-saṅgāhika-mettā*) as taught in the Discourse on Loving-Kindness (*Mettā-sutta*).

2. Loving-kindness developed by dividing beings into groups of two (*duka-bhāvanā-mettā*). Loving-kindness developed by dividing beings into groups of two (*duka-bhāvanā-mettā*) and loving-kindness developed by dividing beings into groups of three (*tika-bhāvanā-mettā*) are both likely to be confusing to those who do not know how to interpret the Pāḷi text, but how one may get confused will not be explained, lest it should cause more confusion.

The loving-kindness developed by dividing beings into groups of two (*duka-bhāvanā-mettā*) is developed by recognising [1658] there are four pairs of beings, namely:

1. The pair of frightened and unfrightened beings (*tasa-thāvara-duka*).
2. The pair of seen and unseen beings (*diṭṭhādiṭṭha-duka*).
3. The pair of far and near beings (*dūra-santika-duka*).
4. The pair of those who have been born and those in the womb of their mothers (*bhūta-sambhavesi-duka*).

1. May all those worldlings and noble learners who are frightened, and may those Arahats who are without fright, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally (*tasā vā thāvarā vā anavasesā sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā*). Contemplating thus is the development of loving-kindness to the pair of frightened and unfrightened beings (*tasa-thāvara-duka-bhāvanā-mettā*).

2. May all those beings seen and unseen, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally (*diṭṭhā vā adiṭṭhā vā anavasesā sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā*). Contemplating thus is the development of loving-kindness to the pair of seen and unseen beings (*diṭṭhādiṭṭha-duka-bhāvanā-mettā*).

3. May all those beings living far and living near, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally (*dūrā vā avidurā vā anavasesa sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā*). Contemplating like this is the development of loving-kindness to the pair of far and near beings (*dūra-santika-duka-bhāvanā-mettā*).

4. May all those beings who have been born and those who are still in the womb of their mothers, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally (*bhūtā vā sambhavesi vā anavasesā sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitatta*). Contemplating like this is the development of loving-kindness to those who have been born and those still in the womb of their mothers (*bhūta-sambhavesi-duka-bhāvanā-mettā*).

The above-mentioned four ways of the development of loving-kindness is called loving-kindness developed after dividing beings into groups of two (*duka-bhāvanā-mettā*).

3. Loving-kindness developed by dividing beings into groups of three (*tika-bhāvanā-mettā*). This loving-kindness developed by dividing beings into groups of three is of three kinds:

1. The set of three of tall, short and medium beings (*dīgha-rassa-majjhima-tika*).
2. The set of three of large, small and medium-sized beings (*mahantāṇuka-majjhima-tika*).
3. The set of three of fat, thin and medium beings (*thūlāṇuka-majjhima-tika*).

1. May all those beings having long bodies, those having short bodies and those having bodies of medium length, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally (*dīghā vā rassā vā majjhimā vā anavasesā sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā*). Contemplating thus is the development of loving-kindness to the set of three of tall, short and medium beings (*dīgha-rassa-majjhima-tika-bhāvanā-mettā*).

2. May all those beings having big bodies, those having small bodies and those having bodies of medium size, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally (*mahantā vā aṇukā vā majjhimā vā anavasesā sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā*). Contemplating thus is the development of loving-kindness to the set of three of large, small and medium-sized beings (*mahantāṇuka-majjhima-tika - bhāvanā-mettā*).

3. May all those beings having fat bodies, those having thin bodies and those having bodies of medium build, without exception, be happy both physically and mentally (*thūlā vā aṇukā vā majjhimā vā anavasesā sabbe sattā bhavantu sukhitattā*). Contemplating thus is the development of loving-kindness to the set of three of fat, thin and medium beings (*thūlāṇuka-majjhima-tika-bhāvanā-mettā*).

The above-mentioned three ways of development of loving-kindness are called loving-kindness developed after dividing beings into groups of three (*tika-bhāvanā-mettā*).

Since these three ways of development of loving-kindness: Developed towards all beings, developed by dividing beings into groups of two and developed by dividing beings into groups of three are thoughts of loving-kindness, developed

with the desire to see others attain prosperity and happiness, they are called loving-kindness wishing for benefit and happiness (*hita-sukhāgama-patthanā-mettā*).

Similarly, thoughts of loving-kindness developed with the desire to see others free from misfortune and not suffering are called loving-kindness wishing for freedom from loss and suffering (*ahita-dukkhāgama-patthanā-mettā*). This kind of loving-kindness is described in Pāḷi: [1659]

> *Na paro paraṁ nikubbetha, nātimaññetha katthaci na kañci,*
> *byārosanā paṭigha-saññā, nāññam-aññassa dukkham-iccheyya.*
>
> May one not deceive another; may one not despise another; may they not wish to cause suffering to one another by offending and hurting, physically, verbally and mentally.

Contemplating like this is the development of loving-kindness wishing for freedom from loss and suffering.

It may be asked: "Why is the development of loving-kindness described not in one way only but in several different ways in the Path of the Analytic Knowledges (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*) and the Discourse on Loving-Kindness (*Mettā-sutta*)?"

The answer is: The mind of a worldling roams about continuously from one sense object to another. The mind, in such a state, cannot be kept steady on the object of loving-kindness by adopting one means only. Steady concentration of the mind can be achieved by repeated change of method of contemplation. Therefore, a variety of ways of developing loving-kindness was taught by the Buddha. Sages of later times, too, were obliged to explain it in different ways.

Or, an alternative explanation: Those who develop loving-kindness are of different basic aptitudes; for some, the unlimited loving-kindness (*anodhisa-mettā*) method is more comprehensible; for others, either the limited loving-kindness (*odhisa-mettā*) method is more intelligible; or the mode of suffusing beings in different directions with loving-kindness is more lucid; or the inclusive (*sabba-saṅgāhika*) means is clearer; or developing in pairs (*duka-bhāvanā*) is more suitable; or the developing in triads (*tika-bhāvanā*) is more appropriate. Since the different basic aptitudes of those who develop loving-kindness require

adoption of diverse means suitable for each individual, the Buddha had to teach these different methods, and later teachers had to explain them fully.

The Bodhisatta's Loving-Kindness

How the Bodhisatta had developed loving-kindness and fulfilled the perfection of loving-kindness has been explained in the Birth Story about the Wise Suvaṇṇasāma (*Suvaṇṇasāma-jātaka*, Ja 540) and told in the Basket of Conduct (*Cariyā-piṭaka*). The story as told in the Basket of Conduct (Cp 3.13), in brief, is as follows:

> "Dear Sāriputta, when I was Suvaṇṇasāma, living in the residence made ready by Sakka, I directed loving-kindness towards lions and tigers in the forest. I lived there surrounded by lions, tigers, leopards, wolves, buffaloes, spotted deer and bears. None of these animals was frightened by me, nor was I frightened by any of them. I was happy living in the forest, as I was fortified with the powers of loving-kindness."

From this passage, we know nothing of Suvaṇṇasāma's family, birth, etc.; we know only of his noble and happy living without a trace of fear from the beasts in the forest, sustained by the virtues of his loving-kindness.

In the Birth Story about the Wise Suvaṇṇasāma (*Suvaṇṇasāma-jātaka*, Ja 540), however, it is said that when the Bodhisatta Suvaṇṇasāma was struck by an arrow, he asked: "Why did you shoot me with the arrow?" and King Pīḷiyakkha replied: "While I was aiming at a deer, the deer that had come nearer to the point of the arrow fled, being frightened by you. So I was annoyed and shot you." Then Suvaṇṇasāma replied: "Seeing me, deers are not frightened, nor are the other beasts of the forest (*na maṁ migā uttasanti, araññe sāpadānipi*)." He also said:

> "King, even Kinnaras who, with a very timid nature, are living in the Mount Gandhamādana, would joyfully come to me while they are roaming in the hills and forests."

From this verse, it is known that the Bodhisatta Suvaṇṇasāma, living in the forest, directed loving-kindness towards all forest-dwelling animals, including Kinnaras, and that he was accordingly loved by each and every animal in the forest.

In the list of eleven advantages that accrue by developing loving-kindness, one is: being loved by Devas, Amanussa and humans. But from the Suvaṇṇasāma story, we know that animals too love one who develops loving-kindness.

> The eleven advantages of developing loving-kindness have been shown in connection with the Observance Day with Nine Factors (*navaṅguposatha*), in the section on the perfection of morality above.

The Story of Ven. Visākha

Of these eleven advantages, in connection with the love of Devas, demons and ghosts (*amanussānaṁ piyo*), the story of Ven. Visākha is cited in the Analysis of the Sublime States (*Brahma-vihāra-niddesa*) [1660] of the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*, Vism 9).

Visākha, a householder of Pātaliputta, having heard about Śrī Laṅkā, was desirous of going to that country to devote himself to the practice of Dhamma. After leaving his wealth to his family, he crossed over to Śrī Laṅkā and became a monk at the Mahā Vihāra. For five months, he studied the two books of monastic rules (*dve mātikā*), and then left the Mahā Vihāra for a group of monasteries which were suitable places for meditation. He spent four months at each monastery.

On his way to the hill-monastery called Cittala, Visākha came to a junction of two roads and while he was thinking which road to follow, the Deva of the hill guided him to the right direction. Accordingly, he arrived at the monastery and stayed for four months there. After planning to go to another monastery the following day, he went to sleep. While he was thus sleeping, the spirit of an emerald green tree sat on a wooden plank at the edge of a staircase and wept. "Who is weeping here?" asked the monk. "I am the spirit of the emerald green tree, sir," was the reply. "Why are you weeping?" – "Because you are about to leave." – "What advantage is there to you of my staying here?" – "Your stay here makes the local Devas, Yakkhas and others show loving-kindness to one another, and so love prevails among them. After your leaving, they will quarrel among themselves, even using harsh words."

"If my stay here really helps you live happily as you have indicated," said the monk, "I will stay on for another four months." When the four months had lapsed, the monk was about to leave and the spirit wept again. In this way, the

monk could not leave the place at all and passed into Nibbāna at the same monastery of Cittala.

The story shows that those who receive loving-kindness not only love him who directs loving-kindness to them, but they show goodwill to one another under the influence of his loving-kindness.

Loving-Kindness of a Hunter

In the Long Birth Story about the Golden Goose (*Mahā-haṁsa-jātaka*, JA 534), when the Bodhisatta, the king of the geese, was caught in a snare, he suffered much from injury. At the instance of the goose general, the repentant hunter picked up the goose king tenderly and nursed him with loving-kindness to relieve his pain. Even the weals raised by the snare did not remain on his feet, which became normal with the veins, flesh and skin undamaged because of the power of the hunter's loving-kindness.

This is but a pertinent extract from the Long Birth Story about the Golden Goose. The story in full may be learnt from the same Birth Story (*Jātaka*). Similar stories are told in the first Short Birth Story about the Golden Goose (*Cūḷa-haṁsa-jātaka*, Ja 502), the Birth Story about the King of the Deer Rohanta (*Rohanta-miga-jātaka*, Ja 501) and the second Short Birth Story about the Golden Goose (*Cūḷa-haṁsa-jātaka*, Ja 533). The power of loving-kindness may be well understood from these stories.

Passion in the Guise of Loving-Kindness

He who wants to direct his loving-kindness towards beings should be careful about one thing, and this is not to have developed passion (*rāga*) in the guise of loving-kindness, as it is warned in the Book about the Guides (*Nettippakaraṇa*) commentary: "Passion in the guise of loving-kindness is deceiving (*mettāyanā-mukhena rāgo vañceti*)." In the Analysis of the Sublime States (*Brahma-vihāra-niddesa*) of the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*, Vism 9), too, it is stated: "Extinction of anger means fulfilment of loving-kindness, but arising of passion means destruction of loving-kindness."

When a man directs his loving-kindness towards another to whom he has shown anger, the anger disappears, and there appears in him loving-kindness, which is goodwill. Therefore, disappearance of anger leads to appearance of loving-kindness. If passionate attachment appears in him while he is thus developing

genuine loving-kindness, his genuine loving-kindness fails. He has now been deceived by passion, which assumes the semblance of loving-kindness. [1661]

As loving-kindness is one of the ten perfections, it should be directed towards other beings until they return their goodwill to oneself, as was shown in the example of the Bodhisatta Suvaṇṇasāma and others. Not only is loving-kindness included in the ten perfections, but it is also found in the 40 methods of tranquility (*samatha*) meditation, which leads to the attainment of absorption (*jhāna*) and the super knowledges (*abhiññā*). Therefore, Bodhisattas and virtuous men of ancient times developed loving-kindness, and, with sharp and intense concentration, attained the absorptions (*jhāna*) which are called full concentration (*appanā*) in Pāḷi.

To give illustrations of such an attainment while fulfilling the perfections, the Birth Story about the Best (*Seyya-jātaka*, Ja 282) and the Birth Story about the King Ekarājā (*Ekarāja-jātaka*, Ja 303) may be cited.

The Birth Story about the Best

A synopsis of the Birth Story about the Best: King Brahmadatta of Bārāṇasī ruled righteously, fulfilling his ten kingly duties. He gave alms, kept the five precepts and observed the eight Observance Day precepts. Then a minister who had committed a crime in the palace was expelled by the king from the kingdom. He went to the neighbouring country of Kosala, and while serving the king there, he urged him to attack and conquer Bārāṇasī which, he said, could easily be done. King Kosala followed his suggestion, arrested and imprisoned King Brahmadatta, who put up no resistance at all, along with his ministers.

In the prison, Brahmadatta directed his loving-kindness towards Kosala, who had robbed him of his kingdom, and, in due course, Brahmadatta attained loving-kindness absorption (*mettā-jhāna*). Because of the power of that loving-kindness, the robber King Kosala felt burning sensations throughout his whole body, as if it were burnt with torches. Suffering from particularly severe pain, he asked his ministers: “Why has this happened to me?” They replied: “King, you suffer thus because you have imprisoned King Brahmadatta, who is endowed with morality.” Thereupon Kosala hurried to the Bodhisatta Brahmadatta, begged for forgiveness and returned Bārāṇasī to Brahmadatta, saying: “Let your country be yours again.” From this story, it is clear that loving-kindness is conducive to attainment of absorption (*jhāna*).

The Birth Story about the King Ekarājā

The story of King Ekarājā: Once upon a time, a minister serving King Brahmadatta of Bārāṇasī committed an offence. The story thus begins with the same incident as that in the previous Birth Story about the Best. Both the the Birth Story about the Best and the the Birth Story about the King Ekarājā are like the Birth Story about One with Great Virtue (*Mahā-Sīlava-jātaka*, Ja 51). For the full story read the latter.

What is peculiar to the story of King Ekarājā is this: While the King of Bārāṇasī was sitting in great state with his ministers in the courtyard, King Dubbhisena of Kosala had him tied and caged and then hung upside down above a doorstep in the palace. Having developed loving-kindness with the robber king as the object of his contemplation, Brahmadatta attained the absorptions (*jhāna*) and the super knowledges (*abhiññā*). He managed to release himself from bondage and sat cross-legged in the sky.

Dubbhisena's body became burning hot, and the heat was so intense that he rolled from side to side on the ground, grumbling: "It's so hot; it's so hot." Then he asked his ministers: "Why has this happened to me?" The ministers replied: "King, you suffer very painfully like this because you have wrongly arrested and suspended upside-down the virtuous and innocent king." – "In that case, go and release him quickly." Under this order, the royal servants promptly went to where King Brahmadatta was and saw him sitting cross-legged in the sky. So they turned back and reported the matter to King Dubbhisena.

The Buddha's Loving-Kindness

Once, while members of the Saṅgha headed by the Buddha were travelling to Kusināra, the Malla princes made an agreement among themselves that any one of them who did not extend his welcome to the congregation would be punished. Accordingly, a Malla Prince, Roja by name, who was a friend of Ven. Ānanda while he was a layman, extended his welcome with other Malla princes to the congregation. Thereupon Ven. Ānanda said admiringly to Roja that it was a great opportunity to do so, as the congregation was under the Buddha's leadership. Roja replied that he did so not because he had faith in the Three Treasures but [1662] because of the agreement made among themselves. Finding Roja's reply unpleasant, Ven. Ānanda approached the Buddha and told him of it. He also requested the Buddha to make Roja's mind more pliant. The Buddha

then directed his thoughts of loving-kindness exclusively to Roja, who could not remain still in his residence and like a calf which has been separated from its mother, went to the monastery where the Buddha was staying. With genuine faith in the Buddha arising in him, he paid homage to the Buddha and listened to his discourse, as a result of which he became a Stream-enterer (*Sotāpanna*).

At another time, too, when members of the Saṅgha, with the Buddha at its head, entered the city of Rājagaha and went on alms round, Devadatta, after consulting King Ajātasattu, sent Nāḷāgiri the elephant, who was in must, to attack the Buddha. The Buddha overcame the elephant by suffusing him with loving-kindness. Then the citizens of Rājagaha recited with joy the following verse (*Aṅgulimāla-sutta*, MN 86):

> *Daṇḍeneke damayanti, aṅkusehi kasāhi ca,*
> *adaṇḍena asatthena, ahaṁ dantomhi tādinā.*
>
> Some cattle-trainers, elephant-trainers and horse-trainers tame their respective animals by beating or hurting them with a goad or a whip. However, the mad elephant Nāḷāgiri has been tamed by the Buddha without any stick or weapon.

10. The Perfection of Equanimity

The Meaning of Equanimity

A literal translation of the Pāḷi word *upekkhā* would be "taking up a balanced view," which means maintenance of a neutral position between the two extremes of sorrow and happiness. Traditional Myanmar scholars rendered it as "indifference."

If the meaning of this rendering is not well thought of, one is liable to misinterpret it as "being inattentive," "being negligent." But equanimity is not remaining inattentive or negligent. Equanimity pays attention to objects but only in a balanced manner with the feeling of neutrality when encountering objects of sorrow or objects of happiness.

Development of Equanimity

The development of equanimity is the same as that of loving-kindness mentioned in the Path of the Analytic Knowledges (*Paṭisambhidā-magga*). As mentioned above, the methods to be adopted in developing loving-kindness are

528 because there are four basic modes. On the other hand, in developing equanimity, there is only one mode, which is *kammassakā*, meaning "all beings have deeds (*kamma*) as made by them, which are their own property." Therefore, the methods, in this case, form one quarter of 528 which is 132.

As in developing loving-kindness, there are twelve categories of beings: five unlimited (*anodhisa*) and seven limited (*odhisa*). Since there is just one mode, we have twelve methods only that are to be adopted before applying them to the ten directions:

1. All beings have productive deeds as their own property (*sabbe sattā kammassakā*).
2. All breathing things have productive deeds as their own property (*sabbe pāṇā kammassakā*).
3. All existing creatures have productive deeds as their own property (*sabbe bhūtā kammassakā*).
4. All persons or individuals have productive deeds as their own property (*sabbe puggalā kammassakā*).
5. All those who have come into individual existences have productive deeds as their own property (*sabbe atta-bhāva-pariyāpannā kammassakā*).
6. All women have productive deeds as their own property (*sabbā itthiyo kammassakā*).
7. All men have productive deeds as their own property (*sabbe purisā kammassakā*).
8. All noble ones have productive deeds as their own property (*sabbe ariyā kammassakā*). [1663]
9. All persons who have not yet attained the state of noble ones have productive deeds as their own property (*sabbe anariyā kammassakā*).
10. All Devas have productive deeds as their own property (*sabbe devā kammassakā*).
11. All humans have productive deeds as their own property (*sabbe manussā kammassakā*).

12. All Petas belonging to the lower worlds have productive deeds as their own property (*sabbe vinipātikā kammassakā*).

When these twelve are applied to the ten directions, the result is 120. To these are added twelve methods which have no reference to any direction, and the total number of methods becomes 132. Any one of these suitable methods may be used in developing equanimity (*upekkhā*), but it should not be taken that the other methods are inapplicable.

As in the case of loving-kindness, one may develop equanimity by using other terms for beings and persons if one so desires. The word *kammassakā* may also be replaced by other Pāḷi terms of the same meaning, which are mentioned in the Discourse on the Subjects for Continual Reflection (*Abhiṇha-paccavekkhitabbaṭhāna-sutta*, AN 5.57). There it is said: All beings have productive deeds that they own, it is productive deeds that they are heir to, it is productive deeds that they are born from, productive deeds are their kinsfolk, productive deeds are their refuge (*sabbe sattā kammassakā, kamma-dāyādā, kamma-yoni, kamma-bandhū, kamma-paṭissaranā*).

1. Having productive deeds as one's property (*kammassakā*).
2. Having productive deeds as one's heritage (*kamma-dāyādā*).
3. Having productive deeds as one's origin (*kamma-yoni*).
4. Having productive deeds as one's kinsfolk (*kamma-bandhū*).
5. Having productive deeds as one's refuge (*kamma-paṭissaraṇā*).

Since all five Pāḷi terms have one and the same significance, one may develop equanimity (*upekkhā*) by substituting all beings have productive deeds as one's property (*sabbe sattā kammassakā*) with any of the following four expressions that pleases one or that is understood well by one:

All beings have productive deeds as their heritage (*sabbe sattā kamma-dāyādā*).
All beings have productive deeds as their origin (*sabbe sattā kamma-yonī*).
All beings have productive deeds as their kinsfolk (*sabbe sattā kamma-bandhū*).
All beings have productive deeds as their refuge (*sabbe sattā kamma-paṭissaraṇā*).

A Point to Consider

In this connection, a point to consider is this: It is clear that loving-kindness is a perfection to be fulfilled for the welfare of beings and thus deserves to be considered as a noble perfection. On the other hand, though equanimity is a perfection to be fulfilled, it is a mental disposition which holds that "happiness or suffering is one's lot in life; if one is possessed of good deeds conducive to happiness, one will be happy; if one is possessed of bad deeds conducive to suffering, one will suffer. I can do nothing to alter the productive deeds of others." Is it not difficult to call such an attitude noble? Will it be wrong if one says that equanimity is an attitude of mind which does not care for the welfare of beings and which remains apathetic towards them? It is therefore necessary to consider why equanimity is ranked as an exalted perfection.

In both secular and spiritual matters, it is natural that something which is difficult to get is of great value, and something which is easy to get is of little value. It is, therefore, a common knowledge that in the world, easily available materials, such as pebbles and sand, are cheap, whereas gold, silver, rubies and other gems, which are hard to come by, are precious.

Similarly in spiritual matters, greed, hate and other unwholesome mental states are likely to arise easily; accordingly, they are of little worth. It requires no special exertion to let them arise. As a matter of fact, what is difficult is to prevent them from arising in an uncontrollable manner. They are indeed like useless weeds. On the other hand, giving (*dāna*), morailty (*sīla*) and other wholesome deeds cannot happen without putting forth the necessary effort; they do not take place automatically. One such meritorious deed is the development of genuine loving-kindness which is even superior to giving and morality. This genuine loving-kindness is indeed difficult to be developed. [1664]

There are three types of persons: a foe (*verī-puggala*), neither foe nor friend (*majjhatta-puggala*) and a friend (*piya-puggala*). It is difficult to develop loving-kindness directed towards a foe (*verī-puggala*), but not so difficult towards neither a foe nor friend (*majjhatta-puggala*); on the contrary, it is easy to direct loving-kindness towards a friend (*piya-puggala*). Loving-kindness that has as its object neither a foe nor neither foe nor friend but only a friend is loving-kindness of no value, no matter how often it is developed, because it is just a performance of an easy task.

If one desires to fulfil the perfection of loving-kindness properly, one should develop loving-kindness directed towards oneself first. Since such a development is in one's own interest, loving-kindness arises easily and fully without fail. This loving-kindness which is complete, as it is developed for one's own self, should serve as an example. Hence, loving-kindness should be directed towards oneself first.

When loving-kindness is directed towards a foe, neither friend nor foe and a friend, one should do so all alike without any discrimination, in the same manner one has done towards oneself. Could it be easily done? No, it could not be. Indeed, it is difficult to develop loving-kindness even towards a friend the way one does towards oneself, let alone towards a foe or a neutral person; as has been instructed by the Buddha, there is no person like oneself that one loves (*atta-samaṁ pemaṁ natthi*) (see SN 1.13, *passim*). Only when loving-kindness, which is so difficult to develop towards a friend, can be developed not only towards a friend but also towards the other two persons on a par with oneself and without the slightest difference, can it become genuine perfection of loving-kindness.

This suggests how difficult it is to develop genuine loving-kindness and how great its value is. On account of the development of this form of loving-kindness, as has been stated above, Suvaṇṇasāma was loved by wild beasts like tigers, lions, etc. It is even more difficult to develop equanimity (*upekkhā*) as a perfection than to develop loving-kindness for the same purpose.

It is not easy to develop equanimity even towards a neutral person of the three types. People would say: "I remain equanimous with regard to him now," or "In this matter, I adopt the attitude of he is the owner of his own productive deeds (*kammassakā*)," and so on. As such a saying signifies unconcern and disinterest, equanimity appears to be of little importance. In reality, equanimity presupposes paying attention to, and taking interest in, the object of contemplation, but as a neutral observer.

As it is easy to develop loving-kindness towards a friend, so it is easy to develop equanimity towards a neutral person. Because one does not love or hate him, it is easy to keep one's attitude towards him balanced without any desire to see him happy or to see him suffer. But it is more difficult to develop equanimity towards a foe. Because, if one hates him, one rejoices easily when he declines,

and one envies him when he prospers. It is hard to prevent both mental states from arising; when either of them sets in, even in the slightest manner, one fails to maintain equanimity.

It is still more difficult to develop equanimity towards a friend than towards a foe. Because one is already attached to a friend, one is delighted when he prospers or distressed when misfortune befalls him. It is difficult to prevent both delight and distress from arising in oneself.

Only when one maintains equanimity with the same attitude towards all three types of persons as towards oneself, without any of the above-mentioned difficulties, can the development of equanimity be possible. As long as there is partiality in one's attitude towards these three types of persons, equanimity is far from successful.

As has been said, the development of equanimity is not an attitude of unconcern or neglect; on the contrary, it does pay attention to and takes an interest in the object of contemplation. In doing so, one says to oneself: "Nothing can be done to make beings, including myself, happy or unhappy. Those who are possessed of good deeds will be happy and those who are possessed of bad deeds will be unhappy. Since their happiness and unhappiness are related to their past deeds, nothing can be done about them." Only profound reflection in this vivid manner, with living beings as objects of contemplation, constitutes genuine equanimity. Since it involves neither anxiety nor uneasiness, it is noble, serene and calm. The more it goes beyond loving-kindness, the higher its spiritual standard is.

Like loving-kindness, equanimity is one of the 40 subjects of tranquillity (*samatha*) meditation and one of the ten perfections. One who desires to meditate on equanimity according to the tranquillity method does so [1665] only for the highest absorption (*jhāna*) and not for the lower ones. Those who are slow to grasp, reach the highest stage of absorption (*jhāna*) only by acquiring them five times. For them, the Buddha has taught the fivefold absorption, which is called the fivefold (*pañcaka*) method. The absorption acquired for the first time by them is the first absorption, the one acquired for the second time is the second absorption and so on up to the fifth absorption. In this way, there are five absorptions for the dull.

The intelligent, however, reached the highest absorption after acquiring them four times. For them, the Buddha has taught the fourfold absorption, which is

known as the fourfold (*catukka*) method. The absorption accomplished for the first time is the first absorption, and so on. In this way, there are four absorptions for the intelligent.

Those who have not attained any absorption (*jhāna*) in either of these two ways should not try to meditate yet on equanimity for the highest stage of absorption. Equanimity, as a subject for meditation, belongs to the fifth absorption in the fivfold (*pañcaka*) method and to the fourth absorption in the fourfold (*catukka*) method. The dull can meditate on equanimity only when they have attained the fourth absorption and the intelligent only after acquiring the first three absorptions, by means of other tranquillity subjects. Because equanimity, as has been said, is subtle, serene and noble, it thus belongs to the highest absorption (*jhāna*) and not to the lower ones.

Loving-kindness (*mettā*), on the other hand, belongs to the lower four or three absorptions. This indicates the fact that equanimity is superior to loving-kindness. If equanimity is not intended as a subject for meditation but intended as a perfection to be fulfilled, it can be developed at any time.

The Story about Bristling Hair

With regard to the perfection of equanimity, the story of the Bodhisatta's hair-raising, severe efforts in fulfilling the perfection of equanimity will be reproduced from the commentary to the Basket of Conduct (*Mahā-lomahaṁsa-cariyā*, Cp 3.15).

Once, the Bodhisatta was born in a family of wealth and rank. When the time came for his education, he went to a well-known teacher. After completing his education, he returned to his parents to look after them. On their death, his relatives urged him to protect and increase the riches that he had inherited.

However, the Bodhisatta had developed fear of all realms of existence, and his fear was based on the nature of impermanence of all conditioned things. He also had perceived the loathsomeness of the body and had no desire at all to be entangled in the thicket of defilements associated with a household life. In fact, his desire to get out of the world of sensuality had long been growing. Accordingly, he wanted to renounce the world after abandoning his great wealth. "But because of the renown, my renunciation will make me famous," he

thought to himself. Since he disliked fame, gain and honour shown to him, he did not renounce the world.

In order to test himself whether he could unshakably stand the vicissitudes of life, such as gaining and not gaining wealth, etc., wearing the usual clothes, he left the house. His special desire was to fulfil the highest form of the perfection of equanimity by enduring the ill-treatment of others. Leading a noble life of austerities, he was thought by people to be a feeble-minded eccentric, one who never showed anger to others. Regarded as a person to be treated not with respect but with impudence, he roamed about villages and towns, big and small, spending just one night at each place. But he stayed longer wherever he was shown the greatest insolence. When his clothes were worn out, he tried to cover himself with whatever remnant was left. And when that piece was torn away, he did not accept any garment from anybody but tried to cover himself with anything available and kept moving.

After living such a life for a long time, he arrived at a village. The village children there were of an aggressive nature. Some children, belonging to widows and associates of the ruling class, were unsteady, conceited, fickle-minded, garrulous, indulging in loose talk. They wandered around, always playing practical jokes on others. When they saw aged and poor people walking along, they followed them and threw ashes on their backs. They tried to place nettles under the old people's arm-pits just to make them feel uncomfortable. When the old people turned round to look at them, they mimicked their movements and manners by bending their backs, curving their legs, pretending to be dumb, etc. and had great fun, [1666] laughing among themselves.

When the Bodhisatta saw the unruly children, he thought: "Now I have found a good means of support for the fulfilment of the perfection of equanimity," and he stayed in the village. Seeing him, the mischievous kids tried to make fun of him, who, pretending as though he could no longer endure them, and as though he was afraid of them, ran away. Still, the children followed him wherever he went.

The Bodhisatta, on the run, reached a cemetery and thought to himself: "This is a place where no one will prevent these mischievous youngsters from doing harm. I have now a chance to fulfil the perfection of equanimity to a high degree." He went into the cemetery and slept there using a skull as a pillow.

Getting an opportunity to indulge in devilry, the foolish children went where the Bodhisatta was sleeping and insulted him in various ways, spitting phlegm and saliva on him and doing other evil things and went away. In this way, they ill-treated the Bodhisatta every day.

Seeing these wrong acts done by the wicked children, some wise people stopped them. With the knowledge that: "This indeed is a holy ascetic of great power," they all paid respects to him with utmost reverence.

The Bodhisatta kept the same attitude towards both the foolish kids and the wise people. He showed no affection to the latter who honoured him, nor aversion to the former who insulted him. Instead, he took a neutral stance between affection and aversion with regard to both parties. In this way, he fulfilled the perfection of equanimity.

> Though this story is called the Long Story about Bristling Hair (*Mahā-lomahaṁsa-cariyā*), the name Mahā Lomahaṁsa was not that of the Bodhisatta. It just refers to the effect on those who come to know of how the Bodhisatta had practised; this horrible story could make their hair stand on end, hence, the story's name Mahā Lomahaṁsa.

Fulfilment of Equanimity

The extinction of hate and love is the fulfilment of equanimity (*upekkhā*). The perfection of equanimity signifies stilling of these two mental states. There is no perfection of equanimity unless both are calmed.

In special affairs, staying in a negligent mood, without taking interest in anything, leads to the impairment of equanimity. Such an attitude cannot be called equanimity. It is only unawareness, which is wrongly thought to be equanimity.

Real equanimity is not indifference or unawareness. It sees both good and evil, which lead to happiness and suffering respectively. But he who observes equanimity reflects clearly: "I am not concerned with these matters of happiness and suffering; they are the results of their own good and evil deeds."

In the commentary to the Book about the Guides (*Nettippakaraṇa*) it is stated: "Extreme absent-mindedness appearing as indifference with regard to various sense objects, either good or bad, is deceptive. Delusion (*moha*) disguised as equanimity is deceptive. Reluctance to perform deeds of merit also tends to

deception by assuming the appearance of the sublime mode of equanimity. Indolence (*kosajja*) in doing good deeds is also likely to pretend to be equanimity. Therefore, one should take care of oneself not to be deceived by either delusion or indolence that is apt to behave like equanimity.

Essence of Equanimity

Equanimity in an ultimate sense is a separate entity. It is a mental concomitant (*cetasika*) called specific neutrality (*tatra-majjhattatā*). But all the mental concomitants of specific neutrality cannot collectively be called the perfection of equanimity. Specific neutrality is a mental concomitant that is associated with all beautiful thoughts (*sobhana-citta*); it accompanies each arising of a beautiful thought. Specific neutrality which can be regarded as genuine perfection of equanimity pays attention to beings and reflects: "Happiness and suffering of beings are conditioned by their deeds (*kamma*) in which nobody can intervene. They have deeds as their own property and cause." Specific neutrality (*tatra-majjhattatā*) that arises out of contemplation, not of beings, but of the Three Treasures, alms giving and observance of the precepts, cannot constitute a perfection of equanimity. [1667]

When equanimity is maintained, contemplating happiness and suffering of beings, specific neutrality does not arise alone but all associated consciousnesses and mental concomitants appear with it. Though the object of specific neutrality and the object of its associates are one and the same, equanimity, with regard to the happiness and suffering of beings, is its main function. Therefore, this specific neutrality is designated a perfection of equanimity. Its associated consciousnesses and mental concomitants also come to be included in the perfection of equanimity; specific neutrality plays the leading role and this is the only difference between it and its associates.

Ten Kinds of Equanimity

There are other kinds of equanimity that cannot be included in the perfection of equanimity, though each of them is an ultimate reality. The Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) and the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) enumerate ten such equanimities:

1. Equanimity with six factors (*chaḷaṅgupekkhā*).
2. Equanimity as sublime living (*Brahma-vihārupekkhā*).

3. Equanimity as a factor of Awakening (*Bojjhaṅgupekkhā*).
4. Equanimity of effort (*viriyupekkhā*).
5. Equanimity regarding formations (*saṅkhārupekkhā*).
6. Equanimity regarding feelings (*vedanupekkhā*).
7. Equanimity resulting from insight (*vipassanupekkhā*).
8. Equanimity as specific neutrality (*tatra-majjhattupekkhā*).
9. Equanimity resulting from the third absorption (*jhānupekkhā*).
10. Equanimity from the purity of the fourth absorption (*pārisuddhupekkhā*).

1. There are six sense objects, good and bad, that appear at the six sense spheres. Arahats are not delighted when the sense objects are desirable and not dejected when these are undesirable. Always being endowed with mindfulness and comprehension, they take them in with equanimity, maintaining their natural purity of mind. This kind of mental equipoise is called equanimity with six factors (*chaḷaṅgupekkhā*). That is, equanimity with six factors: the six sense spheres and six-objects.

2. Equanimity which views that happiness and suffering of beings occur according to their deeds is equanimity as sublime living (*Brahma-vihārupekkhā*). The perfection of equanimity is this kind of equanimity.

3. When efforts are made to attain the path and the fruition, if some factors are weak and other strong, the weaker ones are to be strengthened and the stronger are to be suppressed, but when these factors of the path reach the status of factors of Awakening (*Bojjhaṅga*), their associated factors are of equal strength. Equanimity observed equally on these elements is called equanimity as a factor of Awakening (*Bojjhaṅgupekkhā*).

4. In making efforts to attain the paths and fruitions, energy extended for just the required amount, neither too much nor too little, is equanimity of effort (*viriyupekkhā*).

5. In making efforts for the attainment of concentration, path and fruition states, remaining detached from conditioned things (*saṅkhāra-dhamma*), such as the hindrances (*nivaraṇa*) that are to be eradicated by means of the first absorption

(*jhāna*) is called equanimity regarding formations (*saṅkhārupekkhā*). This equanimity regarding formations arises when the insight (*vipassanā*) wisdom matures. Before its maturity, one needs to make efforts to eradicate conditioned things (*saṅkhāra-dhamma*). But once the maturity is acquired, it is no longer necessary to make special efforts to eradicate them. Only an attitude of indifference is needed for the purpose.

6. Feeling experienced neutrally, without delight or dejection, when taking in a sense object is equanimity regarding feelings (*vedanupekkhā*).

7. Maintaining a mental equilibrium in developing insight into the nature of impermanence and other characteristics of the aggregates is called equanimity resulting from insight (*vipassanupekkhā*).

> A brief explanation of insight (*vipassanā*) may be given here in this connection. *Vi* means "special" and *passana* "seeing." Hence, *vipassanā* is "special seeing" or "insight." Perceiving that there are concrete things, such as men, women and so on, is an ordinary knowledge, common to all. It is an understanding based on perception but not a special understanding based on profound wisdom. Insight is knowing: "In reality there are no such things as 'I' or 'he.' What is termed 'I' or 'he' is just an aggregate of matter and mind that is subject to destruction and dissolution. These aggregates are [1668] continuously decaying without interruption. There is no sign of impairment only because every decaying object is being endlessly replaced by a newly conditioned thing."

8. Equanimity observed without making efforts to maintain specific neutrality on these correlated phenomena that are well-balanced in their respective functions is called equanimity as specific neutrality (*tatra-majjhattupekkhā*).

9. In developing absorption (*jhāna*), remaining indifferent to the sublime bliss that appears at the third absorption is called equanimity resulting from the third absorption (*jhānupekkhā*). It is the equanimity that is acquired only in the third absorption (*jhāna*).

10. Being purified of all opposing factors and requiring no effort in pacifying them is called equanimity from the purity of the fourth absorption (*pārisuddhupekkhā*). It is the equanimity in the fourth absorption (*jhāna*) stage which is free of all opposing factors.

Of these ten, six: equanimity with six factors, equanimity as sublime living, equanimity as a factor of Awakening, equanimity as specific neutrality, equanimity resulting from the third absorption and equanimity from the purity of the fourth absorption, are the same in their ultimate sense. They are all mental concomitants that are specific neutrality (*tatra-majjhattatā-cetasika*).

Why are they then enumerated as six kinds? Because they differ from one another in their time of arising. A simile is given in the above-quoted commentaries to explain this point: A man, in his childhood, is called a boy (*kumāra*); when he becomes older, he is called a youth (*yuva*); again, when he becomes older, he is called an adult (*vuddha*), general (*senāpati*), king (*rāja*), etc. A man is thus called differently according to the stages and positions in his life.

To make it clearer, their distinctions are due to the differences in their functions, which are as follows:

1. As has been stated before, to contemplate all six sense objects, good and bad, with equanimity is the function of equanimity with six factors (*chaḷaṅgupekkhā*).

2. To contemplate the happiness and suffering of beings with equanimity is the function of equanimity as sublime living (*Brahma-vihārupekkhā*).

3. In striving to achieve the absorptions (*jhāna*), path and fruition states, to contemplate with equanimity the hindrances that are to be removed is the function of equanimity as a factor of Awakening (*Bojjhaṅgupekkhā*).

4. To develop energy neither too much nor too little than what is required is the function of equanimity of effort (*viriyupekkhā*).

5. To contemplate with equanimity all correlated factors, without encouraging or suppressing is the function of equanimity regarding formations (*saṅkhārupekkhā*).

6. To contemplate sensations with equanimity is the function of equanimity regarding feelings (*vedanupekkhā*).

7. To contemplate with equanimity the three characteristics of impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and non-self (*anatta*) is the function of equanimity resulting from insight (*vipassanupekkhā*).

8. To contemplate with equanimity the associated factors which are well balanced is the function of equanimity as specific neutrality (*tatra-majjhattupekkhā*).

9. To contemplate with equanimity even the most sublime bliss of the absorptions (*jhāna*) is the function of equanimity resulting from the third absorption (*jhānupekkhā*).

10. To contemplate with equanimity which is purified of all opposing factors is the function of equanimity from the purity of the fourth absorption (*pārisuddhupekkhā*).

Thus, not only the differences of functions but also those of the sense objects should be noted. Equanimity of effort is a concomitant of effort (*viriya-cetasika*), and equanimity regarding feelings (*vedanupekkhā*) is a concomitant of feeling (*vedanā-cetasika*): These two equanimities are quite separate from other concomitants (*cetasika*) in terms of Dhamma.

Equanimity regarding formations and equanimity of effort are both concomitants of wisdom (*paññā-cetasika*). But they have two different functions as follows: Contemplating without making special efforts on the three characteristics of conditioned things (*saṅkhāra*) is equanimity resulting from insight; equanimity, when contemplating without fear of conditioned things (*saṅkhāra*) is equanimity regarding formations. [1669]

Equanimity as a Perfection and the Ten Equanimities

The list of these ten equanimities mentioned by the commentators do not directly include equanimity as a perfection. One might, therefore, be anxious to know: Is the exclusion due to the fact that equanimity as a perfection is not associated with any of the ten, or is it an oversight on the part of the commentators? It could not be said that the commentators were so negligent as to leave it out from their list. It is to be taken that the perfection of equanimity is contained in the equanimity as a sublime living (*Brahma-vihārupekkhā*).

However, some are of the opinion that the equanimity as a sublime living and the perfection of equanimity are two different things. According to them, taking up one and the same attitude towards one's foe and friend is the perfection of equanimity; taking up one and the same attitude towards the happiness and

suffering of beings, with the thought that these two conditions are the result of their own deeds, is equanimity as a sublime living.

That is to say, the perfection of equanimity contemplating the happiness and suffering of beings is not the perfection of equanimity but equanimity as sublime living.

However, the nature of the perfection of equanimity is explained in the Chronicles of the Buddhas (*Buddha-vaṁsa*, Bv 2.164) thus:

> *Tatheva tvaṁ sukha-dukkhe, tulā-bhūto sadā bhava,*
> *upekkhā-pāramitaṁ gantvā, Sambodhiṁ pāpuṇissasi.*
>
> Therefore, in suffering and happiness, you should be like the scales of a balance, having come to the perfection of equanimity, attain Full Awakening.

In this verse, *sukha-dukkhe tulā-bhūto* means "in suffering and happiness, you should be like the scales of a balance." Thus, contemplation of happiness and suffering is taught as the basis of the perfection of equanimity also in the Story about Bristling Hair (*Mahā-loma-haṁsa-cariya*, Cp 3.15), where it is said:

> *Ye me dukkhaṁ upaharanti, ye ca denti sukhaṁ mama,*
> *sabbesaṁ samako homi…*
> *Sukha-dukkhe tulā-bhūto yasesu ayasesu ca.*

There, also on the basis of those two stages in life, it is taught:

> Some people do harm to me, while others give comfort, my attitude towards all of them is the same … Whether in suffering and happiness, or in fame and disgrace, I am like the scales of a balance.

In the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) and the Birth Stories (*Jātaka*) commentary mentioned above, explanations are given also on the basis of those two mental states: happiness and suffering. "Though the village boys' ill-treatment of the Bodhisatta, such as the spitting of phlegm, would normally cause suffering and the villagers' honouring him with flowers, scents, etc. would normally cause happiness, the Bodhisatta viewed both with a balanced attitude of mind. The Bodhisatta's equanimity that did not deviate from that balanced position was the supreme perfection of equanimity (*paramattha-upekkhā-pāramī*).

Besides, when the Path of Purification (*Visuddhi-magga*) and the Abundance of Meaning (*Aṭṭha-sālinī*, DsA) explain the characteristics, functions, etc. of equanimity as a factor of Awakening (*Brahma-vihārupekkhā*), it is said thus: Equanimity has the characteristics of viewing beings with neutrality (*sattesu majjhatta-kara-lakkhaṇa upekkhā*). "Beings" here is used as a general term; it means those who offend and those who show kindness towards oneself or those who are happy and those who are suffering. Therefore, taking up a neutral attitude towards one's foe and friend alike is clearly equanimity as a factor of Awakening (*Brahma-vihārupekkhā*). Therefore, it clearly means that the perfection of equanimity is also included in equanimity as a factor of Awakening.

The Great Chronicles of the Buddhas

by

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